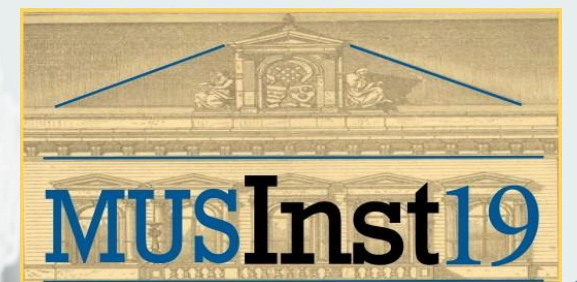


Between Art and Education: Croatian Children's Songs for Elementary Schools in the Last Decades of the Long 19th Century

Marija Benić Zovko

Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts



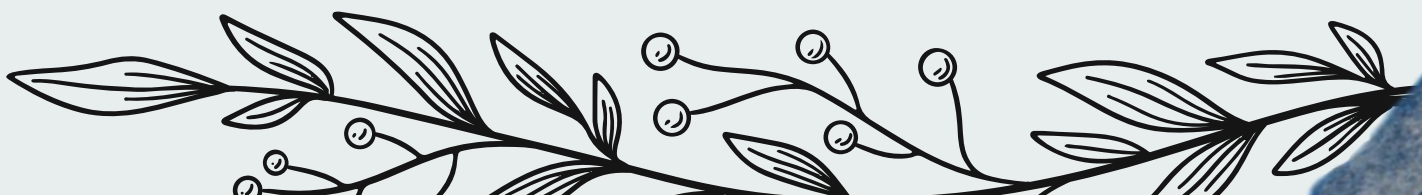
Lovece, 29 November 2025



School Law enacted in 1874:

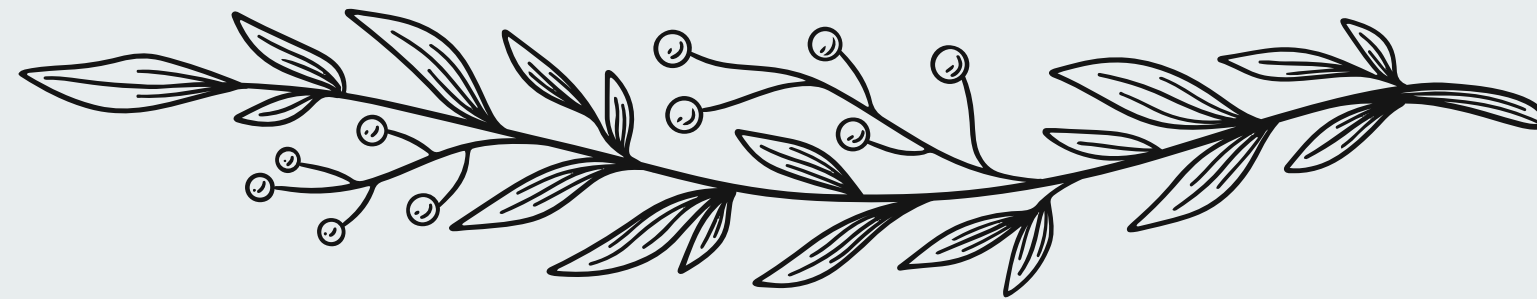
- free and compulsory primary education for all children regardless of gender, age, economic status, origin, or religious affiliation
- the secularization of education
- the introduction of the Croatian language as the official language of teaching
- the inclusion of Singing as a compulsory subject in public schools

Singing contributed to:

- child's health, especially the health of the respiratory organs
 - the language acquisition and in correcting minor speech impediments
 - the quality of children's play and entertainment
 - a positive influence on personality, socialization, emotions, and morality (influence of J. H. Pestalozzi and J. F. Herbart)
- 

