



UNIVERSITY OF NIŠ
The scientific journal FACTA UNIVERSITATIS
Series: **Linguistics and Literature** Vol.1, No 3, 1996 pp. 157 - 168
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<http://ni.ac.yu/Facta>

THE BURDEN OF VUK'S PHILOLOGICAL REFORM ON THE LYRICS OF BRANKO RADIČEVIĆ

UDC: 886.1(091)-1

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Abstract. *Reception of Radičević's poetry indicates that its aesthetic valuation has been determined foremost by the poet's association with the Vukovian program for reforming the literary language. For a century, academicians and publicist critics alike dominated the understanding of Radičević's poetry in the public mind through two interpretive methods: romantic subjectivism and critical positivism. More recent critical thinking applied to Serbian literary history challenges the influence of the philological principles based on notions of "folkloric" ethnographic purism, which yet affects appreciation of this poetry. More theoretically informed, intrinsic analysis of the poems' imagery shows how literary language — even the simplest, most crystalline, as Branko's was — can be neither completely "pure" nor in "common" use among the people. c oeuvre offers an optimum corpus for further socio-linguistic study of the aims, methods and aesthetic biases of Slavic language purist movements generally, both past and present.*

"It was practically a battle of the elements." (*To je bila gotovo stihijska borba.*) Uttering these stirring words in 1935, the great Serbian linguist Aleksandar Belić began his lecture on the nineteenth-century struggle over the literary language and orthography of his nation [3]. In his talk, he portrays Vuk Karadžić as a philological revolutionary general who not only had to possess the vision of a strategic victory — the standardization of a common national language — but also the practical know-how of a military commander capable of executing good tactical maneuvers on the field of battle. One of Vuk's most ingenious moves was his deployment of two of his central fighters behind enemy lines, so to speak. These were his youthful collaborators, Đuro Daničić and Branko Radičević. Through their activities, the general was able to outflank his fiercest opponents on their home territory. This was one of the most effective steps taken by Vuk

Received, November 30, 1996

in his lifelong struggle to break the social and cultural hegemony of the conservative Serbian church hierarchy and participate in southern Hungary.

There is, possibly, an irony but certainly no contradiction in the fact that Vuk's greatest helpers in his program of reform were themselves scions of Vojvodina. For these young men possessed the worldly spirit and free-thinking frame of mind characteristic of a new generation of Serbs from that special, culturally cosmopolitan region of central Europe. At the same time they came from enlightened Serbian homes in which neither the Russified Slaveno-Serbian clerical literary tradition nor the quasi-Orthodox Uniate faith had a place. And Vuk was not intolerant or suspicious of the progressive Serbs from Hungary, as his compatriots in homeland Serbia generally were at that time. However, it is not enough to assert, as Bell16 goes on to do in his talk, that one should not conceive of Vuk's struggle as one between Serbia and Vojvodina precisely because his most enthusiastic followers were Vojvodinians [3]. The complete *embourgeoisement* of Vojvodinian Serbian society has been outlined on the basis of many historical studies about the reception of Western languages and ideas, especially from France, within Vojvodina [2]. I would assert that, at least in the case of Radičević, Vojvodina should be understood as the meeting ground of modern civil cultural influences radiating from Western Europe, filtered especially through Vienna, and not simply as a sociological and geographical arena filled with gladiating religious and linguistic true believers and apostates. Indeed, my chief thesis here is that one of the greatest contradictions inherent in Vuk's struggle as it was carried out — the contradiction between philological and literary aims — is reflected in the *civilized, linguistically unconfirming* poetry of Branko Radičević.

