



Research Article

Dancing and singing at the traditional Gjakova wedding

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Abstract

This study examines the traditional wedding ceremony of Gjakova as an important expression of Kosovo's musical and cultural heritage. Based on materials covering the period from the beginning of the twentieth century to the present, the paper analyzes the songs, dances, rituals, and performance practices that shape the Gjakova wedding tradition. Particular attention is given to characteristic wedding dances such as Vallja e Zambakut, Vallja e Shotës, Vallja e Napolonit, and Sa e bukur na ka dal nusja, as well as to their musical, rhythmic, choreographic, and symbolic features. The study discusses the role of sung dances, instrumental accompaniment, melodic construction, rhythmic and metric diversity, and modal features such as the Aeolian mode and the Hijaz maqam. It also examines the poetic structure of wedding songs, including verse forms, refrains, dialogue, ornamentation, and rubato passages, which contribute to the expressive and emotional character of the ceremony. In addition, the paper considers the ritual functions of wedding songs, especially their relationship with symbolic actions, social cohesion, and the transition of the bride and groom into a new social and familial status. By comparing traditional wedding practices with contemporary forms of celebration in Gjakova, the study shows how modernization has introduced new elements into the organization and meaning of the wedding ceremony, while many musical, choreographic, and ritual features continue to preserve local cultural identity. In this respect, the Gjakova wedding represents a dynamic field in which Kosovo's traditional music, dance, ritual symbolism, and cultural memory are maintained, transformed, and transmitted across generations.

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Introduction

The Gjakovë wedding is an event in which our songs and dances, cultivated from generation to generation up to the present day, come prominently to the fore. These are songs that praise the beauty of the bride and the bravery of the groom, as well as our dynamic, energetic, and joyful dances, which constitute a folkloric treasure, both musical and poetic, for the cultural identity of this region.

The dances of the city of Gjakovë, which are performed at all family celebrations, unfold with their full expressive force during the wedding ceremony. The performance of these dances, mainly within family settings, has traditionally been accompanied by musical instruments, initially the def, sharki, bugari, and knee harmonium, and, over time, also by the instruments of urban musical ensembles. The dances of Gjakovë have always been accompanied by songs, mostly of a lyrical character and, at times, of an epic-lyrical nature. The dance repertoire begins and ends with sung dances such as Vallja e Zileve, Vallja e Çikave, Sa e bukur na ka dal nusja, Vallja e Shotës, Vallja e Zambakut, Vallja e Napolonit, Vallja e Metelikut, Marshi i Kosovës, and Marshi i Gjakovës, among others.

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These dances are most often performed in pairs, although dances in a closed circle, with men and women together, are also present. The dances performed at weddings are highly diverse, forming a rich typology, since the wedding, by its very nature, is a major celebration in which a large number of people of different ages, genders, professions, and experiences rejoice and celebrate collectively, thus making it an important event for the entire community in which it takes place.

Lyrical dances are the most widespread dances in the Gjakovë wedding tradition. These include dances through which the beauty of the girl and the boy is expressed, as well as love, friendly relations, and similar themes. Unlike other regions of Kosovo, dances of a lyrical character are more prevalent in Gjakovë. They are expressed with elegance, they are more appealing, and they are highly engaging to perform. In contrast to the lyrical dances of other cities, the lyrical dances of Gjakovë are characterized by the following:

- the predominance of instrumental musical accompaniment by well-tempered instruments, which allows for the expression of the soloists' mastery;
- the preservation of the structure of folk dance, making them widespread and more elastic from a choreographic point of view;
- the perceptible influence of Turkish Oriental culture;
- an economical choreographic text, whereas bodily plasticity, by contrast, is highly evident through a multitude of interpretive nuances and shades;
- the activation of the entire body during the dance, together with the limbs that function as expressive qualities in the transmission of the dance text, including the head, shoulders, legs, soles of the feet, and fingers.

