



MUSIC AND DANCE IN SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE

Gender, Virtual Communications and Legacies of
Empires: Eighth Symposium of the ICTMD Study Group
on Music and Dance in Southeastern Europe

İstanbul, Türkiye
2024



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**Gender, Virtual Communications and Legacies of
Empires: Eighth Symposium of the ICTMD Study
Group on Music and Dance in Southeastern Europe**

**Co-ordinated by
ICTMD Türkiye, İstanbul University, İstanbul Technical
University, Boğaziçi University and Trabzon University
10 May – 13 May 2022**

Editors:

Abdullah Akat, Liz Mellish and Nick Green

Editorial assistance:

Ivanka Vlaeva

Gül Kaplan Ekemen

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Introduction

The eighth symposium of the ICTMD Study Group on Music and Dance in Southeastern Europe was organised in İstanbul between 10 May – 13 May 2022 by the ICTMD Türkiye national committee in cooperation with İstanbul University State Conservatory (Ethnomusicology Program), İstanbul Technical University Turkish Music State Conservatory (Musicology Department), Boğaziçi University, and Trabzon University State Conservatory.

The programme focused on three themes:

1. Gender and sexuality in music and dance in Southeastern Europe.
2. Music and dance in virtual communications
3. Legacies of Empires on dance and music in Southeastern Europe

This publication is considered a full record of this Study Group's eighth symposium. The aim of the editing is to standardise the use of English language and the style format from authors who use varying punctuation, spelling, and referencing rules. All texts were edited using the DdA reference format for dance.¹ Twenty-one presenters did not submit full papers; these are represented by their original abstracts which are grouped at the end of publication, so that there is a full record of all the symposium presentations.

Special thanks go to the ICTMD Türkiye national committee, the Program Committee, the Local Organizing Committee and the Study Group executives, for their great efforts in the preparation of the Symposium programme.

The detailed full report of the Symposium written by Dóra Pál-Kovács, Dilyana Kurdova and İdris Ersan Küçük follows.

Endnotes

1. See Elsie Ivancich Dunin and Candi Harrington deAlaiza, 2010. "DdA reference format for dance." Online: <https://79c295e1-a534-4dee-8b68-e135ef174454.filesusr.com/ugd/c33df9_d76f567b50714bf6a4711c219d061614.pdf>.

Themes

1. Gender and sexuality in music and dance in Southeastern Europe

Sexuality is a difficult topic for all researchers and educators. Dance and music academics, teachers and educators are not immune to these challenges, especially given the large number of children, adolescents, and young adults who pursue dance or music study and performance. Dance and music (traditional, social, popular) provide one of the clearest opportunities for the discussion of gender, sexuality, since the genre itself relies on representations of specific characters and the narratives of scenario foreground stories of love and desire.

This topic focuses on sexuality, gender, and identity in dance and music training and practice, and tries to investigate diverse perspectives from schools, dance and music schools, college, university dance and music programs as well as cultural associations, even popular neighbourhoods and villages. By bringing issues of sexuality and gender to the forefront we consider that the factor of gender is one of essential importance for the interpretation of dance and music cultures, thus dancing and music making may be approached as a place where the gender identities are not only represented but also constructed, sometimes verifying and other doubting the dominant ideology of the society regarding the ‘correct’ masculine and feminine behaviour. On the other hand, the term sexuality calls attention to various modes of desire, particularly the ways in which desires are policed and/or authorized by the dominant power structures of a given society, therefore, sexuality procedures have been strongly influenced by gay and lesbian studies and queer theory.

Whatever the season, region or rhythm, the main ‘danger’ remains the same, that dance and music promote sexual freedom and/or breaks down social barriers. And so, all over the world, dancing and music making have always been a vital act of revolution. Potential topics that could be addressed include (but are not limited to):

- The terms ‘dance’ and ‘music’ are gendered and merely describe the same thing in different words when the various genders and/or sexualities perform?
- How gender operates in the dance and music world in the early twenty-first century?
- The impact of sexuality *on music and dance practices* in contemporary and traditional cultures.
- Sexuality and sexual identity in folk music and dance.
- Sexual orientation and participation in dance and music teaching and practice.
- Representations of gender and sexuality in cinema, television and social media.
- Dance and music in popular culture – a vehicle for entertaining and/or a platform for education?
- The role of dance and music in constructing/deconstructing gender stereotypes.

2. Music and dance in virtual communications

‘Seeing is believing’, so the old saying goes. But seeing is never final; instead, it is a fluid domain of social meaning. The physical act of vision is only one domain of seeing. Vision also encompasses a broader palate of knowing, questioning, perception and reflection.

The Covid-19 pandemic has generated tremendous changes in daily life across the globe. Initially, without therapies and vaccines to reduce sickness and suffering, people reduced their risk of infection by covering faces, washing hands, and especially by remaining ‘socially distant’ from family, friends, and colleagues as well as strangers. This distancing has created new forms of distress from social displacement and inadequate emotional connections. In particular, the pandemic’s social displacements have posed thorny challenges for people seeking to exchange ideas, offer comfort, and express feelings in close relationships. To stay connected, people have explored innovative cultural and technological strategies to communicate remotely about family, romance, work, healthcare, and other matters. Many of us, for example, increasingly rely on FaceTime, Twitter, Zoom, and other technologies and social media to express ourselves—particularly by displaying our faces—across multiple cultural and social contexts.

Ethnomusicologists and ethnochoreologists have long observed that human groups who encounter new social contexts develop innovative means for exchanging ideas and feelings with others. As happens with any new cultural pattern, the initial encounters with unfamiliar communication practices seem unsettling and stressful, particularly during everyday conversations. The fundamental human desire to connect with friends and colleagues, celebrate life events, take new forms. As experienced academics, we currently grapple with the complexities of sharing knowledge remotely rather than in face-to-face seminars. For example, Zoom meetings has become a common issue that we address with colleagues. Having gained familiarity with new communication practices in our own personal and work lives, we offer our anthropological reflections on how this pandemic moment relates to broader human experiences with remote communication.

Potential topics that could be addressed include (but are not limited to):

- Pro-and-con analysis of crucial success factors (monitoring and evaluation) of music and dance (education) in virtual communication.
- Virtual memory matched dance and music education design (how can dance and music be learnt from the internet?) (Development of creative tendencies for the internet in music and dance education) (Multimedia techniques in education).
- Digital arrangements regarding dance and music education.
- The problematics of dance and music education related to virtual communication during the pandemic.
- Dance and music methodology in virtual (online) communication.
- Interactions in virtual communication: Theoretical and practical inferences.
- Intergenerational digital adaptation/attitudes in dance and music education?
- Evaluation of online dance and music education examples before the pandemic and adaptation to the current situation.
- Online teaching and learning in music and dance.
- Interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches in virtual communication (music & dance).

In this new world of personal media, events of music, dance or theatre take on new lives through virtual imagery and visual experiences. Such new circumstances necessarily require additional perspectives for research. Moreover, as images move and transform across the globe at instantaneous speed and in numerous reconfigurations, they give rise to new questions of

representation and ethics in access and consumption, in contexts such as museum exhibits and online events.

3. Legacies of Empires on dance and music in Southeastern Europe

Over the centuries, Southeastern Europe has been subject to the rule of a diversity of Empires, (i.e. Austrian-Hungarian, Byzantium, Ottoman). As a region, it embedded a palimpsest of multiculturalism, which has long been disguised during the nation-building processes. The region consists however of a rich, hybrid and complex cultural diversity, displaying a range of commonalities that transcend national borders. However, the shared cultural heritage also evokes a strong cultural memory, which can also be emotionally challenging. It is now time to delineate, delay and deconstruct the conceptual, structural and ethnographic implications of this heritage. We are inviting participants to present the impact of different imperial experiences on various forms of dance and music traditions, both in historical and contemporary perspectives.

Potential topics that could be addressed include (but are not limited to):

- Similarities among the dance and music cultures in the region.
- Claimed ownership of certain dance and music traditions.
- (inter)cultural results of religion on dance/music.
- (inter)cultural results of various administrative/diplomatic/political strategies on dance/music.
- (inter)cultural results of wars/riots/resistances on dance/music.
- (inter)cultural results of love affairs on dance/music.

Report on the symposium

Dóra Pál-Kovács, Dilyana Kurdova and İdris Ersan Küçük

After the unprecedented times we lived through the past two years, our Turkish friends finally had the opportunity to host us all in person but also online. The İstanbul University's exquisite Rektörlük Mavi Salon (Rectorate Blue Hall) was our meeting place for 4 days inviting us to elaborate on three main topics but also allowing us to share our experiences, thoughts, and appreciation for each other. This hybrid conference included 2 panel sessions, one poster session and 15 paper sessions of altogether 53 papers, 6 of which were presented online. The busy program was balanced by lovely evenings, an amazing Bosphorus boat tour and an exquisite concert at the İstanbul Technical University. Turkish hospitality has been proven for one more time thanks to the excellent joint work of the İstanbul University, İstanbul Technical University, Boğaziçi University and Trabzon University.

This memorable symposium opened with welcoming words from Abdullah Akat (Chair of the local organizing committee), Arzu Öztürkmen (head of the ICTMD Türkiye national committee), Velika Stojkova Serafimovska (former chair and current vice-chair of the Study Group), Mehmet Öcal Özbilgin, the then acting and the now chair of the Study Group and Mahmut Ak, the rector of İstanbul University. Everyone expressed their happiness and gratitude for being able to meet in person, for keeping the group together and not becoming smaller in number but on the contrary, growing in numbers and keenness.

Music and dance in virtual communications

Having been forced to stop the normal until now way of living, working, and experiencing life, it was necessary that one of the main topics of the conference would be the 'new normal' – that is the topic of "Music and dance in virtual communications". Some of the papers presented concerned the way people lived through these unprecedented times, how they reacted and adapted to the whole turmoil.

Daniela Ivanova-Nyberg opened her presentation with a vivid hands-on approach by engaging all of us present or online with a 5 minute dancing session. She continued by sharing her observations and various aspects of teaching and learning Bulgarian dances via Zoom as well as showing us the outcomes of her surveys conducted with Bulgarians and non-Bulgarian respondents. She concluded by quoting Ingold "we study *with* people rather than making studies *of* them".

Dilek Cantekin Elyagutu and **Kerem Cenk Yılmaz** elaborated on the transactional distance theory of distance education and discussed the effect of online learning on the traditional dance culture of Turkey since Turkey is a region that still preserves its traditional environment and methods for transferring traditional dance practices.

Gül Kaplan Ekemen also explored the topic from the angle of virtual stage performances and the pros and cons of this new way of virtual culture using the example of the Evdekal campaign.

Iva Niemčić and **Joško Čaleta** gave two Croatian examples in the light of the new normality, the continuity and development of the Lastovo Carnival and the traditional vocal music making.

Ivona Opetcheska Tatarchevska discussed about the sustainability of the professional folk dance scene in Serbia, Macedonia and Croatia with the example of the regional initiative Ethnosummit 'TraditionNew/TradicijaNova', as a five years old interdisciplinary, new cultural

pattern/model of cooperation established on the initiative of the State Ensemble of Folk Songs and Dances of Serbia 'Kolo'.

Christos Papakostas took a different approach by analyzing music and dance communities on Youtube within the larger frame of the relations between folk cultures in Greece and Turkey.

Muzaffer Sümbül took up the subject of digital cultural environments and the formation of network societies and how the body as a tool becomes digitized by taking a new form of conveying its message directly to the audience.

When there is a problem – there is a solution: another part of the papers presented under this main topic dealt with possible strategies to cope with the new, not that much wanted, normal, based on already existing situations. So, logically, another group of the papers under the major topic of Virtual Communications concerned the formation of databases and the digitalization of existing material

Joško Čaleta emphasized the need for digital databases in times like these by showcasing the Klapa singing development and giving a brief introduction to the record industry in Croatia from 1927 to the end of 1950s available within the Digital Repository of the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research.

Last, but not least, an interesting topic that attracted a lot of attention was presented by **Ivanka Vlaeva** who presented crypto music, the product of distant communication which we all have experienced up until now, revealing the numerous opportunities it offers to the market in a digital age and thus inciting a lot of discussion of the new ways to earn money in the post-Covid digital era.

Gender and sexuality in music and dance in Southeastern Europe

The second topic of the symposium was Gender and sexuality in music and dance in Southeastern Europe. By bringing issues of sexuality and gender to the forefront we consider that the factor of gender is one of essential importance for the interpretation of dance and music cultures, thus dancing and music making may be approached as a place where gender identities are not only represented but also constructed, sometimes verifying and other times doubting the dominant ideology of the society regarding the 'correct' masculine and feminine behaviour.

Dance

Nick Green emphasised an outline of the traditional forms of Romanian men's dancing, focusing on the 'corps' type group dances which are closely linked to many customs and traditions with the aim to introduce and analyse the dance content and context.

Liz Mellish pointed out that the Transylvanian *călușeri* dances hold a place in Romanian collective memory because of their use as a demonstration of 'Romanianness' in resistance to the domination of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. She gave details about the women's role in the past and nowadays.

Paul-Alexandru Remeș presented different perspectives about who, and when young men can participate in social life in Romanian communities. He showed video material demonstrating different approaches to the subject showing how the separation between sexes is defined, and in some cases bonds created, from a different perspective in traditional village settings.

There were 2 presentations about the Hungarian dance culture in Romania. **Vivien Szőnyi** spoke about dance as a sociocultural practice that constructs women's roles in the life

in a Moldavian settlement and how their innovative efforts to create dance can be linked to the transformation of the local economy and society.

Dóra Pál-Kovács dealt with feminine and masculine gender roles in certain gestures and touching movements in a 20th century couple folk dance from Magyarózd, a Hungarian village in Transylvania, what kind of touching belongs can be considered as transgression and how women perceived these.

Gökçe Asena Altınbay covered gender inequality in Turkish folk dance organization, how the practices aimed to prevent gender discrimination with a liberal feminist perspective find a place in professional or semi-professional folk dance educational institutions.

Sevi Bayraktar focused on gender and Turkish folk dance in the remarking of revolutionary spaces. Why was the dancing body in public political assemblies so often represented as male despite the prominence of women in labour activism?

İdris Ersan Küçük discussed the Black Sea region of Turkey, where cultural identities are very dominant in social life. Masculinity is a dominant feature in the lyrics of folk songs and the body language of dances. He gave the experiences of male dancers who were encultured in the eastern Black Sea region and chose dancing as a profession.

Natalia Koutsougera introduced one of the newest aspects in the gender issues is the LGBTQ movement and the problems of a Greek female rap group, since rap is essentially a male genre of music and dance. She focussed on the constructions of gender and sexuality among male-dominated, female-dominated and queer-dominated zones which are connected with Afrodiasporic and Latino diasporic global flows.