In 1845 Vuk published a book with a long title usually referred to as *Letters (Pisma)*, in which he set forth his newest revolutionary thoughts about the future of the Serbian literary language [11]. For many years Vuk had been opposed by older, conservative intellectuals who wrote in the traditional literary idiom used in the Serbian cultural milieu of Vojvodina at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Many of his contemporaries believed that his program was essentially promoting an alien, backwoods vernacular [4]. Vuk was now sure that he should turn to the younger generation, and he did so in this book. Nowhere, he claims, was such corrupt and unseemly Serbian spoken as in the regions of Srem, Bačka and Banat, and the more "gentlemen writers" (*gospodski pisci*) there were in any given place, the worse the language was spoken. Within just two years of this statement, Daničić had joined the philological battle in his treatise *The War for the Serbian Language and Orthography*, in which he laid the scientific foundation for Vuk's further language work, and Radičević had published his first book of poems, showing how Vuk's idea of a national literary language could function as an artistic medium. These practical achievements — polemical and poetic — were the tactical prelude to the success in principle that Vuk's conception of language would attain many years later, at the end of the process initiated at the meetings between Vuk and the Illyrian Movement leaders (Croat and Slovene) in Vienna during 1850, when the Literary Concord (*Književni dogovor*) was signed.

Two assertions can be made about Radičević that would seem on the surface to characterize him as an unlikely candidate to be a warrior in Vuk's philological struggle: Branko was the quintessential educated Vojvodinian Serb of his time and generation, and his interest in and commitment to language was instinctively expressive, rather than scientific. Born and bred in the provincial central European milieu that was Vojvodina,

he knew several foreign languages and was well-read. At the same time, his youthful exposure to Serbian was informal and purely the result of a conflation of regional usages, both literary and vernacular [10: 9-13]. These factors make it all the more incredible that, approximately four short years after he began to write poetry in Serbian, his friend and cohort in support of Vuk's cause, Đuro Daničić, could declare that Branko's first book of poems heralded a new epoch in Serbian literary art, because "until today not one educated Serb has sung in verse like this Radičević, and he sings the way a Serb man of letters should sing." [6]

If ever it seemed necessary and appropriate to investigate the interrelationship between talent and *Tendenz* in literature, it is in the case of this young poet. Daničić's words refer to formal aspects of Radičević's language, which in his famous simile he immortalized as language "pure as a tear" (*kao suza — čist*), and we must understand such praise as part of the utilitarian burden of what was foremost a philologists' program. Their's was not a struggle for literary quality in poetic terms. Despite Radičević's acknowledgement, embrace and active support of Vuk's language effort in both word and deed, prior to his first book of poems published in 1847 he had not printed a single line of Serbian verse [13]. In this respect, he was an exception among his contemporaries [8]. Another indication of the primarily utilitarian value placed on these poems is the general lack of critical literary evaluation of them, either by Vuk or his detractors. Indeed, Daničić's famous review is not a scientific analysis of Branko's poetics but a philological polemic; it is more an appreciative apologia for the fledgling literary form of the spoken idiom than it is a true assessment of the stylistic merit of a developing young poet.

Branko came to Vienna in 1843, the same year in which he began to write verse seriously, and immediately became part of Vuk's circle. In purely formal terms, it is possible to consider him a *vukovac* even before then, since he had already written a school assignment in ordinary Serbian using Vuk's orthography. And to say that the eighteen-year-old lad was already favorably disposed to the work of the philological reformers would be an understatement, inasmuch as his father, a civil servant with interests in writing and translating, was a personal friend and enthusiastic supporter of Vuk. Therefore, it is not difficult to understand the speed with which Branko formally assimilated Vuk's ideas, especially since at that time he and Danid¹⁶ were helping Vuk compile a new edition of his *Serbian Dictionary*. However, Branko did not limit his own poetic lexicon to dictionary entries already approved by Vuk according to the Vukovian approach of thoroughgoing, ethnographically-based, or "folkloric" purism [22]. In his verse he used words theretofore not known by his mentor to be in folk usage but that he himself found or remembered from a childhood in which his local Vojvodinian dialect of Serbian was never unexposed to foreign elements. In this regard, one indicator in support of my thesis is that Branko never attempted to make his own poetic language "pure" in terms of Vuk's "common national" (*prostonarodni*) standard. Rather, his verse line was often based on certain "provincial" forms characteristic of the spoken Serbian of Srem. In this it may be said that the pupil even surpassed his teacher in adhering to the principle of writing the way the people speak, even if they were the much-deprecated "folk from across the river" (*prečani*) from Serbia proper, who lived far from the provenance of Vuk's ideal language model — the remote rural Hercegovinian dialect that he held in highest regard as being the Serbian least exposed to foreign influence. The relation of Branko the poet toward language was heartfelt, rather than rational. Once, in suggesting how best to write the word *gr'oce*, he guardedly told Daničić that he had no intention of

interfering in his area of expertise and that he was only speaking as a non-professional [16: xxxv]. Clearly, his interest in and facility with languages, and he knew to a lesser or greater degree several modern and classical ones, was not philological but poetic.

