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From the Editor

Dear authors, reviewers, editors, and readers,

The Journal of Kosovo Music and Culture presents Volume 1, Issue 2, with contributions from the creative and diligent music researchers.

In this issue, we feature six articles. We thank our authors for their patience during the peer review process. We also extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Journal of Kosovo Music and Culture team for their efforts in this issue. Our editorial board members are updated with each issue. Thank you very much for your contributions. In this issue, we also made some updates to the editorial board. We believe that being a member of the editorial board is related to actively contributing to the functioning of the journal. We invite researchers who want to contribute to the promotion, visibility, and policy development of the Journal of Kosovo Music and Culture.

In our journal, facts and arguments capture the spirit, the intellect of the people, the way of life, the organization itself, the coherence, and through which shed light on the past. These components, organized into chapters and subsections, are highlighted through exploration of various topics, starting with the history of the city of Kosovo to continue with entertaining parties.

We wish you a pleasant and insightful reading experience.

With warm regards and all best wishes,

Prof. ass. dr. Krenar Doli

Editor in Chief - Journal of Kosovo Music and Culture



Research Article

An analysis of the Kosovar Henna Night in terms of traditional rituals and contemporary transformations

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Abstract

The henna night (kanagjeq) marks one of the most significant moments in the life cycle within Albanian tradition, carrying deep symbolic complexity. In traditional practice, the rituals taking place in the girl's family—such as the henna ceremony, preparation of the dowry, and ritual singing—include several days of preparations for her departure to the groom's household. Beyond transmitting inherited values across generations, these rites reflect social dynamics and cultural changes over the centuries. This study analyzes the function and symbolism of kanagjeq in its traditional context and contrasts it with contemporary performance styles that have evolved from traditional forms. By comparing classical forms and modern variants, the article highlights how the ritual preserves cultural identity while adapting to the influences of globalization, urbanization, and gender shifts. Ultimately, it is shown that contemporary transformations maintain the symbolic core of kanagjeq while reflecting the need to reconstruct cultural identity in a changing world.

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Introduction

Kosovo, despite being a newly established country, continues to develop thanks to its strategic location, deep historical background, and rich cultural foundations. In this context, analyzing the cultural codes of Kosovo and understanding the dynamics between cultural continuity and transformation is of great importance. It is especially crucial to trace how deeply rooted traditional rituals have evolved in the face of modern societal changes. One of the most prominent rituals in Kosovar culture is kanagjeqi (the henna night), a deeply emotional and socially symbolic ceremony that marks a young woman's transition into marriage. Typically held at the bride's home, this ritual serves not only as a festive celebration but also as a symbolic reflection of moral values, social structures, and gender roles. Over time, kanagjeqi has undergone several transformations influenced by globalization, urbanization, and shifts in the roles of women (Gega Musa, 2016; Munishi, 2020). While more traditional forms of the ritual are still preserved in rural areas, urban settings often present it in more modern, aesthetic, and performative styles (Reineck, 1991). This study aims to examine the kanagjeqi ritual in Kosovo from both traditional and contemporary perspectives, revealing how this cultural structure has transformed while certain elements have been preserved. In this regard, kanagjeqi is interpreted as a living tradition that connects the past with the present (UNESCO, 2003; Xhemaj, 2003).

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Kanagjeq and Its Surrounding Rituals

Kanagjeq represents a traditional ceremony with ritualistic character, marking the girl's transition into a new stage of life—marriage. In the Kosovar context, as in many other traditional cultures, this rite was held in the bride's family home and carried significant familial and social functions. Scholar Ukë Xhemaj emphasizes that in Albanian ethnological literature, the term “wedding in the bride's home” is often used to describe *kanagjeq*; however, he considers this a semantic distortion influenced by foreign cultures. According to the scholar:

“...In traditional Albanian customary culture, family and social customs are clearly distinguished. There are those related to joy, sorrow, and those with an intermediary nature—carrying elements of joy and a touch of melancholy—as is the case with the *kanagjeq*.² This mixed feeling of joy and sorrow is closely connected to the patriarchal perception of morality in traditional Albanian society. According to researcher Leontina Gega Musa, a cheerful atmosphere did not prevail in the bride's family, as her departure was also perceived as a loss. As she states: “...under the influence of the concept of patriarchal morality, an atmosphere of joy did not dominate in the family of the girl who was getting married; therefore, the solemnity of the wedding was limited.”³ Traditional terms such as “nata e kanës” (the night of the henna), “nata e bojës” (the night of the dye), or more commonly “kanagjeqi” carry connotations that are clearly distinct from those of the wedding itself.⁴ Due to the distinct connotation between these two rituals, researcher Krenar Doli also makes a clear distinction between these two ritual events, emphasizing the two main components of the *kanagjeq*: the feeling of joy for the marriage and the sorrow over the girl's separation from her family. According to him:

“The balance between these components has been weighed within the tradition of the Albanian family, leading to the naming of the *kanagjeq* rite—understood as a kind of ceremony that differs from the wedding itself.”⁵

Kanagjeq was usually organized several days before the wedding, and the starting day varied by region—typically Monday, Thursday, or Saturday—and continued until the day the bride left her parents' home. According to data from researcher Xhemaj, during this period the girl would go through several preparatory phases, involving rituals and ceremonial acts with symbolic functions marking her transition into married life.⁶ Meanwhile, researcher Janet Susan Reineck describes this rite of Albanian tradition as an intense period of transformation for the bride, during which, on the night of the *kanagjeq*, surrounded by friends and relatives, the girl would cry and embrace her family members—expressing both her departure and her transition into a new life. Reineck also mentions the dressing ritual (*veshatorja*), highlighting that “...a close woman, known as the *telake*...”⁷ ...or *veshatore*, accompanied the bride throughout the entire *kanagjeq*, took care of her clothing and preparations, and was responsible for placing the henna on her hands.⁸ They were responsible for displaying the dowry, selecting the clothes the girl would wear, and taking care of the gifts or money (*bakshish*) brought for the bride.⁹ On the following day, the bride was dressed by the *veshatorja*, and she would cry or lament continuously. It is known that on this day, songs were usually sung by the women for the bride, but she herself would not sing or lament on her own *kanagjeq* night. The atmosphere of this night was calm and often melancholic.¹⁰ A rich and detailed description is provided by researcher Vlorë Fetaj Berisha, who describes the chronology of the *kanagjeq* and the way in which the bride was informed of her departure.

...just as a wedding has its own chronology, so does the *kanagjeq*. The visit (*vadj*) was planned five weeks in advance, but the bride was not informed of the date. On the night before the *kanagjeq*, one of the daughters or paternal aunts (*ballë*) would take a piece of wool, soak it in water, and gently touch the bride's head with it while saying: “May your *kanagjeq* be blessed.” From that moment, the bride knew she would soon be leaving as a bride. The next day, the girl who was to become a bride was taken around to visit the neighbors, where she would greet and say

2 Xhemaj, U. (2005). *Shtresime kulturore* (Cultural Layers). Albanological Institute of Prishtina, Prishtina, p. 201.

3 Gega Musa, L. (2016). *From Rites of Passage to Celebrations (Prej rriteve të kalimit në kremtime)*. Gjurmime Albanologjike, Folklore and Ethnology, (46), 62. Prishtina: Institute of Albanology.

4 Rukiqi, M. (2009). Wedding Songs I (*Këngë Dasma I*). Prishtina: Institute of Albanology. p. 13.

5 Doli, K. (2015). The Wedding in the City of Gjakova (*Dasma në qytetin e Gjakovës*). Prishtina: Institute of Albanology. p. 107.

6 Xhemaj, U. (2003). Albanian Ethnoculture in Podgur (*Etnokultura shqiptare në Podgur*): Ethnological Monograph. Prishtina: Institute of Albanology. p. 181.

7 A name for the female wedding instructor that has been used in several regions, such as in the Opjë area.

8 Susan Reineck, J. *The Past as Refuge: Gender, Migration, and Ideology Among the Kosova Albanian*, University of California, Berkeley, 1991, p. 93.

9 Susan Reineck, J. *The Past as Refuge: Gender, Migration, and Ideology Among the Kosova Albanian*, University of California, Berkeley, 1991, p. 93.

10 Kanagjeqi Arbanës (Ngjitja e Kanës) emocionale, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iRPkL54eJW8>, (qasur me 10.07.2024)

farewell to them. On the night of the *kanagjeq*, after the guests had arrived and dinner was served, the bride was dressed, a scarf was placed on her head, and the singing would begin. That night, as the henna was applied, various *kanagjeq* songs were sung.¹¹ One of the most well-known songs associated with this ritual is:

*The henna rises, drop by drop,
Tonight you are the flag among girls.
The henna rises with drops of red,
Tomorrow you are the flag among brides.*¹²



Photo1. Wedding celebration of d.k., Nepole village, Kosovo (photo from the family archive, 09.08.2021)

Kanagjeq songs constitute an essential component of the ritual, carrying multiple symbolic and emotional functions. These are mostly sentimental songs, marked by melancholic tones, in which the girl is touchingly reminded of her family members and the life she is leaving behind. In the historical and social context—when maintaining contact with one's family after marriage became more difficult due to distance, economic conditions, or patriarchal norms—these songs served as a means of expressing emotional separation.

Researcher Vlorë Fetaj Berisha emphasizes that in the past, married women rarely had the opportunity to return to their families, except on special occasions such as funerals, weddings, or rare visits. This explains the presence of weeping in this symbolically charged night.¹³ Scholar Visar Munishi has also written about *kanagjeq* songs, approaching the ritual and its surrounding practices from two perspectives: tradition and modernity, placing them on two interpretive tracks—traditional and contemporary. According to him, “...the songs sung during the night of the henna were mostly performed by groups of girls close to the bride—either close or distant cousins, as well as girls from the same village or community. In some cases, girls known for their singing abilities were specifically invited in order to create the proper atmosphere according to the ritual's requirements. Additionally, there are documented cases where *defatore* (frame drum players) or ‘professional’ ritual singers were invited, who specialized in performances during the *kanagjeq*.”¹⁴

¹¹ Vlorë Fetaj Berisha, “Dasma tradicionale shqiptare, dikur dhe sot” në emisionin Voyage - RTK . <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=itjVrJPWsvM>, Facebook: <http://smarturl.it/RTKfb>, WEB: <http://smarturl.it/RTKweb>, (qasur me 22.08.2022).

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Vlorë Fetaj Berisha, “Dasma tradicionale shqiptare, dikur dhe sot” në emisionin Voyage - RTK . <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=itjVrJPWsvM>, Facebook: <http://smarturl.it/RTKfb>, WEB: <http://smarturl.it/RTKweb>, (qasur me 22.08.2022).

¹⁴ Munishi, V. (2020). *From Pain to Joy: The Change of Repertoire in the Traditional Henna Ritual (Nga dhembja në gëzim: Ndryshimi i repertorit në ritualin e kanagjeçit tradicional)*. Gjurmime Albanologjike, Folklore and Ethnology, (50), 115. Prishtina: Institute of Albanology.



Photo 2. singing of the bride d.k. with daf in her home-organized traditional wedding celebration, Nepole village, Kosovo. (photo from the family archive, august 2021)

Munishi also points out that, contrary to the general perception that *kanagjeq* is solely a sentimental or melancholic rite, field data show that this ritual also includes moments of joy and humor. He emphasizes:

“Despite the general belief that the traditional *kanagjeq* as a ritual consists only of emotional or sorrowful moments, empirical data prove otherwise. In this generally emotional ritual, there are also moments when joyful songs are sung.”¹⁵

These joyful songs often contained lyrics with humorous elements, serving to ease the emotional burden and entertain those present.¹⁶ The subjects of these satirical lyrics were often the bride’s future husband, mother-in-law, or other members of the new family, placing them at the center of attention through gentle irony. This humorous dimension in *kanagjeq* songs reinforces the performative and social character of the ritual, revealing culturally adapted ways of coping with emotionally charged situations.

***Kanagjeq* Songs and Their Ritual Function**

As discussed above, the night of the *kanagjeq*, especially the moment of applying the henna (also known as “boja” or the dye), was accompanied by numerous songs, which formed an essential component of this ritual.¹⁷ The songs were primarily emotional in nature, depicting the girl’s emotional separation from her family. Through their verses, they addressed the key figures in her life—her mother, father, brothers, sisters, and other relatives. Some of these verses, sung by her friends and cousins, describe the moment of parting with touching tones:

Cry, oh Havë, in your yellow scarf,
All your friends have gathered ‘round,
They’ve gathered and encircled you,
They want to send you to your husband.¹⁸

In addition to the songs, one of the most significant moments of the ritual also took place on this special night: the application of the henna. In traditional practice, this was the first time the girl had henna placed in her hair or on her hands, a task carried out under the care of the *veshatorja*.¹⁹ According to researcher Ajshe Berisha, in earlier periods this ritual act was not a simple one, but rather accompanied by special customs and rich symbolism. Berisha describes a scene in which the girl’s mother prepares a tray with the henna placed in a dish, set beside a pot of blooming flowers and lit

¹⁵ Munishi, V. The cited work, p. 113

¹⁶ Berisha, A. The cited work, p. 237.

¹⁷ Berisha, A. *The Wedding in the Bride’s Family in the Region of Kamenica* (“Dasma në familjen e vajzës në trevën e Kamenicës”), *Albanological Research – Folklore and Ethnology*, Vol. IX-1979, Institute of Albanology, Prishtina, p. 236.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ The dresser instructs the bride on how to behave with her husband, his family, and how to dress.

candles (or an oil lamp). The girl, in silence and with emotion, extinguishes the candles.²⁰ Meanwhile, her friends would begin the ritual song:

Oh cry, dear Havë, on your sister's chest,
Do you know, sister, tonight is the night of the henna?
Oh cry, dear Havë, plead with your mother,
So that tonight they don't press the henna upon you.