Music

Alma Bejtullahu gave a presentation about the traditional concept of sworn virgins, an old custom that regulates the transformation of the gender/sexuality when women assume the social role of men. What does it mean when a woman dresses in men's clothes, and wears a man's name, and how does it signify women's freedom, and social equality between men and women.

Velika Stojkova Serafimovska discussed the example of the Macedonian Roma musician Baysa, who also dresses as a woman in men's clothes, with masculine hair, which can be linked to her performance. For her, this is a form of protection. Her journey as a Roma woman musician follows different stereotypes, prejudices, conflicts and discriminations that she is still overcoming, while music was, and still is, her only saviour and escape.

Stepping out of the traditional framework, **Bengi Çakmak** presented Atmospheric Black Metal music, with all its gender implications, as black metal itself is a specifically masculine music. The examples we heard confirm the presence of a female perspective in this masculine world, thus music has a very special and crucial place in terms of the capacity of an artistic creation that is transformative and encompassing.

Bahar Gjuka started her speech with a personal, family example, and continued with different segments of women's life, and Turkish folk songs about child marriages. The process of music making involved cross-cultural exploration, communication, rehearsals and performances of this song in a community in Calgary.

Ayano Tamaki observed the change of sexual expression through the example of the *chalga* singer, Azis in Bulgaria. How his sexual expression has changed concretely and what the factors were. We could see an example of transitional display of sexuality in popular music in gender.

Marko Kölbl illustrated a critique of heteronormativity by Croatian examples. Accordingly, the stereo presumptions in ethnographic research often mirror the presidential weight of shared understandings of gender and sexuality within traditional musical cultures. He provided theoretical discussion from the field of gender studies and queer theory to ethnomusicological practice.

Sanja Ranković and Mirjana Zakić referred to how the role of Serbian women in Kosovo has changed from limited positions in social action and expected participation in the musical life of the community to take leading positions in the local environment.

Social custom

Dilyana Kurdova gave a talk about how women earned their right to take part in traditionally male folklore rituals. Today there are more and more females disguised as Mummers in different festivities. At the same time men do not participate in female rituals. According to Durkheim we could say that society is more real when celebrating. We heard a brief comment on society's reaction to the inclusion of women in traditionally male rituals and to elaborate on the role of women within the larger frame of so-called 'dance revival' in Bulgaria.

Gamze Tanrivermiş and Abdullah Akat shared information about the Turkish and Georgian *Berikoaba* and *Kalandar* customs with regard to gendered representations involved in these customs. Considering the fact that the main performers and worshippers of the Dionysian rites were women, the representations of gender could be seen in the play, songs and dances. We could see these two rituals' connection with the cult of Dionysus, through the themes of rebirth and fertility.

Gonca Girgin and Elif Özen highlighted the authority, crisis, and reconciliation of the Erotic Karagöz, which is one of the shadow theatres of the Ottoman Empire. There was a dialogue at the basis of the performance that positioned it in the social history narrative that is constructed through the elements. Karagöz might own the role of a breaking point with integrated sexuality and obscene plays.

Legacies of Empires on dance and music in Southeastern Europe

The largest topic of the symposium was the **legacies of empires on dance and music in Southeastern Europe** with 26 presentations showing the vast information on the subject. Also a couple of presentations could be considered under this topic's umbrella because of their joint or multilayer features. All presentations are sorted under relevant subtitles as academic custom and for understanding the aspects better. Additionally, it can be regarded in two parts - dance liaison and music liaison. The first day of the symposium, the paper session of "Transcultural process in dance and musical practice" was chaired by Carol Silverman.

The papers in this topic were mostly related to music with the exception of the presentation of **László Felföldi**, guest of honour of the Symposium that was about dance. He gave an overview of the multi-faceted dance and music panorama of Banat (Vojvodina, Serbia) a northern region of Southeastern Europe in the middle of the 20th century. According to his presentation, the empires (Austro-Hungarian, Byzantium, Ottoman, Russian) and countries (Serbia, Romania, Hungary) exercising authority over this region, had strong impacts on the cultural memory of the region through their cultural policies during their hegemony ensuring nation building processes. He mentioned the contributors to this field included the Janković sisters, Ivan Ivancan, Anca Giurchescu, Pesovár Ernő and Martin György. Also the presentation was based on his own research in Banat, that started in the 1980s in the villages along the Maros river among Serbians, Romanians, Hungarians and Gypsies.

Mojca Kovačič pointed out the ideas of legacies: Slavic against German during the Austro-Hungarian monarchy or Alpine and European against Balkan (and Oriental) in the post-independence period of Slovenia. Her paper focuses on the so-called Slovenian Balkan brass bands (*Slovenski trubači*), which flourished on the music scene after 2000. They aimed to complement the existent discussions of the processes of commodification and appropriation of Balkan brass music by the Global North yet to shift a view from the conceptual framework of ethno-racial difference toward the shared experience of global capitalism.

The main purpose of **Jakša Primorac**'s presentation, which was the last one of the session, was to draw attention to the importance of the centuries-long influence of Italy, and sporadically France, on the music of the East Adriatic, Ionian and Aegean regions. He discussed two examples of traditional liturgical singing to illustrate this phenomenon. His first example regarded the traditional chant of Istrian Croats. During the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period, Croats and Italians in Istria practiced different traditions of Catholic liturgical singing. The second example refers to the chant of Orthodox Greeks on the Island of Syros, as well as on some other neighbouring Cyclades Islands in the Aegean Sea, which is identical to the Orthodox chant on the Ionian Islands.

There were two sessions about the topic of 'legacies of empires' before the lunch break on the third day of the symposium. The first one was related to biographies of musicians and their research. In the paper session of "Negotiating legacies of canonic figures in music research and practice" the chair was taken by Velika Stojkova Serafimovska.

Bernard Kleikamp described the life and work of Dutch ethnomusicologist Wouter Swets. He met Swets in the 1970s and worked together with him in the 1990s. Swets, who was the owner of Pan Records Company, subsequently used the results of his fieldwork with his band *Calgija*, that existed from 1969 until 1995. The iconoclast ethnomusicologist Wouter Swets (1930–2016) started doing fieldwork in the Balkans and Turkey in the 1950s. In the presentation, Swet's videos from the Calgija Band were shown and an audio piece played that showed the arrangement by Wouter Swets.

Urša Šivic focused on France Marolt, the founder of the Institute of Ethnomusicology in Ljubljana Slovenia and his tendencies toward cultural decolonization. Marolt became the inventor of research methods and discourses motivated by an idea of cultural decolonialism which was the reaction to the long-lasting legacy of the Austrian(-Hungarian) Empire and national(istic) tendencies beginning in the 19th century. The presentation analysed Marolt's nomenclature and his key ideological premises and critically evaluated them through perspectives of the then broader political and cultural space.

As the last presenter in the session **Baia Zhuzhunadze** delved into Bayar Şahin's archive of traditional music of Georgians living in Turkey and its importance for reviving traditional pieces already forgotten in Georgia. His archive includes up to 450 audio and 300 video samples of musical and oral folklore of the 1970s–2020s. The geography of the records covers the following districts inhabited by Georgians: Artvin, Ordu, Rize, Sinop, Sakarya, Kocaeli, İnegöl, and İstanbul. These recordings are an important and unique source for the study of the issue of polyphonic singing tradition among Georgians living in Turkey.

In the last session of the day, the paper session of "Contemporary dance practices in the Balkans" was chaired by László Felföldi. This session was mostly related to dance as it is indicated in the title.

Vesna Bajić Stojilković emphasized that until the beginning of the 20th century, different parts of the territory of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina were under great impact from the Byzantium, Ottoman and Austrian-Hungarian Empires. Choreographers, and Serbian

and Bosnian well-known researchers, very consciously underlined the reflection of different Empires with certain dance-music parameters, as well as choreographical principles and procedures. In this paper she presented which parameters and choreographic techniques choreographers used to underline the impact of different imperial experiences, both in historical and contemporary perspectives, according to the structural and formal analysis of different Folk Dance Choreographies based on Serbian and Bosnian traditional dance and music.

Delivering her first ever paper at an international conference, **Anastazija Živković** presented a study she did together with her late mentor and our dear friend and colleague – **Selena Rakočević** that delved into the *Robot Kolo* craze in Serbia. She underlined that among various cultural elements in which Ottoman legacy can be recognized is a traditional dance genre, *čoček*, which was brought to the Balkans by the Turkish professional dancers and musicians, who from the nineteenth century were primarily Roma. In its various forms, *čoček* is still performed in many areas of the Balkans. Among them, one of dances that has been a part of participatory dance practice of Southern and Southeastern Serbia for the last thirty-five years is *robot kolo*, composed by Roma musician Saša Mutiš in the mid-1980s, signified by dancers and musicians, both Serbians and Roma, as *čoček*. It was analysed and discussed structural-formal and performing features of kinetics and music of this round chain dance in 4/4 rhythm in contemporary dance practice of Serbians and Roma in Southeastern Serbia.

In the last presentation of the day **Archontia Makri Doulgeri** explained the *Anastenaria*, a religious ritual taking place twice a year in Ayia Eleni, Serres, Greece. The roots of the ritual are found in the heritage of the Kostilides, the Greek Orthodox community of Kosti, a village in Strandzha mountain at the western banks of Black Sea. The religious practice incorporates a variety of activities and culminates in dancing and firewalking accompanied by music. In this paper, she discussed the place of dance within the ritual practice, and its role in the perpetuation of this tradition.

On the fourth day, which was the last day of the symposium, the two morning sessions were about Ottoman legacies. The day started with the panel session of “The impact of Ottoman experiences in traditional, family, and social ceremonies of Kosovo” chaired by **Arbnora Dushi**. She also made the first presentation. She conveyed that the influence of the Ottoman heritage is still present in many traditional ceremonies of Albanians in Kosovo, especially in those that are related to family rites. Among these, there has been a ceremony known as *Dhjetësahatëshi* (Ten hours) which used to be organized by wealthy families in the cities, a few days after the traditional wedding day. The experiences of the Imperial heritage of dance and music in Southeast Europe, respectively in Kosovo, brought through the example of the women’s ceremony *Dhjetësahatëshi* were presented in the panel.

Secondly **Krenar Doli**’s paper presented the tradition of *Aheng* for men in the city of Gjakova (Southwest Kosovo), which represents the gathering of many people for celebration, and includes a musical repertoire of civic folk songs and dances. The research emphasized the connection and influence of the Ottoman tradition and culture in Gjakova’s *Aheng*, whose repertoire has played a primary role for the preliminary reference of the concept of originality, as well as its gradual music and accompaniment with instruments, which later become a reformed part of the Gjakova’s *Aheng* in the new century.

Afterwards, **Bubulinë Sylja** argued the rhythm and movements of (semi)circle dances among Albanian weddings in Kosovo, that showed or identified the shared cultural Ottoman traditions by asking the following research questions: How do Albanians in Kosovo perform (semi)circle dances at *Aheng*? What are the characteristics of such dances? What are the similarities and differences of movement and rhythm between Albanian (semi)circle dances and Ottoman traditions?

At the end of the panel **Visar Munishi** talked about the last days of the bride-to-be at her parents' house until the actual day of marriage, which are considered amongst the most sensitive parts of the Albanian traditional marital rituals. According to the research, in Albanian tradition, this very act of bidding farewell to her close family members is known as *hallallaku*, during which she greets and seeks the *hallallaku* (blessings) from each member of her family and friends, encouraged by constant evocative songs. This farewell act is a type of communication, where the singers sing, while the bride-to-be usually expresses her emotions by speaking to, or hugging tightly, the farewell party attendees.

The paper session on “Ottoman Heritage in Southeastern Europe Music and Dance Traditions” was chaired by Abdullah Akat.

As a first speaker of the session **Arzu Öztürkmen** approached the Ottoman cultural heritage from the perspectives of global history and history of emotions. She pursued two lines of inquiry: (1) Transnational impact: Examining how the circulation and influences between different regional contexts bring cultural affinities as well as distinctions; (2) Emotional impact: Exploring the emotional impact of imperial hegemony, both as response and reaction. The research also benefits from Armenian, Georgian and Egyptian sources, which have long been neglected in Ottoman dance studies. The study also aims to explore the discursivity in discussing the cultural heritage of the Balkan dances, which has long been explored through national discourses.

Zdravko Ranisavljević, reflected on the Ottoman Influence in the dance tradition in Novi Pazar, Serbia with special emphasis on aspects of interculturality in the segment of heritage that can today be considered ideal-typical in the presentations of traditional dances of this city and its environs.

Mehmet Öcal Özbilgin focused on the effect of the power of the Ottoman period on the communization and separation of the traditional dance heritage of today's nation-states. In the traditional dance repertoire of Southeast European societies, the (inter)cultural effects of the 20th century's administrative/diplomatic strategies are of great importance. He presented data collected during fieldwork in the Balkans, among Exchange Associations, oral history studies with immigrant societies, and ethnographic studies on traditional dance within the projects of Ege University State Turkish Music Conservatory and Ethnography Museum.

Rumiana Margaritova pointed out that the ‘socialist’ period of Bulgaria (1944 – 1989) gives proverbial examples of changing attitudes towards the Ottoman heritage, including the traditional music of the Bulgarian Turks: its existence and visibility were inconsistently encouraged or questioned. This is clearly observable in the music production at the Bulgarian National Radio's Turkish section. This paper reviewed the process and the results that covered the Ottoman heritage in socialist clothes, by trying to trace the changes in its sounding, poems' topics, and meaning for the 35 years of its institutionalization on the Radio. The basis of the research was archival documents, the catalogue of almost 2000 records of the Turkish section, sound examples, as well as interviews with key figures in the process.

The afternoon sessions of the last day were all about music, for the paper session of “Music, Minorities and Migration” the chair was taken by Alma Bejtullahu.

Lisa Gilman mentioned that contemporary conflicts—rooted in the historical layers of empires of the past combined with the same human desire to control and dominate peoples, land, and resources—are forcing thousands of people from their homes into precarious journeys and unknown futures. As displaced peoples move through time and space, music (along with other cultural forms) becomes a critical means of survival. The experiences were shown from a part of a larger global project examining music and entrepreneurial initiatives by migrants.

The goal of the project was to provide a positive narrative that counters the stereotype of refugees as vulnerable victims or dangerous pariahs that drain resources in the communities to which they flee in addition to contributing to scholarship on music and identity, trauma, and cultural conservation.

