

SEDNAL MI DŽEMO SLOBODEN

Macedonia, as sung by Mirvet Belovska, early '50s

Sednal mi Džemo sloboden, Džemo,
Vo taja niva ornica,
Vo taja niva ornica, Džemo,
Pod taja kruša letnica.

“Dej gidi majko, budala, džanam,
Kaurška sabja ne seči,
Kaurška sabja ne seči, majko,
Kaurška puška ne dupi!”

Majka mu dojde na Džemo, aman,
I na Džemaj zbor mu prozbori:
“Ne sedi, Džemo, sloboden, Džemo,
Sloboden, Džemo, raspašan.

Ušte mi zborot ne go doreče,
Pukna mi puška od gora,
Pukna mi puška od gora, džanam,
Džemaja mi go ranija.

“Ne ni e mirna godina, Džemo,
Kauri glava krenale,
Kauri glava krenale, Džemo,
Izlegol Micko vojvoda.

Džemaja mi go ranija, džanam,
Desnata noga koleno,
Desnata noga koleno, džanam,
Levata strana srceto.

//“Izlegol Micko vojvoda, džanam,
So dvanaeset drugari.”//

Džemo sat leisurely in a fallow field under a pear tree. Džemo’s mother came to him and spoke, “Don’t sit there, Džemo, careless and unarmed! This is a bad year for us, Džemo—the infidels have risen up. Their chief warrior Micko has come out into the open with twelve comrades.” “Hey, mother, you fool! An infidel’s sword does not cut, an infidel’s rifle does not shoot.” He had not even finished speaking those words when a rifle shot rang out from the woods, and Džemo was wounded in the right knee and on his left side in the heart.

Notes

raspašan: lit. “unbelted”: knives, pistols and various items such as tobacco, money, etc., were carried in the long sashes men wound about their waists.

kaur: Turk. *gâvur*, “godless,” a non-Muslim.

Džemo and Micko. This song is based on real people from the late 1800s. Džemo was a Turkish highwayman who worked near the town of Treska. He was supported in his efforts by his brother, who was an Ottoman official in the town of Kičevo. Micko was a *hajdutin* (guerrilla fighter), who took it upon himself to wipe out the incautious Džemo.

Transcribed and translated by Rachel MacFarlane