But it is the substance of Radičević's lyrics, which were never appreciated analytically in his own time, that distinguishes them from the erstwhile pseudoclassical Serbian poetry he ridicules so well in his verse satire *The Way (Put)*. In his light-hearted lyric poems especially, he disputed the earlier literary aesthetics, not simply by employing the ordinary language and the new, simplified orthography, but by stylistically dehierarchizing the subject matter (be it love or fear, joy or sorrow) and by deconventionalizing its treatment (whether tenderly or frivolously). And in his posthumously published verse novel *The Nameless One (Bezimena)*, also called *Crazy Branko (Ludi Branko)*, which, had he finished it, might be considered his major narrative poem, he carries this irreverent aesthetic stance to its most iconoclastic, freedom-loving, *down-to-earth* extreme:

Up, up, my dear, light-wingéd song!
But take me not to the heavens,
Let these wings of yours drop downward,
No, those miracles aren't for me,
The way up there's chill and frigid,
I'd surely freeze pitifully.

Milton, Klopstock, woe unto them,
From there they came froz'n through and through.
Oh, those noses... icy tapers —
What a fright just to glimpse at them!
Lower, lower, dear child of mine,
This little Earth is your true realm!

Gore, pesmo lakokrila!
Al' ne vod' me na nebesa,
Niže pusti svoja krila,
Nisu za me ta čudesa,
Put je tamo studen, hladan,
Morâ bih se smrznut jadan.

Milton, Klopštok, zle im sreće,
Do'se otud prornznuti,
O nosevi... ledne sveće —
Strahota ih i glenuti !
Niže, niže, čedo moje,
Zemljica je carstvo tvoje! [19: 202]

The style of this epyllion emulates certain national lyric qualities. Even in these few lines, we can see the justification for the non-descriptive, affective stock epithets that have always been given to Branko's poetry, such as "full of life" (*životna*), "natural" (*prirodna*), "temperamental" (*plaha*), "cheerful" (*vedra*), "innocent" (*bezazlena*), "mischievous" (*nestašna*). Or, as in the case of the opposite emotional register — in reference to his elegiac lyrics like "Sorrow and Admonition" (*Tuga i opomena*) or "When

I Dreamt of Dying" (*Kad mlidijah umreti*) — "touching" (*dirljiva*), "stirring" (*potresna*), "tender" (*nežna*), "sincere" (*iskrena*). His verse is infused with the light, mocking, personal, imaginative spirit of the octosyllabic lyric folksong line.

Vuk and Daničić, on the other hand, were no Romantics at heart, but rather men of strict reason and practical, pedagogical sense. Despite the fact that Dositej Obradović, the sentimental rationalist, was Vuk's spiritual predecessor, at least in regard to his enlightening ideas about the national language, we know that Vuk rejected even Dositej's "half-way" (*polovni*) literary language — both its philosophical underpinnings and its usage — being as it was part middle class, clerical Slaveno-Serbian and part common spoken language. A great deal of the polemical thrust of Vuk's philological reformation came from his disregard for the older Serbian literary tradition, perhaps even his ignorance of some of it. This, of course, was justified by the greater aim of the language "war." Posterity has been able to reclaim even a man of letters like Gavril Stefanović Venclov¹⁶, who lived a century before Vuk and who wrote in "plain Serbian," even using a form of simplified orthography [23]. Vuk, of course, would not have known of this cleric's manuscript texts. Branko, however, was faced with an aesthetic decision in forging his revolutionizing poetic idiolect. Should he reject all literary tradition, either simply because earlier works had been couched in an unstandardized idiom, especially in the case of the "civil" (*građanska*) poetry written by the Serbs of Vojvodina in the eighteenth century, or else because some more recent works showed a non-national, foreign influence, especially of "decadent" (*trula*) Western culture? Indeed, as Skerlić has shown, one of the strongest motives for purism among the most extreme adherents of Vuk's program within the United Serbian Youth movement was the xenophobia targeted against the "rotten" West [21]. The dilemma for Branko the creative writer was obvious: to negate such literary traditions meant to deny his own aesthetic formation, because, though this was surely never a subject of significant discussion between him and his philological friends, he was in fact writing poetry before their very eyes in the tradition of the Serbian Rococo, as Kašanin was the first to point out [12]. He was also under the strong impression of European Romantic writers, particularly of Byron [25].