These sentimental songs are found in all regions of Kosovo, where—according to ethnological and anthropological data—they are recognized as an inseparable element of the *kanagjeq* ritual. They served as a mechanism for expressing emotional separation, but also as a marker of the girl's transition into a new social role as a bride.

Another key moment was the display of the dowry (*çejzi*). This ritual usually took place on Saturday, also known as “women's day,” when the women of the family, along with friends and female relatives, gathered to view and celebrate the bride's trousseau. Each guest would bring symbolic gifts for the future bride, while the dowry items were arranged in two rooms: one containing the clothes and belongings the girl had prepared for herself, and the other containing gifts intended for the groom's family.²¹



Photo 3. exhibition of the bride's dowry, Gjakovë, Kosovo. (photo from the family archive, january 2010)

The dowry was arranged with great care, according to the age and familial closeness of the groom's family members.

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Photo 4. The bride and the exhibition of the dowry made by her, Klinë, Kosovo (photo from the family archive, 2013)

During this day, the atmosphere in the bride's home was filled with songs and lamentations, marking the girl's final moments with the women of the household before departing to become a bride.

²⁰ Berisha, A. The cited work, p. 236.

²¹ Berisha, A. (1979). Dasma në familjen e vajzës në trevën e Kamenicës (The wedding in the bride's family in the Kamenica region). Gjurmime Albanologjike, Folklor dhe Etnologji, IX, 234. Prishtinë: Instituti Albanologjik i Prishtinës.

²² Ibid.

This ritual served not only to demonstrate her abilities and preparedness as a woman, but also to honor her family of origin and bid farewell to her social circle.

Some concluding elements of the ritual

Continuing the emotional atmosphere of the night of the *kanagjeq*, one of the most emotionally intense moments was the final songs sung for the girl, which were often accompanied by symbolic scenes of farewell with close family members.

Another well-known song sung by the girl's friends is:

*Crying, oh Havë, with the yellow scarf,
When the women from your uncle's house arrive, who will greet them first?
Who will greet them, who will invite them in?
If it's not Havë, they won't step inside.*²³

Songs like this not only reflect the pain of separation, but also highlight the appreciation of the girl's role within her family and social context. They reinforce the image of the bride as a cherished, respected, and central figure in Albanian culture. During the evening, a ritual dinner was also held in honor of the women present—friends, aunts from both sides of the family, and other female relatives. This moment carried symbolic significance, serving as a form of gratitude and farewell from the girl to her circle of women. In a way, the women acted as witnesses and supporters of the ritual, accompanying the bride with songs, advice, and gifts.

It is important to emphasize that the organization of the *kanagjeq* had many variations across different regions of Kosovo. Differences could be observed in the order of rituals, the lyrics of songs, the composition of the trousseau (*çejz*), or the way the community participated. These regional distinctions enrich our cultural heritage, both in its material and spiritual dimensions, and testify to the dynamism of Albanian tradition. Although rooted in patriarchal structures, this tradition has created space for collective, emotional, and cultural expression.

In conclusion, despite the lack of great festivity in the bride's home—often dictated by traditional moral norms—the *kanagjeq* remains one of the richest rituals in terms of structure, content, and symbolism. It continues to live on today in various forms adapted to modern contexts.

Contemporary Transformations of the Kanagjeq

In terms of how the *kanagjeq* is organized today, it is evident that this ritual—like many other life-cycle rituals—has undergone numerous changes under the influence of various social, economic, and cultural factors. These transformations are closely tied to developments in family structure, women's emancipation, and the globalization of cultural models. Some of the elements that have gradually faded or disappeared from the *kanagjeq* ritual have also been identified by researcher Bashkim Lajçi. In addition to changes in the Albanian wedding itself, he mentions the transformation of the girls' pre-wedding gathering. According to him:

“...the custom of dyeing the hair, placing henna on the bride—which used to take place one or two days before the bride was taken—along with the gathering of women and girls who participated in this ceremony, as well as other actions related to the separation from maidenhood, are no longer practiced or are practiced very rarely today.”²⁴

After the last war in Kosovo, especially in the first post-war years, there was a noticeable decline in the practice of wedding ceremonies, including the *kanagjeq*, which were usually organized in a more modest manner. However, with the improvement of socio-economic conditions, particularly in recent years, a moderate revival of some traditional elements of this ritual has been observed. Organizing the *kanagjeq* in restaurants has become quite common, although

²³ Berisha, A. The cited work, p. 237.

²⁴ Lajçi, B. (2020). Ndryshimet bashkëkohore në dasmën tradicionale shqiptare (Contemporary changes in the traditional Albanian wedding). *Albanologji* II, (10), 2010–2019. Prishtinë: Instituti Albanologjik i Prishtinës, p. 14.

there are still instances where the ritual is held in the bride's home, in a more intimate setting, in the presence of female relatives, extended family, and her friends.



Photo 5. Henna night in the courtyard of the bride's home, Nepole village, Kosovo (photo from the family archive, August 2021)

Likewise, the bride's lament during the singing accompanied by the *def* (traditional frame drum), or with a singer performing traditional *kanagjeq* songs, has been symbolically revived.



Photo 6. Singing of the bride at the henna night (Web 5)

Scholar Leontina Gega Musa considers this return to be more of a symbolic act, represented primarily through its aesthetic and performative aspect:

“...this ritual has returned only as a symbolic act, because the bride in the current context arrives at the celebration of the henna night already styled by beauty salons, which are regularly frequented by girls and women (regardless of social status) as an essential part of feminine grooming.”²⁵

Thus, *kanagjeq* rituals continue to be practiced in various ways, often intertwining traditional elements with new cultural influences. In rural areas, there is a greater dedication to preserving the traditional form, including the use of henna and *kanagjeq* songs, while in urban areas, the experience of this ritual often takes the form of a modern celebration.

It cannot be denied that, in some families—especially in rural regions—the symbolism of the henna and some elements of tradition are still preserved, accompanied by *kanagjeq* songs performed by various singers from the Albanian entertainment scene.²⁶ This does not imply a loss of value; on the contrary, by preserving old symbols within new

²⁵ Gega Musa, L. (2016). *Prej riteve të kalimit në kremtime (From rites of passage to celebrations)*. *Gjurmime Albanologjike, Folklor dhe Etnologji*, (46), 65. Prishtinë: Instituti Albanologjik i Prishtinës.

²⁶ Doci, A., & Doci, A. (n.d.). *Nata e kënasë (The night of henna)*. Web3: <https://orainfo.net/aida-para-pak-kohe-eshte-bere-nene-por-asgje-nuk-po-e-ndalon-qe-te-jete-pjese-e-kanagjeqeve/>

Web3: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pnDweke2Yig> (Accessed on January 15, 2025).

contexts, tradition gains longevity and adaptability. In many cases, instead of traditional songs, modern music is played, and the *kanagjeq* experience has been transformed into an event influenced by different cultural styles. A clear example of this influence is the increasingly frequent use of the term “Bride to Be,” reflecting the direct impact of Western culture on local rituals. Despite these changes, the importance of preserving elements of cultural heritage remains essential. Researchers and cultural institutions continue to promote traditional values through festivals, exhibitions, and scientific and cultural activities aimed at affirming and documenting the spiritual wealth of the people.

Conclusion

The *kanagjeq* ritual, as a fundamental part of the Albanian cultural heritage, has undergone a profound transformation influenced by social, economic, and cultural factors. These changes are a natural consequence of societal developments and globalization, which have altered the way this ritual is experienced and organized. The analysis of its development shows that although some traditional elements have faded or disappeared, others have been preserved, revived, or incorporated into new forms of ritual expression. In rural areas, forms closer to the past are still preserved, whereas in urban areas, the ritual often takes on a more modern character, becoming an aesthetic or performative celebration. Nevertheless, the preservation of symbolic elements even within new forms represents an opportunity for the continuity of tradition and cultural identity. In this sense, it is essential to encourage practices that safeguard and revitalize cultural heritage, giving life to a new form that blends the old with the new. This approach not only brings renewed meaning to the *kanagjeq* ritual but also helps preserve the collective identity and cultural memory of the Albanian people.

Biodata of Author



Dr. **Angjelina Hamza-Hasanaj** is an ethnologist and researcher of Kosovar cultural heritage, born on September 22, 1982, in Klina, Kosovo. She completed her primary and secondary education in her hometown, initially focusing on general medicine (2001). She pursued undergraduate studies in Ethnology at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Prishtina (2004–2007), and completed her Master's degree in Sociology at the same faculty (2011–2013). She earned her PhD on July 14, 2022, at the “Ss. Cyril and Methodius University” in Skopje, within the Institute of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology, with a dissertation that explored the role of women as heads of households in Kosovo from a historical and anthropological perspective. Her professional career began as a nurse in a private clinic in Klina, and later she transitioned into academia. Since 2009, she has been engaged with the Albanological Institute of Prishtina, initially as an intern in the Department of Ethnology, later as an independent researcher, and currently as a scientific associate (assistant professor). As of September 2023, she has served as the Head of the Department of Ethnology, and since October of the same year, she has been a member of the Governing Council of the Albanological Institute. Her research focuses on issues related to the structure and function of traditional Albanian families, interfaith marriages, life-cycle rituals, and cultural transformations in contemporary urban contexts. Dr. Hamza-Hasanaj has made a significant contribution to the study of intangible cultural heritage in Kosovo and beyond, using ethnological and anthropological approaches. She has participated in over 35 national and international scientific conferences, representing the Albanological Institute on various themes such as urban anthropology, traditional rituals, family structure changes, and the impact of the pandemic on ritual practices and traditions. She is the author of a youth novel, “*Çelin lulet e ëndërrimeve*” (“*The Blossoms of Dreams*”, 2001), and the scientific monograph “*Interfaith Marriages among Albanians in Kosovo*” (Albanological Institute, 2022). She is also co-author of the bibliographic work “*Folklore and Ethnology in the journal Gjurmime Albanologjike (1971–2023)*” (Prishtina, 2024). She has published over 30 scientific articles in specialized journals such as *Gjurmime Albanologjike*, *Albanologji*, *Studime Albanologjike*, *EtnoAlb*, *Scupi*, *Shenja*, and *Sharri*, where she has addressed topics such as family organization, traditional clothing, cultural symbols, traditional food, folk beliefs and rituals, and the impact of globalization on cultural identity. In addition to her research work, she is involved in reviewing scientific works by renowned authors such as Ali Muka, Izaim Myrtezani, Bashkim Lajçi, Anton K. Berisha, and Vjollca Krasniqi. Her writings have also been featured in the Kosovar dailies *Kosova Sot* and *Koha Ditore*.
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Research Article

The role, importance, and contribution of the Albanological Institute in the genuine and professional study of Kosovo's musical folklore and cultural

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Abstract

This study examines the institutional foundations of the discipline of ethnomusicology in Kosovo, its development process, and its contributions to the country's cultural identity. Founded in 1953, the Institute of Albanianology in Pristina (IAP) has played a pioneering role in systematically collecting, preserving, and scientifically studying Kosovo's musical folklore. Field research, melodic studies, and monographs conducted under the leadership of Prof. Rexhep Munishi and Prof. Bahtir Sheholli have highlighted the melodic structure, rhythmic diversity, and sociocultural functions of Kosovo's folk music. These studies have made significant contributions not only to the documentation of folklore but also to the recognition of Kosovo's cultural heritage at national and international levels. Today, a new generation of researchers, such as Albin Sadiku, Krenar Doli, and Visar Munishi, continues the scholarly legacy of the IAP and strongly represents Kosovo's ethnomusicology in contemporary literature. In this context, the study demonstrates that Kosovo's musical culture, by connecting with universal musicological theories, both strengthens local cultural identity and offers unique contributions to universal scientific discussions.

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Introduction

Seventy years ago, in 1953, the founding of the Albanological Institute of Prishtina (IAP) became undeniable evidence that this was the best and only path for the genuine, professional, and institutional study of our folkloric heritage in general, and of Albanian musical folklore in particular. Through the doors of this institution have passed countless times the names of renowned scholars, who with their work have left indelible traces in the study of our rich cultural, scientific, and national heritage. Quite rightly, the Arbëresh scholar Antonio Belushi expressed in an interview: *"For me, the Albanological Institute is a small divinity of the Albanian people."*

The success of the IAP is testified by the works accomplished and the countless books published each year by its scientific staff. Within the framework of the IAP, the Department of Folklore and Ethnology also operates, which includes the sector of ethnomusicology. Ethnomusicology is a social science concerned with the study of traditional folk musical heritage from the past up to the present day, with the aim of also forecasting its future directions. It studies all types of folk songs, both from the old rural and urban traditions, as well as from the newer rural and urban traditions. Ethnomusicology also studies folk musical instruments and folk dances with all their characteristics.

Ethnomusicology in general, and Albanian ethnomusicology in particular, is a relatively new science. As a first step in the melographing of our folk songs, we can consider two collections of songs published in the early 1940s: Pjetër Dungu (1940) published "*Lyra shqiptare*" (*Albanian Lyre*), which contains 50 folk songs (Sokoli, 1965), and in 1943, Gjon Kol Kujxhija published the first booklet titled "*Dasma Shkodrane*" (*The Shkodra Wedding*), which contains 50 sung dances (Kujxhia, 1943).