The Gjakovë dances generally performed at weddings may be divided into two types according to their musical accompaniment:

- sung dances accompanied by the def; and
- dances accompanied by musical ensembles consisting of instruments such as the violin, clarinet, accordion, def, lahuta, and others.

In the architectural structure of the popular lyrical dance, three types may be distinguished:

- The asymmetric three-step pattern, with the formula 4+2, comprises a total of 6 steps, 4 to the right and 2 to the left. The motif consists of 2 to 3 steps arranged asymmetrically.
- The continuous two-step pattern, with the formula 1+1, is executed laterally, step by step. The dance is light and is performed without exception even by older practitioners.
- The continuous three-step pattern derives from the continuous two-step pattern and a jumping step, but it also bears an Oriental overlay resulting from the migrations of Eastern peoples into Albanian lands.

Vallja e Zambakut is one of the characteristic dances of the city of Gjakovë. This dance, with its typical 7/8 dance rhythm and broad, open movements in the form of the continuous three-step pattern, is today widely performed in Gjakovë weddings. The dance is divided into two parts. In the first part, the young man and the young woman dance and create an idyllic dialogue with one another. As the dance develops, the rhythm accelerates, so that the two dancers move away from each other and gaze at one another from the corners of their eyes. Vallja e Zambakut includes a jumping step performed by both parties, while the body assumes a plastic posture inclined forward. Both characters serve as interpreters of this deeply emotional relationship. The dance has a defined conclusion, yet it continues to preserve its initial dynamic spirit. This artistic creation worthily represents the artistic and creative level and maturity of the people who succeeded in producing a stylized work, one that enriches the urban idyll of this city.

In the dance Sa bukur na ka dal nusja, with the value of the musical meter...



Figure 1. Musical notation and choreographic structure of “Sa e bukur na ka dal nusja”

Vallja e Zambakut belongs to the category of sung dances of the city of Gjakovë. The lyrics and music are by Ymer Riza (1885-1961).



Photo 1. The Ensemble of Songs and Dances of the city of Gjakovë performing Vallja e Zambakut (Krenar Doli’ personal archive)

The melody is constructed from four musical phrases, each consisting of four measures. The men’s two-step pattern corresponds to two musical measures, with each step having the value of a quarter note, whereas for the women, the swaying of the body alternately to the right and to the left may approximately correspond to one musical measure in duple time, or slightly more. The song accompanying the dance is performed in the form of a dialogue between the group of men and the group of women. It is initially begun by the men, usually on the second beat of the musical measure, who sing the first two lines, repeated twice, thus preserving the choreographic motif. The women then begin to sing, always repeating twice the lines sung by the first group. The repetition of the lines twice by the following group and the successive entries continue throughout the song and the dance until the end. According to this analysis, the dance is distinguished by its compositional simplicity and communicative power.



Figure 2. Choreographic representation of Vallja e Shotës (Gjon Kujxhija, *Valle Kombëtare*, Vol. 1, “Asmus” Publishing House, p. 35.)

Vallja e Shotës, which is performed at all festive gatherings, is danced with particular enthusiasm at weddings. From the perspective of choreographic means of expression and, more generally, from the atmosphere of the dance, Vallja e Shotës is one of the expressions of national unity in the field of Albanian folk choreography. In its choreographic structure, the dance is based on the customary motifs of the Gjakovë dance tradition, such as free walking, the step-by-step motif, as well as elements of the doubled three-step pattern and the alternating four-step pattern. It is characterized by such ethno-national features as the overall harmonization of the movements of the feet, body, hands, and head. In terms of musical accompaniment as well, this musical material is encountered in various vocal-instrumental variants.

Together with its constituent elements, namely dance, melody, and poetic text, this dance has created a genuine folkloric syncretism, as one of the most crystallized and beautiful expressions of the architecture of folk choreography in Kosovo.²



Figure 3. Choreographic motifs of Vallja e Shotës in Gjakova tradition (R. Bogdani, *Vallëzimi popullor shqiptar - Lirika*, Akademia e Shkencave e Shqipërisë, Tiranë, f. 308.)