Belma Oğul emphasized that throughout history, the mobility of the population and the change of the political borders has resulted in entangled cultures of the people which are based on the cultural memories reconstructed by the present based on the past. She explained the *kolo* called *Čačak* performed by the Bosniak people living in Turkey who immigrated from the former Yugoslavia by employing Karen Barad's theory of agential realism arguing that the universe comprises phenomena, which are the ontological inseparability of intra-acting agencies.

The presentation of **Athena Katsanevaki** was involved with the Greek-speaking Muslims of the area of Western Macedonia in Greece who moved into Asia Minor in 1922, after the expulsion of the Christian populations of Asia Minor and the exchange of the Christian and Muslim populations. The data presented were based on personal fieldwork among three different areas of Greek speakers in Western Macedonia: in Northern Pindus (Grevena, Voion-Anaselitsa) in Southern Pindus (mountainous villages of the area of Agrafa) and in Eastern Macedonia (among the Sarakatsani who moved there from Bulgaria).

The paper session of "Musical Legacies Between Empires" was chaired by Mehmet Öcal Özbilgin. The first speaker, **Amal Msakni**, discussed the Alevi-Bektashi community which is known by a rich musical corpus and choreographic heritage. She pursued the example of Hacı Bektash Veli, eponymous founder of the Alevi-Bektashi tradition, whose mission was to propagate the doctrines and dogmas of Islam in the Anatolian region. According to her, thanks to hymns and gestures, the master has succeeded in attracting many followers to him, hence the birth of a rite called Semah. She presented her fieldwork experiences.

Okan Ceylan explained the influence of the Tobacco Regie Company of the Ottoman Public Debt Administration in the story of *Kerimoğlu Zeybeks*. *Kerimoğlu Zeybek* is both a folk song and folk dance. The presentation indicated the connection between the story of *Kerimoğlu Zeybek* and Southeast Europe comes from the tobacco trafficking between Greeks who lived in the Dodecanes Islands. This study mainly focused on the daily social life of oppressed peasants.

As the last speaker **Aleksandra Kuzman** presented online the title "Alla Turca and Alla Franca – Macedonian Chalgia Music, a sound between Empires". She showed the western and orientalist features of Macedonian chalgia music.

The last paper session of the symposium "From competitions of safeguarding: institutionalization of traditional music in Southeastern Europe" was chaired by Rumiana Margaritova.

Serkan Şener's paper focused on the performer profile of Turkish string ensembles, which were dominated by Romani musician families, and their experiences in the music industry. Ethnographic research about the topic and narratives from the field were presented. He elaborated that they maintain their presence in a constantly changing social environment. The historically beginning point of these string ensembles was based on the 1960s and the process of arabesk music.

And the last speaker of the symposium, **Marija Dumnić Vilotijević** presented the examination of the role of one music element's past in the policy of UNESCO intangible cultural heritage safeguarding process. On the example of Serbia's national ICH element *vranjska gradska pesma* (urban songs from Vranje, no. 26). She provided ethnomusicological

recordings of Vranje folk music from 1970s, held by the Institute of Musicology SASA, and she raised a discussion about the importance of audio-visual historical heritage (including its digitization and publication), in the process of ICH safeguarding, and contributing to contemporary urgent ethnomusicology.

The closing session included reports by Dóra Pál-Kovács, Dilyana Kurdova and İdris Ersan Küçük. The efforts of the local committee, the technical team and the executive committee were acknowledged by Mehmet Öcal Özbilgin. The ICTMD Türkiye committee and other stakeholders of the symposium expressed their gratitude to Mahmut Ak rector of İstanbul University and Abdullah Akat chair of the local committee for their hospitality and friendship.

Guest of honour – Dr. habil PhD. Felföldi László



We were very pleased to welcome Dr Laszlo Felfoldi as the Guest of Honour at the Eighth Symposium of the ICTMD Study Group on Music and Dance in Southeastern Europe in İstanbul, in 2022. Dr. Felföldi is an ethnochoreologist, who was department leader and scientific vice-director of the Institute for Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, lecturer and titular university professor of the Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology Department of Szeged University, titular professor of the Hungarian Dance Academy (Budapest), and former lecturer of the Liszt Ferenc Music Academy (Budapest). He is the co-founder and retired convener of the Choreomundus, joint International Master on Dance,

Knowledge, practice and Heritage course, former Chair of the ICTMD Study Group on Ethnochoreology (2008–2014), and current leader of the Working Group on Choreology of the Ethnographic Commission of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HAS).

Dr. Felföldi was born on 12 August, 1947 in Szeged (Hungary). He is married to Clara who we also welcomed to this Symposium, and they have two daughters and one son. He studied English and Russian Language Literature and Ethnography at the University of Szeged, Hungary 1967–1972. He graduated from Szeged University with his first Doctoral Dissertation in 1984, and later in 2004 he was awarded his second PhD in ethnology and cultural anthropology from Budapest University. He was granted Habilitation at Debrecen University in 2016. He is fluent in: Hungarian (native), English, and Russian.

He has worked in many different positions throughout his working life. First at the Regional Museum of Csongrád, Szeged, as museologist 1973–1983, then in 1984 he started working in the Institute of Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. He retired from there in 2012.

He undertook extensive fieldwork between 1972 and 2014 covering topics including the folk dance tradition of south-east Hungary, mainly among the Hungarian, gypsy and Serbian communities, national minorities in Hungary and Hungarian minorities in Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania and Yugoslavia.

He has published extensively on traditional dance of peoples living in East-Central, Southeastern Europe, and the Volga-Kama-Belaja Region of Russia concentrating on the problems of dancing individualities and communities.

The focal point of his professional interest is the relation of the collective knowledge to the individual creativity in traditional dance. He participates in UNESCO's cultural programs as expert on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. He has organized more than 15 international symposiums, conferences, and meetings.

Due to his outstanding academic work, he has received many different awards from Hungary and internationally.

Programme

Tuesday, 10 May 2022

10:00 – 11:15 Transcultural processes in dance and musical practice (Chair: Carol Silverman)

László Felföldi, Hungary:

Moving cultural kaleidoscope: Impact of different empires on dance and music traditions of Banat in historical perspectives

Ana Hofman and Mojca Kovačič, Slovenia:

“Classy trubači”: Economies of othering, corporate listening and Balkan brass bands in Slovenia

Jakša Primorac, Croatia (virtual):

Latinokratia in traditional chant: Examples of Istria and Syros

11:30 – 12:45 Staging Gender in Folk Dance (Chair: Arzu Öztürkmen)

Gökçe Asena Altınbay, Turkey:

Gender inequality in the organisation of Turkish Folk Dances

Dilyana Kurdova, Bulgaria:

Dancing women: Bulgarian folklore traditions today

14:00 – 15:15 Gender Imaginaries in Folk Dance Traditions (Chair: Joško Čaleta)

Vivien Szónyi, Hungary (virtual):

To be woman as dance-forming factor in the Moldavian dance culture

Dóra Pál-Kovács, Hungary:

Transgression movements in dance and outfit

İdris Ersan Küçük, Turkey:

Analysing being a male dancer in a patriarchal society by ethnochoreohistory: Example of the eastern Black Sea Region

15:30 – 16:20 Folk dance in virtual spaces (Chair: Dóra Pál-Kovács)

Daniela Ivanova-Nyberg, Bulgaria/USA:

What did we learn? Why does it matter? Observations on outcomes of teaching and learning Bulgarian dance via Zoom in the period 2020–2021

Muzaffer Sumbul, Turkey:

The Projection of the digitalization of folk dances during the Covid-19 pandemic: An autoethnographic analysis of the digital communication transformation of local dances from tradition to stage, visor to screen

16:35 – 18:15 Music and Dance, Gender, and Political Activism (Chair: Marko Kölbl)

Carol Silverman, USA:

Politics, activism, and Romani music: Interpreting trends in Serbia, North Macedonia and Bulgaria

Sanja Ranković and Mirjana Zakić, Serbia:

Cultural leadership and musical activism of Serbian women in Kosovo and Metohija

Sevi Bayraktar, Germany/Turkey:

Gender and folk dancing in the remaking of revolutionary spaces in Turkey, 1960s–2010s.

Velika Stojkova Serafimovska, N. Macedonia:

Female gender and sexuality in predominantly all-male traditional music ensembles

Wednesday, 11 May 2022

9:00 – 9:50 Gender and Sexuality in Turkish Music and Dance Heritage (Chair: Belma Oğul)

Gonca Girgin and Elif Özen, Turkey:

Authority, crisis, reconciliation: Erotic (Toraman) Karagöz tells about...

Bahar Gjuka, Canada/Turkey:

Performing trauma in privileged spaces: Empowering Turkish women's voices of the past

9:50 – 10:40 Gender Bending in Rituals and Performances (Chair: Liz Mellish)

Alma Bejtullahu, Slovenia:

The appropriation of the traditional concept of the sworn virgin in present-time Kosovo music

Gamze Tanrıvermiş and Abdullah Akat, Turkey:

Ritual and gender: Exploring the gendered performative and musical practices of the rituals *Berikaoba* and *Kalandar*

10:55 – 11:20 Poster Session (in presence)

Ayano Tamaki, Japan:

Sexuality of the *chalga* singer Azis: Focusing on the change of sexual expressions in his performances

11:20 – 12:35 Queer and Gender Constructivist Perspectives on Music and Dance in Southeastern Europe (Chair: Mojca Kovačič)

Marko Kölbl, Austria:

Critiquing heteronormativity in ethnographic research on music and dance in Southeastern Europe

Natalia Koutsougera, Greece (virtual):

"The street is my name": Lgbtqi+ and women in rap and urban dance scenes of Greece

Bengi Çakmak, Turkey:

Becoming and vibrating: From becoming-woman to the nomadic subjects in musical creativity

15:15 – 16:30 Music, Dance and Digital Distance (Chair: Iva Niemčič)

Gül Kaplan Ekemen, Turkey:

Folk dances from tradition to digital: "Stay-at-home" virtual stage performances

Dilek Cantekin Elyagutu and Kerem Cenk Yilmaz, Turkey:

Rethinking transactional distance theory in dance education in the post-digital age

Christos Papakostas, Greece (virtual):

"Under one roof". Music and dance communities in YouTube

16:45 – 18:00 Romanian Men's Group Dances: Men's Societies, National Icons and Gendered Roles in History and Current Society (Chair: Nick Green)

Nick Green, UK/Romania:

Romanian men's dances: Customs, choreography and connections

Paul-Alexander Remeș, Romania:

Ceata in Romania: Different forms of organisation regarding society, customs and gendered dances

Liz Mellish, UK/Romania:

Collective memory, past empires, and (evolving) gender roles: dances in Romanian Men's *călușeri* and *călușari* customs

18:15 – 19:30 Music, Dance and Ethnography in the Pandemic (Chair: Muzaffer Sumbul)

Joško Čaleta, Croatia:

Klapa singing concept of a ‘new normal’ and technological strategies during pandemic times

Iva Niemčić and Joško Čaleta, Croatia:

Croatian traditional music and customs – survival in new conditions

Ivanka Vlaeva, Bulgaria:

Crypto music in a world of virtual communication: peculiarities and challenges

Thursday, 12 May 2022

9:30 – 10:45 Negotiating legacies of canonic figures in music research and practice (Chair: Velika Stojkova Serafimovska)

Bernard Kleikamp, Netherlands :

The life of ethnomusicologist Wouter Swets (1930–2016)

Urša Šivic, Slovenia:

France Marolt and his tendencies of cultural decolonization

Baia Zhuzhunadze, Georgia:

Bayar Shahin’s archive of traditional music of Georgians living in Turkey

11:00 – 12:15 Contemporary Dance Practices in the Balkans (Chair: László Felföldi)

Vesna Bajić Stojiljković, Slovenia/Serbia:

Legacies of Empires on stage folk dance and music performances in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina

Selena Rakočević and Anastasija Živković, Serbia:

Robot Kolo as one of the forms of contemporary *Čoček* in dance practice of Southeastern Serbia

Archontia Makri Doulgeri, Greece:

Dancing new meanings through old fires” – the *Anastenaria* ritual of Ayia Eleni, Greece today

Friday, 13 May 2022

9:00 – 10:40 The Impact of Ottoman Experiences in Traditional, Family, and Social Ceremonies of Kosovo (Chair: Arbnora Dushi)

Arbnora Dushi, Kosovo:

Traces of Ottoman heritage in a traditional women’s ceremony in Kosovo: “Dhjetësahatëshi”

Krenar Doli, Kosovo:

The tradition of *Aheng* in the city of Gjakova

Bubulinë Sylaj, Kosovo:

(Semi) Circle dance and its oriental connections among Albanians in Kosovo: The case of wedding ceremony

Visar Munishi, Kosovo:

Seeking the bride-to-be blessings

10:55 – 12:35 Ottoman Heritage in Southeastern European Music and Dance Traditions (Chair: Abdullah Akat)

Arzu Öztürkmen, Turkey:

Deconstructing “Ottoman cultural heritage”: The legacy of dance practices

Mehmet Öcal Özbilgin, Turkey:

Cultural policies of the traditional dance heritage of Southeastern Europe after the Ottoman Empire period

Zdravko Ranisavljevic, Serbia:

Reflections of the Ottoman influence on the dance heritage in Serbia: The case of the dance tradition in Novi Pazar

Rumiana Margaritova, Bulgaria:

Ottoman music heritage in socialist clothes: The institutionalization of Turkish music at the Bulgarian National Radio in the second half of the 20th century

14:00 – 15:15 Music, Minorities and Migration (Chair: Alma Bejtullahu)

Lisa Gilman, USA

“We are all people”: Music, identity, and cultural survival in the lives of displaced peoples

Belma Oğul, Turkey:

Entangled cultural memories in Southeastern Europe

Athena Katsanevaki, Greece (virtual):

The Vallades: The Greek-speaking Muslims of Western Macedonia (Greece-Asia Minor Turkey). Connotations in their vocal repertory.