Besides these melographers and scholars, as the pioneer of collecting folk music and melographing folk songs in Kosovo is considered Lorenc Antoni, who published seven volumes under the title "*Folklori muzikor shqiptar*" (*Albanian Musical Folklore*) (Antoni, n.d.). In Albania, the pioneer and scholar of folk music was Ramadan Sokoli, who published the first book of an ethnomusicological character, also titled "*Folklori muzikor shqiptar*" (*Albanian Musical Folklore*) (Sokoli, 1965).

Organized work for the research and study of our cultural heritage became possible thanks to the establishment of relevant institutions, in which scientific workers were employed whose profession was the study of folklore in general and musical folklore in particular. Thus, in 1959 the Institute of Folklore was founded in Tirana, where the Department of Ethnomusicology also began its work, while in Kosovo in 1953, the Albanological Institute of Prishtina was established for the first time. In the IAP, within the Department of Folklore and Ethnology, in 1971 the Ethnomusicology Section was opened with the staff members Prof. Dr. Rexhep Munishi and Prof. Bahtir Sheholli. The scientific workers of these two institutions began their organized work of collecting folk musical material through individual and group expeditions carried out in various Albanian regions, both in Albania and in Kosovo. Thanks to the work of these two institutions, satisfactory results were achieved in the collection, preservation, study, and presentation of our cultural heritage in general, and of our ethnomusicological heritage in particular.

Undoubtedly, the professional study of Albanian ethnomusicology in Kosovo began with the IAP, with Prof. Rexhep Munishi and Prof. Bahtir Sheholli, and later continued with the next generation of employees, graduated ethnomusicologists, of this institution. Naturally, the work done by researchers outside of IAP should never be underestimated. It goes without saying that Lorenc Antoni carried out colossal work in collecting, transcribing, and publishing Albanian folk songs—his work is worthy of every praise. Nevertheless, one of the first studies conducted professionally, according to contemporary European methodology in Kosovo, is the monographic study of Prof. Rexhep Munishi, entitled *The Singing of Podgur Women* (Munishi, 1979). Since this work has more of a research character, it is divided into three chapters, within which the distinguishing elements are presented, as the author notes (Munishi, 1979: p.7).

The study is preceded by a brief introduction that gives a realistic overview of the course of this research. As mentioned above, the work is divided into three chapters. The first chapter discusses the course of the work and the structure that the study took in its final stage. It provides data on the period of field material collection, the method of transcription of the melodies and the difficulties during the transcription-melography process, the general musical and textual characteristics of the singing style, as well as the thematic aspects of the songs of Podgur women.

The second chapter, which constitutes the core part of this monographic study, contains the musical elements presented in specific tables related to the structure of melopoetic verses and stanzas, the cadences of melopoetic phrases, the rhythms of melopoetic verses, as well as the tonal orders and ambitus within which these songs are created.

In the third chapter, which in terms of importance is very close to the second chapter—because without it everything stated in the second would not have been convincing or well-argued—are presented the melodic and textual examples of the collected songs, deciphered and transcribed by the author himself (Sheholli, 2020).

After these chapters follow: summaries in Serbo-Croatian and French, an index of the names of villages and singers, the alphabetical order of the songs, and finally the table of contents. The next study by Prof. Rexhep Munishi, also carried out according to ethnomusicological scientific methodology, is entitled *Albanian Highlander Songs* (Munishi, 1987).

The first stage of a scientific ethnomusicological study is the collection of the necessary material in the field. Mitad Shamiq, in his book *How to Write a Scientific Paper*, states: "A scientific paper has the greatest value if it treats material that has been collected first-hand." This is precisely what Prof. Rexhep Munishi did in his monographic study entitled

Albanian Highlander Songs. In this study, the author has tried to view these songs from many perspectives: artistic-musical creativity, historical, ethnomusicological, sociological, etc. To achieve this successfully, he divided the work into three separate chapters.

The first chapter, entitled *Albanian Highlander Songs and Their Evolution*, discusses the themes and transformations of the songs, their social function, their origin and antiquity, the influence that highlander songs have exerted on other types of songs, etc. In short, this chapter provides a general overview of this type of song.

The central and main part of this monographic study is presented in the second chapter, entitled *Melopoetic Elements*. This chapter discusses the types and structures of melopoetic verses, melopoetic forms, cadences of phrases, rhythmic structures, tonal rows, ambitus of songs, etc.

In the third chapter of this work, the focus is on the individual, collective, ethnopsychological, and associative character of the songs, their symbolism, and their musical status. At the end of the study, professionally transcribed examples are presented. The work is also supplemented with photos, diagrams, tables, and other necessary data for a scientific ethnomusicological study.

In addition to these two research works, the author has also published other books such as *Ethnomusicological Problems* (Munishi, 1997), *Musical Identity* (Munishi, 2001), *Choral Singing in Yugoslavia*, as well as a series of research papers published in various scientific journals.

After Prof. Rexhep Munishi, in 1976, the ethnomusicologist Prof. Bahtir Sheholli was also employed at the IAP, in the ethnomusicology sector. Throughout his career as a researcher of musical folklore, he followed the methodology of professional ethnomusicological scientific work. Prof. Sheholli began his research with fieldwork on Albanian musical traditions, recording them on magnetic tapes and filming the creators and bearers of this tradition. He then transcribed and notated (melographed) the collected field material, making it available for further professional ethnomusicological study.

His research papers, published in the IAP's scientific journal *Gjurmime Albanologjike – Folklor dhe Etnologji*, were treated and analyzed from historical, ethnological, sociological, and especially melopoetic perspectives, the latter being the core work of a genuine professional ethnomusicologist. In his study entitled *The Lyric Love Songs*, the author states at the outset: "Our love songs have always been an expression of the most subtle feelings. They encapsulate the purest erotic emotions and experiences" (Sheholli, 2020). He then discusses the scientific and popular terminology used for these songs. As a professional ethnomusicologist, the author primarily focuses on the musical aspect. During his melorhythmic analysis of love songs, he discusses their vocal style, the development of melodic lines, rhythmic structures, the accompaniment of songs with various folk instruments, the structure of melopoetic verses, etc.

At the end of the study, songs notated (melographed) by the author himself are presented, including: *Mori çikë në drras të gurit*; *E mirë boll ma shtrove shtratin*; *N'drras të vekut kush po kanë*; *Mos u en' more djal natën me cigare*. It is particularly impressive that, alongside the vocal melodies, the melodic lines of the *çifteli* and *sharki* are also notated when they accompany the songs.

With the same methodological approach, Prof. Sheholli also addressed other research works such as: *Folk Songs as a Constant Strengthening of the Patriotic Activity of Isa Boletini*; *On the Musical Tradition of Llap*; *Shi'ism: Ilahi in the Tradition of the Dervishes*; *On the Lyrical Poetic-Musical Creativity of Arshikëria*; etc. Prof. Bahtir Sheholli was a profound connoisseur of Albanian folk musical tradition; for a long time, he was also a selector and curator of singers and dancers for the Folkloric Festival of Glllogovc as well as for the Folkloric Festival of Gjirokastër. He was equally knowledgeable about Albanian folk instruments and a critic of acculturated phenomena that attempted to infiltrate authentic Albanian musical folklore.

Based on the methodology of scientific ethnomusicological work, today's researchers at the IAP—employees of the ethnomusicology sector and professional ethnomusicologists—also continue the work of collecting, researching, and studying folk musical traditions. Among them are: Albin Sadiku (author of this study), who, in addition to various papers published in scientific journals, has published the ethnomusicological monographs *The Art of Children's Singing in Bujanoc and Preshevë – Play, Song, Dance* (Sadiku, 2017) and *The Role, Function, and Use of the Sharki in Kosovo*

(Sadiku, 2020); Krenar Doli, who so far has published the ethnomusicological monographs *The Wedding Ceremony in the City of Gjakova* and *The Tradition of Sofiste Music in Kosovo* (Doli, 2023), as well as several articles in various scientific journals; and Visar Munishi, who, in addition to various journal articles, has published the ethnomusicological monograph *The Dances of Karadak* (Munishi, 2018).

To remain objective, it must also be acknowledged that some researchers outside the IAP, such as Behar Arllati, Arnisa Rexhepi, Bekim Ramadani, etc., are also doing commendable professional ethnomusicological work. Nevertheless, it has now been convincingly proven and argued that the best and most reliable path for the study of folk musical tradition is the institutional one—the path paved over decades by the Albanological Institute of Prishtina.

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated the development of ethnomusicology in Kosovo, and in particular, the central role played by the Institute of Albanianology in Prishtina (IAP). Founded in 1953, the institute has been a pioneering institution for the systematic collection, preservation, and scientific study of Kosovo's musical folklore. The work of Prof. Rexhep Munishi and Prof. Bahtir Sheholli has made significant contributions to the recognition of Kosovar musical culture not only locally but also regionally and internationally. Their field research, melodic studies, and monographs have highlighted the historical roots, melodic richness, and sociocultural functions of Kosovar folk music. Today, researchers such as Albin Sadiku, Krenar Doli, and Visar Munishi continue this institutional and scientific legacy and strongly represent Kosovar music in modern ethnomusicological literature. Thanks to the work carried out by the IAP, Kosovo has not only preserved its musical folklore, but also strengthened its cultural identity and made its own unique contribution to international scientific debates. As a result, the discipline of ethnomusicology in Kosovo has played an indispensable role both in preserving national culture and promoting it internationally.

Biodata of Author



Dr. **Albin Sadiku** was born on March 10, 1974, in Bujanoc. He completed his primary education in his hometown and pursued his secondary music education in Prizren. He graduated from the Faculty of Music in Prishtina, specializing in General Music Pedagogy. He later earned a second degree in Ethnomusicology from the same faculty. He continued his postgraduate studies at the Faculty of Music in Tirana under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Vasil Tole. In June 2006, he was awarded the title of Master in Musicology. Since 2003, he has been working as a researcher at the Albanological Institute of Prishtina, in the Department of Folklore, Ethnomusicology Section. He has published scholarly articles in various journals across Kosovo, Albania, Serbia, Montenegro, and other countries. On October 23, 2014, he defended his doctoral dissertation at the Center for Albanological Studies in Tirana. In 2017, he published the monographic study "The Art of Children's Singing in Bujanoc and Presheva: Play, Song, Lullaby." In 2020, he released another monograph titled "The Role, Function, and Use of the Šarkija in Kosovo." Most recently, in 2023, he published "Female Singing in Albanian Wedding Traditions in Bujanoc and Presheva."

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Research Article

The role of meter in the piano works of Zeqirja Ballata and its contribution to Kosovo's musical modernism

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Abstract

This study provides a cross-sectional analysis of the analytical results concerning meter as a component of rhythm in the broad sense within the piano works of the Kosovar composer Zeqirja Ballata (1943), who is regarded as a promoter of contemporary compositional techniques of the 20th century. He distinguishes himself from other Kosovar composers through his bold musical language, the use of contemporary expressive means, and his consistency in applying them. Pronounced dissonances, nuclear motifs, new notation, novel acoustic phenomena, consonances created by overlapping close intervals, extreme dynamics, exploration of pianistic acoustic possibilities, dramatic expressiveness, and other characteristics of his musical language classify Ballata among the most innovative creators of his time and as a guide of this creative style among Albanian composers. In the course of a comprehensive in-depth analysis of Ballata's piano works, meter emerges as a tool he employs wisely to create a distinctive foundation for shaping the overall aesthetic message. The empirical corpus of this research comprises all of his piano works, the number of which amounts to 14. The purpose of this study is, through detailed metric analysis, to identify the metrical devices employed and the manner of their use in the overall texture of Ballata's piano music. The research method applied in this study is qualitative. The presentation of research results in the paper has been carried out not only through verbal text but also with tables. The analysis is primarily based on the theory of musical analysis, specifically meter, according to the author Tome Mančev

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Introduction

What the Kosovar composer Ballata (1943) (Ashak, 2025) employs in his musical expression stands very close to the philosophical-aesthetic and creative orientations of the time, such as: "Modern music" is a philosophical and aesthetic stance founded around the 20th century (Bannister, 2013), in a period of radical changes in the musical language. This was a period shaped by diverse and challenging reactions, reinterpreting old categories of music, by innovations that led to new ways of harmonic, melodic, sonic, and rhythmic organization, by aesthetic shifts and viewpoints closely tied to the period identified as modernism in the arts of the time. The most widespread term associated with it is "innovation" (Metzer, 2009). Its main feature is "linguistic pluralism" (Morgan, 1984).

The legacy within musical modernism is the belief that music is not a static phenomenon defined by eternal truths and classical principles, but something essentially historical and developmental. While belief in musical progress or the principle of innovation is neither new nor unique to modernism, these values are particularly significant within

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modernist aesthetic positions. The creative heritage of modernism includes Arnold Schoenberg's dodecaphony and chromaticism that dismantle tonality, and Igor Stravinsky's (Campbell, 2010) dissolution of metric rhythm.