Vallja e Napolonit is one of the crystallized folkloric creations of the erotic lyricism of the city of Tirana and, more generally, of the urban area of Central Albania. Today, it enjoys a vibrant artistic life throughout the city and the nation, perhaps more than any other Albanian folk dance. The manner in which it is performed is characteristic of a considerable number of Albanian mixed pair dances.³ From a musical point of view, according to local tradition, Vallja e Napolonit has been accompanied by small musical ensembles such as the violin, clarinet, lute, and tambourine. The violin has played the principal role. The accompanying melody is among the most beautiful and artistically accomplished. The melodic interweavings produced by the playing of the musical instruments, namely the violin, clarinet, and lute, although carried out intuitively, with taste and finesse, instinctively radiate to the dancers an explosive impulse for nuances and decorative ornaments. The dancers harmonize the choreographic means of expression aesthetically, while always leaving room for spontaneity, which is expressed through the figures and ways of shifting the steps, thereby giving the dance a particular artistic expressiveness. From the perspective of musical language, the accompanying melody consists of five phrases in the 2/4 rhythmic meter. The principal theme of the melody is carried by the lute, then the violin intervenes, performing the theme with improvisational insertions, after which the theme is again taken up by the lute until the end of the dance. In the group of musical instruments accompanying the dance, the clarinet does not play a soloistic role.



Figure 4. Musical arrangement of Vallja e Napolonit performed by a small orchestra (Ramazan Bogdani, *Albanian Folk Dance - Lyricism*, Academy of Sciences of Albania, Tirana, p. 306. Performed by a small orchestra from the city of Tirana.)

² R. Bogdani, *Vallëzimi popullor shqiptar - Lirika (Albanian Folk Dance - Lyricism)*, Academy of Sciences of Albania, Tirana, p. 323.

³ R. Bogdani, *Vallëzimi popullor shqiptar - Lirika (Albanian Folk Dance - Lyricism)*, Academy of Sciences of Albania, Tirana, p. 301.

Song accompanies the wedding from its very first moments until its conclusion, in both families. Song is, so to speak, not merely a festive element of the wedding, but also an integral and indispensable part of it. Therefore, both the songs and the dances performed on this occasion are numerous and diverse. They represent an inexhaustible richness in our folk творчегу, both in terms of their rich and multifaceted content and in terms of their varied melodic character and the very modes of performance, ranging from singing without instrumental accompaniment to those accompanied by musical ensembles. In these songs and dances, specialists in the field will find highly valuable material in the diversity of their melodies and their different, and at times irregular, rhythms, while composers may draw inspiration from this rich source of folk melodies for worthy artistic creations. Wedding songs, however, will especially attract the attention of specialists in folklore and ethnology, who, in the content of their texts, will be able to identify many aspects of the life of ordinary people, as in other types of oral literature in general, beginning with the earliest stages of economic and socio-cultural development and continuing to later stages. In wedding songs, whether directly or indirectly, numerous aspects of material and spiritual life are reflected, sometimes even with strongly realistic tones.

Based on these distinctive characteristics of our folk choreography, we may say that this people has created dances of great value in which the concept of national beauty is defined, born and developed under specific historical circumstances.⁴

Of particular importance is the historical fact that the Albanian people have been inspired and have created great artistic values. These values render our culture immortal and ever inspiring in the defense of our national being and its territorial integrity. Our autochthonous culture, expressed through a choreography beautiful in form and rich in content, evokes a sense of respect and a fervent love for our Albanian nation.

Wedding songs are quantitatively among the most numerous in our folklore. They express a broad thematic range drawn from various aspects of life, thus transmitting customs and traditions through different rituals and, on the other hand, highlighting in realistic tones the state of cultural development at a particular stage of their historical evolution as well as in its subsequent course.⁵ At the same time, they have also found their diverse artistic forms and modes of expression, which testify to the great creative power of human beings across generations.