As seen in the epithets mentioned above, ones frequently used in speaking about Radičević's poems, attempts are often made to describe the effect of his lyrics not in functional but in sensational terms. Branko was indeed a man of exuberant, emotional expression. A close study of his language and imagery shows that one qualifier can never be used to characterize his creative language — precisely the one Daničić employs: *čist*. This does not put the poet at odds with the philologists; it does not mean that his language was "impure." The cathartic act of designating a native language as "pure" is not literary but philological. It is an expression of the rhetorical function inherent in a program of language modernization. In the case of Vuk's ordinary "folk" Serbian, this was aimed largely at rejecting Church Slavonic elements [22:99] But the role of any prescriptive intervention on behalf of the notion of linguistic purity is essentially aesthetic. [1]

The polemical exchange Radičević's poems provoked was immediate, heated and prolonged. Among Vuk's adherents as well as his enemies, the young poet was seen first of all as a zealous advocate of Vuk's ideas, while neither side examined the poems themselves in a critical light. Svetozar Miletić accused Branko of "*sullyng everything Serbian*" (*na sve što je srpsko hulu bacio*) and emphasized that he was promoting "*dirty business*" (*nečisti* poslovi, Miletić's own emphasis). Certainly Branko's use of the

exclamation "*Ijuju!*" in *Đački rastanak* to debunk pseudo-classical norms must also have been perceived as a heresy three times over because of his triple use of the "j", a letter graphically anathematized by Vuk's enemies as "the devil's scythe" (*srp nečastivog*). We know that Branko's style was evocative and feeling-oriented. Yet it is obvious that his head was never veiled in some romantic fog and that, instead, his language was always founded on real emotional experience. But it was always the refined experience of an "urbanized man" (*urbanizovani čovek*), as Milan Dedinac has called Radičević [7]. The myth our poet helps dispell is based on the notion that erudition and sophistication must be oriented toward the ethereal and unearthly.

No poet was ever more in touch with the land and the national reality than Branko was. He could never pose in the guise of a real peasant, but he could and did make constant use of the real folk world. He was constantly nominating it, and that was part of his heresy against the murky abstractions of neo-classical writing. His aesthetic criteria were determined by his insistence on freedom, imagination and poetic license. This can be seen even in the naive innocence of "Girl at the Well" (*Devojka na studencu*), in the appealing conceits of a romantic frolic like "The Escapade" (*Vragolije*), and in the scene of trivial, semi-erotic reverie presented in "*Cic!*," a poem so irreverently unpuritanical that its title, an expressive interjection indicating that someone will not obtain the object of his desire, is perhaps most appropriately translated into English as "Naw!" In all of these simple lyrics, pure examples of *poésie fugitive*, Branko issues as strong a poetic challenge to the old school of belles lettres as Vuk was doing philologically to the old, institutionalized and calcified ideas about the dignitas and norma of the literary language.

That Branko's poetic instrument, even when he pretended to hold a *gusle*, was a classically lyrical one is evident in the opening lines of his epic *Gojko*:

Hey, gusle mine, c'mere a little while!
 And you also, slim little bow,
 So I can strum and fiddle some,
 To set my heart and breast at ease:
 So much too full of happiness,
 Wondrous marvel it's not yet burst!