Modernism has been pluralized and contextualized; its aesthetic, geographic, and technological boundaries have been transcended and pressed, paving the way for major transformations in musical language and structure (Tunbridge et al., 2014). In this framework, the progress brought by Mahler and Debussy implies a profound historical change. If we were to search for a name that leads us to the rupture of musical thought of the time (1890), a thought symbolized by the removal of the barline in Strauss, but without imposing a fictitious stylistic unity of the time, it may be better to return to the concept of modernism according to Hermann Bahr, which refers to a stylistically open modernist music extending broadly from 1890 to the beginnings of modern music in the early 20th century, specifically 1910. Meanwhile, Eero Tarasti defines musical modernism from the perspective of the dissolution of traditional tonality and the radical transformation of tonal language by seeking new models—atonality, polytonality, and other altered tonal forms—that developed in the early 20th century (Tarasti, 1979). Another definition comes from Daniel Albright, who views musical modernism as a testing of the boundaries of aesthetic construction, realized through particular techniques such as hyper-realism, abstractionism, neoclassicism, futurism, etc. (Albright, 2004). On the other hand, in the periodization of 20th-century art, the period from the late 1950s onwards has been defined as postmodernist. Many critics and musicologists who have addressed Ballata's musical language classify it as postmodernist (Kovačević, 1984).

Based on the above positions, the orientation of this research to analyze meter as a component of rhythm in the broad sense, whether as an aesthetic stance or as an analytical format, is grounded in the analytical framework of T. Mançev, where among other things we find: Rhythm, as the temporal law of music, organizes sounds on the basis of their durations. Regarding this, Mançev emphasizes that the smallest rhythmic relationship is that between the two closest sounds, then proceeding to relationships between small units up to rhythmic relationships between beats in cyclical works. Rhythmic relationships are created both on the horizontal and vertical planes. Meanwhile, meter, as the second component of rhythm, besides being a process of periodic fragmentation of musical time, also carries accentuation. The choice of metric organization by the composer itself brings forth the fundamental determinations and frameworks within which the composer will unify the other musical parameters with which the work as a whole, as well as its character and dramaturgy in particular, will be built.

The analysis of meter and rhythm passes through questions concerning their nature at the level of the work, such as: what are the specific rhythms, the types of rhythmic combinations, the meter and the construction of measures, how metric sequences are organized at the level of measure and phrase (iamb-trochee in duple meter, dactyl-amphibrach-anapest in triple meter, types of paeons in quadruple structures). In this framework, answers are also sought concerning polymeter and other specific features that the analyzed work may contain.

Rhythm in the narrow sense as figure, and meter as its background, realize a symbiotic relationship that also encompasses tempo as the third component of rhythm in the broad sense, which conditions both of these.

Results of the analysis of meter in the piano works of Zeqirja Ballata

The works included in the analysis are arranged chronologically, from the earliest to the most recent. The analysis has been carried out mainly in terms of general data, changes in meter (presented in tabular form), metric dynamics (also presented with tables), and the analysis of metric sequences, which has been applied to specific works that appeared of particular interest for this study (also presented in tabular form).

Meter in *Echi delle Montagne Maledette* (*Echoes of the Accursed Mountains*), according to the findings, is presented as an aesthetic tool with an emphasized role. In the course of 94 measures, the composer used two value types: 4s and 8s. The quarter-note as a metric unit is found in the segment M-1–49, while the eighth-note is in the segment M-50–94, which means that there are two states of metric value creating a change. Changes in metric measures are noticeably more diverse. The segment M-1–49 is traversed by successive changes from 3/4 to 2/4 (see the following table, M-1–37). The segment M-59–87 has an interesting organization of the metric measure 5/8+7/8, which originates in the features of traditional Albanian folk music. Therefore, in this work, unlike for example *Two Caprices*, *Solo de Concert*, etc., metric

dynamics as an aesthetic element is secondary in relation to the metric dynamics represented by the organization of the metric measure. The argument regarding metric measure is illustrated in the following table.

Table 1. Overview of changes in meter

Position of metric change	1	24	28	37	50	88	92	Frequency
Quantity of metric units	3	2	3	2	5+7x19	5	4	25
Value of metric units	4	4	4	4	8	8	8	2

Metric dynamics – In this analysis it was of interest that, in addition to the marcatos, the tenutos were also identified. Both of these articulation marks, with their discrete and meaningful appearance, have a clear aesthetic role.

Table 2. Metric dynamics

10	11	12	13	14	15	18	24	25	26	27	34	48	Fre.
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	2	↓
4	2	2	1	2	1	3	0	0	0	2	0	1	↓
61	65	69	73	77	82	83	84	85	86	87	92	93	↓
0	2	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	15
1	0	1	2	1	2	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	30

Meter in *Fantasia rustica* shows an even denser variability of metric measures than in *Echi delle Montagne Maledette*. In its course of 64 measures, 38 changes occur, among which are found pairs of metric measures such as (3/4+4/4) x 6 (M-14), (3/4+4/4) x 3 (M-34), and (4/4+3/4) x 2 (M-59). It should be emphasized that the irregular measure 5/4 is predominant, while the pairs 3+4 or 4+3 in the musical unfolding bring the rhythmic spirit of Albanian folk music, creating the sensation of a 7/4.

Table 3. Overview of metric changes

Measure	1	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Quantity of metric units	5	4	5	3	4	5	2	5
Value of metric units	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Measure	10	11	13	14	26	27	28	29
Quantity of metric units	4	5	4	3+4x6	5	3	4	5
Value of metric units	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Measure	31	32	33	34	40	42	43	45
Quantity of metric units	4	3	4	3+4x3	5	2	5	4
Value of metric units	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Measure	46	48	49	53	54	56	58	59
Quantity of metric units	3	4	5	4	3	4	3	4+3x2
Value of metric units	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Frequency of changes	38							
Frequency of types of metric units	1							

Metric dynamics – Unlike in other works, where metric dynamics, specifically accents, are highly active either as an aesthetic, stylistic factor or as a metric device, in *Fantasia rustica* the composer avoids his characteristic tendency. The use of accents is modest; only ten instances are encountered. It is characteristic that tenutos are used in the work. Since the analytical format does not foresee a separate treatment of articulations, alongside metric dynamics the overview of the tenutos and commentary on them will also be presented, due to the aesthetic role they play in the work. There are no more than six markings, which accompany specific narrative and dramaturgical moments.

Table 4. Metric dynamics

Measure	12	13	14	15	16	17	28	29	44	Fre.
Number of accents	2	2	1	1	2	1	0	0	1	10
Number of tenutos	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	6

Meter in the first movement of the Sonata, in its course of a total of 41 measures, has a relative variability (a total of 8 changes), with an unchanged metric unit value, which is the quarter note. The number of units changes from 4 to 5

units per measure. The change of the metric measure occurs mainly in positions of microstructural division. The argument for the change of the metric measure is presented in the following table.

Table 5. Sonata (First movement) – changes of metric measure

Measure (position) of metric change	1	4	6	17	23	28	30	40	Fre.
Quantity of metric units	5	4	5	4	5	4	5	4	8
Value of metric units	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	1

The second movement, in its course of a total of 221 measures, has altogether 49 metric changes. The types of note values of the metric units are the eighth note and the quarter note. The eighth note value predominates throughout. The quarter note, as a metric unit, appears in segments M-137–138 and M-145–154. In measures with eighth-note metric units, the quantity of units changes from 5, 6, 7, up to eight eighths. Meanwhile, in measures with quarter-note metric units, in both occurrences, there are four quarter notes. The frequent change of metric measure, especially the presence of 7/8 and 5/8, represents a characteristic of Albanian folk rhythm. The overview of metric changes in the second movement of the Sonata is presented in the following table. As for the structuring role of metric changes, it can be said that, apart from at the beginning of the second theme and the beginning of the recapitulation, they are more active within the developmental flow than in the structural positions.

Table 6. Sonata (Second movement) – changes of metric measure

1	Measure (position) of metric change	1	19	22	26	28	30	32	36	38
2	Quantity of metric units	8	7	5	8	6	5	6	7	8
3	Value of metric units	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
1	Measure (position) of metric change	43	45	47	49	56	60	63	68	71
2	Quantity of metric units	6	8	5	8	5	5	5	6	5
3	Value of metric units	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
1	Measure (position) of metric change	75	92	94	96	99	128	130	137	139
2	Quantity of metric units	8	7	5	6	8	7	8	4	6
3	Value of metric units	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	4	8
1	Measure (position) of metric change	141	143	145	155	160	164	173	174	177
2	Quantity of metric units	8	5	4	7	5	8	5	6	8
3	Value of metric units	8	8	4	8	8	8	8	8	8
1	Measure (position) of metric change	180	182	184	188	197	199	201	203	205
2	Quantity of metric units	6	8	6	8	5	8	5	6	8
3	Value of metric units	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
1	Measure (position) of metric change	208	211	215	217					
2	Quantity of metric units	7	5	6	5					
3	Value of metric units	8	8	8	8					
	Frequency of change	49								
	Quantity of value types	2								

Metric dynamics – The metric dynamics in the Sonata, as in Ballata's other works, appear as an aesthetic device and, at the same time, take on the dimensions of a stylistic tendency. They often occur in the concluding positions of musical ideas as a way out of the impossibility of harmonic resolution. During the analysis, in addition to the marcato, the aesthetic and structural role of the tenuto articulation was also observed. Therefore, in the following tables the tenuto is also addressed. In the overall course of 41 measures of the first movement, a total of 25 accents (marcato) and 42 tenutos were noted. The lower frequency of marcato in relation to tenutos derives from the rhythmic organization, dynamics, and the general character of the second movement, Largo. The tenutos, as one of the creators of the general character, have a higher frequency. The marcato and tenutos, throughout the flow, were used with an organization of successive presentation, but not rarely also appear side by side and within a single measure. The overview of their occurrence throughout the course of the work is presented in the following table.

Table 7. Metric dynamics (First movement)

Measure	1	2	3	5	6	7	8	12	15	17	18	19	20	21
Number of accents	1	2	1	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	1	1	2
Number of tenutos	2	3	0	0	2	4	0	2	2	4	0	1	1	0
Measure	22	24	25	26	29	30	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	Fre.
Number of accents	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	3	0	1	1	2	0	25
Number of tenutos	1	3	2	1	4	2	2	1	2	0	1	0	2	42

In the second movement, in the course of 221 measures, a total of 217 accents (marcato) and 55 tenutos were found. The rhythm of the use of accents, more than in any other work, reveals a symmetry on the horizontal plane. It is characteristic that we encounter segments of 6–7 measures without accents followed by 8–11 measures with accents (see the following table). They interact with other parameters in dramaturgical and structural aspects.

Table 8. Metric dynamics (Second movement)

Measure	1	7	8	9	10	12	13	15	16	17	18	24	30	31	
Accents	1	2	2	2	2	2	6	2	4	1	1	1	2	0	
Tenutos	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	4	
Measure	32	33	34	36	37	39	40	41	47	53	54	55	56	57	
Accents	12	10	2	0	2	2	2	2	1	1	7	2	2	1	
Tenutos	0	0	0	1	0	0	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Measure	58	60	63	65	69	72	73	74	75	76	78	84	86	89	
Accents	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	
Tenutos	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Measure	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	99	100	101	102	107	109	102	
Accents	4	2	3	3	2	2	1	2	3	1	0	4	4	2	
Tenutos	0	0	3	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	
Measure	107	109	112	114	115	118	119	128	130	131	152	155	156	157	
Accents	5	4	2	4	3	0	0	1	4	2	1	0	0	0	
Tenutos	0	0	2	0	0	4	1	1	0	0	0	1	2	1	
Measure	158	164	166	167	168	169	170	171	174	175	176	178	180	182	
Accents	0	1	1	4	3	5	3	4	3	0	1	2	2	4	
Tenutos	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	
Measure	183	184	186	193	194	195	196	199	203	204	211	212	217	218	
Accents	3	1	1	2	2	4	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	
Tenutos	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Measure	219	220													
Accents	4	2													
Tenutos	0	0													
Fre. of accents	217														
Fre. of tenutos	55														

Meter in *Caprice No. 1*, while maintaining the same note value as the metric unit (the quarter-note value), the metric measure changes nine times. Thus, throughout the work ten metric states appear: from 2 up to 5 quarters. The changes most often occur at the end or beginning of structural segments, or in segments where the material functions as a linking bridge between structural parts. This appears as one of the techniques of connecting contrasting, respectively conflicting parts, as a consequence of the content defined by the title and the Andante elegiaco character. The following table reflects the frequency and quality of metric measure changes in the course of *Caprice No. 1*.

Table 9. Changes of metric measure

Nr.	Measure	1	8	11	22	27	34	42	43	48	50
1	Quantity of units	4	2	4	3	2	4	5	3	5	4
2	Value of units	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
4	Total changes	10									
5	Total types of values	1									

Metric dynamics, specifically the organization of accents, with a total of 58 instances, play an important role in creating the images conveyed by the musical texture.

Table 10. Overview of metric dynamics

Measure	1	2	16	18	20	21	25	34	38	39	40	41	42	45	51	54	55	56
Accents	2	2	3	6	2	4	6	3	2	4	5	6	2	4	1	4	1	1
Total	58																	

Accents are usually used at the beginning or end of structural and microstructural sections, which shows that, in addition to their aesthetic function, they also gain a syntactic-structural role. Another characteristic of metric dynamics is the accompaniment of melodic lines both in dynamics *p* and *f*, precisely for the purpose of emphasizing the beginning or end of the two structural subjects of capricious conflict.