Composed in various verse forms, these songs have enriched our folk metrics and have served as models for our poets in their artistic creations.

In these songs, especially in the position of the refrain line, the simple four-syllable verse, which cannot express very much, is encountered only rarely. The flexible six-syllable verse, however, with its accelerated rhythm, gives the songs, and especially the dances, a desired rhythmic vitality. It rarely appears interwoven with the four-syllable verse, but more often with the eight-syllable verse, chiefly in the position of the refrain.

In wedding songs, the most widespread verse form is the eight-syllable line, just as in other types of our oral poetry, ranging from lullabies to laments. The eight-syllable line is preferred by the folk singer because it offers greater expressive possibilities: it conveys thoughts and ideas, provides descriptions, and complements them with figurative expressions, a livelier musicality, and rich rhythmic combinations that also make it possible to avoid the melopoetic monotony of the verses. Appearing sometimes in the form of exclamations, and more often as part of the preceding line or as an independent line, the refrain simultaneously becomes an emphatic reinforcement, both of the poetic expression and of the melodic phrase, enhancing its musical effect as well as the intensity of experience.

Dialogue is always present in wedding songs, as it is in most other creations of our oral poetry. Dialogue not only broadens the angle from which the artistic object is represented, but at the same time also renders the ideas of the composition functional, breaks monotony, and gives dynamism and vitality to the style of these songs.

Wedding songs are part of spiritual culture, as they perform practical and symbolic functions, and they carry a particular semantics. As a component of rites, expressed through the word and through the many possibilities it affords, the song, in the process of creating the artistic image, becomes a symbolic expression of social relations. Wedding songs

⁴ Skender Selimi, *Folklori koreografik shqiptar (Albanian Choreographic Folklore)*, SHBLU, Tirana, 2003, p. 48.

⁵ Institute of Albanology of Prishtina, *Këngë dasme 1 (Wedding Songs 1)*, prepared by Anton Çetta and Anton Berisha, Rilindja, Prishtina, 1980, p. 19.

convey a certain amount of information about various aspects of life in the community or in the communities of earlier historical periods through which this type of folkloric creation was formed and transmitted.⁶

Wedding songs generally have texts with a defined structure that correspond to the relevant sequences and appear in different forms and dimensions, which are taken up and reused as models each time the ceremonial is celebrated. The song is an important connecting link among the members of the community; it integrates the family, kinship, and social group into the overall structure of the ceremonial, thereby contributing to the strengthening of relations among people. It is well known that the rites of the wedding have as their principal aim the union of the individual with the kin group and with a particular social group. Through them, the bond among the members of the family, the kin group, the community, and social groups is realized.

Songs in the wedding, as a fundamental component, represent the rite, which symbolically performs an aesthetic function. The basis for the realization of the aesthetic function of rites in wedding songs is the coded sign, the hidden message expressed through symbol. One of the manifestations of the reciprocal connections between social structure and the culture of society is the regulation of social relations through the aid of symbolic cultural means.⁷ Within the structure of rites, several well-known modes of symbolic reference may be observed:

- clearly expressed utilitarian thought, referring to the practical aim and purpose of the rites;
- hidden symbolic thought, conscious and intelligible; and
- expressed symbolic thought, related to the unconscious and belonging to experience grounded in human nature.

During the celebration of the wedding ceremonial, the ritualization of the participants also takes place, through which the closest possible approximation is sought, that is, the alignment of reality with the idealized model. This process implies precisely the endowment of every element of the ceremonial with a pronounced symbolic charge, thereby making symbolism an end in itself. Symbolization encompasses all the parameters of ritual expression, including characters, objects, actions, and songs, and at these levels the song fulfills both a pragmatic and a symbolic purpose. It is precisely the aim of approaching the ideal model throughout the duration of the wedding that leads to the aestheticization of reality. Harmony and expressive means ensure that every wedding celebration reintroduces the meaning of archaic experiences and of the rites themselves, which are conceived as a unified system with its own units and a consolidated structure within the sphere of beliefs, in cohesion with the system of social relations.