The educational potential of Singing

- Lyrics
- The spirit of the nation



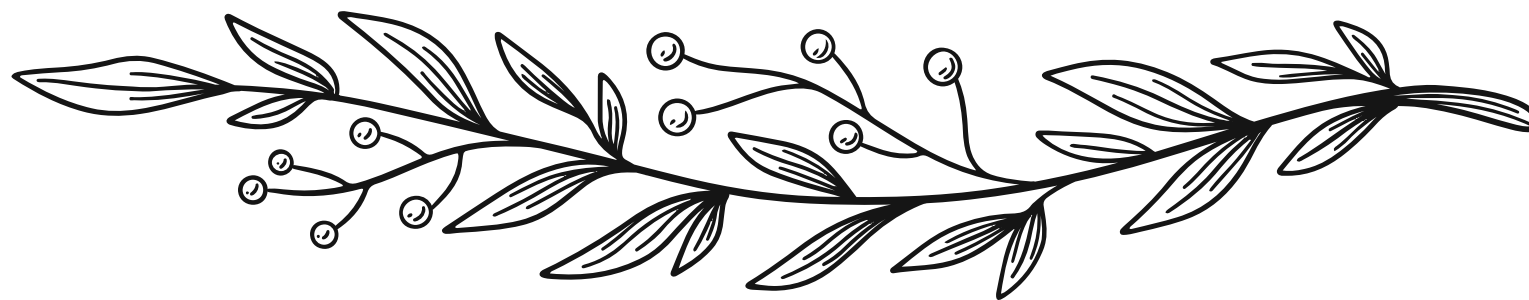
National song

- a characteristic musical style inherent to the spirit of a particular nation, present in both folk music and art music
- (oral-tradition) folk music = aesthetic and pedagogical ideal
- music pedagogues sought a foundation for the aesthetic canon in folk songs



Children's poetry for primary schools

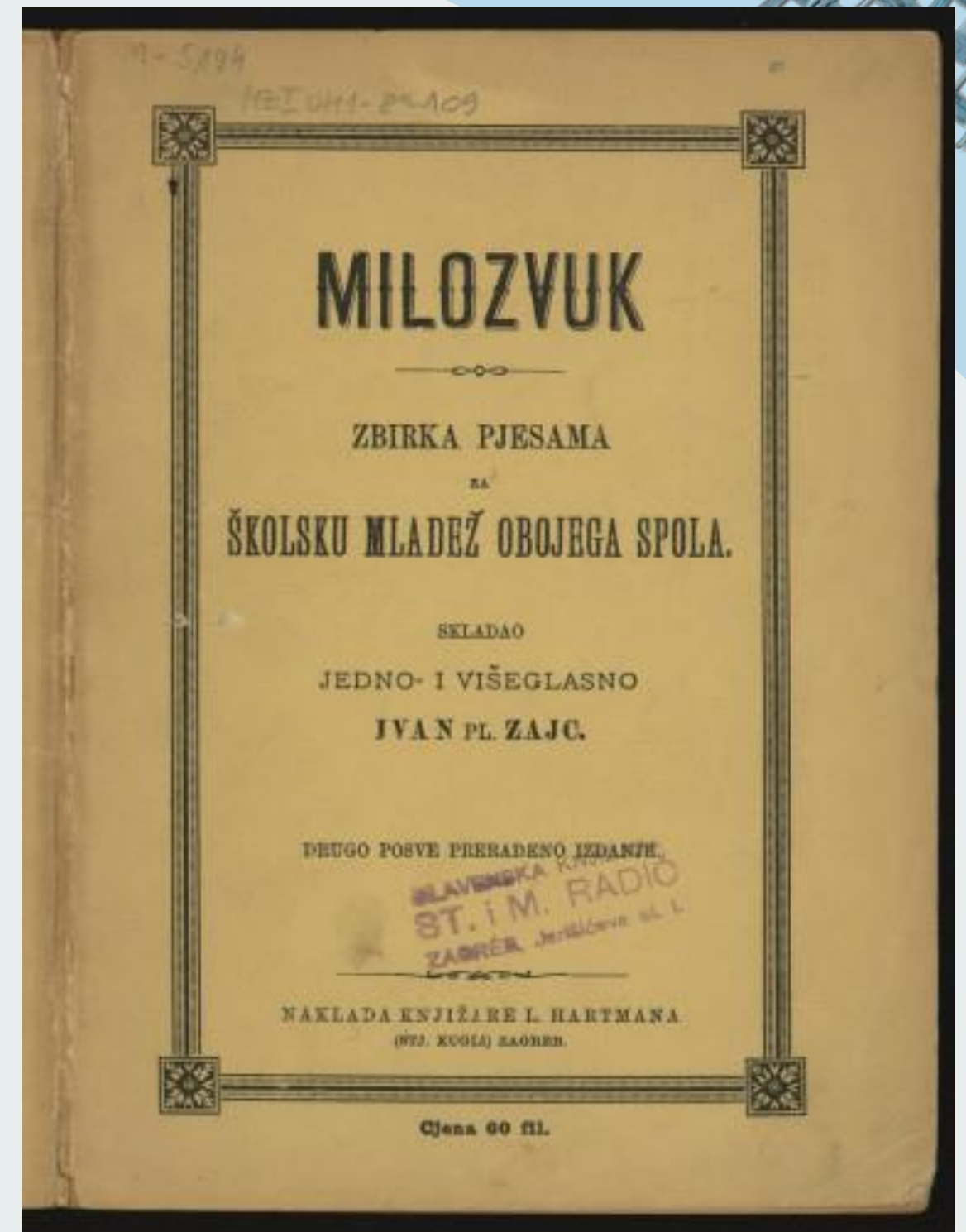
- Teachers-poets
- pedagogical utilitarianism – pedagogically oriented poetry
- aesthetic expression was often sacrificed for educational purposes