15:30 – 16:45 Musical Legacies Between Empires (Chair: Mehmet Öcal Özbilgin)

Amal Msakni, Tunisia:

The role of music and dance in the transmission of religious beliefs in Anatolia: the example of the Alevi-Bektashi

Okan Ceylan, Turkey:

Socio-cultural reflections of the Tobacco Regie Company of the Ottoman Public Debt Administration in Western Anatolia: The example of *Kerimoğlu Zeybek*

Aleksandra Kuzman, N. Macedonia (virtual):

Alla Turca and *Alla Franca* – Macedonian *chalgia* music, a sound between empires

17:00 – 18:15 From Competitions to Safeguarding: Institutionalization of Traditional Music in Southeastern Europe (Chair: Rumiana Margaritova)

Serkan Şener, Turkey:

Play them all!: Networking, institutionalization, and competition among Turkish string ensembles

Ivona Opetcheska Tatarchevska, N. Macedonia:

The “TraditionNew” – Ethnosummit as a new cultural pattern (pro-and-contra analysis)

Marija Dumnić Vilotijević, Serbia:

Interpretation and invention of urban folk songs from Vranje: Past of (national) intangible cultural heritage

Theme 1: Gender and sexuality in music and dance in Southeastern Europe

Panel 1: Romanian men's group dances: Men's societies, national icons and gendered roles in history and current society

The Romanian men's societies, known as *juni* and *ceata* are central to the teams (past and present) that perform men's group dances in customs and local events. This panel combines three complementary papers that introduced the subject of Romanian 'men's dances' with a focus on the community, the roles of women, and the custom complexes. The presenters draw from their ongoing research projects that examine the societies in which these traditions take place both in the past and present, through archival research, historical references, and past and contemporary fieldwork. They look at gender in traditional life, organisation in the form of the *ceată* and *juni* men's clubs; socialising as men in the company of men and women spending time with other women, the role of women in the traditional custom complex and their contemporary role in the performed traditions.

The first paper in the panel introduces and analyses the traditional forms of Romanian men's dancing, focusing on the 'corps' type group dances which are closely linked to many customs, traditions and rituals. The second paper presents an ethnographic study of men's Transylvania group dances drawing on historical sources and contemporary fieldwork, illustrated by filmed footage. The third paper addresses issues of 'collective memory', resistance against domination of empires, and gender roles in men's group dances, with reference to Transylvanian winter *călușeri* and southern Romanian *căluș* customs.

Nick Green
(UK/Romania)

Romanian men's dances: Customs, choreography and connections

This paper gives an outline of the traditional forms of Romanian men's dancing, focusing on the 'corps' type group dances which are closely linked to many customs, traditions (and rituals). The data analysed comes from a survey of currently available videos, documents from the late 19th century onwards, and published articles and books. The elements (dancing, music, and other activities) within a particular custom and dance are very often a collection of ideas and themes from the past, and not so distant past, which are combined to form a custom complex. Deconstructing the custom complex and the choreography into separate constituent themes enables a clearer analysis. I will consider the generic choreographic themes that are common, or distinguish between, the customs and traditions that make up the men's corps dances. There are many choreographic publications that focus on detailed motifs and inner structure of the performance of a particular dance, but I will assess the generic features to reveal connections and trends.

Keywords: Romania; men's dances; choreology; customs.

In this paper I consider some generic choreographic themes that make up many of the men's dances in customs and traditions in Romania. This was presented as an overview introduction to the subject of 'men's dancing' that was followed by the two other papers presented in this panel. However, I am not aware of any published introduction on this generic subject and in addition this paper presents a perspective that demonstrates a commonality across men's group dances in many customs and regions. There are also many examples of men's chain dances in customs across both Romania and Bulgaria, however in this paper I am concentrating on the men's group (or 'corps') dances. This research is part of my on-going project to revisit the work of Anca Giurchescu and her colleagues to review their ideas and conclusions on the ethnography of Romanian dancing and share through our website "eliznik.org.uk" using embedded videos to show the dance traditions.

Apparently similar dance ideas can occur in widely different locations, but on closer inspection there may be no causal link. For example, English Morris and Romanian *Căluș* are often connected due to a similarity of the costumes and commonality as a men's group dance tradition, although in reality they are distinctly different traditions in history, choreography, purpose, and context, which indicates that these are not closely related traditions [Petac 2019; Mellish and Green 2013].

My ethnographic research involves an analysis of the recent practices and looking backwards using any documentation and archives available to situate these practices in recent history. Great care should be taken not to make extrapolations from current data to propose an 'archaic' survival. There are two common situations that might be mis-considered in this respect, a singular example which may be just a local product through interpretation or importation, rather than a singular 'archaic' survivor, or a generic theme which probably best represents the tradition now or in the recent past, however is most likely to be linked to a 'fashion' by 'horizontal transmission' at some point in the past. Scientifically one can model evolution in 'vertical transmission' (passing on of cultural ideas down the generations) using phylogenetic methods. However, 'horizontal transmission', adopting fashions and trends, is often dominant in social contexts and can be modelled using random copying or some form of weighted copying, finally resulting in a critical mass where one form dominates.

Data

The data for this paper comes from my study over the past few years to create a database of dances, both as currently performed and as referenced in published documentation. In recent decades there has been a large resource of local ethnographic data uploaded to YouTube by participants and spectators covering places and contexts that no single researcher could hope to attend in person. Historical data comes from documents available from the 19th century onwards that include published academic articles and books of notated dances. These historical resources include dance publications regarding Transylvanian men's dances (for example the works of the past masters of Transylvanian dance research Andrei Bucşan [1971] and Hungarian researcher György Martin [1985; 1967], the detailed books of Viorel Nistor [1991], and more recently Silvestru Petac [2014].

There are also many books on the customs of Moldavia and southern Romania, especially the *Căluş* healing ritual and the Moldavian New Year masking customs, and there are a few published dance notations of the most complex dance forms of *Căluş* in southern Romania [for example see Badea 1998] and *Jocul Căiuţilor* (literary the dance of little horses) of northern Moldavia [Andriescu 1980], but otherwise 'dance' within the customs is not addressed and seems almost to be neglected academically with interest focused on the healing rituals and zoomorphic masks.

Methodology

For a methodology I have drawn from Anca Giurchescu. In her book [Giurchescu and Bloland 1995] she gives a summary of the dances under ethnographic regions using a common set of parameters. This method is called 'segmentation'.

Segmentation takes into account all structural features (parameters) of the dance: arrangement in space, connection, kinetics, amplitude, intensity, pathway, tempo, rhythm, meter, multiplicity, as well as its relationship to music and texts [Giurchescu and Bloland 1995:118].

I would argue that the phrase "all structural features (parameters) of the dance" is about a set of outwardly observed features, so not including the effect of 'context' or 'interrelationships'. Giurchescu does say "[h]owever, one must keep in mind the social-cultural context" [Giurchescu and Bloland 1995:117]. Context is all important in creating dancing, as this can lead to changes in the execution of many parameters. Adaptions to the dynamics, formation, props, and structure can occur when dancing has a different purpose in a different location with different participants.

I find the concentration on movement detail in a 'hierarchical organisation' of dance structure does not represent the process of dancing people where a concept of a dance/dancing is more often a number of connections/relationships between various features leading to the interpretation. This means that a fully universal hierarchal concept of dance definition is not possible, instead it is network of relationships between features that form identifiable collections of movements in the context.

For example, formation and path, when moving in space, are most often interrelated. Also, these are adapted by context, so it is possible to see the same dance performed in different formations or paths depending on the situation. It is common to give musical notation (naming) of rhythms used in the dance, however the rhythmic actions represented by the 'rhythm' patterns are both steps (weight changes) and other gestures (stamps, spur-clicks, kicks). In most Romanian dance traditions 'steps' are all important in the understanding of a dance, so rhythm

without reference to the ‘steps’ loses a portion of the information, hence the weight change and non-weight change elements are often clearly separated within an understanding of dance motifs. Although the system of weight changes that Leibman [1992] uses in his research on Macedonian dances does not work for Romanian dance structures, the relationship between rhythm and weight changes cannot be neglected.

Event context and custom complexes

The themes and ideas observed during community social events and customs appear to be shared and exchanged between different contexts. This could be visualised as a Venn diagram of overlapping contexts. Some dances are specific to particular customs, and some dances are only practiced during social occasions, however many dances cross between contexts, but sometimes with adaptations.

Customs very often include some community dancing at the end which is taken from the social repertoire, such as *Hora* or *Sârba*. However, it is also seen that dances from the social repertoire are adapted and enter the men’s custom repertoire. For example, in Arad/Banat the central European finger gesturing couple dance known as *Judecata* in this region has been added to the *Călușeri* repertoire in one Arad village. Also, in northern Moldavia dances from the social repertoire such as *Rața* and *Polca* are incorporated into the dance repertoire of the *Jocul Căiuților* horse custom.

There is an overlap between dancing in customs and the, previously, weekly Sunday dance in the village through the special events of fairs (calendrical meeting events) and balls which are often linked to custom days such as the celebration of Carnival in the spring.

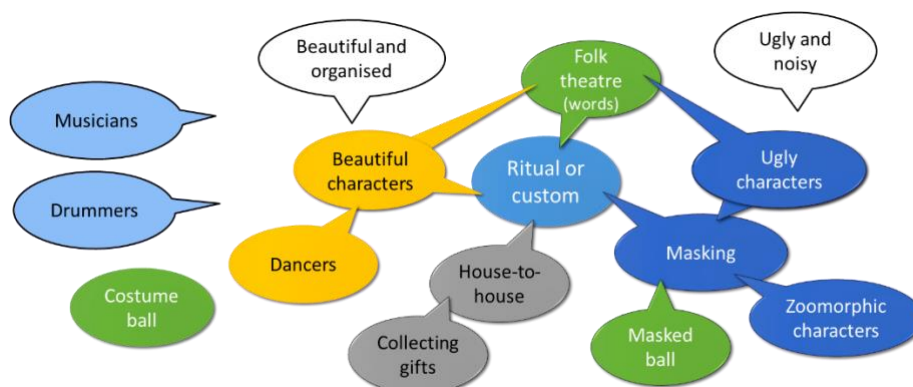


Figure 1. Custom context.

An alternative visualisation to the Venn diagram is depicting the activities within a custom as a bundle or cluster of elements, each of which has its own history and story (see Figure 1). These bundles are not fixed, and change over time, depending on local popularity and fashions [see Mellish and Green 2020a].

Our premise is born out when examining some of the customs in Moldavia, such as the *Capra* (goat) custom. The older New Year customs are based around zoomorphic characters, predominantly the *Capra* (goat), although since the 19th century there has been a shift from their magical-ritual functions to a function of fun-entertainment [Lavric 1976]. This longer evolution has led to many different forms of *Capra* with very different characters attached to this custom, including the ‘ugly’ and the ‘beautiful’ as two groups of characters in the procession, or other animal masked characters to the extent that in some locations the bear character takes the foreground.

[...] analysing the composition of the goat's procession, we have the opportunity to notice the great variation it shows. Many different characters can be connected to it, no restrictions being placed by any maintained tradition. Thus, the goat's procession appears as a truly bizarre association of types that can be seen by the spectator, divided into two groups: the ugly and the beautiful [Adăscăliței and Ciubotaru 1969:9].

Spatial arrangement

The typical spatial arrangement of participants during a custom that is performed outside a house or in the street involves some central action. The musicians and/or drummers and any number of additional characters remain around the edges of the space and if there is an organised movement (dance) this naturally is a circle around the central action. The participants' movement around the circle can be audience participation in a community chain dance such as *Hora* or *Sârba* at the opening or closing of the custom event (see Figure 2).

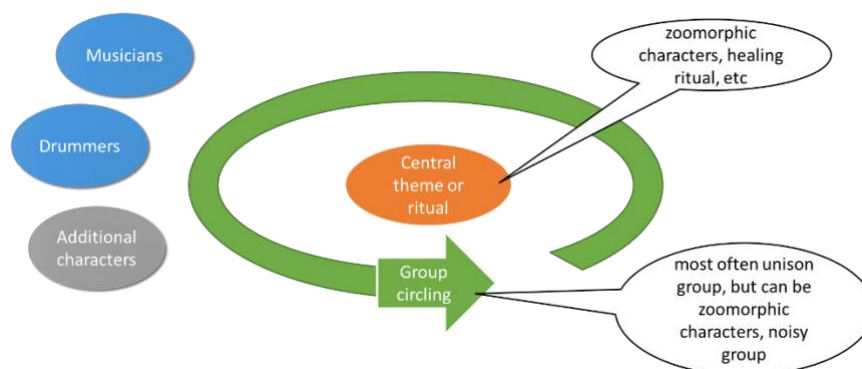


Figure 2. Spatial layout in customs context.

The central action area can include zoomorphic characters or a ritual element of the custom, or the dance leader (*vătaf*), but often can be empty if the custom does not have a ritual element. In many cases the dancing is integral to the custom, as it is for southern Romanian *Căluș* which is carried out by a group of men bound by an oath. In his case the custom can include a healing ritual, however, the general house-to-house tradition is the men performing a suite of dances, and without the dancing there would be no custom.

The 'beautiful' and the 'ugly'

In 2018 when we talked about *Fărșang* Carnival we mentioned the distinction between the 'organised' and the 'noisy rabble' [Mellish and Green 2020a] which could also be described as the 'beautiful' (*frumoșii*) and the 'ugly' (*urâții*) [see Niemčić 2001; see also Tatarchevska 2020]. This differentiation is maintained in the characters within customs, the 'ugly' being masked and the 'beautiful' (*haiducii*, *ofițerii*, *damele*, *cavalerii*, *împărații*) most often unmasked [Lavric 1976]. This theme flows through into co-ordinated group movements, or dancing, within customs. There is the organised 'beautiful' and in unison dance group and the more freely interpreted 'ugly' dancing.

Romania has many forms of masked character groups; such as bears or masked characters with many large bells attached, not unlike the *Kukeri* of Bulgaria. These 'ugly' noisy rabble characters, the drummers, or an assembly of all the other participants, move together around the circle, each making locally typical steps with rhythmic variation, but generally not in

complete unison. The degree of unison-ness can range from un-coordinated walking, to performing different movement themes at the same time (such as head dipping or turning). Similar ‘dancing’ can be seen with the ‘ugly’ masked characters in the neighbouring countries (for example *Kukeri* in Bulgaria).

‘Organised’ group dancing in unison in the form of chain dances is frequent in customs, rituals and social contexts, throughout the Balkans. However, in Romania a very common form of group dancing in unison is a formation in a line or circle where the dancers are physically unconnected to their neighbouring dancers. This form appears to be rare in neighbouring ethnicities.

This men’s dance formation of a line, column or circle of unconnected dancers is generally known as ‘ceată’ formation in Romanian texts, named after the men’s society. Giurchescu uses the term ‘corps’ in English [Giurchescu and Bloland 1995:273], I am not sure if she intended this to be pronounced as per “corps de ballet” or as per “army corps”, maybe she was playing on words as many of these dancing groups have a military costume. The men’s groups are variously known as *Ceată*, *Jienii*, or *Irozii*, so these names can refer to the men’s ‘beautiful’ group performing these unison dances, however, caution is needed as the *Ceată* group in the community often includes the ‘ugly’ characters!