Metric dynamics and polydynamics are also rich and creative. The use of regular and polydynamic accents is quite dense. These two types of accents create clashes both with dynamics and with regular meter. The metric patterns used, both in the entirety of the work and in its smaller structures, turn out to include types such as iamb-trochee, dactyl-amphibrach-anapest, and the types of paeons, as presented in the following table:

Table 11. Overview of metric feet and structural factors

N	Position (M)	Structural factor of the metric foot
o	Category	
	Graphic sign	
1	1.M- 1-2/ 2. JAMB/ 3. (-/+)	Intonational and dynamic culmination
2	1.M-3-5/ 2.DAKTIL/ 3.(+--)	Rhythmic values, <i>p</i> dynamics, and the low potency of melodic flow movement
3	1.M- 6-7/ 2.JAMB/ 3. (-/+)	The rhythmic value (dotted quarter note) makes the measure heavy and the point where the previously developed energy is discharged
4	1.M-8-10/ 2.ANAPEST/ 3.(--/+)	The chord in M-10 that brings the gravitational center, its rhythmic value, and cadential strength
5	1.M-11-12/ 2.JAMB IV / 3.(--/+)	The highest tone – the culmination of the foot, its power for initiating the development that will follow
6	1.M-13-16/ 2.PEON IV/3. (---/+)	Dynamic gradation culminating in A4 with accent and corona that intensifies the built dramatic quality
7	1.M-17-18/ 2.JAMB/ 3.-/+)	Accents that regroup the entirety of the metric measure (3+3+2) give developmental energy, gaining power and weight
8	1.M- 19-21/2. ANAPEST/3.(--/+)	By moving from eighth-note triplets to sixteenth-notes in descending motion accompanied by accented eighth-notes, especially the last two on the unaccented part of the motion, with crescendo dynamics
9	1.M-22-25/ 2.PEON IV/3. (---/+)	Dynamic culmination, intonational, rhythm, accents
10	1.M-26-29/2.PEON IV/3. (---/+)	Rhythmic organization, enrichment of the vertical, <i>espressivo</i>
11	1.M-30-33/2.PEON I/3. (+---)	Rhythmic figure
12	1.M-34-36/ 2.DAKTIL/ 3.(+--)	The highest tone of the foot, rhythmic organization, accents
13	1.M-37-38/ 2.JAMB/ 3.(--/+)	Rhythm, accents, cadential strength
14	1.M-39-42/2.PEON IV / 3.(---/+)	Dynamic, melodic culmination, and rhythm
15	1.M-43-44/ 2.JAMB / 3.(--/+)	Dynamics (<i>sf</i>), long value, accent, rest
16	1.M-46-49/2.PEON IV / 3.(---/+)	Rhythmic organization, dynamics, cadential strength
18	1.M-50-51/2.JAMB/ 3. (-/+)	Rhythmic organization, melodic culmination
18	1.M-52-55/ 2.PEON IV/3.(---/+)	Rhythmic organization, accent, harmony
19	1.M-56-57/ 2.HOREJ/ 3.(+)	Harmony, rhythmic organization, descending dynamics

The meter in *Capriccio No. 2*, throughout 64 measures, changes 5 times, as presented in the following table.

Table 12. Changes in metric measure

Measure	1	37	43	59	63	Total
Metric measure	4	7	4	3	4	5 changes of metric measure
Metric unit	4	8	4	4	4	2 metric units

The changes in metric measure come into play in the segment after half of the work's development, specifically in M-37, which corresponds to the proximity of the golden section (total number of measures $\times 0.62 = X$, X = measure according to the resulting number). The change of metric measures is one of the empowering tools for achieving dramatic intensity up to the overall culmination, and toward the end. Among the metric measures appears the 7/8, characteristic of Albanian folk music, which Ballata organizes with metric groupings (M-1 = 3+2+2 and M-2 = 2+2+3) $\times 2$, later reorganized into 3+2+2, and then transitioning into regular measures.

Metric dynamics and polydynamics are also rich and creative. The marking of regular and irregular accents is quite dense. They create oppositions both with dynamics and with regular meter.

From the analysis of the applied metrics, both on the overall level (large structural units) and in smaller segments (down to the measure level), the following are found to be present: iamb-trochee, dactyl-amphibrach-anapest, and types of paeons.

Table 13. Overview of metric dynamics

Measure	1	2	3	6	7	13	14	15	16	17	20	23	25	26	27	29	30
Accents /	2	1	1	3	3	3	2	2	2	8	2	2	6	2	4	1	3
Measure	31	32	33	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	52	53	54	57	59
Accents / quantity	4	8	3	2	2	4	4	6	6	5	3	2	2	2	2	2	2
Total	106																

From the comparison of the results presented in the above table with the dynamics, it can be concluded that the accents (marcados) are concentrated in the segments with forte dynamics, specifically in the segments where the powerful conflicting motif appears.

These segments, rich in accents, in addition to forte dynamics, are often reinforced and accompanied by agogic changes. They form a separate line with a clear aesthetic function, treated almost as an independent subject with strongly emphasized action upon other parameters, and play a dominant role in creating the corresponding acoustic spaces.

The meter in *Solo de concert* consists of a total of 114 measures, with variable metric measure throughout its course. It begins with a 5/8 measure, which changes already at the fourth measure. Throughout the sequence of metric changes, the metric unit remains the eighth note (♪), while their quantity varies from three (3) to eight (8). The dynamics of the metric changes in detail are presented in the following table.

Table 14. Overview of metric changes

1	Measure (position) of metric change						1	4	6	12	14	23	29	33
2	Quantity of metric units						5	6	4	3	4	3	4	5
3	Value of metric units						8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
1	35	44	46	47	48	50	55	57	61	65	67	68	83	84
2	4	7	4	5	7	4	5	7	4	5	4	5	6	4
3	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
1	85	87	88	89	98	102	104	105	106	107	108	109	110	112
2	7	5	6	7	6	5	8	4	8	5	7	6	8	7
3	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
1	113	Quantity												
2	6	37												
3	8	1												

Based on the data presented in the table above, it is observed that the meter in *Solo de concert* has a high frequency of change. There are a total of 37 changes in metric measure, whereas the metric unit is unchanged; throughout the entire course it remains the same—eighth-note value. The last fifteen measures show a higher frequency of metric-measure changes. All of this leads to the conclusion that the variability of the metric measure assumes the weight of an expressive device in its own right, serving as a means for organizing other parameters during the construction of the compositional texture.

The dynamics of meter, expressed as a totality of accents, has an aesthetic role rather than a role in integrating the temporal equality of units, values, and measures, thus avoiding the traditional function of accents. In this case, the counting of accents was carried out by unifying the accents in the vertical into a single calculated unit.

Therefore, in the following table the quantity of accents is presented on the horizontal line and not vertically, bearing in mind that parallel accents in the vertical represent a single beat and constitute the same dramaturgical moment.

Table 15. Overview of metric dynamics

Measure	1	4	9	10	11	12	13	17	18	20	21	22	23	27
Number of accents	2	3	3	1	3	2	1	2	2	1	1	3	3	1
Measure	28	29	30	31	34	35	36	42	43	53	54	55	56	59
Number of accents	4	2	3	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	2
Measure	60	61	63	69	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	83
Number of accents	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	3	3
Measure	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	94	95	96	97	112
Number of accents	2	3	1	4	3	5	4	3	5	5	3	3	5	2
Frequency of accents	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	112

During the piece, a total of 112 marcato signs are used, which have a pronounced aesthetic role. They contrast with the traditional metric dynamics, since they do not follow the stressed part of the measure, but rather syncopate it, creating a sense of polymeter, which brings a dramaturgical effect. Through such use of accents, opposition is created against rhythmic groups and figures, denying and preventing the direct identification of both the meter itself—already highly changeable.

High-level metric feet

While at the low level (measure level) the metric feet have a limited presence due to the predominance of aesthetic accents, which make their detection almost impossible and unclear, the identification of metric feet at the high level (phrase level) is much more feasible. In the following table, the data derived from the analysis are presented in the respective columns.

Table 16. Overview of metric feet and structural factors

Nr	Position (M) Category Graphic sign	Structural factor of the metric group
1	1.M- 1-2 2. JAMB 3. (-/+)	Although in the initial measure we find two accents, they have an acoustic aesthetic effect, while the structural strength of the group turns out to be the half-note value in the second measure, which gives weight to the measure.
2	1.M-3-5 2. ANAPEST 3. (-/+)	The three-measure group culminates in measure 5 after dynamic and intonational gradation, textural, harmonic density, and dynamic gradation.
3	1.M- 6-7 2. JAMB 3. (-/+)	M-7 has little movement and appears as energizing the weight that will be manifested in measure 7 in the cluster as the culminating point of the segment so far.
4	1.M-8-9 2. JAMB 3. (-/+)	The group is structured by the measure with melodic movement of chordal sounds, while the following measure gains weight from the crescendo dynamic, vertical progression, and intonational ascent.
5	1.M-10-13 2. PEON IV 3. (---/+)	The same technical action as in the previous group, except that the group ends with a single stressed sound in f after dynamic gradation.
6	1.M-14-16 2. Daktil 3. (+--)	The group at the beginning inherits dynamic strength and pitch height from the previous group.
7	1.M-17-20 2. PEON IV 3. (---/+)	In the middle of measure 22, the flow gains weight, calm, and is expressed as a phrase ending and simultaneously as a structural section ending.
8	1.M- 20-33 2. PEON IV 3. (---/+)x3	This segment appears as a triple Peon IV, because the weight of the last measures of the PEONS is faintly distinguishable, unlike measure 33, which carries special weight from the melodic, dynamic, and intonational structuring aspect.
9	1.M-33-34 2. JAMB 3. (-/+)	Measure 34 gains weight from the dynamics, intonational climax, and arrival of seconds in dissonant chords.
10	1.M-33-34 2. HOREJ 3. (+ -)	Measure 35 is in f and dramatizes.
11	1.M-37-38 2. JAMB	The structural elements are crescendo dynamics and dotted values.

	3. (-/+)	
12	1.M-39-40 2.JAMB 3.(-/+)	The syncopated rhythm and energizing rests make measure 40 weighty.
13	1.M-41-43 2.ANFIBRAH 3.(-/+)	The central support occurs in M-42 with dynamics, reaching fff in the middle register.
14	1.M-44-48 2.PEON IV 3.(---/+)	The release of the dense chordal texture into a unison in the low register at the beginning of M-48.
15	1.M-48-51 2.PEON III 3.(-/+)	The joint bringing of the upper register with the low register, i.e., timbral actions, make measure 51 weighty.
16	1.M-52-54 2.PEON IV 3.(---/+)	Intonational ascent and dynamic gradation.
18	1.M-55-56 2.JAMB 3. (-/+)	Rhythmic organization.
18	1.M-57-61 2.PEON IV 3. (---/+)	Dynamic gradation (fff), high register, triple repetition of the material.
19	1.M-62-68 2.ANAPEST 3.(-/+)x2	Melodic and rhythmic structure with the same processing technique.
20	1.M-69-74 2.HOREJ 3. (+-)x3	The structural factor is the organization of accents, note values, and dynamics.
22	1.M-75-78 2.PEON I 3. (+---)	Structural factor is the organization of accents and note values.
23	1.M-79-86 2.HOREJ 3. (+-)x4	Quarter note at the beginning of the group.
24	1.M-87-90 2.HOREJ 3.(+) x2	The quarter-note value reached by the upward movement of eighth notes makes this moment gain supportive weight.
26	1.M-91-94 2.JAMB 3. (+) x2	An inner additive material displaces the material of the weighted measure, as in previous groups, from Iambic to Trochaic position.
27	1.M-95-97 2.ANAPEST 3. (-/+)	The previous action is repeated here too: by adding one more measure, a three-measure group is formed, supported by the third measure of the group.
28	1.M-98-101 2.PEON IV 3.(---/+)	Dynamics ff, dense chordal texture, high register, quarter-note values structure Peon I.
29	1.M-102-103 2.HOREJ 3. (+)	Dynamics fff, high register.
30	1.M-104-105 2.HOREJ 3. (+)	Rhythmic organization: the first note in the low register dotted quarter in M-104, as well as the long values in M-106, 108, 110, make this group supportive. Structurally, the ascending movement of the musical material also stands out.
31	1.M-112-114 2.ANAPEST 3.(-+)	Dynamics fff, dotted quarter rhythmic value, and final notes with secco articulation.

The meter in *Variations sensitives*, in the course of a total of 67 measures, has 16 metric states, respectively 15 changes. The quantity of metric units is 3, 4, and 5, whereas the value of the metric units always remains the same—a quarter note. Similarly to *Caprice No. 2*, the changes of the metric measure constitute one of the elements with a structural role. They change from one structural component to another, thus playing a characterizing function for each structure or microstructure of the work. Consequently, the changes of the metric measure also function to reinforce the dramaturgical tendency through melodic modifications and harmonic development in cases of thematic material variation.

Table 17. Metric changes

Nr.	Measure	1	5	11	12	15	19	21	22
1	Number of units	4	3	5	4	5	3	4	5
2	Value of units	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
1	Measure	24	35	37	39	43	47	61	64
2	Number of units	4	5	4	3	4	3	5	4
3	Value of units	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
//	Total changes	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	16
//	Total types of values	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	1

Metric dynamics – The density of the use of accents (marcados) shows that the composer relies heavily on marcato as a means of realizing one of the dramaturgical aspects. The aesthetic use of accents appears in various situations:

1. Alongside dynamics in *p* as well as in *f*;
2. Both at the beginnings and at the ends of structural sections;
3. With the purpose of counterpointing the traditional metric accent of regular and irregular rhythmic figures (triplet M-16);
4. On syncopated notes;
5. In segments of dramatic, declamatory intensification, with structural force, etc.

The following table reflects the distribution of accents throughout the course of the work:

Table 18. Overview of metric dynamics

Masa	2	7	9	10	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	24
Thekset/sasia	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	9	2	2	7	1	4
Masa	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	39	41	42	43	44	//
Thekset/sasia	1	2	3	3	6	6	2	6	4	1	1	6	//
Masa	45	46	52	53	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	66	//
Thekset/sasia	3	3	6	4	2	2	1	1	6	4	1	1	//
Gjithsej	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	110

From the overview of metric dynamics, it results that in the course of 67 measures, a total of 110 accents have been used. The observed frequency is an indicator that the metric dynamics has a noticeable and relatively high activity in the aesthetic and dramaturgical shaping of the work.