Wedding songs define themselves as an important component of the rite through artistic representation, using music and words as the instruments of their mode of expression, through which symbolic analogies of the social condition are created, as well as similarities between reality and the idealized model of the rite. In any attempt to classify wedding songs, the determining criterion is the relationship of the song to the rite.⁸

In scholarly classification, the cycle of wedding songs, according to the chronology of all the ceremonies included in the wedding, is grouped into: songs before the wedding, songs during the wedding week, and songs after its conclusion. Representative song models according to the chronology of the wedding, before, during, and after the wedding:

*O where are you going, little girl,
With a watch on your wrist?
Oh aman, aman,
Oh aman, aman,
Together we shall place the crown.
O where are you going, little girl,*

⁶ Agron Xhagolli, *Etnologjia dhe folklori shqiptar (Albanian Ethnology and Folklore)*, Triptik, Vlorë, p. 263.

⁷ E. Bassin-V. Krasnov, "Social Symbolism," *Voprosi filozofii*, 1971, No. 10, p. 164.

⁸ In Albanian folkloristics, a general classification of the cycle of wedding songs has generally been pursued by well-known collectors and scholars such as Th. Mitko, S. Dine, Q. Haxhihasani, and Z. Sako. This classification is found in publications from the series *Early Collectors of Albanian Folklore*, material that is included within other folkloric genres belonging to particular regions, as well as in the systematization of wedding folklore material according to scientific criteria in the archive of the IAKSA. One such publication, in two volumes, containing folkloric material collected in Kosovo and aiming at a scientific classification, was published in 1982 by the Albanological Institute of Prishtina.

*With a ring on your finger?
Oh aman, aman,
Oh aman, aman,
I have fallen in love with you.⁹*

In what follows, we shall present various examples of songs associated with climactic moments and directly linked to the rite. These are songs with directive functions which, through the accompaniment of artistic language, affirm ritual action. In this way, the rite is artistically conditioned by the poetic word, ritual action, the participation of ritual objects, the functional ethnographic setting, and so forth. At that moment, the song becomes a syncretic component of the rite. The functions of this organism are not related solely to the pragmatic aim of ritual success. The particular associations created by the song, through the interrelation of text, music, and dance, confer value upon this function also at the aesthetic level, one connected with human feelings, with emotional involvement and lived experience, and with the inclusion of the entire community participating in the most essential nodes of the celebration, which stands out as a ceremonial festivity. The connection between rite and song is realized through symbolism, through the invisible dimension that preserves early mentalities, and through codes that require a reading of multilayered symbolism, constituting the most important part for study. For example:

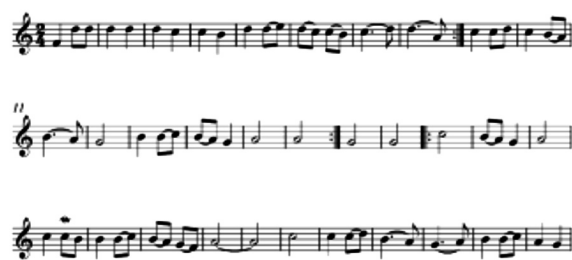


Figure 5. Example of a traditional Albanian wedding calling song (Lorenc Antoni, *Albanian Musical Folklore*, Volume Five, Rilindja, Prishtina, 1972, p. 71.)