In this paper I concentrated on the men’s single file dance in a circle around the event space that is a common feature of customs in Romania. However, it must be noted that there are also dances common in *Căluș* and *Jocul Căiușilor*, that are not circling dances, where the formation is often a line with the *vătaf* (leader) or officer commanding the team from in front of the line. Where there is no central ritual action, or when the space is limited as in a house or courtyard, the circle formation can readily change to form two rows, such as in *Jocul Căiușilor* and *Jocul Arnăușilor*. Once in a formation of two rows, the choreography can change to two opposing lines that make other coordinated movements such as changing position with the dancer opposite or hand-clapping sequences with the opposing dancer.

Sticks and swords

A stick, sword, or mace is held in the right hand by the dancers in very many Romanian men’s dances performed during customs. But, unlike other European traditions it is very rare for these props to be used to connect dancers, clashed together, or in featured movements such as throwing and twirling.

For the most part the stick is held in various fixed positions or used as support during displays of highly difficult and rapid virtuosity motifs. [Giurchescu and Bloland 1995:273]

Historically ethnochoreologists have grouped all such dances under the common fund designated as “springing/jumping dances”, but in this construction many dance types with separate histories and forms become artificially connected by this evolutionary assumption. This concept of an archaic “springing/jumping dances” ancestry has only a general characterisation,

“Springing/Jumping Dances” (Sprungtanz) is characterized by a homogeneous kinetic vocabulary based on numerous variants of springing movements in combination with stamps and leg swings. [Giurchescu and Bloland 1995:273]

In the Romanian dance repertoire, the Carpathian shepherds’ dances have many jumping steps, especially with heel clicks in the air, but otherwise the vocabulary of steps, which also

includes stamps and leg swings, is consistent with the chain dance repertoire.¹ This concept of “springing dances” is inclusive of individual improvised dances, dances with props and those without, and different uses of props. In this way this concept of “springing dances” is far too general to use for analysis of Romanian men’s dances, and also does not include the fundamental generic form typical of many Romanian men’s dances that have a figure based on walking (or triple step) in single file in a circle.

It is interesting to note that both *ceată* and men’s chain dance types can have similar constructions: a figure moving to the right with an introductory or resting step, followed by more complex or contrasting figures in place. In the most basic dances there might only be the walking figure, but in the most complex dances sequences there are many figures which very often include borrowings and developments to form technically challenging movements. However, there are also very many men’s chain dances in the custom repertoire where the dancers hold shoulders or hands of their neighbours, but these chain dances are more closely associated with the social dance repertoire.

This would suggest the act of carrying a prop (stick or sword) in the right hand is one factor leading to dances being performed in the *Ceată* formation. Dancing in single file is natural when holding a prop and dancing in a circle, but equally well the sharing of dance themes between chain dances and *ceată* formations has clearly happened. When considering whether the dancers use a prop or not, Giurchescu says,

From a historical and functional perspective the Men’s Corps Springing dances are differentiated according to whether or not they utilize implements such as swords, sticks, and handkerchiefs. [Giurchescu and Bloland 1995:273]

However, in Romanian dances we find that the prop may have been omitted or abandoned without changing the classification of the dance type. The dances of the *Călușeri* are generally expected to be stick dances, but in all the Banat region and many villages in Hunedoara region, the *Călușeri* dances are performed without a stick. The Bucovinian New Year’s custom dances are clearly closely related to this fund of dances, but do not use a prop. So as Giurchescu says,

Those springing dances that do not incorporate implements undoubtedly are related to those that do. [Giurchescu and Bloland 1995:273]

One reason for this can be seen in cases where the men’s dance is performed in a social context and it is not usual to have a sword or stick at the social event, leading to the props being mainly related to the custom context.

Videos examples and maps

The maps in Figures 3, 5 and 7 give a clear impression of the numbers of villages with currently or recently active traditions. Each point on these maps is a reference to a village tradition and where possible I have tried to find a YouTube video of the tradition either as a house-to-house tradition or presented on the streets of the village. The live online versions of the maps have the reference and links available in the popup information for each point.²

For the symposium presentation I showed a number of examples from different customs, contexts and regions. In this paper I have linked the same examples using QR codes. These examples are only intended as an overview and are in no way representative of the total range of dances and customs.

Moldavian New Year traditions

There are many different New Year customs in Moldavia, in particular the very common *Capra* goat zoomorphic tradition, and many versions of folk theatre, but these do not have organised group dancing. The majority of customs that include some form of men's group dancing are in northern Moldavia. As discussed earlier, the dancing is not generally included in published works on the mask customs, however the *Jocul Căiușilor* dances [Andriescu 1980] and some of the men's dances in Bucovina [Ciornei and Rădășanu 1981] are included in books of notation without any information on the dance context.

It is necessary to be aware of political and cultural history shaping the current ethnography. It can be assumed that traditions similar to those across the border in Romanian Moldavia once happened also the Republic of Moldova, however, these have not continued, whereas on the Romanian side it would almost seem that traditions have proliferated with many villages within a locality performing almost identical copies of a particular version.

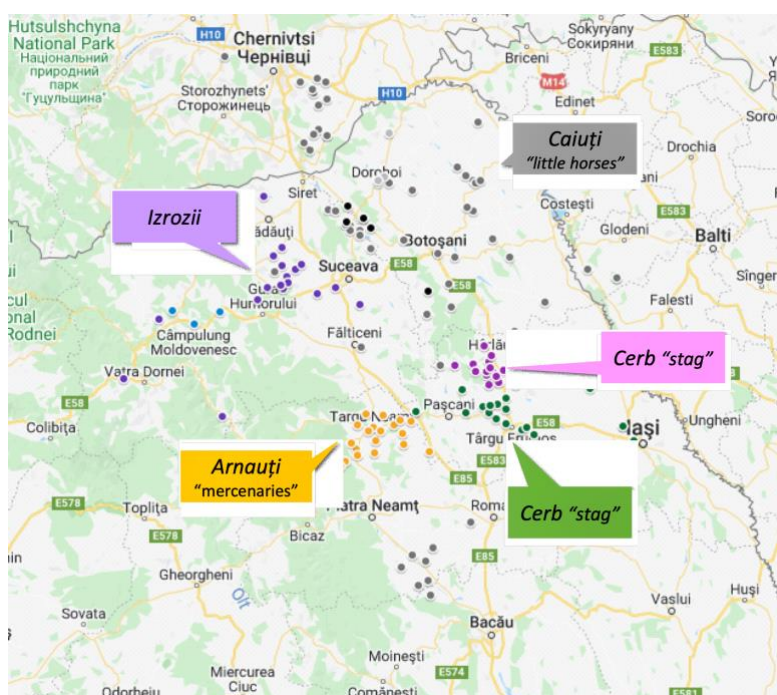


Figure 3. Map of men's dances in Moldavian customs [Mellish and Green 2022].

There are a few notable clusters of organised dancing that is similar, see Figure 3,

1. Grey dots are the *Jocul Căiușilor* (*Căiuși*) or little horses' dance tradition which predominates in the north east.
2. Orange dots are the *Jocul Arnăușilor* (*Arnăuși*) dancers which have a special history.
3. Mauve dots are the Bucovinian *Irozii* custom, which are linked to the continuum of traditions along the Carpathians.
4. Pink and Green dots are the zoomorphic *Jocul Cerbului* or stag tradition.

There also other traditions that are singular examples or only have a few localised examples which are not discussed here, but are covered in more detail on our website [Mellish and Green 2022]. For the purposes of this discussion, I showed four examples which follow a similar theme in the *ceață* formation type dances (see the QR codes in Figure 4), there are of

course other dances in other formations with different backgrounds performed by these men's groups.

<i>Jocul Arnăuților</i> (“mercenaries”) from Timișești, Neamț county	https://youtu.be/Tg8Vlhovkp4	
<i>Jocul Cerbului</i> from Buhalnița, Iași county	https://youtu.be/Zg4vpo8MnWs	
<i>Irozii</i> dance Pădurețul, from Pârteștii de Jos, Suceava country	https://youtu.be/XOXnr1g_G7U	
<i>Jocul Căiușilor</i> – little horses from Vârfu Câmpului, Botoșani county	https://youtu.be/dPVf7G_oq08	

Figure 4. QR codes for Moldavian video examples.

In two examples, *Jocul Arnăuților* (dance of the ‘mercenaries’) and *Jocul Cerbului* (the stag dance), the dancers use a 3-step pattern to 7/8 music, a rhythm that is universal across the old *Capra* (goat) zoomorphic traditions. In the *Cerbul* (Stag) tradition, which is limited to only one sub-region in Iași county, the group of men dance holding hammers and make a circle around the stag character.

The *Jocul Arnăuților* from central west Moldavia hold a decorated mace in their hand. This tradition is named after the mercenary soldiers of mostly Albanian origin that came to Romania during the Phanariot ruling period. However, the connection ends there as the custom performed does not have any southern Balkan dance features. They typically dance a dance suite of three parts; this circling dance in 7/8 meter, followed by a dance in the local syncopated 2/4 meter, then a dance similar to the pan-European clap dance in two facing rows.

In the north east of Moldavia the *Jocul Căiușilor* or the little horses dance tradition is dominant. This tradition ranges from the dancers holding a likeness of a horse's head in their hand, to the head being mounted at the dancer's waist, which can lead to a full-frame horse like an English hobby-horse, or a more recent urban tradition where the crown on the horse's head dominates and the dancers are dressed in shiny long gowns. Although there are versions of this custom where the *Jocul Căiușilor* characters are in the centre of the circle with an organised group of dancers circling them, in general this tradition is now dominated by the dance performances of the *Căiuși* dancers. This leads to a wider repertoire of dances, most often danced in a line or two rows. This includes both dances related to the custom and additions from the local social dance repertoire such as Polka, *Rața* and the infamous *Alunelul*.

The *Irozii* custom of Bucovina is found in the very north of Romania next to Ukraine. The *Irozii* dance *Pădurețul*, which is an example of a dance clearly related to the wider fund of men's group dances, but and do not hold a prop or stick. This shows how having a prop in one hand is not actually a necessary characteristic of these men's dances.

Southern *Căluș* at Pentecost

Southern Romanian *Căluș* is a widespread and quite varied custom incorporating men's group dances. The tradition covers approximately the agricultural area west of Bucharest until the Carpathian foothills and south to along the Danube (see Figure 5).

Most academic writings focus on the 'healing' ritual aspect of *Căluș* practices, almost to the point of neglecting the rest of the bundle of elements that make up the *Căluș* custom and the ways that this tradition continues in the communities now. There is great speculation that this custom was 'archaic' and more widespread in the past, but references are few and incomplete.

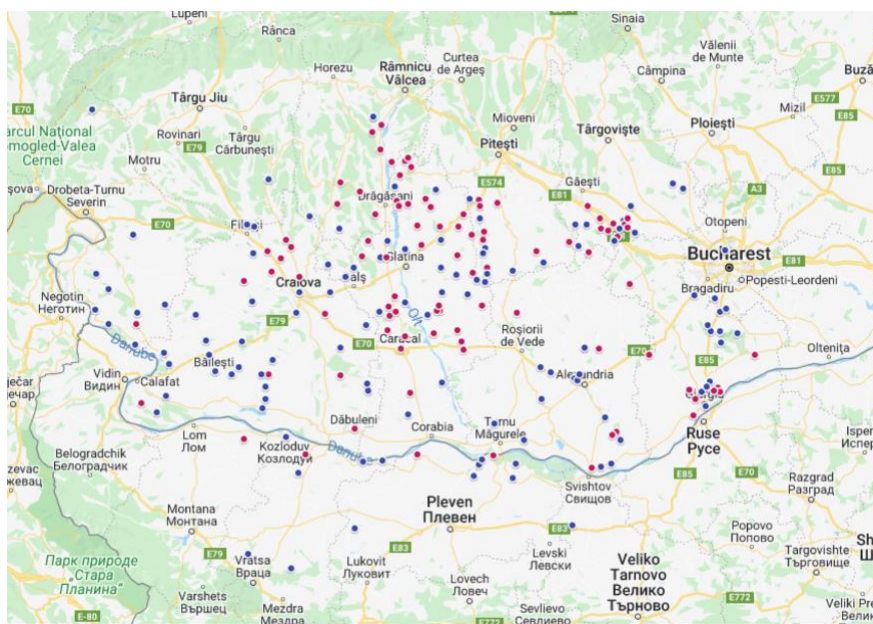


Figure 5. Southern *Căluș* custom, the 'red' dots are linked to videos, and the 'blue' dots are where there is a reference to a custom in the recent past [Mellish and Green 2020b].

In terms of the dance, the central area of Figure 3 has more complex step patterns which have become the elaborated staged versions and the performance style most often attributed to *Căluș* in people's minds (see QR code in Figure 6, Caracal ensemble). Along the Danube and in some other locations the dances are simpler and quite varied, for example from the village of Dăbuleni (QR code in Figure 6), note that this example also includes the ritual fainting of one of the dancers.



Ensemble Romanăți from Caracal, Ilt county	https://youtu.be/mm2CXVbII9Y	
<i>Căluș</i> from Dăbuleni, Dolj county	https://youtu.be/GAH6td4qzt4	

Figure 6. QR codes for *Căluș* dance video examples

Transylvanian winter *Călușeri*

It is very difficult to justify closely connecting Transylvanian *Călușeri* (see Figure 7) and southern *Căluș*, although they both undoubtedly are based on the same concept of a men's society performing a custom, however separate histories have led to different functions, different elements, and little connection in terms of the features of the customs and dance choreology.

It appears from documents that many village customs died out a century or more ago in much of central Transylvania, but a tradition remained alive or was regenerated in various zones on the edges of Transylvania and into Banat.