The meter in *Valle/Dance No. 1* is organized in a total of 22 measures. The tempo indicated by the composer is $\text{♩} = 70$. The metric unit of a quarter note remains unchanged throughout, while the number of metric units within the measure varies. During the short musical flow, the metric measure changes quite often from 3/4 to 4/4, in total 12 times. The following table presents the overview of the metric changes.

Table 19. Metric changes

Measure (position of metric change)	1	2	3	4	5	7	9	11	12	13	14	20
Quantity of metric units	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	4
Value of metric units	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Total changes	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	12

The dynamics of the meter are used by the composer with creativity for aesthetic purposes. Its overview is presented in the following table.

Table 20. Position of accents

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	10	11	13	17	18	19	20	21	22
Number of accents	1	3	2	2	1	3	3	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	1
Frequency	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	31

The score contains a total of 31 accents, mainly aesthetic, which oppose the rule of the metric measure, giving the impression of irregular measures. They are usually placed on upbeats (unaccented movements), on upbeats tied to the downbeats of the following measures, on upbeats followed by rests on downbeats, on upbeats with ornaments, in triplets with the second note missing (rest on the second note of the triplet). The composer gradually resolves this phenomenon

by placing the accent on the half-downbeat (M-20 in the third movement). In measure 21, the accent shifts to the second beat, reaching the complete harmonization of the aesthetic accent with the metric accent on the first beat (downbeat) at the end of the piece. This play with accents makes segments in $\frac{3}{4}$ feel like $\frac{5}{8}$, and in certain $\frac{4}{4}$ measures feel like $\frac{3}{4}$. Thus, the accents take on the function of a driving factor in the piece.

High-level metric groups

The theoretical thought of T. Mañev regarding high-level metric groups that define the supporting moment cannot serve as a guideline for this work, because the used interpolation connects and interweaves elements that create weight moments with moving elements from one measure to another, or from the material of one hand to the other. Thus, throughout almost the entire piece it is impossible to separate and identify weight-dividing moments. The work flows with an uninterrupted and continuous moving tendency.

The meter in *Valle/Dance No. 2* has a total of 23 measures with a $\frac{9}{8}$ metric. The irregular (mixed) $\frac{9}{8}$ meter is organized throughout the piece as **2+2+2+3**, representing a continuous stability of metric organization. As can be seen from the division of the measure into three duple units and one triple, the composer does not refer to the Western model of $\frac{9}{8}$, but to the traditional Albanian folk one. This, together with the presence of modal harmonic structures and the melody borrowed from a dance of the same origin, places the piece within an identifiable national framework.

The composer's tendency toward rhythmic modifications, in this work, is mainly concentrated in the fourth beat with triple units, where the motivic material begins (in the last eighth), preserving the metric pulse both in terms of the meter as an independent segment and in the coordination of the melody's meter with the chosen metric nature.

Unlike *Valle No. 1* and other works, the use of accents is very modest, and as such they do not require tabular representation. They appear in:

- M-3: 3 accents,
- M-5: 3 accents,
- M-9: 3 accents.

In total, there are 9 accents.

The high-level metric groups are clearly more distinguishable, and their identification follows the type of traditional narration.

Table 21. High-level metric groups

Nr	1.Position (M), 2.Category, 3.Graphic sign	Structural factor of the metric unit
1	1.M. 1-2/ 2. JAMB/ 3. (-/+)	Dynamic, intonational, and rhythmic culmination
2	1. M.3-6/ 2. PEON IV/ 3. (---/+)	Dynamic, intonational, and rhythmic culmination
3	1. M. 7-8/ 2. JAMB/ 3. (-/+)	Dynamic, intonational, and rhythmic culmination
4	1.M. 9-12/ 2. PEON I/ 3. (++--)	Dynamics, metro-rhythmic reorganization of the theme
5	1.M. 13-16/ 2. HOREJ x2/ 3.(+-)x2	Metro-rhythmic reorganization of the theme
6	1.M 17, 18, 19,20,21/ 2. HOREJ në nivel mase/ 3. (+-)x5	Fragmentation of the motivic whole and repetition of the fragment
7	1.M. 22-23/ 2. JAMB/ 3. (-/+)	Dynamic culmination, melorhythmic organization, intonational culmination, cadencing
Total		7 metric units

The meter in *Plaku i maleve*, throughout its total of 39 measures, has a high frequency of metric changes. The composer applies a total of 17 changes of the metric measure with 2, 3, and 4 quarter notes. The frequency of these changes is evenly distributed across the entire course of the piece. Thus, there is no fragment more or less dominated by metric changes. The rhythmic value of the metric unit remains unchanged: the quarter note value. The frequency of metric changes energizes the rhythmic movement, which, during rhythmic organization, relies mainly on eighth-note and quarter-note values. In this way, the components of the same parameter complement each other's possibilities.

Table 22. Changes of the metric measure

1	Measure (position) of metric change	1	3	4	10	11	12	15	16	18
2	Quantity of metric units	4	3	4	3	2	4	3	4	3
3	Value of metric units	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
1	Measure (position) of metric change	19	25	26	29	30	31	34	36	//
2	Quantity of metric units	4	3	4	3	2	4	2	4	//
3	Value of metric units	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	//
	Frequency of change	18								

Metric dynamics – The following table shows a high frequency of accent usage. In the course of 39 measures, a total of 49 accents are found. They are located mainly in the unaccented parts of the beat (of the measure), which indicates their pronounced aesthetic role. In this situation, where metric changes have a high dynamic, such a strong presence of accents increasingly takes on an aesthetic role by counterpointing the already changeable meter. This further enlivens the movement of the work, adds dramatic character to the overall flow, and at the same time strengthens the vertical structures, which gain important acoustic weight in the linear progression (as in M.11).

**Figure 1.** (M-11)

Despite the simultaneous appearance of accents at certain moments, in the following table the total number of accents also includes parallel accents.

Table 23. Metric dynamics

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	11	12	13	17
Number of accents	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	4	1	1	2
Measure	18	20	24	25	27	29	30	34	35	37	39
Number of accents	2	2	4	2	1	5	3	5	3	3	2
Frequency of accents	49	/////									

The meter in the work *Alla Marcia*, according to the indicators presented in the following table, can be evaluated as having a high frequency of metric variability in its temporal organization. In the course of a total of 59 measures, the composer applies 37 metric states, corresponding to 36 changes. In a flow where agogic and character changes are practically absent, it seems that the need for motion and possible temporal deviations is compensated through metric changes. In this aspect, the segment from M-1 to M-12, compared to the other segments, is calmer and more restrained from metric changes. Dense changes occur from M-12 to the end of the piece.

As observed in other works, the meter in the musical expression of the *Ballata* relies mainly on the constant value of the metric unit. Throughout the entire piece, the metric unit remains the quarter note, while the number of units per measure changes from four to three quarters. A rare and brief appearance of the 2/4 measure is encountered in M-17, 49, and 54.

The metric changes contribute to elevating the overall artistic expression, deliberately freeing it from the monotony of march-like expression.

Table 24. Metric changes

Nr.	Measure	1	12	13	16	17	18	22	24	26	27	34	35
1	Number of units	4	3	4	3	2	3	4	3	4	3	4	3
2	Value of units	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
		39	40	41	44	45	46	48	49	50	51	52	53
1	Measure	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	2	3	4	3	4
2	Number of units	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
	Value of units	54	55	57									
1		2	3	4									
2	Measure	4	4	4									
	Number of units	37											
	Value of units	1											

Metric Dynamics – In order not to change the approach in calculating the *marcatos* (accents), which make up the metric dynamics of the work, the following table presents the total number of accents marked by the composer himself. Despite the high frequency of accents (61), if we take into account that they appear in parallel groups of 2 or 4, the emphasized moments result in a significantly lower number. The calculation of the emphasized moments gives the following result: 1, 2, 1, 3, 1, 1, 3, 3, 1, 3, 2, 2, 1, 2, 1, 1, 1, 2, 1, 1 = a total of 34. This is a rather high participation in the dramaturgical construction and the aesthetic character of the work. As such, metric dynamics becomes one of the musical expression tools with high frequency and a supporting parameter for the dramaturgical flow. For an efficient overview, the rhythm of metric dynamics is presented in the following table.

Table 25. Overview of metric dynamics

Measure	4	5	7	8	9	11	16	18	19	20	22
Accents / quantity	2	3	2	2	4	2	2	6	5	2	3
Measure	23	24	25	32	33	37	48	54	56	58	59
Accents	4	4	2	3	2	2	1	1	4	1	4
Total	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	61(34)

The meter in *Hexaphonia* has a high frequency of changes. Throughout 108 measures, it changes 37 times. These changes concern the number of metric units within the measure, while the eighth note continuously remains the only type of metric unit. Certain segments are denser with changes, but the fact that the longest distance between two changes is no more than 5–7 measures shows that the distribution of metric changes has been made symmetrically throughout the entire work, forming the framework of the technique of metric organization.

Table 26. Metric changes

Nr.	Measure	1	5	7	10	13	20	26	28	34	40	43	45
1	Number of units	5	6	5	4	6	5	6	4	6	4	6	4
2	Value of units	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
		52	55	60	61	65	68	69	71	72	75	78	79
1	Measure	6	5	4	3	6	4	5	3	6	5	4	3
2	Number of units	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
	Value of units	80	82	83	85	86	87	91	93	96	97	98	99
1		4	6	5	4	5	6	4	6	5	4	5	6
2	Measure	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
	Number of units	102											
1	Value of units	5											
2		8											
	Measure												
	Number of units	1											

Metric dynamics – The frequency of *marcatos* found in the work is very low compared to most of Z. Ballata's piano compositions. If we add to this the fact that the total number of accents in certain measures are used simultaneously in

both hands of Piano I or in parallel in Piano I and II, then in the linear flow the phenomenon of accent occurs much less frequently than the overall sum of 26 accents would suggest. The accents occur in specific aesthetic and structural moments. The dramaturgical effects in the work are realized through other elements of musical language.

Table 27. Overview of metric dynamics

Measure	10	11	12	26	38	45	61	62	68	69	80	87
Accents/quantity	4	1	2	6	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
Total	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	26

Suite for Pioneers

The *Suite for Pioneers*, as a cyclic work, is composed of three parts with different characters, and accordingly, the parts bear the following titles: *The Bell of Maribor*, *The Owl*, and *March*. Based on their different characters, the treatment of meter will be addressed separately for each one.

The meter in *The Bell of Maribor*, which has a total of 30 measures, is the unchanged 3/4 time signature. This uniformity of meter corresponds with the natural expression of the static movement of the bell's toll.

Both the fixed metric measure and the metric dynamics (the accents—marcados) serve the purpose of creating the character and musical program. They are used with appropriate care.

Unlike most of Z. Ballata's works, where the metric measure and dynamics enjoy considerable freedom to operate in the aesthetic plane, here they appear carefully subordinated to the function of the programmatic image.

Table 28. Metric dynamics

Measure	2	3	4	6	8	15	16	21	23	24	25
Accents / Quantity	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
Unit	3	2	3	3	0.5 & 1.5	1.5	2	2	2	3	2
Total	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	12

The delayed or syncopated accent within the framework of a natural meter carries the illustrative function of the delayed hearing of the main strike, the delayed ringing of the bell under the force of the wind. In this way, the accents become cooperative in the linearity of the overall dynamics, while also preserving identity in the aesthetic context.

In its course of 28 measures, *Hutini* has an unchanged metric measure of 2/4. Within the character of *Cantabile*, the metronome value = 92 also remains stable throughout. Unlike most of Z. Ballata's piano works, here no marcato (accent) is encountered, a feature attributed to the basic compositional idea. Unlike in the treatment of other works, where much emphasis was given to the presence and effect of marcados (often overshadowing the presence of staccatos), in this case staccatos should be highlighted. Although they are used rarely (M-4, 10, 12, 16), they carry a characterial, programmatic, and emotional function.

The meter in *March*, although in its total course of 13 measures the metric measure is not marked (presumably a technical issue), according to the calculation, it is 4/4 and unchanged. It should be emphasized here that the work was studied from the manuscript, and after all analyses, the absence of barlines cannot be treated as an ametric work, but as a technical omission. The piece begins with an anacrusis. The following table, unlike analogous tables in the analyses of other works, also includes a row for knocking, as an important element of the composer's stylistic expression and as an acoustic phenomenon of contemporary music, which in this case, based on the aesthetic effect, also appears as a metric function.

Table 29. Metric dynamics and knocking

Measure	0	1	2	10	11	Measure	0	1	2	4	5	6	8	10	12	13
Accents / Quantity	1	4	2	1	4	Knocks	1	4	2	2	1	2	2	1	1	1
Total	//	//	//	//	//	12	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	//	17

Song/Pesem

Meter – In the course of 40 measures, which is considered a relatively short length, the metric measure changes 19 times. Exactly, there are a total of 20 metric states, which in mathematical proportion results in a change in 50% of the measures. The rhythmic value of the metric units remains unchanged throughout (quarter-note value), while the number of metric measures is two. Only the meters 3/4 and 4/4 are used. These changes, among other things, are made possible by rhythmic augmentations, especially in the repeated A section, as well as by irregular rhythmic figures.