Ivan Zajc (1832-1914)



- the most prominent Croatian composer of the second half of the 19th century
- educated at the Milan Conservatory
- director of the opera, director of the music school in Zagreb, singing teacher, conductor, choir director
- composer, with an oeuvre comprising more than 1,000 works



Milozvuk [Sweet Sound] 1876, 1894

I intended to spread folk music and to fill the child's heart with songs – folk songs, by no means foreign or inappropriate, not contrary to the nature of our children.

Norms advocated by the music pedagogues

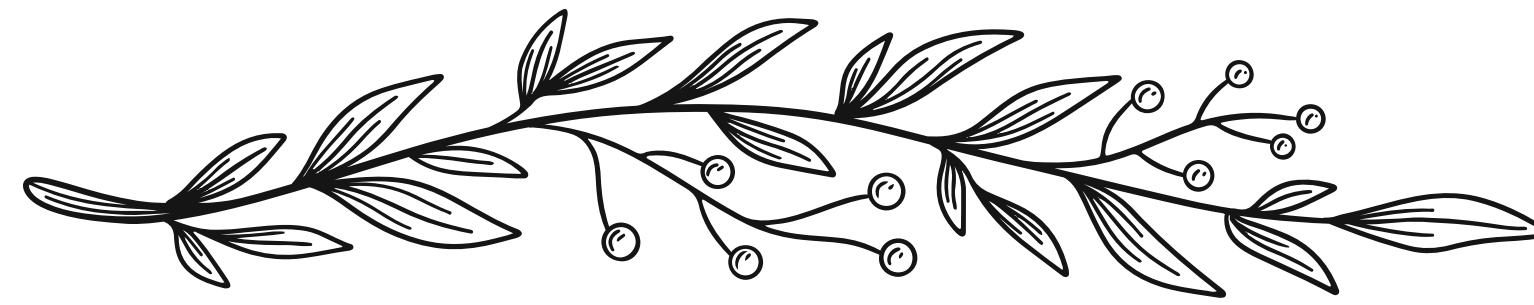
- lively and cheerful character
- major keys
- 2/4 (or 4/4) time