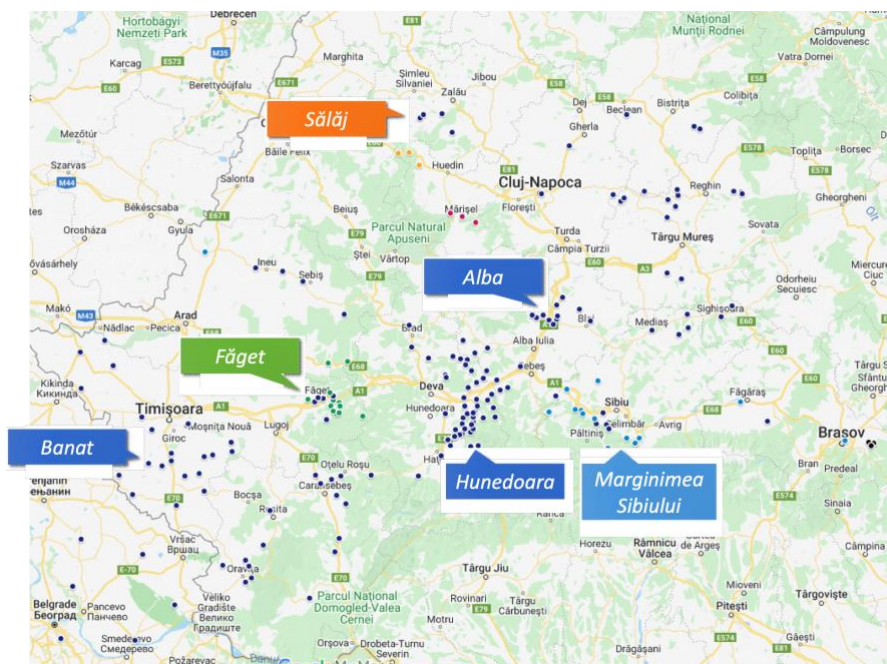
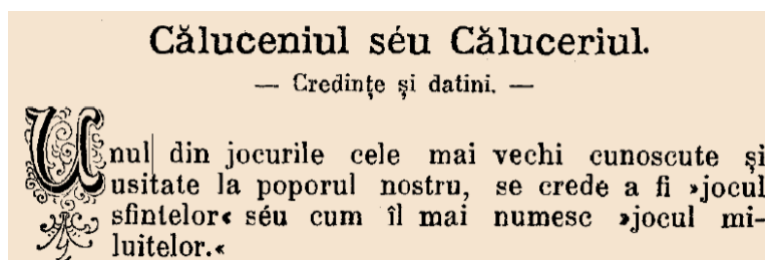


Figure 7. Transylvanian winter *Călușeri* [Mellish and Green 2020c].

There are very few early documented references to an earlier *Călușeri* custom or ritual. There is a 1859 report from the village of Foeni, four hours by horse from Timișoara, where the community dance was opened by the *Căluseri* [anon 1859]. This predates the wider adoption of the ballroom choreographed version of *Călușeri* (see Mellish this publication) and has the setting within the community event, typical for Banat, rather than a performance at a ball or festival which suggests this refers to the pre-choreographed *călușeri* dance. There are also several accounts from the Caraș valley in southern Banat in the 1890s that mention the local name for the custom as “căluceni” [Iana 1890] (see Figure 8).

In Giurchescu’s 1960s research on the fading dance traditions of the mountain shepherds in eastern Transylvania [Giurchescu 1963] she speculated that the dance *a mutului*, the dance of the mute character often associated with *Căluș* traditions, was the remains of such a tradition. This link seems to be confirmed in Bartók’s 1914 music collections where he put *Căluseri* in brackets after the melody “A mutului” [Bartók 1967:204] (Figure 9).

linu. Acei carii știu jucă bine și a face mai multe figuri în joc, se numesc *calușieri*.

Figure 8. Early *Călușeri* references [Iana 1890].Figure 9. Early *Călușeri* references [Bartók 1967:204].

The melodies for the two *Călușeri* dances *Banu Mărăcine* or *Bătută* and *Romana* or *Călușeriul* (see Figure 10) that were re-popularised following re-choreography in the 1850s, are now almost synonymous with *Călușeri* in popular culture.




<i>Banu Mărăcine</i> or <i>Bătută</i> – Almașu Mare, Alba country	https://youtu.be/JiOG_yDH77E	
<i>Romana</i> or <i>Călușeriul</i> – Grebanec, Serbian Banat	https://youtu.be/CgcqpEfMVK4	

Figure 10. QR codes for *Banu Mărăcine* and *Romana* video examples

These same dances can be presented in quite different styles, the example from the Făget region of north Banat is more grounded with stronger movements, and the example from Hunedoara region is more athletic and exhibits the dance skill of the *vătaf* leader (see QR code in Figure 11). It is difficult to know if these styles are adaptations from the choreographed version, or styles remaining from the local repertoire.

<i>Călușeri</i> from Tomești Făget region	https://youtu.be/tGZU_F03mXQ	
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<i>Călușeri</i> from Boșorod Hunedoara region	https://youtu.be/P2uaxEkqcF4	
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Figure 11. QR codes for *Călușeri* video examples.

There are many examples where similar dances are performed within both the *Călușeri* custom and the local non-custom or social dance repertoire. An example is one dance from the *călușeri* of the village of Gura Râulului in southern Transylvania, and the dance *Bota* (a type of stick dances known as *De băță* from the village of Idicel on the central eastern side of Transylvania where there is no longer a *Călușeri* tradition (see Figure 12).



<i>Călușeri</i> from Gura Râului, Sibiu county	https://youtu.be/wUNfjpUFIOc	
Men's dance from Idicel, Mureș	https://youtu.be/y2eVY-44Vrc	

Figure 12. QR codes for *Călușeri* custom and non-custom video examples.

Conclusion

In this paper I have presented an overview of one genre of men's dancing that is closely related to customs particularly at New Year and Pentecost. This so-called *Ceată* form of dance, taken from one term for the social organisation of dancers (see Paul Remeș in this publication), is characterised by men dancing in unison, without physical connection to other dancers, generally in a circle but can be in a line or rows, and frequently holding a stick or sword.

I chose a perspective starting from the context of the generic custom, using the notion of custom complexes, collections of themes and ideas that combine and adapt to form these customs, and the idea of a spatial arrangement which leads naturally to dancing in a circle around the custom focus. Dances that are part of a custom may well also form part of the social repertoire and it is common for there to be an exchange and overlap between contexts.

Within these customs there are generally the 'beautiful' (unmasked) and the 'ugly' (masked) characters. This form of unison group men's dance is associated with groups of 'beautiful' characters, something very frequent within the Romanian-speaking communities but rare among neighbouring ethnicities.

Historically dance academics have proposed an evolution of the European men's dances from an archaic common fund under the title "springing dances" which are differentiated by the props used. I have argued that this is too generic to be useful for analysis as much of the

Romanian men's repertoire of movements are closely linked to the chain dances and the generic form in customs of walking (or triple step) in a circle is not fundamental to "springing dances".

In the Romanian dance repertoire, a stick or sword is only held in various fixed positions or used as support, thus differentiating the genre from most of the other European men's stick and sword dances that include fighting figures or kinetic actions with the stick. The holding of a stick or sword is connected to the customs context and could be one reason for the dancers not being connected physically. The use of such props appears to have been abandoned in many traditions where the dances are clearly closely related to those that use a stick, as when the dance is performed in a social context it is not usual to carry a stick or sword to the social event.

Another unifying feature is that the horse, *cal* has played a significant role in ritual and customs with common customs in all three regions, *Căluș*, *Căluseri* and *Căiuti*. As far as I am aware these are the only 'horse' attributed dance customs in the Balkans. When compared to the surrounding ethnicities there appears to be some generic themes that unify Romanian men's dancing in rituals, customs, and derived social contexts. This is evident in the current practices and recent past, there is obviously a unifying factor in history, but I would refrain from suggesting an archaic evolution.

Endnotes

1. It should be noted that the kinetic repertoire typical for Romanian men's dances includes walking, stamping, jumps, and heel clicks and rhythmically syncopation is common. These features are universal across most of the Romanian dance forms.
2. I created a database of dance and custom references (documented or video) which includes the location. From this I can export the data as a geo-tagged data file to Google MyMaps.

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Paul-Alexandru Remeş
(Romania)

***Ceata* in Romania and different forms of dance organisation according to the sex criteria - society, customs, and gender in dances**

This paper concentrates on the defining terms that are used mostly in Transylvania for the formation of lad's or men's social brotherhood. Each and every term used in Romanian tradition for defining this kind of fellowship has a well-connected custom related to the name. The most common form is *Ceată* which can also have different meanings depending on the context used. The carolling customs or dancing rituals are the first cultural forms performed by groups of men who have their own rules that differ from village to village. The dance practices often have crossovers with pagan rites and religious customs. This is the reason why some of those gatherings always have a natural underlay connecting people that always follows the socialising process at all levels: psychic, social, and cultural, and contributes to the general development of society.

Keywords: Romania; men's brotherhood; *Ceată*; customs.

The paper describes a part of the general symbolism that is found around the old terminology used to define a group of people, or more correctly, a gathering that is called *Ceată* by Romanians. Different specialised dictionaries in Romanian define the group of people of the same gender, that have the same function or the same purpose, under the general dome of the term *Ceată*.¹ This form of association is typical for Romanian people and is found in most rural cultural events, especially during the holidays and festival periods. Socialisation in the Romanian rural area has been, and still is, represented by dance and other interactive activities of a folkloric nature, to a greater extent compared to the European average. In common speech, the term *Ceată* is used mostly at winter holidays referring especially to the group of people who go carolling. Those groups were, and some of them still are composed exclusively of men or lads who have a great sense of camaraderie and their main duty is to give blessings to each and every house they visit during their cultural performances which mostly involve dancing and carolling. Gheorghe Ciobanu made an important study regarding carol rhythms and dance rhythms and explained in his conclusion that the oldest form of carols could not have survived and been widely perpetuated if they were not correlated with movement during their interpretation [Ciobanu 1964:35]. In the past, the dances had a special meaning and the groups were organised based on the criteria of gender. In Romanian dances usually the best conserver of rhythmic formulas in dance are the women and girls because the men and the boys always intend to be more spectacular so they divide the rhythmic values.

An example is *Jocul Caprei* [the goat dance ritual] (see video example 1) which is found in the entire Romanian cultural space in different forms, and which is performed exclusively by men. In some popular beliefs, it is also said that the one who dances under the goat coat is cursed for 7 weeks – a belief that was most likely launched by the church regarding all pagan rites. Popular beliefs also attribute female roles to the material with which this mystical character is wrapped. Thus, the fabric is given the magical fertility forces of mothers who give life to their babies. “Together with goat's (Turca) ibis head, she banishes poverty from the house and brings plentiful prosperity and abundance” [Sbîrcea 1957:163].

Video example 1: *Jocul Caprei* [Goat Dance organised by a group of boys from Cergăul Mare, Alba County, filmed by Paul-Alexandru Remeș on December 24, 2012. <https://youtu.be/9b1ju5D2FJ4>



As is common in the history of dance, some of the dances were danced especially by men. One interesting phenomenon of modified formation in dance, and other problems regarding folk dance evolution in Romania, were signalled around the middle of the last century by Emanuela Balaci. She studied the transformation of dance using an example of the dance *Brâul* [girdle or belt] [Balaci 1959:53–55]. This very common chain dance was initially danced only by men, however in time the formation of dance transformed into mixed gender, and nowadays, in some places, we can find also women's formations dancing *Brâul*.

The companionship of the boys:

“Do the boys of the village, or some of them, get used to getting together to spend the days between Christmas and Epiphany? When is it formed and what is the name of this company called “*ceată*”, “*bere*”, “*bute*” or otherwise? Who runs it? Is it received by anyone or only those who have reached a certain age or certain conditions? (What are those?) How do the boys in the fellowship spend their time? Are they disguised? With what and how? When does fellowship break up and what are your customs then?” [Mușlea 1931].

This is a short questionnaire sent by the folklorist Ion Mușlea in 1931 to the teachers and officials who in turn returned the necessary answers. Those questionnaires represent a very important direction of research for linguist researchers and ethnologists and constitute the biggest manuscript fund in Cluj-Napoca's archive. The answers to this questionnaire can be found in certain publications of my colleagues from the Institute's Archive of Folklore.

The boy's gathering, *Ceata*, takes place between December 24 and January 7. A group of boys participate, who gather in a house in the village, which they take over for all this time. Here they make dance exercises and dance parties. On each day in this festival period, the *Ceata* sings carols around the houses in the village, dancing some men's dances or some pair dances with the hosts' girls. A special dance for the occasion is *Borița*. In the previous few years because of some local misunderstandings, the *ceata* was no longer organised. [Bucșan 1971:8].

Winter holidays seem to be the most loved ones in the whole Romanian cultural space. Christmas is a special religious holiday for everyone and between Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve the rural society is in a continuous celebration. In some villages from Transylvania, they start dancing on Christmas Eve. In others the youngsters are allowed to dance only from the first day of Christmas. Those practices are always a combination of popular beliefs intersected with religious ones. The musicians have the main role because they provide the accompaniment with music and rhythm. In the Apuseni Mountains, *Ceata* is organised by a chief called *taroste*. This character is responsible for the organisation of the group called *Juni*, and also he liaises with the locals in whose house the next day's dancing will be held. He pays the musicians after all their work is over and also makes chants for the gifts received in each house. *Alduirea colacului*, *a băuturii*, *a banilor* [honour for the food, for drinking and for

money] is a common custom that is related to the duties of the *taroste* who gives oral blessings in each house to pay for carolling with those so-called gifts [Cîmpeanu 2022].

A cultural asset catalogued in the Patrimoniul cultural național al României [National Cultural Heritage of Romania] is a manuscript dated 1870–1880 called *Junețea* in Romanian. This has, *Berea*, the feast of the boys, (*Berea* is literally translated as the Beer) under customs of the Romanian people. This is another name for the organisation of the group of boys that is still found in some villages, that is particularly characteristic of the Mureș area together with old folk-theatrical customs. The companies of the boys were arranged according to age. Thus, two *Berea* can be formed in a village, that is two groups of boys, the small *Berea* is made up of boys over 15 years old who have not yet completed their military service, and the big *Berea* consisted only of boys with military service.

In the language in common usage before the mid-20th century, the peasant men called their wives '*muliere*' (from the Latin *mulier*, *mulieris* for woman) meaning married woman or mature female person, and the woman called the man '*omul meu*' which means my husband. In Bistrița County, in a certain sub-area, a girl was called 'before boy'. We thus understand that the lexical family was influenced by gender but also that in the present case, gender can be assigned to a word belonging to the opposite gender. This was influenced mostly by the people's beliefs that if you gave a girl a boy's name then she could be protected from evil during her lifetime. This enters into a different and very wide research area about people's beliefs.

Viewing the customs of the village in field research related to the organisation using the criteria of gender, in Romania there are three active elements of intangible heritage. Those are included on the UNESCO list of elements of intangible heritage of humanity, by the names:

- 1) *Călușul* [The Căluș Ritual] the date of inclusion – November 25th, 2005;
- 2) *Colindatul de ceată bărbătească din România și Republica Moldova* [Men's group carolling from Romania and Republic of Moldova] the date of inclusion, December 5th, 2013; and
- 3) *Jocul fecioresc din România* [Lad's dance from Romania] the date of inclusion, December 2nd, 2015. All three elements are represented locally in each village/territory.

