CROATIAN-INDIAN LINKS: Thirty Chapters for Thirty Years of Diplomatic Relations (1992 – 2022)

Edited by Ivan Andrijanić

Editorial board: Mislav Ježić Ružica Čičak-Chand Darko Žubrinić



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Portrait picture of Ambassador of India, H.E. Raj Kumar Srivastava on the page VII: Office of the President of the Republic of Croatia, Tomislav Bušljeta

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Pero Budmani, the Indologist

INTRODUCTION

Pero Budmani (1835–1914), a pivotal figure of Serbo-Croatian Linguistics, was also a keen indologist who, in the latter part of the 19th century, furnished the first Serbo-Croatian translations of Sanskrit classics; see Maretić 1924: v and Katičić 1973: 54, 308. This fact, however, is almost always overlooked by Budmani's biographers, and the purpose of this brief paper is, accordingly, to draw attention to Budmani, the Indologist.¹

LEARNING SANSKRIT

Budmani was born a prodigious polyglot, eventually mastering at least twenty different languages (Rešetar 1926: 105). In addition to Serbo-Croatian and Sanskrit, these included Persian, Greek, Latin, English, German, Norwegian, Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Pol-



Pero Budmani

ish, Finnish, Hungarian, Turkish, Chinese, Arabic, and Swahili. In fact, Budmani's command of these languages was so impressive that it apparently captivated others completely. Lujo Vojnović, for example, recalls becoming nearly mesmerized by Budmani pointing out a number of mistakes in a grammar of Chinese (Vojnović 1912: 147).

Greek, Latin, and Italian were the first languages Budmani learned and, by the age of 17, he had reportedly also learned German, English, and French (Düringsfeld 1857: 21). The last language he learned, towards the age of 50 or 60, was Swahili. It is not known when, where, or why Budmani learned Sanskrit; however, according to Rešetar 1926: 105, it was likely during his time at the University of Vienna (1854–57), where he went to study medicine and law.

¹ For more general information on Budmani, see *Budmani's Life* and *Budmani's Work* below.

Sanskrit was taught by Anton Boller (1811–1869) in Vienna at the time but it is possible, if not even likely, that Budmani learned the language without any assistance from Boller because he was an autodidact throughout his life and had learned Persian and Arabic in the same way; see Maretić 1924: v.



Five Sanskrit Stories (Pet pripovijedaka iz sanskrta), Dubrovnik 1867.

FIVE SANSKRIT STORIES

Probably eager to meet the growing demand for horror stories in the 1800s, Budmani decided to make his literary debut with a Serbo-Croatian rendering of a selection from the grisly *Vetālapañcaviṃśatikā* some ten years after leaving Vienna. The translation, *Five Sanskrit Stories (Pet pripovijedaka iz sanskrta)*, was printed in the *Dubrovnik* in 1866 and is the first work of Sanskrit Literature to be translated directly from Sanskrit to Serbo-Croatian (Maretić 1924: v and Katičić 1973: 54, 308). It could not have taken Budmani more than a year to complete because he used Lassen's edition of the text, which was published only a year earlier (Lassen 1865). According to what we can tell, *Five Sanskrit Stories* were received well by both the average reader (the book was reprinted in 1867!) and the literary critic (Popović 1931).

INTERPRETING A MIXED LANGUAGE

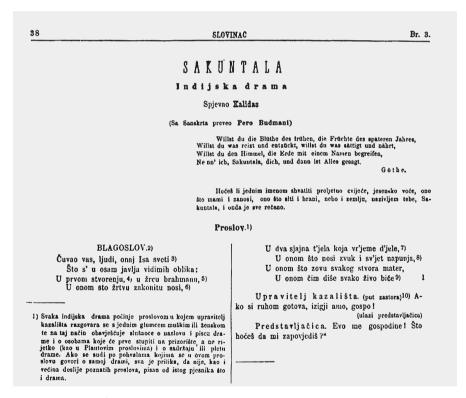
Budmani went on to serve as a court interpreter and took part in the proceedings when, in 1878, the infamous case of Baldo Pitarević's murder was brought to justice. Pitarević was a captain usually bound for South America, but in 1877 he was murdered on his way there, and one of Pitarević's men, Ivan Srića, was charged with his murder, while the rest of the crew was charged with aiding and abetting murder (Šundrica 1965). However, the trouble was that the crewmen could not understand the proceedings because, unlike Srića, they could not speak any Serbo-Croatian. They spoke, for the most part, broken Portuguese while Budmani would translate. There was, however, one particular crew-member who apparently spoke a "variety of Portuguese interspersed with expressions of English and Indian origin" (Bersa 1941: 244f). According to Bersa, that man gave Budmani the most trouble with simultaneous translation.