*The house caught fire and burned,
And why is the company murmuring?
Blessed be your hands,
For you have kindled the wedding.
For this day, I need you, my company,
For tonight you have honored my wedding.
The wedding was kindled,
And the kerchief was burned,
So that bachelorhood may leave the young man.
Blessed be your hands,
For you have kindled the wedding.
For this day, I need you, my company,
For tonight you have honored my wedding.
Blessed be your feet,
For you have kindled the wedding.
Young man, do not mourn your bachelorhood,
For you have taken a girl, mashallah.¹⁰*

In post-wedding songs dedicated to the figure of the bride, various objects worn by the bride are exalted, for example:

*These bride's dimije,
Filgjona, filgjona,
Rise a little earlier, bride,
Now you are no longer at your mother's home.*

⁹ Examples of songs belonging to the type associated with pre-wedding moments. Performed by Demir Krasniqi. Material recorded in Prishtina on 27 July 1970. Archived in the audio-visual archive of musical materials.

¹⁰ Examples of musical pieces known by the term "calling songs." In Albanian publications, Kosovar scholars have also used the designation "songs of invitation."

*These bride's dimije,
Come from woolen cloth,
Rise a little earlier, bride,
Now you are with your husband.
In another's house, O bride,
By God, it is very difficult,
Whether you wish it or not, to your mother-in-law
You must say "mother."
Come, our bride,
Do not be distressed,
For these words, O bride,
Are only customary.*

Or there is material directly connected with the wedding ceremonial that takes the figure of the bride as its object of study, in which the bride is compared with the floral world, with all kinds of flowers, with precious objects such as gold and the silver belt, and with objects of cosmic nature such as the moon, the sun, and the star. Metaphor and ornamental epithets are likewise widely used and generally apt, while hyperbole, symbol, allegory, personification, and even curse formulas are also present.

How beautiful the bride has appeared to us



Figure 6. Musical notation of the wedding song "Sa e bukur na ka dal nusja" (Performed during the unveiling ceremony of the bride)

*How beautiful the bride appears, mashallah,
mashallah.
Her forehead seems marked by beauty, mashallah,
mashallah.
Her eyebrows are like braid, mashallah, mashallah.
Her eyes are like cups, mashallah, mashallah.
Her cheeks are like sweet biscuits, mashallah, mashallah.
Her mouth is like a jewel box, mashallah, mashallah.
Her teeth are like pearls, mashallah, mashallah.
Her neck is like zamak, mashallah, mashallah.
Her figure is like a banner, mashallah, mashallah¹¹.*

The symbolism found in songs directly related to the wedding ritual forms part of the semantics of rites, harmonized also with their semantic and aesthetic values. The qualities of objects skillfully fused into the symbolism of the songs and ceremonial acts, across functional temporal and spatial dimensions, give meaning to the wedding ceremonial, which in its essence and content aspires toward the ideal. I believe that, in the study of musical materials, particular attention should be devoted to the close relationship between the artistic symbols of the songs and specific ritual symbols. Here we encounter the relationship between the artistic principle and the practical one, between song and rite, between the real and the ideal, while emphasizing the aesthetic essence of the wedding ceremonial.

The melody, based on a rich rhythm with diverse metric forms in wedding songs, is highly developed. It possesses a considerably broad expressive range, extending from gentleness, sweetness, and the greatest ardor of passion to the pain of sorrow.¹² When we speak of the tonal foundations of wedding songs, which are characteristic phenomena of our

¹¹ This song is sung on the occasion of the unveiling of the bride.

¹² Ramadan Sokoli, *Folklori muzikor shqiptar (morfologjia)* (Albanian Musical Folklore [Morphology]), Tirana, 1965, p. 25.

musical folklore, the modalities most frequently used in the songs of the wedding repertoire are the Aeolian mode and one of the modes of the Oriental type, namely the Hijaz maqam. Songs in the Aeolian mode are more sensitive and carry a measure of compassion, whereas those in the exotic mode of the Hijaz maqam are full of eroticism. These two modes not only appear separately, but are also interwoven within a single musical piece. There are cases in which a wedding song based tonally on the Aeolian mode ends in the Hijaz mode. There are also other cases in which the same song is sung in both modes, at times in the Aeolian mode and at times in the Hijaz mode. This also depends on the singers' preferences and on the technical capabilities of the musical instruments they possess. Since there were diatonic instruments, such as the *çifteli*, which lack the semitones necessary to form the augmented second, an interval without which wedding songs in the Hijaz maqam cannot be sung, the singer was compelled to transform the tonal basis of the Hijaz maqam of a given song into the Aeolian mode.