The *Căluș* ritual primarily involves the physical participation of dancers made up exclusively of men who form a '*Ceată*'. The *Călușari* fight the mythological beings from the sphere of the surreal known as *Ielele*'. In traditional Romanian culture '*Ielele*' are female or flying female mythological beings are also made up of a group, having facial characteristics. They are found in the Romanian popular beliefs under other names: *Vântoase*, *Măiestre*, *Frumoase*, etc. There was also a parallel tradition in the form of a female group who appear at *Rusalii* (the feast of Pentecost) known as the *Crăițele* in Banat, Oltenia, and Valea Timocului where some of them danced until they fell into a trance. The times of the year when these groups of *călușari* and *călușeri* (see video example 2) are formed may differ depending on the area in which they are practicing the ritual. Thus, in the Oltenia and Muntenia Plains of the Danube, in the Transylvanian Plain (extinct form), and Banat (extinct form) the *Căluș* cycle was practiced at Pentecost, while in Transylvania, in Aromanians, and Megleno-Romanians the *Căluș* cycle is practiced during the winter holidays. The Ceata of Călușari consisted exclusively of men,

The performers/dancers are called "călușari", they gather once a year and dress in women's clothes. On their heads they put a wreath woven of wormwood and

adorned with flowers; they talk like women and, in order not to get to recognise each other, they cover their cheeks with a white cloth. [Cantemir 1909:232].

If I was to analyse the statement from the point of view of Gabriel Negry [1986], I could say that the respective groups described by Dimitrie Cantemir practiced a type of mimetic dance characterised by the translation process, first of all, due to their masking and secondly by practicing the utility function within the community.

Video example 2: *Călușerul* from Meseșenii de Sus, Sălaj County, filmed by Paul-Alexandru Remeș on December 24, 2021. <https://youtu.be/XR2QNSuilkE>



This dance is a variant of this type of ritual that fortunately still retains some traces of its esoteric function. These traces obviously adapted to the new norms of social behaviour. The video shows the funny character usually called ‘*mutul*’ who is wearing a white doctor’s robe with all the inscriptions that were mostly used during the Covid19 pandemic period. So they following the topical world issues and always adapting their roles.

Men’s group carolling is based on a variant of the text in which the trinity is described. My grandmother, Ana Remeș used to sing a version of this carol every year during the winter holidays and I learned it during the Christmas holidays. The famous Romanian writer, Lucian Blaga also used the same text to open his speech when he was appointed as a member of the Romanian Academy in 1937, thus showing the importance of these words. This carolling is the most important moment during the calendar year and takes place in the period when most of the groups are formed. Video example 3 is a *Ceată* gathering that can be found in the southern part of the Mureș Valley under the name of *Butea*, or *Butea feciorilor* [lad’s Butea].

Video example 3: *Butea feciorilor* from Cergăul Mare, Alba County, filmed by Paul-Alexandru Remeș on December 24, 2012. <https://youtu.be/d0qNWZfnehY>



Jocul fecioresc, the lad’s dance, is a heritage element that, like the other two elements mentioned, is based on the formation of *Ceată*. I previously assisted Zamfir Dejeu in the process of transcribing some types of lad’s dance for the UNESCO projects. Zamfir Dejeu’s compilation with transcripts in Laban dance notation “The lad’s dance in Romania” [Dejeu 2016] identifies nine types of lad’s dances and over 15 subtypes found in Romanian choreographic space. The term *Ceată* in connection with these lad’s dances is justified by the fact that, in the wider area most of the dances in this category are closely related to the *Ceata Feciorilor*, the *Călușari Ceata*, or even *Ceata* with masked men [Dejeu 2016:5]. The terms Moldavian *Ceata* dances and shepherds’ *Ceata* dances are used to define two subtypes of lad’s dances that belong to an old strata. The men’s dances mostly have motifs comprised of kicks and rhythmic stamping on the ground, whilst the lad’s dances have more kicks of the leg and are more dynamic.

Video example 4: *Plimbata la Feciorească* and the *Bătuta la Feciorească* from Ticușul Nou, Brașov County, filmed by Paul-Alexandru Remeș on January 6, 2013.
<https://youtu.be/3l59KjRY9lg>



The category of old-strata dances chain dances characterised by rhythmic beats on the ground, performed in a formation of a circle, or semicircle are also danced by the *Ceată* [Dejeu 2000:144]. In Transylvania these are predominantly in the villages south of the Târnave region and across the Upper Olt region.

The dances were divided using the criteria of gender and some of them still are. From this point of view, the last important criterion of this paper is the rhythm of Romanian folk dance which the ethnochoreologists can find in a different conservation process between males and females. According to researchers, women have the highest degree of rhythmic conservation, and men are the exact opposite of this process, due to the general tendency of bravery and competition with each other [Dejeu 2000:593]. I thus have observed an aspect that probably presents the most important characteristics of the development of Romanian traditional dance after the medieval period.

It is important from a teacher's perspective to point out that the couple dance teaching in Transylvania, where this type of dance is predominant, has to be usually made by both a man and a woman. This teaching model is necessary for physical and physiognomic reasons, always following the characteristics of Lads' dances through virtuosity and the elegance of girls in group or pair dances. It is essential that the pedagogical process of dance is adapted to the new forms in which dances are performed during social contexts like weddings, parties, and other contemporary events that include dancing.

In conclusion, each and every gender has its own way of manifestation in dance practice. The boys and the men have the responsibility for perpetuating male dances full of masculinity and virility, just as the girls and the women have their own femininity and tenderness to express in dance. The social context is the most important phenomenon for humans as we firstly are social beings. Group and couple dances are a way to connect and socialise closely with each and every member of the community. Dance and art generally, is always the easiest way to understand the culture and habits of others and are ways of demonstrating the relationship between genders even in limited areas. All the forms of brotherhood between people, despite the organisation regarding criteria of gender or not, contribute to the mental well-being of the community, and also in these gatherings cultural life flourishes and contributes with facets of intangible heritage that enrich universal heritage.

Endnotes

1. *Ceată*, plural *cête*, from old Slavic чета has many meanings, those useful in this context are 1) category of people of the same social condition, 6) guild, 7) to enter into a certain group who belong to the same professional or social category, 10) group of people who go carolling, 11) association (professional) and fellowship [dexonline 2004].

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Liz Mellish
(Romania/UK)

**Collective memory, myths, symbols of Romanian-ness and (evolving) gender roles:
Romanian men's *călușeri* and *căluș* rituals, customs and dances**

This paper addresses issues of symbols of Romanian-ness and collective memory among Romanians, with reference to Transylvanian winter *călușeri* and southern Romanian *căluș*. Prior to 1918 the Transylvania *călușeri* dances were used as a demonstration of 'Romanian-ness' in resistance to the domination of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Following the Second World War, the southern Romanian *căluș* was adopted as the most representative Romanian icon, following a view that links *căluș* back to Romanians' Latin/Dacian roots. The versions of *călușeri* and *căluș* promulgated as symbols of Romanian-ness were the arrangements for staged performances. It was only after the 2005 ICH listing of *căluș* that the village version of *căluș* became the emblematic version. Within collective memory both *călușeri* and *căluș* are regarded as specifically male, this ignores the roles that women have played historically in these customs. This paper draws theory on collective memory, archival research, published literature and fieldwork by the author.

Keywords: Romania; men's-dances; *căluș*; *călușeri*; collective memory.

This contribution to our panel on Romanian men's group dances addresses issues of 'symbols of Romanian-ness' and 'collective memory' among Romanians, with reference to Transylvanian winter *călușeri* and southern Romanian *căluș* and their associated dances. It first asks why men's dances, customs or rituals were promoted as icons of Romanian-ness. Martin, when discussing "Peasant dance traditions and national dance types in East-Central Europe between the 16th and 19th centuries" gives a possible answer:

Romantic national ideology played a primary role in the selection of particular folk dance types as the representatives of national character [...] Among the peoples of the Carpathian Basin [...] the role of national dances was played by male dances [...] the national elites selected a peasant male dance of a kind which, in their opinion, represented suitably the historical past, the national character and also symbolised the[ir] political desires and goals [Martin 1985:124,118].

However, the selection of the representative dance or custom can change over time alongside the changes in the national history as it is considered necessary to highlight different facets of nationality which has been the case in Romania.

This paper deals with two separate men's organised group dance forms that have been promulgated as symbols of Romanian-ness during different times through history and in different ways; the *căluș* ritual/custom of southern Romania (also found in the neighbouring regions of northern Bulgaria) that takes place every year at the time of *Rusalii* (Pentecost), fifty days after orthodox Easter, and the winter *călușeri* of southern Transylvania and Banat which are part of the Christmas and new year custom cycle.¹ An outsider may see these as part of the same custom complex but in fact, they have different histories, myths, dances, ritual purposes, and geographical areas of origin, that are summarised in Figure 1.

	Danubian <i>Căluș</i>	Transylvanian <i>Călușeri</i>
Geographical distribution	Southern Romania	Transylvania and Banat
Time of year of main occurrence	<i>Rusalii</i> – 50 days after Easter	Winter as part of winter holiday customs
Ritual purposes	Healing, fertility, good health	Possibly in distant past
Adoption as symbol of Romanian-ness	1935 onwards	Mid-19th century
Dates of myth	Ongoing especially in 20 th century	Mid-19 th century onwards
Intangible cultural heritage	First on Romania ICH list (2005)	Listed within the “Transylvanian Lad’s dances” (2015)

Figure 1. *Căluș* and *Călușeri* comparative table.

Symbols of Romanian-ness and collective memory: Transylvanian winter *călușeri* and the Habsburg empire

Collective memory, according to Halbwachs is a “socially constructed notion” [Halbwachs, quoted by Coser 1992:22]. It comprises elements of individual and group memories that can be linked to specific myths and ‘diacritica’ by ruling political or cultural masters in a specific time-period. Assmann discussed Halbwachs concept in greater detail in his works. He proposes the concept of cultural memory as the “handing down of meaning” [Assmann 2011:6] that is comprised of “that body of reusable texts, images, and rituals specific to each society in each epoch” [Assmann and Czaplicka 1995:132].

In the mid-19th century, many of the nation-states of Europe began to move towards the borders that exist today. This gave rise to the need to establish a specific identity connected to the area they control (or wished to rule) which commonly involved the promotion of symbolic cultural separators or “diacritica” [Barth 1969:31] together with the use of myths as a means of boundary reinforcement and to promote nationalism [Kolstø 2005]. These myths come in several variations including myths of origin, unity and continuity [Boia 2001a] with the use of these myths to set imaginary or physical ‘boundaries’ being controlled/guided through a series of norms intended to limit the effects of cultural change [Appadurai 1981:203].²

Although Verdery claims that Romanian national identity had its earliest roots in the mid-1700s [Verdery 1991:27], in Transylvania the need to demonstrate national identity for Romanians strengthened after the mid-19th century although Romania, as it is bounded today, did not exist for a further seventy years.³ The Transylvania *călușeri* dances were first used as an emblem of ‘Romanian-ness’ at this time to demonstrate ‘Romanian-ness’ in resistance to the domination of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and have held a place in Romanian collective memory ever since.

The Christmas and New Year custom cycle in Transylvanian and Banat that takes place between 24th December and 7th January, includes singing carols (*colinde*), *călușeri* dances, folk theatre and in some areas drumming (*dubași*). These customs take place during the daytime when organised groups of young men known as *Ceată* or *Junii* go from house to house in villages [Remeș 2023] and are followed in the evening by a village ball in which everyone participates. However, it is less evident that there are two separate and overlapping

manifestations of these dances, firstly the dances that are part of the house-to-house winter customs and secondly, from the mid-19th century, the performance of the *călușeri* dances in public events organised by the urban elites as a demonstration of Romanian nationalism.

This paper is concerned with the latter manifestation, which can be dated from around 1850 when two Transylvanian intellectuals⁴ from Brașov compiled a choreography of a *Călușeri* dance, that they named *Romana* (using a patriotic name) based on dances collected in Transylvania villages [Emilian 1886; Mureșianu 1901; Bucșan 1982:88].

Returning to Martin, he observed that dances adopted as representative of a nation or ethnicity “always emerged from the sphere of popular culture” [Martin 1985:119]. He continued:

[...] Popular dance of the East European people was identical with the peasant dance until the nineteenth century, and consequently the national, elites, seeking for symbols of national identity turned to the rural dance traditions [...]. They strove to adjust these peasant dances to the taste of the nobility and the urban middle classes by regulating and eliminating regional differences and refining their performance. [...] In the reorganization of dance life the elites had two aims: they wished to raise the folk dance to the level of theatre dance and connect it to composed music; and further, they tried to make it an organic part of the social life throughout the nation. Two simultaneous currents – “upward” and “downward” – characterized these efforts [Martin 1985:119,124].

Following the choreography of *Romana*, and *Banu Mărăcine* (the latter from the suite of dances belonging to the *călușeri* of south western Transylvania [Giurchescu and Bloland 1995:29]) were regularly included as a short performance item in the programme of social balls held in city ballrooms [Clemente 1998:140; Green and Mellish 2020], and were danced by the men’s *Ceată* or *Juni* groups at festivals and celebrations in Transylvanian towns and cities (see Figure 2). These arranged versions of the *călușeri* dances were subsequently re-taught to village dance groups throughout Transylvania and Banat where they developed numerous local variants thus spreading the ‘tradition’ to a considerably wider area than the area from which the material was collected [Bucșan 1982:90]. In 1901 the newspaper *Drapelul*, in an article about ‘Romana’, reported that “50 years since this dance of salon was composed [...] the dance Romana is indispensable at each Romanian *bal* or at each Romanian party, but even also at the dances and parties of people from villages who sometimes even dance quadrille” [Rotariu 1901:2–3].⁵

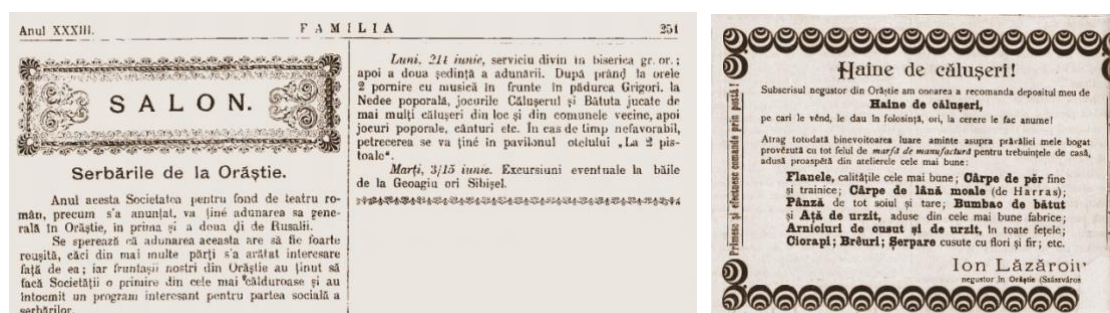


Figure 2. Newspaper adverts the town of Orăștie 1897 (a) *Rusalii* ball [Vulcan 1897:251], (b) costume maker in [Lăzăroi 1897:8].