Table 30. Changes of the metric measure

1	Measure (position) of the change	1	5	6	7	9	10	11	14	17	19
2	Quantity of metric units	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	3
3	Value of metric units	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
1	Measure (position) of the change	23	25	28	29	30	31	32	35	38	39
2	Quantity of metric units	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	3
3	Value of metric units	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
	Frequency of change	20									

Metric dynamics – The accents (*marcados*), as one of the means that in Z. Ballata's creativity gain a significant aesthetic function, in this work, unlike the others, are in a very modest number. A total of eight accent marks appear.

Table 31. Metric dynamics

Measure	5	9	11	22	33	34
Number of accents	1	2	1	1	1	2
Frequency of accents	8					

Conclusion

Regarding meter and metric measure, binary measures dominate, while ternary ones are very rare. In most works, the metric measure is highly changeable, with the characteristic that the metric unit remains constant. However, in works where the program imposes uniformity, the composer is careful and does not change it. Irregular measures with 7 and 5 units are also present. These latter ones stem from Albanian folk music, but the musical material used and the way it is developed do not allow a clear identification of this origin. The metric dynamic *marcato* is strongly expressed in most of the analyzed works. They accompany important aesthetic moments, dynamic gradations, climaxes, and serve as a means of rhythmic counterpoint. It is observed that they are used to enhance the strength of these moments, whereby metric dynamics gain the role of an aesthetic and dramaturgical element. Except for one work that has a symmetrical distribution of accents, in the others they are either isolated within a short phrase or clustered and dense within the narrow zone of the climax.

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Some of her scientific works include:

(2022) *Gjuha muzikore e Zeqirja Ballatës në veprën pianistike Echi Delle Montagne Maladette* (*Music Language of Zeqirja Ballata in Piano Work Echi delle Montagne Maledette*)

(2018) *Gjuha muzikore e Zeqirja Ballatës në veprën pianistike Fantasia Rustica* (*The Musical Language of Zeqirja Ballata in His Piano Work Fantasia Rustica*)

(2018) *Valle nr. 1 e Ballatës* (*Ballata's Valle/Dance No. 1, Example of Atonal Expression in Miniature*)

(2018) *Opusi muzikor i Zeqirja Ballatës* (*The Musical Opus of Zeqirja Ballata*)

(2018) *Karakteristikat e gjuhës muzikore në veprën pianistike Plaku i Maleve të Zeqirja Ballatës* (*Characteristics of the Musical Language in Zeqirja Ballata's Piano Piece Plaku i Maleve*)

(2018) *Sensitiviteti atonal në Variacionet Sensitives të Zeqirja Ballatës* (*Atonal Sensitivity in Variations Sensitives of Zeqirja Ballata*)

(2017) *Aspektet e modernitetit stilistik në veprat pianistike të Zeqirja Ballatës* (*Aspects of Stylistic Modernity in Piano Works of Zeqirja Ballata*)

- (2017) *Risitë tekniko-artistike dhe pedagogjike në Duart e Vogla të Mark Kaçinarit* (*The Techno-Artistic and Pedagogical Novelties in Duart e Vogla of Mark Kaçinari*)
- (2014) *Disa parametra muzikorë drejt zbërthimit të dramaturgjisë muzikore në veprën pianistike Deux Caprices të Zeqirja Ballatës* (*Some Musical Parameters Towards the Unfolding of Musical Dramaturgy in the Pianistic Work Deux Caprices by Zeqirja Ballata*)
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Research Article

Filigree as Kosovo's cultural heritage: Craft, art, and communication in the museum context

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Abstract

This paper will address the artistic works of silver metal, which belongs to the group of precious metals, as well as the activities organized within the projects of the Ethnological Museum that aimed to foster communication between the museum and visitors, and to promote the fine art of the jewelry craft and the filigree technique both inside and outside Kosovo. Among other things, the paper seeks to highlight and present, even if modestly, the Albanian ethno-cultural and artistic values preserved within the museum collections. Particular attention will also be given to the current state of filigree in our country today. In Kosovo, the historical and ongoing center of filigree has been the ancient and beautiful city of Prizren. However, jewelers from Prishtina, Peja (notably with the granulation technique), and Gjakova (primarily the savat technique) have also been engaged in this craft. Filigree works, which mainly include women's jewelry but also men's ornaments, reflect the specific skill of using and combining fine threads, the extraordinary precision, the applied artistry, the talent, as well as the high artistic qualities of the filigree masters.

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Introduction

The National Museum of Kosovo preserves a substantial and diverse collection of cultural heritage objects and exhibits. This collection encompasses archaeological, ethnological, historical, and natural artifacts, as well as artistic works, documents, and photographs. These holdings represent a wide chronological spectrum, ranging from the Neolithic period to the modern era, and are crafted from a variety of materials such as stone, clay, wood, textiles, and metals.

Within this study, particular attention is devoted to artistic silverwork, classified among the noble metals, alongside the activities organized within the framework of the Ethnological Museum's projects. These initiatives have sought to enhance communication between the museum and its visitors, and to promote both the aesthetic and technical dimensions of jewelry-making and the filigree tradition in Kosovo and beyond. The research also aims to shed light on the ethno-cultural and artistic values embedded in the museum's collection, while considering the present-day condition of filigree in Kosovo.

Silver has historically been regarded as a precious resource, extracted from mines and refined for the production of a wide array of objects, ranging from everyday items to highly artistic creations such as jewelry, vessels, ornaments, and coins. Although a number of scholarly works—authored both locally and internationally—have addressed the craft of silversmithing, they remain relatively limited in scope. Among the most notable contributions are Aleksandër Stipčević's *The Illyrians* (2002), Llambirini Mitrushi's *The Development of the Jewelry Craft in Albania* (1976), Zagorka Markovic's

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The Craft of Kujunxhije in Prizren (1964), Drita Halimi-Statovci's *The Historical Development of Craftsmanship and Its Contemporary Importance for the Socio-Economic Structure of the Autonomous Socialist Province of Kosovo* (1982), and Zija Shkodra's *Albanian Guilds* (1973). References to silverwork, and particularly filigree, can also be found in Riza Drishti's *The Crafting of Firearms by Albanians in the 17th–19th Centuries* and Viktor Gashi's *Ethnographic Treasures* (2012).

The practice of silver craftsmanship in the territory of present-day Kosovo has deep historical roots. During the Illyrian period, especially in the southern regions, silversmithing was highly developed even prior to the arrival of the Celts. The city of Damastion emerged as a prominent center for silver production and minting during the 4th–3rd centuries BC (Stipčević, 2002). In subsequent centuries, Kosovo's mines—most notably those of Novo Brdo and Trepça—gained wide renown for their silver resources. The silver artifacts preserved in the National Museum of Kosovo reflect this long continuity, ranging from antiquity to more recent times. Excavations in the Illyrian necropolis at the Peja spa, for instance, have revealed a wealth of silver objects, including omega-shaped fibulae, buttons, brooches, belt buckles, rings, pins, bracelets, and snake-headed bracelets. *Figure 1*. These ornaments, dating to the 6th–5th centuries BC, illustrate the artistic refinement and technical mastery of Illyrian silversmiths. Some examples feature geometric decoration, while the snake-headed bracelets, in particular, stand out as exceptional works of craftsmanship created by skilled artisans with a pronounced artistic sensibility (Institute for the Protection of Monuments of Kosovo, 2006).

Figure 2.

Meanwhile, in several ancient settlements of Kosovo, such as Ulpiana, Vindenis-Gllamnik in Podujeva, and others, the Illyrian-Dardanians also made use of silver ornaments and artifacts, including fibulae of various forms, rings, and similar objects.



Figure 1. Silver ornaments from the Peja Spa, 6th–5th century BC



Figure 2. Silver bracelet with snake heads, 6th–5th century BC

Following the silver artifacts of Late Antiquity, we now turn to the exhibits of the Early Middle Ages, a period in which silverwork continued to flourish. Rings, earrings, and pendants represent the silver ornaments discovered in various necropolises. Some of these pieces were crafted using the well-known filigree technique, particularly rings and earrings. As an illustration, we present a silver ring from the Early Medieval period, discovered in a necropolis at Matiçan near Prishtina, which is combined with the filigree technique (Catalogue, 1998). *Figure 3*.



Figure 3. Silver ring

The extent to which the craft of silversmithing was known and practiced among the Albanian people is evidenced by data, documents, travelogues of foreign authors, and, most importantly, by the objects themselves—various works and ornaments.

The oldest known register (codex) of guilds in Albania, as well as in the Balkans, is that of the silversmiths' guild of the city of Elbasan (1662–1900) (Shkodra, 1973:186). In the silversmithing craft, Albanian masters employed different techniques for producing a wide range of objects. The best known were the techniques of carving, hammering, casting, and filigree (Mitrushi, 1977:373). The most renowned silversmithing technique, not only in Albanian territories but also throughout the Balkans and beyond, was filigree, which reached its peak of development in the 19th century. It was used not only for crafting body ornaments but also for decorating weapons, vessels, and household items. Filigree (which older masters in Northern Albania call *telish me kokrra*—granulated filigree—or applied filigree mounted on a plate dominated by granules, and *telish kafazeli*—openwork filigree with little or no granules) represents a distinct branch of metalworking with fine wires requiring skill, talent, and patience. With this technique, Albanian masters, especially those from Shkodra, Prizren, Tirana, and Elbasan, produced refined and diverse works to such an extent that openwork filigree became recognized as an Albanian specialty in the Balkans (Mitrushi, 1977:380).

In Kosovo, the historic and beautiful city of Prizren has been and continues to be the main center of filigree. However, silversmiths from Prishtina, Peja (noted for the granulation technique), and Gjakova (known for *savat*, niello technique) also engaged in this craft. Despite the numerous circumstances, conditions, and difficulties, the filigree masters of Prizren, Peja, and Gjakova never ceased their work, striving to maintain the centuries-old tradition of this highly esteemed craft both among Albanians and beyond. Among the most notable families engaged in silversmithing in Prizren, Gjakova, and Peja are: Shahta, Shiroka, Bashota, Shahini, Laçi, Bisaki, Bytyqi, Oroshi, Lleshdedaj, Nikolov, Spaqi, Gashi, Pali, Kërveshi, Qivlaku, Domniku, Perolli, Simoni, and many others.

Since this study concerns filigree and the museum, it is important to note that since 1986, around 2,000 silversmithing artifacts have become part of the rich treasury of the collections of the National Museum of Kosovo. These objects previously belonged to the family of the renowned craftsman and collector of silver works, Viktor Gashi from Peja (Gashi, 2012).

The ethnological exhibits of the museum that belong to the group of metal ornaments are primarily made of silver, though some are combined with other metals such as copper and brass. Among the silver artifacts (some crafted with the filigree technique) are earrings, rings, necklaces, bracelets, belt buckles, chains, various chest ornaments, head ornaments, pendants and different brooches, watch chains, collars, cigarette cases, purses, decorative pins, and triangular-shaped amulets. *Figure 4.*



Figure 4. Silver ornaments from the National Museum of Kosovo

In a number of head ornaments and other pieces, silver and the filigree technique are present alongside other materials such as brass, copper, silk, cloth, cotton, beads, amber, and various stones. The filigree works, which primarily include women's jewelry but also men's, represent the specific craft of using and combining fine wires, the extraordinary precision, applied artistry, talent, and the high artistic qualities of the filigree masters. Floral motifs such as flowers and leaves, as well as geometric designs, have been applied to the precious silver ornaments in the collections of the Ethnological Museum – part of the National Museum of Kosovo. However, a large portion of this diverse collection of jewelry, perhaps the finest pieces, mainly from the silversmithing craft, are still unjustly kept in Belgrade, after being borrowed during 1997 and 1999 from the National Museum of Kosovo.

The Ethnological Museum, as part of the National Museum of Kosovo, opened its doors to visitors on September 11, 2006, and in nearly 19 years of activity, it has managed to organize a variety of events, presentations, and exhibitions. These aimed to promote a new way of communication between the museum—as an institution that, beyond exhibiting, also has the mission of educating younger generations, particularly future filigree masters through demonstrations of the craft and its inherited history—and the visitors, who constitute the core of the museum's interactive work, without whom the museum would lose its meaning.

According to Charlie Seemann, a former folklorist and museum advisor in the United States, live performances and demonstrations not only enrich the educational offering of the museum but also support the museum's mission as an institution (Seemann, 1987:59). Based on this perspective, the Ethnological Museum, in the years 2008, 2010, 2012, and 2014, organized the "Crafts Week," during which more than 120 artisans participated across the four editions, demonstrating their crafts in various materials such as woodcarving, metalwork, pottery, textiles, handicrafts, and others. Among these crafts, the demonstration of filigree held a central place due to its materials, tools, artistry, precision, and applied motifs. *Figure 5.* Filigree masters from Prizren, Peja, and Prishtina were part of these activities, and for the first time, alongside the men who traditionally dominated this craft, women also participated, demonstrating how filigree is made. Experiencing filigree production up close not only promoted the artistic values this craft carries but also aimed to educate younger generations, ensuring the continuation of silversmithing traditions from one generation to the next, preventing its disappearance—something that threatens many crafts today due to lack of state support and the limited interest of younger generations.



Figure 5. Filigree masters from Prizren demonstrating filigree work at the Ethnological Museum. Photo: Bekim Xhemili

The importance of the museum's role in the communication between filigree and visitors is further demonstrated by the ongoing project in which, for the first time in the entire history of museology in Kosovo, the Ethnological Museum of Kosovo in Prishtina was twinned with the Cambridge Folk Museum in England in November 2012. As part of this project, there was also a demonstration of the art of filigree and silversmithing at the Cambridge Museum in England *Figure 6*.