- ~~sorrowful character~~
- ~~adagio~~
- ~~minor keys~~
- ~~triple meter~~

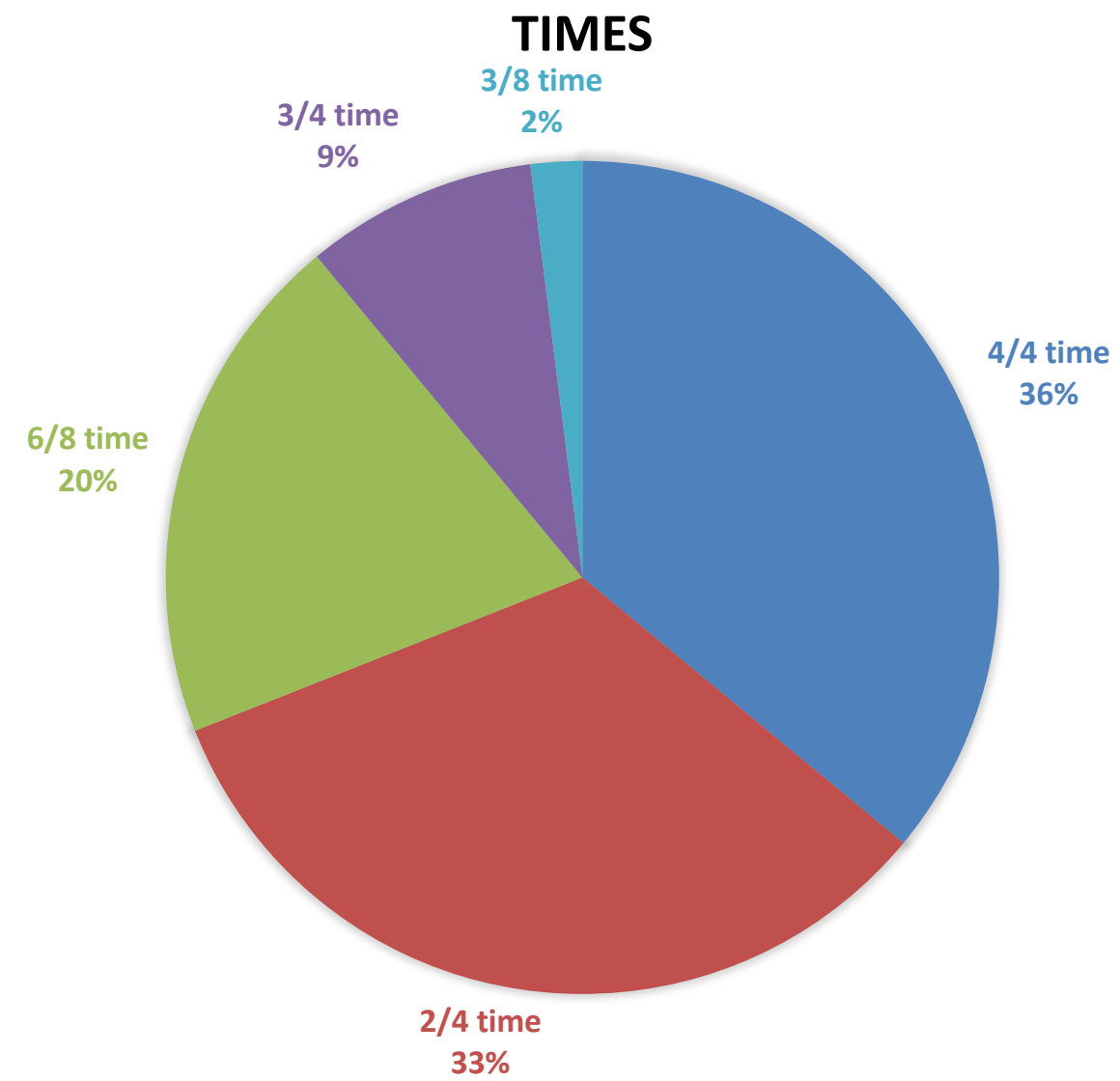


Franjo Kuhač (1834-1911)