During the performance of a wedding song, the singer makes considerable changes in all the elements of the music, as well as in its formal structure. These are characteristic phenomena of lyrical songs that have undergone a stronger influence from Oriental culture. Singers usually perform the first stanza in a more developed and more refined form. In the other stanzas, the melodic intensity declines, the melodic line becomes simplified, the intervals and the ambitus of the song are reduced, the number of tones, especially ornamental ones, decreases and fades, owing to fatigue, lack of sufficient breath, and similar reasons. Later, however, when the text of the song expresses an intensification of feeling, the singer develops the melody once again, adorns it with various embellishments and melismas, enlarges the melodic intervals and, above all, by giving it greater dynamism, lends grace to the song until the end.

Another characteristic phenomenon of wedding songs is the special treatment of the formal structure and melodic content of the final stanza of the song. What characterizes this stanza most of all, however, is the part performed in *rubato tempo* or *ad libitum*, that is, in free rhythm, whether with or without metric division. In the greatest number of songs, the last line of the final stanza is taken in *rubato*, being expanded both textually and musically. These *rubato* sections play the role of the final coda. There are cases in which only the second part of the last line is taken in *rubato*. This is the simplest form of these songs of the wedding ceremonial. There are also cases in which the final stanza is enlarged by one line, which is taken in *rubato* and thus assumes the form of a customary coda. These phenomena occur more frequently in songs whose structural construction is intermediate, between the stanza and the period.

An important expressive means, based on the meaning and the unfolding of the different functions of chordal tones in their interweaving and continuity, is harmony. It is characterized on the basis of a system of rules that connect and combine tones according to more or less established laws, enriched over different historical periods. This entire system of tonal relations begins and develops from a basic chord which, in musical language, is termed the tonic. The tonic is a stable chord achieved through construction upon the principal intervals of the scale, namely the prime, third, and fifth. Usually, the tonic is placed on the strong beats of the measures. The tonic is potentially defined as a stable state. What is important is the driving force, the clash between stable and unstable functions, between the group of the subdominant and that of the dominant. This driving force is resolved through the placement of the tonic at the end, in the simplest type of cadence: T-S-D-T.

Chromatic harmony, modulations, deviations, and altered chords enrich the bed of harmonic language. In this sense, non-chordal elements gradually create frictions, a contradiction with stable chords. The principal tonality performs the function of the tonic in the broad sense of the word.

Harmonic relations, tonal plans, and the resolution of chordal tones assist the course of musical thought in a given musical piece. Likewise, the solutions of various types of harmony, modulations, and deviations make possible the change of emotional states and of figures in general. Thus, the stability, instability, dependence, and resolution of chordal tones always assume an emotive dimension in a musical work, whether in song or in dance.

Since music unfolds its thought in time, it belongs to rhythm, an important expressive means in the construction of musical materials, to organize the ordering of tones over musical duration. In the narrow sense of the word, rhythm is understood and defined as the organized arrangement and continuity of musical tones, whether identical or different in value.

Rhythm is the means that organizes melody. And however beautiful a melody may be, and however great its creative value, if it lacks rhythm, it cannot possess a content that stirs the listener and our memory. Another property is that rhythm, besides organizing musical material, enriches the melody with that quality which individualizes it and distinguishes it from another melody. Musical rhythm, which sets tones in motion in an organized manner, develops on the basis of the support of certain units of fixed time which, by being repeated with equal duration or divided into smaller elements interwoven among themselves, with prolonged values combined with shorter ones, create an organism of accents, now strong and now soft. Strong or soft accents do not have a fixed position, since they often and naturally coincide with the beginning of the strong measure or with the weak beats of the measure. Accentuation here is connected with the meaning assumed by a rhythmic group through the interweaving of strong and weak beats.