The significance of presenting filigree work in England was multifaceted, as visitors, students, and researchers had the opportunity to learn about Kosovo directly through its culture and art—specifically filigree as part of its intangible heritage—and not merely through the lens of war, as some Cambridge Museum visitors noted.



Figure 6. Filigree master from Prizren, Bashkim Tejeci, working in front of visitors at the Cambridge Folk Museum, England. Photo: Bekim Xhemili

The exhibition “*Silver Thread: From Kosovo to Istria*”, opened in 2015 at the Archaeological Park – Lapidarium of the National Museum of Kosovo, was the result of collaboration between the Ethnological Museum of Kosovo and the Ethnographic Museum of Istria, Croatia. The same exhibition had first been presented to the public in December 2014 in Croatia, curated by the custodians of the Ethnographic Museum of Istria.

The exhibition highlighted the rich symbolism of filigree in the public space of Istria, as a consequence of the first economic migration of Albanians from Kosovo to Croatia during the 1950s and 1960s. According to the curators, filigree in Istria dates back to trade relations with Byzantium, but the form of filigree known today in Istria was introduced in the mid-20th century by craftsmen from Kosovo (*Catalogue, 2015*).

This migration was intense and lasted until the late 1970s, largely due to the rapid development of tourism in the region. Through the exhibition, the journey of many families from Kosovo—such as the Shahta, Shahini, Laçi, Bisaki, Bytyqi, Oroshi, Lleshdedaj, and Nikolov families—from Prizren and Gjakova was showcased. Upon arriving in Croatia in the second half of the 20th century, these families opened shops and workshops, continuing the silversmithing tradition, particularly the filigree technique, and creating beautiful works from precious metals, especially silver (*Catalogue, 2015*). *Figure 7*

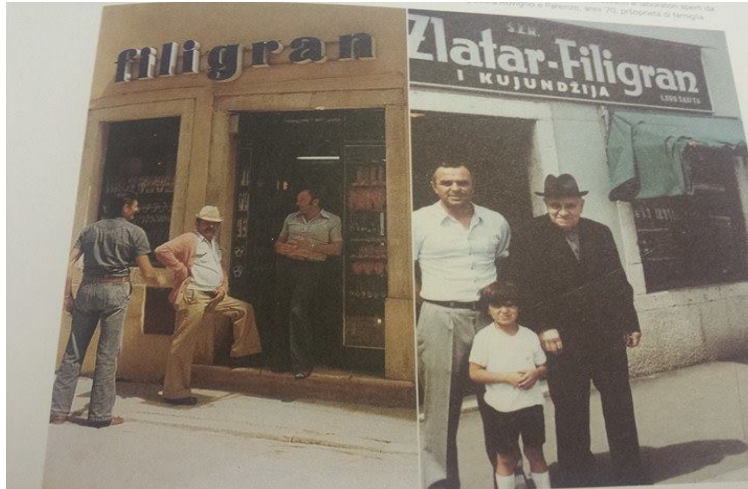


Figure 7. The Lleshdedaj and Shahta families in front of their shops in Rovinj and Poreč, during the 1970s (*Catalogue, 2015*)

The exhibition included around 30 artifacts crafted by the skilled hands of Albanian masters using the filigree technique. All the exhibits were loaned by Albanian families specifically for the opening of the exhibition. Among the items on display were rings, earrings, necklaces, watch chains, chests, figurines, and miniature musical instruments made of silver, such as a ship, motorcycle, piano, violin, as well as a silver-crafted model of the city of Rovinj, which was considered a remarkable masterpiece. *Figure 8*



Figure 8. A filigree violin crafted by Albert Oroshi – Rovinj. Photo: Bekim Xhemili

One of the most striking exhibits was a red *dollama* (traditional robe) from 1850, embroidered with silver threads and worn by Kata Shahta exactly 165 years ago. With the migration of the Shahta family to Croatia, the robe was taken along with them. *Figure 9*



Figure 9. Red robe embroidered with silver thread – Shahta family. Photo: Bekim Xhemili

The exhibition “*The Silver Thread from Kosovo to Istria*” conveyed a threefold history through its exhibits: the tradition of silversmithing and filigree, the migration of Albanians from Kosovo to Croatia, and the preservation of these works for such a long period of time. This event was highly valued by visitors for its content, the history it communicated, and the message that the filigree technique must be preserved further.

Unlike in the previous century, the state of filigree, namely the silversmith’s craft, today is not in good condition. While in the 1980s over 100 filigree artisans were part of the cooperative in Prizren, today in one of the only workshops established in Prizren after the 1999 war, there are just 8 artisans. Among them is the master Bashkim Tejeci, who continues to work at the same pace, producing highly artistic pieces from silver threads. Together with him, seven other men and women are engaged in crafting silver objects. According to Tejeci, there is still interest in filigree today, both from local citizens and foreigners, who order items ranging from the simplest jewelry to larger works (vases, ships, etc.), as well as from national institutions (Interview: Tejeci, n.d.).

However, the main problem faced by this group of artisans, as well as others working privately in their shops or homes, is the unwillingness of local and central institutions to integrate the filigree craft into vocational schools, where future generations could be trained. Artisans have stated they would gladly teach filigree voluntarily, without compensation, as they fear that if this does not happen soon, combined with the country’s poor economic situation, slow tourism development, lack of state support for finding markets (selling works), and competition from gold and silver imports, the craft risks disappearing.

Some artisans, still practicing today, have received attractive offers from abroad to transfer their skills but refused, believing that this heritage must be preserved and passed on within Kosovo. A similar view is held by one of the only filigree artisans in Pristina, Vilson Tomrecaj, 58 years old, originally from Prizren, who has lived and worked in Pristina since 1977–1978 (Figure 10). Coming from a family of artisans—his father Zef and five brothers and two sisters were all engaged in silversmithing—Tomrecaj learned the craft in his childhood. Recalling the past, he mentions times when artisans were even persecuted for filigree work in their homes under the communist regime, the establishment of the cooperative in Prizren, his move to Pristina, and his career of over 50 years. He is not satisfied with today’s situation, citing low purchasing power, with only occasional small sales, mainly gifts bought by younger people or foreigners living in Kosovo. Prices, he notes, are low compared to the extremely delicate work required to complete such items. As an example of this difficulty, he points to a silver model of the famous ship *Santa Maria*, made of thousands of filigree parts, which took three months of intensive work to complete.

Another major challenge is the lack of space in his small shop, which prevents him from teaching the craft to young people—though there is no shortage of those interested (Interview: Tomrecaj, 2016, November). A similar problem is

faced by the only female filigree artisan in Pristina, Krenare Rakovica, 34 years old, who has a small shop in the city center, also serving as her workshop (*Figure 11*). She inherited the craft from both of her parents, who were silversmiths, but she also learned many filigree details from other artisans. In 2012, she demonstrated the filigree technique to visitors of the Ethnological Museum, which she described as a valuable experience—highlighting filigree as a fine art, the museum as an institution preserving material and spiritual culture, and the opportunity for direct communication with visitors. As one of the youngest artisans, through her many contacts she observes that interest in filigree remains, especially among young women, but purchases are mostly made by foreigners (Interview: Rakovica, 2016, November).



Figure 10. Filigree artisans from Prizren in their workshop



Figure 11. Vilson Tomrecaj – Filigree artisan



Figure 12. Krenare Rakovica – Filigree artisan

The continuous promotion and demonstration of filigree in the Ethnological Museum and other museums across Kosovo, the participation in handicraft fairs both inside and outside the country, the promotion of filigree art by artists, local designers, and various festivals through their works, designs, and creations—even symbolically—, the increasing presence and mention of filigree in local and international media, the plan to establish a handicraft museum in the future, and the inclusion of filigree on the list of Kosovo's protected cultural heritage as part of its intangible heritage, all spark hope that despite the many challenges faced by filigree artisans, filigree will survive. This survival will be ensured thanks

to passion, hard work, talent, artistic ability, and the desire, along with the commitment to pass down the craftsmanship from generation to generation, so that future generations, like those before them, may pour their ideas and tastes into artistic silver works.

Biodata of Author



Curator – ethnologist **Bekim Xhemili** was born in Mitrovica on August 8, 1983. He completed his undergraduate and postgraduate studies in ethnology at the Department of Ethnology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Pristina. He pursued further studies at the Institute of European Ethnology as a scholarship holder of the University of Vienna (2008–2009), and later at the University of Turku in Finland, in the Department of European Ethnology during 2010. Since 2006, he has been working at the Ethnological Museum of Kosovo as a curator – ethnologist.

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Review Article

A review of the album: Traces of Little Qamil

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Abstract

The album, together with the monograph “Traces of Qamili i Vogël in Music”, is dedicated to the musical creativity of Qamili i Vogël, who nourished and shaped his artistry through the folk tradition. Every song created and performed by him, which is part of this album, takes us into the heart of the Albanian musical heritage, embracing the spirit of a nation through his originality and creations. Within the Albanian folk tradition, stories of love, historical events, and everyday life are passed down from generation to generation. It is this musical narrative that Qamili i Vogël, with rare mastery, adapts in his creations, channeling the centuries-old melodies of his musical heritage.

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Album Title: Traces of Qamili i Vogël in Music

Author: Bestar Vula & Shpend Rraci

ISBN: 978-9951-28-360-1

Publisher: Artini

Publication Place: Pristina, Kosova

Publication Date: 2025

Pages: 50

Figure 1. Album information: Traces of Qamili i Vogël in Music

This album is a musical journey where, within its sounds, we invite you to discover the spiritual and artistic mastery of Qamil Muhaxhiri (1923–1991), who through his brilliant creations wove folkloric themes into Albanian traditional music.

Within Albanian folk tradition, stories of love, historical events, and everyday life are passed down from generation to generation. It is this musical narrative that Qamili i Vogël adapts with rare mastery in his creations, channeling the centuries-old melodies of his musical heritage.

The eternal musical legacy of Qamil Muhaxhiri is woven as a thread of storytelling, with strands of resilience, love, and the very flow of life. From this rich cultural source, Qamili i Vogël, through his creations and interpretations, deeply rooted himself in Albanian tradition and drew inspiration to compose songs that embellish the repertoire of Albanian traditional music.

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The album, along with the monograph *“Traces of Qamili i Vogël in Music”*, is dedicated to the musical creativity of Qamili i Vogël, who nourished and shaped his artistry through folk tradition. Every song he composed and performed, which is part of this album, leads us into the heart of Albanian musical heritage, embracing the spirit of a nation through his creations and originality.

Undoubtedly, one of the most difficult tasks of this project was the selection of musical materials created and interpreted by Qamil Muhaxhiri to be included in the album, as all his works were remarkable. It must be emphasized that from his entire creative corpus, this album features 16 of his original compositions, musically edited with great care by Mr. Bestar Vula and Mr. Shpend Rraci.

In addition to the USB format, these works of Qamili i Vogël can also be accessed digitally via a QR code located on the first and last page.

The album was made possible with the support of Agrion sh.p.k. and with the permission of his daughter, Ms. Shqipe Muhaxhiri, to whom, together with Bestar, we take the opportunity to express our gratitude.

At the heart of this entire exploration lies the mastery of Qamili i Vogël, this creator and performer, whose pen has given life not only to ethnomusicological studies but also to musical creativity, leaving an extraordinary wealth in the repertoire of Albanian traditional music. Every piece of music found in this album represents the nectar of melodies—these creations and performances remain as a spiritual treasure for all future generations.

May this exploration of *“Traces of Qamili i Vogël in Music”* ignite a deeper appreciation for the resilience and beauty of Albanian traditional music. May his creations and interpretations resonate within your soul, inviting you to experience the eternal charm he left to generations.

Songs Created and Performed by Qamili i Vogël Included in this Album

1. Kah dera të rashë (At the Door I Fell)
2. Malli për dashnorin (Longing for the Beloved)
3. Këndo kumri e mjera (Sing, Poor Dove)
4. Pikllimi (Sorrow)
5. I mjeri jetim (The Poor Orphan)
6. Dija dhe Shpendi (Dija and Shpendi)
7. T’fala boni dashnores sime (Greetings to My Beloved)
8. M’agoj dita n’breg t’nji prroni (The Day Dawns by a Stream)
9. Fol se m’ke në dorë (Speak, for You Hold Me in Your Hand)
10. Hajde moj buzëburbuqe (Come, My Rosebud Lips)
11. Oh, fletët e tua moj drandofille (Oh, Your Petals, My Rose)
12. Jare, mos me shti, moj me t’ba be (Jare, Don’t Make Me Swear)
13. Ku po knojnë k’tu dy kumrija (Where These Two Doves Sing)
14. Vlla e motër Terbeshi (Terbeshi Brother and Sister)
15. Këngë për Ymer Rizën (Song for Ymer Riza)
16. Kadal dal po më vjen pleqnija (Slowly, Old Age is Coming to Me)

Biodata of Author



Dr. **Krenar Doli** was born in 1985 in Gjakova. He completed his primary and secondary education in his hometown. In 2007, he earned his bachelor's degree from the Academy of Arts in Tirana, Faculty of Music, Department of Musicology. In 2014, he completed his master's degree at the Institute of Cultural Anthropology and Art Studies, Albanology Studies Center, specializing in Ethnomusicology within the Department of Ethnology-Folklore. In 2021, he obtained his PhD in Turkish Folklore from Hacı Bayram Veli University in Ankara. He currently

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Muzika në refleksët e kohës, a selection of works, “Erpoprint,” Gjakova, 2007.

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