Gusle moje, ovamote malo!
 Amo i ti, tanano gudalo,
 Da prevučem, da malo zagudim,
 Da mi srcu odla'ne u grudim':
 Ta puno je i prepuno sreće,
 Čudo divno što ne pukne veće! [19: 143]

Despite the folk trappings of the imagery and the heroic decasyllabic meter of many such poems that Radičević wrote after 1847, his lines are pervaded with the self-conscious *literary* sensitivity of a lyricist who knows the lyre of classical poetry. And it would be possible to assert, along with an illustrious line of Serbian literary figures — from Laza Kostić and Pavle Popović to Milan Kašanin, Meša Selimović and Milan Dedinac — that it was not Vuk or Daničić but their epigoni who dealt Branko's lyrics the hardest blow by seeing in them only an imitation of folk songs and by dressing the poet in a folk costume as if in a ceremonial robe. This is, of course, a socio-cultural burden added posthumously, but it derives from the didactic, polemical task which the

philologists assigned to the poet's lyrical voice from the beginning.

At issue here in understanding the poet's true role is the very process by which the oral was made literary (*literaturizacija usmenoga*), that is, how the spoken national idiom was rendered in a literary standard. Detailed analysis of Radičević's poetic language shows that Branko employs compound words that the people use (*narodske*) but also ones that he has altered (*prekrojene*) [10:229]. Ilić stresses the evolution of Vuk's views, from the original principle "write as you speak" (*piši kako govoriš*) adopted in the *Pismenica* of 1814 to the actual language principles he followed in his translation of the New Testament in 1847. It is clear that in that *annus mirabilis* for Serbian literature, and despite the similar views they professed concerning the national language, both Vuk and Branko were producing texts in which the realized form of the literary language was not, in all its details, normally spoken among the people [10:10]. In *For and Against Vuk (Za i protiv Vuka)*, Meša Selimović devotes special attention to the differences between what Vuk practices in his writing, particularly in his translation of the scriptures, and what he does when he adheres to his basic principles of philological reform, as in the compilation of his *Dictionary*. What intrigues Selimović is not what Vuk included in his collection of words, but what he omitted — common words, usually abstractions in frequent spoken use, but ones that Vuk had never heard the *country people* utter. Here, then, the criterion for inclusion in the dictionary was that the lexeme belong to the *realia of the village* [20:112]. The conclusion that Selimović draws is self-evident: "A completely pure common national language cannot be literary." (*Potpuno čisti prostonarodni jezik ne može biti književni.*) [20:135] This statement contains two words that are keys to understanding the philological dimensions and burdens that have been put on Radičević's literary language: *čist* and *prostonarodni*.

Again, Selimović, the author of masterful works like *The Dervish and Death (Derviš i smrt)* and *The Fortress (Tvrđava)* and a writer finely attuned to the ability of the language to express abstract ideas, points to an essential distinction. He shows how both Daničić praising Radičević in 1847 and Belić commemorating him in 1947 speak of the "commonness" or "plainness" (*prostota*) of the national language as being the most desirable form for literature, even though surely what they are thinking of is "simplicity" (*jednostavnost*) [20:130-131]. Indeed, Seven years after Selimović made this key critical discrimination, modern pedagogical research showed that one of the attributes most often used to describe Radičević's lyric poetry is indeed *jednostavna*. In Halilović's study of Radičević's poetry, based on a scientific survey of high school students to determine the reception of Branko's poems among young readers, the concept *jednostavnost* appears fourteen times [9].

Branko's best poems, so full of unlabored and lucid expression, are written in an idiom that is simple but surely not plain. As Milivoj Pavlović has pointed out, in his verse Branko "provided a basic type of poetic language," one that "has more generality [*ima više opštosti*] than Vuk's language." [14] This distinction between Vuk the philological reformer and Branko the lyric innovator is not academic but fundamental for understanding what may be the greatest burden that posterity has laid on the poet: that he was primarily Vuk's pupil—a "little Vuk" (*vučić*), as his contemporaries dubbed him — and that his role in the history of Serbian literature is one of a "school writer" (*školski pisac*).

This problem of the socio-cultural fitting of the poet into the Procrustian bed of the Serbian literary canon was discussed by Sava Damjanov in his article "Branko, Our

Contemporary" (*Branko, naš savremenik*) [5]. Damjanov pleads for a reconsideration of Radičević's poetry, one that would dare to go beyond the bounds of its conventional interpretation as the utilitarian output of a follower of Vuk, a "pro-folk Romantic" (*narodnjački romantičar*), and a programmatic versifier. He goes on to assert that any reevaluation of Branko would begin by setting aside considerations of his importance for the philological issues of the past and by looking at his texts in terms of what they offer to the literary attention of the present.