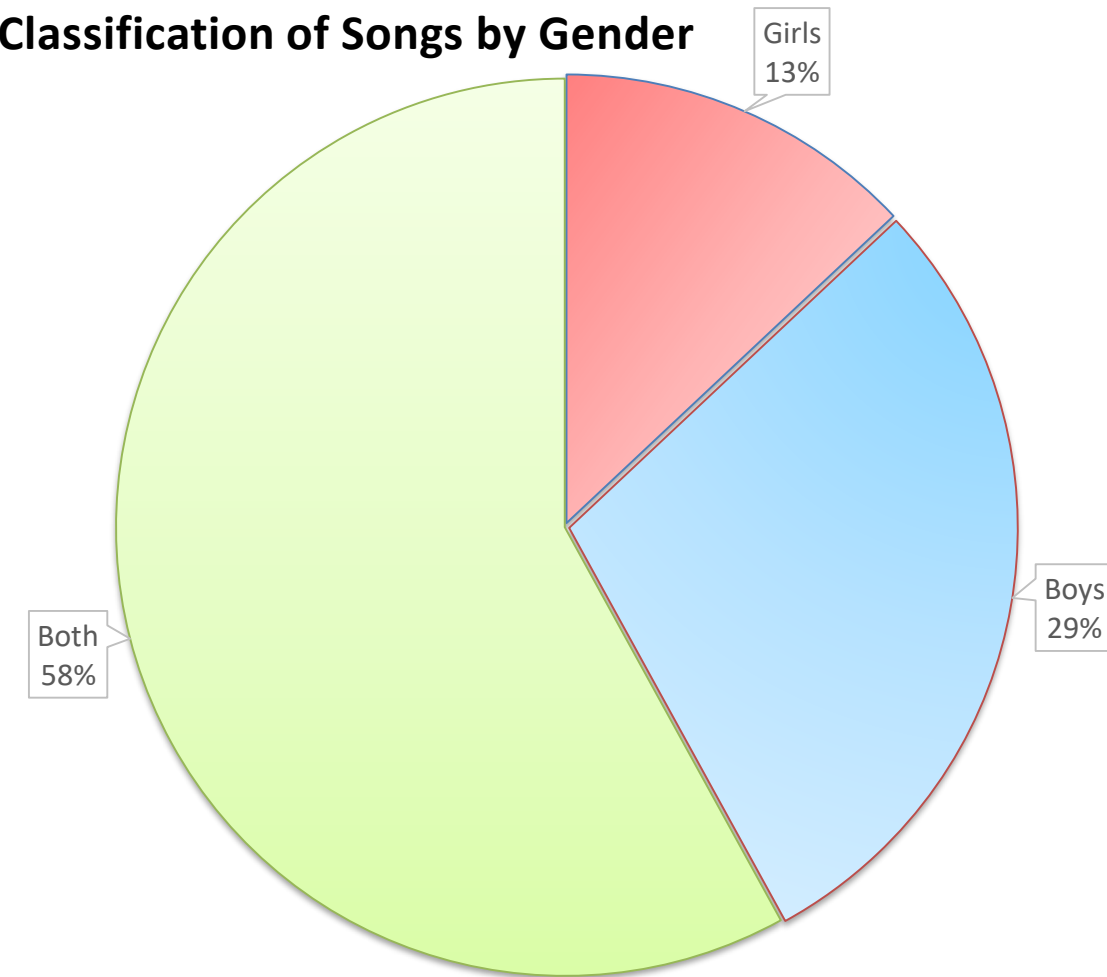
- *Pjevanka* [Songbook], 1885
- minor keys and modes alongside major
- 5/8 and 6/8 time
- irregular phrasing, fragmentary structure



Zajc's songs analysis



Classification of Songs by Gender



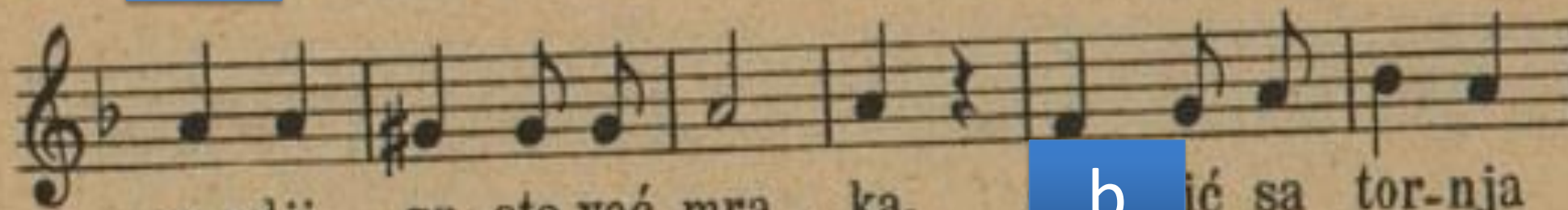
9. Na večer.

Za dječake jednoglasno.

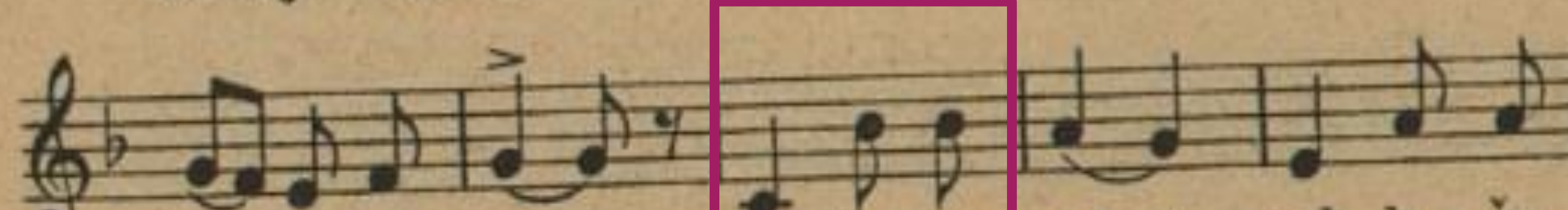
Nješto polagano, legato. Spjevao prijatelj mladeži.