The smallest rhythmic unit lying at the foundation of every musical material is considered to be the incise, composed of two accents: one weak and one strong. The strong accent tends toward affirmation and support, whereas the weak one tends toward calmness. Generally, the weak beat is placed before the bar division, and the strong beat after the bar division, at the beginning. The incise with two or three notes represents the initial rhythmic figure, the smallest and primary unit of musical-rhythmic organization. It is understood that with such small structures one cannot claim the presence of a complete musical thought. Musical thought is formed through the successive arrangement of melorhythmic figures which together create a whole with full and distinct meaning. Musical thought advances and develops through the formation of these small melorhythmic structures, which alternate with one another, expanding and forming the various segments of musical discourse.

The rhythm of wedding songs is a distinctive richness. It is expressed through construction in a wide variety of meters: simple meters such as 2/8, 2/4, 3/8, 3/4; compound meters such as 4/8, 4/4, 6/8, 6/4; and mixed meters such as 5/8, 5/4, 7/8, 9/8, and 12/8.

Ornamentation in the songs of the wedding ceremonial is highly developed and plays an important role in shaping their particular characteristics, although it is not identical in the songs that characterize the wedding ceremonial throughout its different phases. The elements of ornamentation depend on tonal foundations, on the songs themselves, on musical taste, on the technical abilities of the singers, and so forth. The ornamental elements with which melodies are embellished are numerous: upper and lower appoggiaturas, simple and double mordents, glissandi, melismas, trills, and light connections between the principal tones.

Among all ornaments, the most frequent and most widely used are the simple and double mordents, both upper and lower. Melismas are an ornamental characteristic of old wedding songs with tonal foundations in the Oriental modes. Often, melismas include a large number of ornamental tones on a single syllable; therefore, the meaning and diction of the text become difficult to perceive.

Glissandi are used in almost all wedding songs. They occur in two directions, upward and downward. The functional use of glissandi is twofold: to connect two tones, and to rise from one tone to an indefinite height from the final tone of the song or one of its parts.

Ornamental tones derive their value from the principal tones of the melody. There is no strict and fixed rule determining what kinds of ornaments, or how many ornamental tones, will be formed from the principal tone. Naturally, a longer principal tone and one placed on a more accented syllable will also make possible a greater development of ornamental tones. Some ornamental tones have very small rhythmic values, and intervals smaller than the semitone are dynamically lighter. They are so brief that they seem to slip from one to another without resting anywhere. For this reason, the notation of ornamental tones is extremely difficult, since in many cases the signs needed to record all these minute sonic details are lacking.

Ornamentation also depends on the manner of singing, whether solo or group performance. Naturally, a song sung solo may develop much more freely and may be embellished with many of the ornaments mentioned above. Without these ornaments, many songs would have lost their beauty and would not have created the proper atmosphere. Yet the excessive use of ornamental tones also deforms musical materials and contributes to the loss of the artistic value of the song genre.

Conclusion

I feel confident that a single paper of any kind, even a complete monographic work, cannot exhaust the problems raised by a particular issue. There are always new points of view that, over time, will provide original interpretations and thus further enrich our state archives with papers and documents. Therefore, any effort to demonstrate serious values should be supplemented by other relevant works. In conclusion, we believe that the present study remains open for further continuation, including by other scholars who may present their theses and address issues that have not been the object of this paper. In this way, a new contribution may be made to the Kosovo culture especially on Kosovo wedding ceremony, and especially to the wedding ceremony of Gjakova, while also identifying the points of convergence referred to in this scholarly study.

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