Two aspects of interest in Radičević's lyrics are the *ironic* and the *erotic*, elements that have been particularly significant in trend-setting Serbian literature during the past several decades, to the extent that contemporary taste has even succeeded in reclaiming part of Vuk's own previously censored collection. His controversial, sexually explicit popular "women's songs" were published for the first time in 1979 under the title *Crveni Ban (The Red Knight)*, ten of which were soon translated into English [24]. After surveying and classifying several of Radičević's poems having both mocking and ribald features, Damjanov focusses on the unfinished verse novel *Bezimena* as the supreme example of how the ironic and the erotic complement one another in a very modern way.

When it is a matter of irony used in the context of an erotic theme, Radičević defines the object not in terms of sensual eroticism, but according to the conventions of erotic play, stereotyped sexual behavior, and "legalized" erotic codes. And all these are presented as pure falsification in *Bezimena*, which has traditionally been regularly censored. Excerpts from this satirical poem appeared in highly expurgated and misleading form in 1903 [17]. Five stanzas from the first canto were expunged completely from the 1924 edition [18], even though they perhaps best illustrate Radičević's personal aesthetic program:

The wanton lad bums with fire,
And gathers her in his arms,
Then lowers her to the mattress;
But the marvelous lass protests,
And tells him quite abashedly:
"No ! — we might get caught! "

"Who's to catch us? Quite impossible!
Since the door is shut so tight, "
Saying this, he lay beside her,
And then reached out for her knees.
Upset so she says, "Oh, my God !"
Then gives him just a little help.

The deed is done, quick as can be,
The blessing coming from the sky,
'Twas sweet even without a priest,
But why's a priest even needed here?
Only women need to use priests --
Like this she's bound to stay a girl.

So here the two of them go on
And wondrously enjoy themselves
Managing just somewhat to quench

The tremendous flame inside them;
 Their hearts still beating loud within,
 And the girl covering her face.

But her shame ceases soon enough,
 Soon the girl brightens up carefree.
 There's a brief pause, then all at once
 The wicked fun begins again:
 He rocks the lassie in his lap,
 Then they hug and kiss all over.

Planu ognjem detić pusti,
 Pa je uze u natuče,
 Na dušeka tad je spusti;
 Al' se brani divno luče,
 Još stidljivo njemu reče:
 "Ne! — ako nas ko zateče !"

"Ko zateći? Nije nego!
 Kad su vrata zatvorena",
 Njoj je rekô, pa prilegô,
 Mašio se pod kolena.
 Ona jadi: "Oh moj Bože!"
 Pa ga malko potpomože.

Svršen posô, te nakratko,
 a blagoslov dođe s neba,
 I bez popa beše slatko,
 Al' šta popa tu i treba?
 Popi samo žene grade —
 "Vako cura još ostade.

Tako oni tu oboje
 Predivno se osladiše
 I goleme plame svoje
 Nelto malo ugasiše;
 Još im srce jako bije,
 A devojka lice krije.

No stid ovi brzo presta,
 Brzo s' moma rasćereta.
 Malk stade, ali smesta
 Započe se šala kleta:
 On na krilu curu cupka,
 Pa se s njome grli, ljupka. [19: 187-188]

The predominant tone of Shandyism in this surprisingly modern scene reinforces the notion that this is not simply a witty description of the disillusionment of a naive love affair. A combination here of self-irony and superiority toward the world echoes the Shandean literary attitude of Lawrence Sterne. A rigorously empirical morality woven

into the characters and the train of thought in the passage cited is strikingly reminiscent of the famous bedroom "incident" with the anonymous French maid (*fille de chambre*) in the chapters "The Temptation" and "The Conquest" from Sterne's novel *A Sentimental Journey*. Raditević's narrating poetic subject possesses a similarly sophisticated stance — which unifies humor and sobriety, appetite and satiety, irreverence and sentimentality, enthusiasm and restraint — and embodies the rationalistic spirit of Vuk's camp and its skeptical tendencies that came under frequent attack from the clergy.