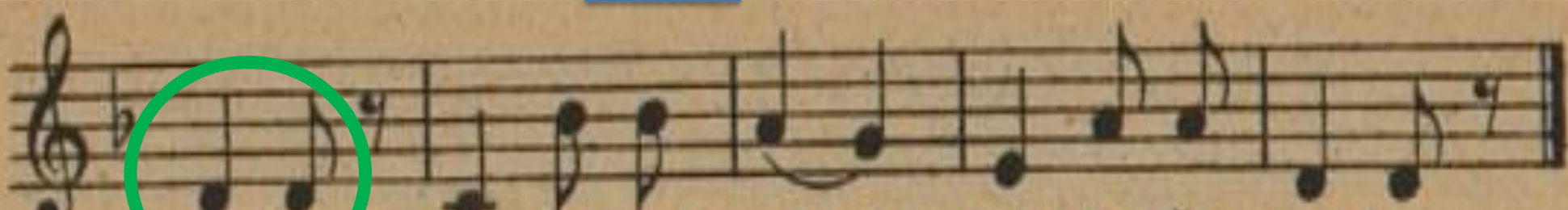
a Ne-stalo zla-tna sun-ča-na zra - ka, **a** no na



ze-mlji gu-sta već mra - ka, **b** ić sa tor-nja



za - zvo-ni gle: **c** ne - ka se smi-ri, nek le - že



c sve, ka se smi-ri, nek le - že sve!

[In the Evening]

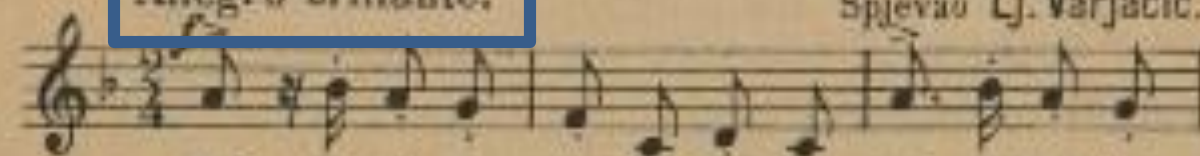


28. Dačka.

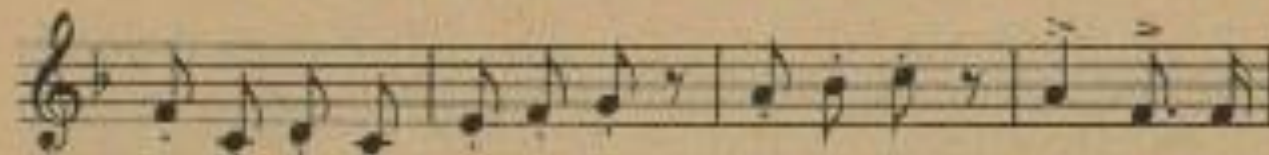
Za dječake (jednoglasno).

Allegro brillante.

Spjevao Lj. Varjačić.



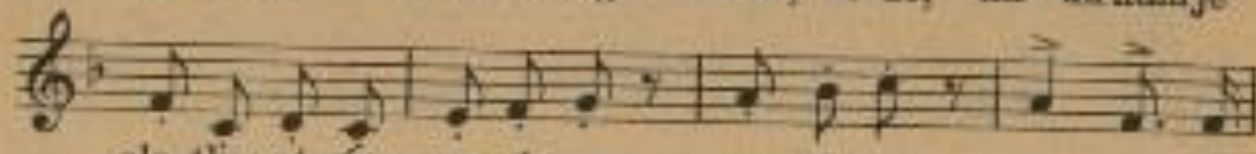
Hej ve-se-lo, mi-li dru-zi, u-go-dno je



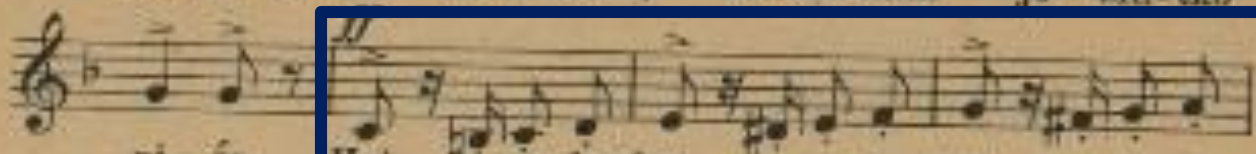
na-še ži-će, u-go-dno, u-go-dno je na-še