"Whenever this individual would speak, Budmani would follow him so carefully that the penetrating powers of his mind would become apparent in his expression. And whenever he would stop speaking, Budmani would keep quiet for a moment in order to make sense of the multitude of roots and endings. But he would soon cheer up and relate to the judge what the man had said."² (Translated by O.L.)

We do not know what the "expressions of Indian origin" were,³ but it is certainly worth noting that, whatever they were, Budmani was able to translate them simultaneously.

ŚAKUNTALĀ

Once the trial had come to an end (with Srića found guilty and other crew-members acquitted), Budmani returned to translating, and soon produced the first Serbo-Croatian rendering of the *Śakuntalā* of Kālidāsa. The *Śakuntalā* (*Sakuntala*) was printed in the *Slovinac* in 1879 and is the second work of Sanskrit Literature to be translated directly from Sanskrit to Serbo-Croatian (Maretić 1924: v). In a rather endearing passage, Bersa recalls Budmani pacing his efforts while working on the translation of *Śakuntalā*.



Śakuntalā in "Slovinac" journal (1879, No. 2, p. 38)

² "Kad je ovaj govorio, Budmani ga je pratio tako netremice, da se je sva pronicavost njegova duha stjecala i pogledu. Kad bi ovaj svršio, gospar bi jedan čas múčao, da se razabere u onom vrtlogu korijena i završetaka; ali bi se skoro razvedrio i mogao je kazati predsjedniku, što je čovjek rekao."

³ Could this man actually have spoken an Indo-Portuguese creole?

"How many verses did you manage to translate? Budmani's friends would ask him as soon as they saw him because, around 1876, Budmani was translating the *Śakuntalā* of Kālidāsa from the original Sanskrit. (His translation was finally published in 1879 in *Slovinac*.) In fact, my father would often get to be the first one to ask the question because he would simply say *How many* (sc. *verses*)? whenever Budmani came up to pick him up for a walk. Indeed, I recall Budmani, anticipating my father's question, once held up four fingers of his right hand from afar, indicating that he had translated four verses that day."⁴ (Translated by O.L.)

The explanation of why it took Budmani so long to translate only a few verses of the original can, on the other hand, be found in Rešetar 1926: 109.

"The most valuable of Budmani's translations is undoubtedly that of the *Śakuntalā*, one of the most beautiful Sanskrit plays, which Goethe held in high regard. Budmani had a lot of trouble translating *Śakuntalā* because he would render in verse those parts that were originally in verse as well; however, versification was not Budmani's forte and he could, by his own admission, compose only a couple of verses per day."⁵ (Translated by O.L.)

The most well-known of all Budmani's translations, *Śakuntalā* was reprinted in 1969.

TWO INDIAN PROVERBS

According to Rešetar 1926: 109, Budmani also authored the translation of the two "Indian Proverbs" printed in the *Slovinac* in 1879 (the same year as *Śakuntalā*) and signed P.B.

EDITING THE DICTIONARY OF THE SERBO-CROATIAN LANGUAGE

Finally, Budmani's knowledge of Sanskrit proved useful when, in 1882, he was appointed editor-in-chief of the *Dictionary of the Croatian or Serbian Language (Rječnik hrvatskog ili srpskog jezika*), which was published from 1880 to 1976 and remains the most comprehensive dictionary of Serbo-Croatian in existence. Budmani made numerous improvements to the dictionary during his tenure as editor (1883–1907), particularly in the sections on etymology, which were updated to reflect the latest developments in Comparative Indo-European Lin-

⁴ "Čim bi se prijatelji našli na okupu, obično je bilo prvo pitanje: 'Koliko ste danas verasa (stihova) preveli?', jer je u ono doba — po prilici g. 1876 — Budmani radio na prijevodu Kalidasine *Sakuntale* neposredno sa sanskrtskog izvornika. (Izašlo je u *Slovincu* 1879.) Više puta bi moj otac pretekao drugove, jer čim bi gospar Pero došao po nj radi šetnje, upitao bi ga naprosto: 'Koliko?' (naime koliko stihova). Dapače sjećam se, da je jednoga dana gospar Pero koji je znao, šta će ga moj otac pitati, podigao izdaleka četiri prsta desne ruke: značilo je, da je toga dana preveo četiri stiha."

⁵ "Od tih prijevoda najvredniji je, naravski, prijevod *Sakuntale* koja je jedna o najlepših staroindijskih drama a Goethe ju je visoko cijenio; oko ńe se je B[udmani] mnogo mučio jer je prevodio u stihovima partije što su u originalu tako sastavlene, a sastavlańe stihova nije mu išlo za rukom, pa je sam pripovijedao da je koji dan uspio da prevede samo nekoliko stihova."

guistics, including numerous cognates from Sanskrit which were typically not included up to that date. *Dictionary of the Croatian or Serbian Language* is Budmani's magnum opus and many consider the section he edited (*D-maslinski*) to be its finest part.