Such a more complex interpretation would be relevant for reinterpreting Radičević's earlier poetry written when he was first collaborating with Vuk, such as "Vragolije" and especially the long satirical narrative *Put*, in which both Vuk's enemies and their neo-classical literary aesthetics bear the brunt of the irony. Certain lines in *Put* refer explicitly to philological issues, so much so that they only mean what they say when they are reproduced in Vuk's own alphabet:

There he saw that marvelous letter Ell,
And its friend, too, the letter En,
And there was also an orphan there,
Brother dear, that beautiful Iota.

Виде онде оног дивног Еља,
И још Ења њему пријатеља,
И још једна беше ту сирота,
Брате мили, оно красно Јота.

Nevertheless, we should not be satisfied with the apodictic, didactic claim that *Put* is only "in reality the cultural and literary manifesto of a democratic generation of young writers and publicists who gathered around Vuk in Vienna." [15] The presence of an ingenious satirical style here argues against such a positivistic subjugation of both the poet and his work to the "currents of history." Today, long after the fundamental issues of language and orthography have been settled in Vuk's favor, these lines, which cleverly mime the folk epic, may be more appreciated as a sophisticated but playful desacralization of the classical poet's divine lyre, and not only as a tendentious apology for the orthographic devices of a philological program. By coordinating grammatical animacy and semantic intimacy as features of new letters used in Vuk's reformed Cyrillic alphabet, Radičević adopts and breathes life into these "illegitimates". (Љ and Њ here are living beings!) Does not the passage cited above parody the pseudo-classical literary practice of summoning divinities — as Orfelin, Rajić and other earlier Serbian writers did when they invoked the Sacred Trinity (*svjataja trojica*) — by presenting the enthronement of three more brotherly *national* muses?

Such a perspective allows us to see Branko, whose personality was admittedly that of a *homo festivus* [16: xxxi], as a developing, maturing poet whose sense of irony and literary ambiguity could only begin to become more intellectually refined after 1847, once he was no longer limited by a sense of immediate programmatic commitment. Indeed, in view of the initial zeal with which Branko supported Vuk, the old philologist might well agree that the following line from Gojko, written in the hallowed heroic decasyllabic meter but exuding the pith of vernacular Serbian, sums up the poet's very apprehension of the philological burden on his lyrics:

Eh, this far, I'll go no farther!
E, pa dotle, a kuda ću više!

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OPTEREĆENOST POEZIJE BRANKA RADIČEVIĆA VUKOVOM JEZIČKOM REFORMOM

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Ispitivanje prijema Radičevićeve poezije u javnosti ukazuje da su njegovi stihovi, od prvog objavljivanja na srpskom jeziku 1847. godine, estetski vrednovani uglavnom na osnovu njegove veze sa Vukovim programom za reformu srpskog književnog jezika. Ove pesme bile su izuzetno malo razmatrane u formalnom smislu tokom prvog veka njihovog postojanja. I naučnici (Daničić, Skerlić, Belić) i književni kritičari (Svetozar Miletić, Pavle Popović) tumačili su prihvatanje Radičevićeve poezije u javnosti na dva kontradiktorna načina: putem romantičnog subjektivizma ili

kritičkog pozitivizma. U prethodnih pedeset godina, kritička razmišljanja o istoriji književnosti (Kašanin, Selimović, Pavić, Živković) stvorila su objektivnije merilo za filološki pritisak koji još uvek utiče na poimanje Radičevićeve poezije. Teoretski bolje obrazložena analitička poetska analiza (Damjanov, Ilić, Milinčević) takodje je pružila uvid u činjenicu da pesnički književni jezik - čak i onaj najjednostavniji, najjasniji, kakav je bio Brankov - ne može biti niti "čist" niti "narodni", u svakodnevnoj upotrebi među ljudima. Radičevićevo delo i način na koji je prihvatano predstavljaju optimalnu podlogu za sociološka i lingvistička izučavanja ciljeva, metoda i predrasuda raznih pokreta za čistotu slovenskih jezika.