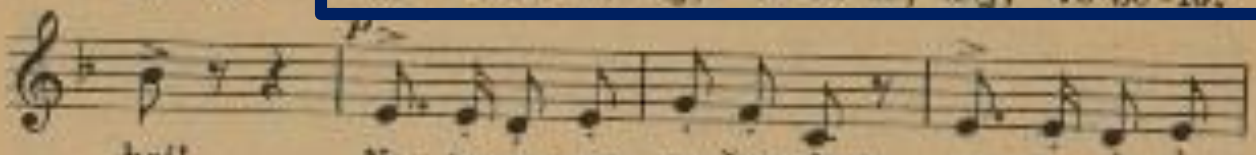
ži-će, na tra-ga bo-li, tu-zi, na-uk nam je



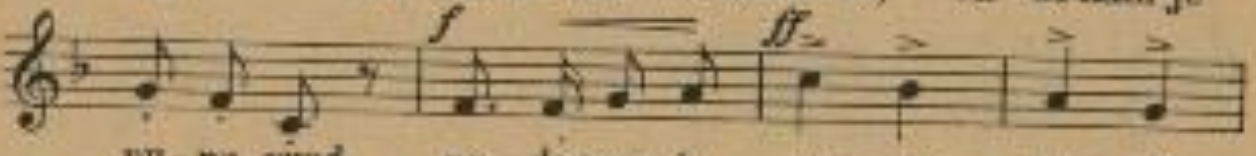
sla-tko pi-će, na-uk nam, na-uk nam je sla-tko



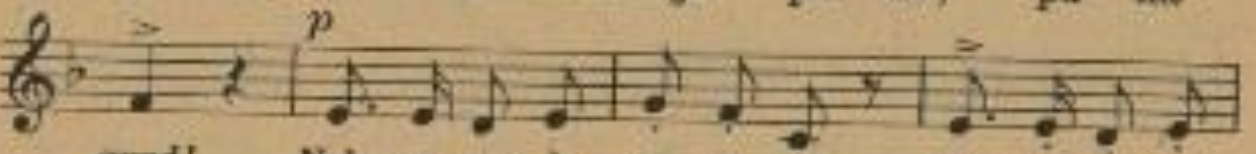
pi-će. Hej, ve-se-lo, hej, ve-se-lo, hej, ve-se-lo.



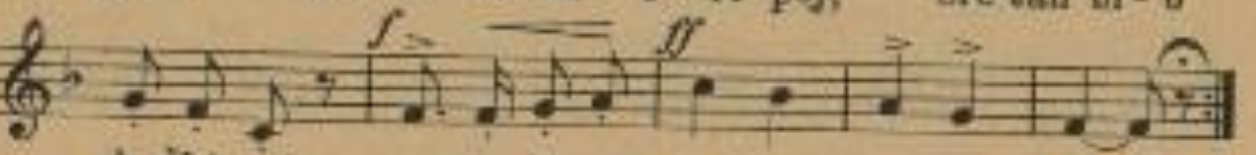
hej! Ne ta-re nas te-žak trud, na-de nam je



pu-na grud, na-de nam je pu-na, pu-na



grud! Nek se svu-da o-ri poj, sre-tan bi-o



da-čki rej, sre-tan bi-o da-čki, da-čki rej!

[School Song]

11. Đak junak.

Za dječake (jednoglasno.)

Allegro moderato.

Spjevao Ljud. Varjačić.

Ja sam đak, baš ju-nak, nit se bo-jim
tu-ći sko-jim; ja sam đak, — baš ju - nak, —
konj dr-ve-ni, mač li-me-ni, ko-nja jašem, mačem mašem,
konj dr-ve-ni, mač li-me-ni, ko-nja ja-šem,
mačem mašem, gla-ve sje-čem ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha,
gla-ve sje-čem ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

[The Heroic Pupil]



23. Oj i joj.

Za dječake (jednoglasno)

Allegro brillante.

Sujevao Josip Gall.

Kad se knjigom mu-čiš, liš-ce kva-si znoj,
po-slom kad si go-tov, ve-se-o pje-vaš oj!—

po-slom kad si go-tov, ve-se-o pje-vaš oj!—

Nješto polaganije.