CONCLUSION

Budmani, a prodigious polyglot who most likely learned Sanskrit on his own, produced the first Serbo-Croatian translations of Sanskrit classics, the *Vetālapañcaviņśatikā* and the *Śakuntalā*, and, by including numerous Sanskrit cognates in the *Dictionary of Croatian or Serbian Language* while editing it, he raised the standard of Serbo-Croatian Etymology to that of the Comparative Indo-European Linguistics of the late 19th century. As a result, it is safe to say that Budmani, the indologist, deserves far more attention than he has thus far received, and we hope to see a thorough examination of his work on Indology in the near future.

BUDMANI'S LIFE

1835	Born in Dubrovnik on October 27.
1841–53	Attends primary and secondary school in Dubrovnik. Foreign languages and mathematics are of particular interest to him.
1853	Inherits the family estate in Castel Ferretti in Italy.
1854–57	Moves to Vienna in order to study medicine and law, but instead spends his time on foreign languages, mathematics, and music.
1857	Moves to Castel Ferretti despite the fact that he lacks a degree. There he learns of Vuk Karadžić and, after reading Vuk's works, decides to devote himself to the study of language.
1861	He meets Emilija (Mile) Lopižić and marries her on September 21. Later, he meets Vuk at her family home in Dubrovnik.
1862-83	Lives with Emilija in Dubrovnik. They have eleven children together.
1866	Publishes translation of a selection from the <i>Vetālapañcaviṃśatikā</i> called <i>Five Sanskrit Stories</i> . It is his first publication, as well as first work of Sanskrit Literature to be translated directly from Sanskrit to Serbo-Croatian.
1867	Publishes <i>Serbo-Croatian (Illyrian) Grammar</i> , which quickly becomes recog- nized as a seminal work of Serbo-Croatian Linguistics
1868-82	To support a growing family, he takes a job teaching Greek, Latin, and Ser- bo-Croatian at a high school in Dubrovnik.
1871	Made Corresponding Member of the Serbian Learned Society. Translates <i>The Undivine Comedy</i> by Zygmunt Krasiński from Polish.

1873-4	Publishes Notes on the Development of z in Slavic Languages.
1875–6	Publishes An Essay on the Meter of the Serbo-Croatian Epic Poetry.
1878	Translates Lokis by Prosper Mérimée from French.
1878	Successfully manages to interpret "expressions of Indian origin" while working as a court interpreter in the case of Capt. Pitarević.
1879	Publishes the translation of <i>Śakuntalā</i> by Kalidasa. It is the second work of Sanskrit Literature to be translated directly from Sanskrit to Serbo-Croatian, and Budmani's most well-known translation. In 1969, it is reprinted.
1882	Following the death of Đuro Daničić, he is appointed editor-in-chief of the <i>Dic-</i> <i>tionary of the Croatian or Serbian Language</i> . It is the most extensive feat of Ser- bo-Croatian lexicography to-date.
1883-1907	Lives in Zagreb with his family and edits the <i>Dictionary</i> . He improves the sec-
	tion on etymology and includes numerous Sanskrit cognates.
1883	Publishes <i>The Dialect of Dubrovnik as Spoken Today</i> ; it is arguably his best and most well-known paper, which, despite the specific title, covers a wider range of topics. For instance, it is one of the first papers to address the concept of the Dalmatian Romance language. Also, it is one of the first papers to discuss the use of maps in Serbo-Croatian dialectology. The same year, he translates <i>What men live by</i> by Leo Tolstoy from Russian.
1885	Publishes <i>Serbo-Croatian Grammar and Lexicography: An Overview Since 1835</i> , a popular paper. The next year, it is reprinted.
1886	Edits Works of Antun Gleđević.
1888	Edits <i>Works of Petar Zoranić, Antun Sasin, and Savko Gučetić Bendevišević</i> and publishes <i>Teach Yourself Russian : A Practical Grammar</i> , which is reprinted in 1903. Also, he is made Corresponding Member of the Serbian Royal Academy of Sciences.
1889	Made Full Member of the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts.
1899	Edits Works of Dominiko Zlatarić.
1900	Appointed Vice President of the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts. He delivers an address before the Academy, which is published the next year.
1902	Publishes <i>Pjerin by Marin Držić</i> .
1907	After 24 years of continuous work, he retires from editing the <i>Dictionary of the Croatian or Serbian Language</i> . He edited 4 176 pages in total, and many consider it to be the best part of the <i>Dictionary</i> .
1908	Moves to Castel Ferretti where Emilija dies on June 11.
1910	Publishes <i>On the Bernoulli Numbers</i> . It is his last paper and the only paper on mathematics.

- 1913 He becomes ill and moves to Dubrovnik, where he plans to die.
- 1914 As a result of the upheaval caused by the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo on June 28, he returns to Castel Ferretti where he dies on December 27.

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