Knji-gu ka-da bje-žiš, on-da sin-ko moj,— kad u

ško-li pje-vaš, on-da pje-vaš oj!— oj!—

Tempo I.

joj!— Kad se knjigom mučiš, liš-ce kva-si znoj,

po-slom kad si go-tov, ve-se-o pje-vaš oj!

po-slom kad si go-tov, ve-se-o pje-vaš oj!—

[Oh and Woe]



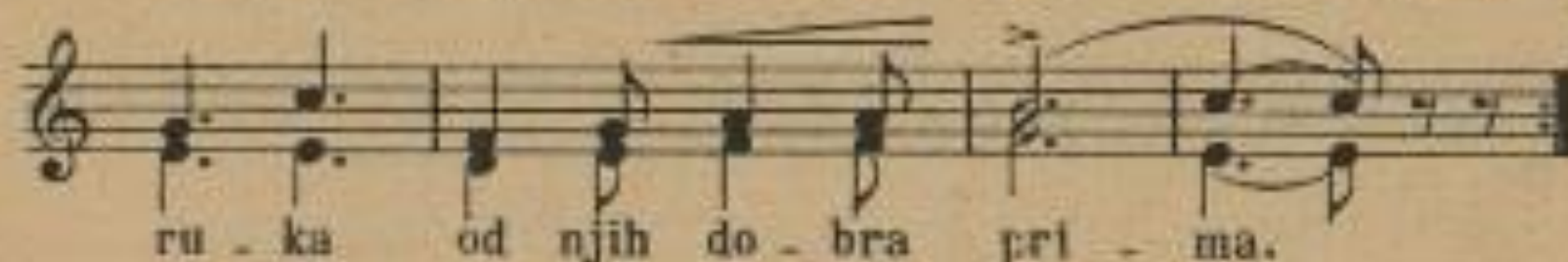
19. Tri kitice.

Za djevojčice (dvoglasno.)

Spjevao I. Horvatek.

Moderato.

Soprani.
Alti.



[Three Bunches
(of Flowers)]



48. Kolo.

Za djevojčice i dječake.

(Troglasno)

Allegro di Kolo Veselo. *p*

Spjevao Filip Lojev.

Soprani 1.2.

Alti..

1 - graj ko - lo

1 - graj ko - lo

go - ri do - li, do - bra mi smo dje - ca

sva; da - nju sva - ko dje te - mo - li,

sva oj

a na ve - čer i grat zna - 1 - graj,

zna oj

pje - vaj sved ve - se - lo, o - vo ko - lo ljub - mo

sad, a kad bu - de poč na dje - lo, dru - go

sad oj

lju - bit će - mo tad, dru - go ljub - bit će - mo

tad oj

fritenuto *smorzando*

tad, dru - go ljub - bit će - mo tad, dru -

tad oj

mf *smorzando* *ritard.*

go ljub - bit će - mo tad!

go ljub - bit će - mo tad!

pp *pp*





Conclusion on Zajc's songs

Pedagogical utilitarianism:

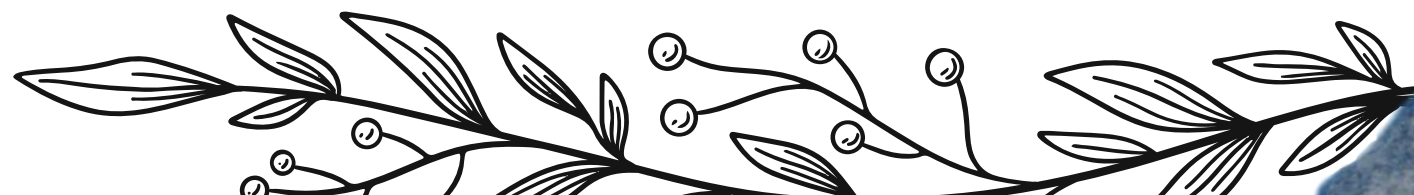
- underutilization of minor keys
- the lack of modulations and chromatic alterations
- regular phrasing
- 2/4 and 4/4 time

Gender roles:

- **Male** – chromatic alterations, broken chords in the melody, accentuation, characteristic rhythmic patterns, wider ranges of character and tempo, triple meter, triplets, irregular phrasing
- **Female** - duple meter, lyrical melodies, absence of chromatic alterations, lack of triple meter, limited melodic leaps and broken chords, *moderato* tempo

Folk songs:

- modality
- irregular phrasing
- kolo (dance)





Thank You