***Călușeri* beyond Romania**

In addition to the spread of these dances within Transylvania and Banat; towards the end of the 19th century there were reports of groups of *călușeri* travelling abroad to perform their dances to promote Romanian identity (see Figure 3). In 1886 a group of *călușeri* dancers performed at a conference in Stockholm to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Astra organisation [Preda 1944:127].⁶ In 1896 a group (possibly from Obreja, Caraș-Severin county) danced in Budapest at the millennium anniversary of Hungary [Turcuș and Milin 2007:34]. In 1909 a group of Romanian soldiers danced *călușeri* in Bosnia (near Knin, now in Croatia) during the anniversary celebrations of the 1866 war with the Turks [Tăslăuanu 1909:23]. Also in 1909, on the national holiday of the Austrian Empire, the *călușeri* from the village of Marga, in the comuna of Băuțar, Caraș-Severin county were invited to Vienna, where they danced in front of Emperor Franz Joseph and then processed through the streets of Vienna on a float, displaying Romanian folk costumes [Băcilă 2013:220]. The following year, 1910, the ‘*formația de călușeri*’ of the Romanian students *Jună* society in Vienna danced at a New Year party for the Romanian community [Tăslăuanu 1910:127; Jompan 1973:41]. In 1918 *călușeri* danced in both Budapest and Vienna for Emperor Franz Josef [Lapteș 2009:74–80], and on 1st December 1918 *călușeri* took part in the ceremony celebrating Romanian Unification in Alba Iulia [Lapteș 2009:74–80]. However, following the unification of Romania in 1918, the promotion of Transylvanian *călușeri* as the symbol of Romanian-ness faded out of favour.



Figure 3. *Călușeri* in (a) Bosnia in 1909 [Tăslăuanu 1909:23] and (b) Vienna in 1910 [Tăslăuanu 1910:127].

***Căluș* in Southern Romania: Overlapping and perpetuated myths in Romanian memory**

Returning to Martin’s 1985 paper, he explained that “recent historical events and distant historical myths played an equally important part in the establishment of national dance consciousness and in the choice of dance types to represent this” [Martin 1985:125]. After Unification in 1918, and especially during the communist period the view that the southern Romanian *căluș* was the most representative dance (and ritual) of the entire Romanian nation took prominence and was promulgated by ‘intellectuals’ who linked *căluș* back to Romanian’s Latin and/or Dacian roots, by drawing on “myths of unity and continuity” which took over as the key themes during this period [see Boia 2001b:139].⁷ These myths have been perpetuated in many writings about *căluș* by scholars who quote historical documents dating back to the 1770s as evidence of the pan-Romanian-ness of *căluș* although it is not clear that these refer to either or both of the *căluș* ritual and/or dancing from southern Romania.⁸

The southern *căluș* is known as a ritual for healing, health and fertility, although the healing part of the ritual is seldom practiced now. It takes place in villages in southern Romania, at *Rusalii* (Pentacost, 50 days after orthodox Easter),⁹ and used to last for seven to nine days,

but nowadays takes place on only two or three days. The *căluș* dancers are known as *călușari*. They are a group of men, always an uneven number, bound together by an oath for the period of *Rusalii* which involves certain interdictions during these days.¹⁰

There are several (potentially) overlapping mythologies regarding *căluș* that are held within Romanian collective memory, including:

- (Mythical) links to possible Dacian or Latin origins (as mentioned above),
- *Căluș* as an ‘ancient’ healing ritual,
- Memory of *călușari* dancers dancing in villages and busking in towns during *Rusalii*,
- Stories of the *călușari* dancers at the 1935 international folk festival in London,
- *Căluș* as a symbol of Romanian nationalism,
- *Căluș* dances as the most spectacular and representative part of performances by Romanian folk ensembles, especially when on tours outside Romania.

The *călușari* in London in 1935 – myths perpetuated

The first recorded occasion when southern *căluș* represented Romania abroad as the ‘icon’ of Romanian-ness was at the 1935 International folk festival in London, when dance groups were invited from many European countries. The invitation letter sent to the Romanian Institute of Folklore in Bucharest [Brauner 1979:44] stressed that the dancers should be peasants (villagers) and certainly not professionals, and as recorded in the Minute Book of EFDSS “there was a preference for groups that would show dances of a ‘ritual or ceremonial character’, rather than social dances” [EFDSS 1933 quoted in Foley et al. 2022:22]. According to Harry Brauner, an ethnomusicologist based in Bucharest, on receipt of this letter, Constantin Brăiloiu, one of the founders of the Romanian *Composers’* Union, immediately thought of the *călușari* [Brauner 1979:44].

It can be questioned as to why at this time-period, almost twenty years since Romanian Unification, the southern Romanian *căluș* was the national symbol selected to represent Romania as a nation rather than the Transylvanian *călușeri*. Also, what role did Constantin Brăiloiu play in this, and why did he immediately think of the *călușari*?¹¹

Three *căluș* groups were invited to Bucharest where a formal selection took place. However, as Brăiloiu and Brauner had already seen the *călușari* from the village of Pădureți-Argeș dancing in streets of Bucharest at *Rusalii* [Brauner 1979:40], it appears that they might have had an advantage over the other two groups, and so they were selected. Arrangements were soon made for their journey to London by rail and ferry [Brauner 1979:46] and the women in the village worked intensively to prepare brightly coloured costumes, with “artistically embroidered belts” and hats with ribbons hanging from them [Ionel 2019] in time for their departure [Brauner 1979:46].¹²

Their appearances at the festival (see Figure 4) won the unanimous acclaim of the audience. As the Romanian press reported “[t]he international fame of the *călușari* from Pădureți [...] began on a hot summer’s day in 1935 in London” [Ionel 2019] “the 10 minutes in which they performed, [...] accompanied by a cobza and a violin [...] silenced the hall and even the jury with their dizzying and delightful dance” [Grigorescu 2019]. According to the English Dance and Song News in September 1935, “[w]henver they appeared they dominated the occasion, the delighted but slightly uneasy audience wondering when, and yet fearing, they

would stop” [Batchelor 1935:246]. However, the most renowned story in UK media was about the hunt for fresh garlic in 1935 London because the *călușari* refused to dance without garlic attached to the top of their *steag* (flag) as they believed this gave them their magical powers [Howes 1935:12; Batchelor 1935:246].



Figure 4. 1935 festival: the Romanian *Căluș* (Illustrated London News).

The memory of their success and story[ies] of the *căluș* group's journey have retained a firm place in Romanian collective memory with regular and numerous mentions in the media and academic literature in both Romania and the UK from 1935 until current times.¹³ Reports in the Romania media recount that “the Călușarii from Pădureți, succeeded [...] in becoming a symbol of Romania traditions through the fame they brought to Romania in 1935” [Stancu 2022]. They made “the biggest impression at the festival, conquering London from the Royal Albert Hall to Buckingham Palace” [Stancu 2022], and because of this were given the nickname “the Tigers of the Carpathians” [Neagoe 2016; Ionel 2019]. Many of these reports also perpetuate various myths about the Romanian *călușari* in London. The most often repeated story was that the Romanians won first prize at the festival [Cruceană 1979; Ionel 2019; Grigorescu 2019; Stancu 2022] which was not correct as the London festival was not competitive!¹⁴

Grigorescu says that “[f]ollowing their success in London, during the next four years the *călușari* toured to other European countries” [Grigorescu 2019], although I have not yet been able to find any confirmation of this. However, in January 1939 they were again invited to London for a smaller festival [see Barbu 1939; Cruceană 1979:115] when the press reported “that the organisers hope the Rumanians, mindful of a similar contretemps in 1935, will bring their own blooming garlic” [Daily Record 1939]. However, the outbreak of the Second World War prevented further travel and, according to Grigorescu it was ten years before the *călușari* groups were reformed [Grigorescu 2019].

***Căluș* in post Second World War Romanian ideology: Continuity between past and present**

Anca Giurchescu refers to the period immediately after the end of the Second World War in Romania as “the revolutionary stage of communism (1948–1965)”. During these years “religious practices and mystical beliefs were interdicted”. However, in villages in southern Romania she reveals that “the ritual components of *căluș* continued to survive in a latent and hidden phase” [Giurchescu 2008:17]. After 1965, during the nationalistic stage of Ceaușescu's dictatorship which lasted until 1989, there was “a reassertion of national ideology in Romanian

culture and politics” [see Verdery 1991:116–121]. Giurchescu explains that it was during this period that *căluș* was appropriated as “a symbol for Romanian’s cultural antiquity, historical continuity, unity and high artistic qualities” [Giurchescu 2008:17]. She notes that *căluș* fulfilled the necessary criteria for selection because it was considered to reflect the “national identity, uniqueness and the continuity of Rumanians in the Carpathian-Danubian cultural area” [Giurchescu 1990:54,56].

She elaborates further:

An important symbolic function of Rumanian folklore has been to establish continuity between the present and the past, or more, to bring the past into present by using the concept of permanence. Folklore has also been employed to symbolise the unitary character of the entire nation, via its regional diversity. [Giurchescu 1990:54]

The rich symbolism of *căluș*, rooted in its polysemic character, has been used on such a large scale that it finally became one of the dominant symbols for the official Rumanian cultural tradition [Giurchescu 1990:54].¹⁵

However, although the claim was that the *căluș* ritual/custom fulfilled these criteria when “enacted in its natural setting” [Giurchescu 1990:54] in Southern Romanian villages, in reality the versions promulgated in this period were the selected arrangements of the *căluș* dances adapted for stage performances that were supplemented with spectacular elements. These arranged choreographies formed part of the repertoire of folk ensembles in all regions of Romania and the Republic of Moldova, and were included in the majority of the many important state ceremonies and parades [Giurchescu 1990:54].¹⁶ They were also usually the centre piece in the programme of Romanian folk ensembles performing for tourists within Romania and when ensembles travelled abroad. Further endorsement of the importance of the symbolism of Calus in this period is seen in the photos of *călușari* dancers that were prominently displayed in tourist literature promoting Romania, and in the production of souvenirs for example dolls dressed as *călușari*.

Căluș both in the village ritual/custom and in the choreographed version was recognised as a dance for men. In respect of the performance choreographies, Giurchescu comments that:

[i]n this selected and stylised form, *căluș* was exclusively seen as a powerful, highly virtuoso men’s dance, which had a great artistic impact on the audience. [...] For professional or amateur dancers from the towns, the learning and performing of the athletic and very complicated routines of the *Căluș*, was a confirmation of their skills [Giurchescu 1990:52, 54].

However, she continues:

[i]n the villages, where the sacred form of *căluș* and [...] *căluș* reduced to a dance performance on stage existed side by side, the performers were forced to pass constantly from one world to another. And they did so with great ease, because of the polysemic character of *căluș*, and because both ritual belief and materialist ideology exist side by side in people’s ambivalent personalities [Giurchescu 1990:53].

***Căluș* today: A living ritual and a polysemic symbol of Romanian-ness**

In 2005, 70 years after the 1935 success, the southern Romanian *căluș* ritual was awarded the status of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) by UNESCO as the first Romanian entry on this prestigious list [UNESCO 2005].¹⁷ Giurchescu was not convinced about the motivation behind the application and expressed her concern in several papers that she subsequently published. The overriding questions she asked were [Giurchescu 2001:66; Giurchescu 2008:23–24]:

- Which *căluș* is included in the listing - the *căluș* ritual, custom, the associated dances, or the choreographies of *căluș* danced by ensembles?
- If the *căluș* ritual, should this be considered as intangible cultural heritage?
- How should the *căluș* listed as ICH be protected, valued and preserved?

She expressed regret that the local community had not been sufficiently involved in the ICH application, and that the list of actions needed to ‘preserve’ this valuable ritual (and its ICH listing) were proposed from the top down rather than consulting the practitioners in the local communities in southern Romania as to what they saw as important.

This debate regarding *căluș* and its ICH listing leads on to a consideration of what *căluș* is today. Is it a ritual, a custom, a dance, dances, a community activity, or only a performance for a non-participatory audience? Is it a living and evolving ritual/custom/tradition that takes place in overlapping contexts, or is it something that is fossilised, and most important for this paper, is it still a symbol of Romanian-ness with associated perpetuating myths in the collective memory of Romanians? Evidence supports the notion that *căluș* can exist (and has survived for numerous years) in parallel/overlapping contexts by drawing on its polysemic character. However, what are the contexts that exist today, and how have these evolved since 1990?

Our *căluș* research and fieldwork more or less follows on where Anca Giurchescu’s fieldwork stopped around 2008 and thus provides a contemporary view of the living contexts of *căluș*. Each year, we follow *căluș* in several of its overlapping contexts during personal fieldwork,¹⁸ supplemented by written literature and archival sources and on-line media including:

- Ritual *căluș* in southern Romanian villages (house-to-house, dancing in courtyards and dancing in the streets),
- *Căluș* groups dancing in southern Romanian towns and cities during *Rusalii*,
- Annual *căluș* festivals organised at local and county levels during and after *Rusalii*,
- *Căluș* groups performances at village fairs held throughout the summer and on national holidays such as Romania day on 1st December,
- *Căluș* participation in life cycle rituals (weddings and funerals) for members of their *ceata*.

Although the full ritual healing is rare nowadays (and if it takes place is well hidden) the other elements of the *căluș* custom continue to take place annually and are still important in local community calendars and collective memory of Romanians, especially those from southern Romania (see Figures 5). Each year in southern Romanian villages at *Rusalii* the *călușari* continue to go from house-to-house, performing their dances and elements of the *căluș* custom in the courtyards, and in return for their dancing are given food, drinks and money at each house they visit,¹⁹ just as Romulus Vuia wrote about in the 1920s and 1930s:

The villagers vie with each other in inviting the *Călușari* to come and dance in their yards, because they believe that he who receives them will not get ill and will have good luck. [Vuia 1935:99]



Figure 5. *Căluș* in southern Romania in current times (a) in Craiova city 2018, (b) house-to-house in a village 2022 (photo credit Nick Green).

At *Rusalii* groups that dance in their villages early in the morning then travel on to adjacent villages that do not have their own *călușari* or nearby towns and cities where they busk on the streets or in markets as a way to earn extra money. References to this date back to the 1930s on the streets in Bucharest [Proca-Ciordea 1978:1] and at Târgul Moșilor [Giurescu 1966:380], and also in the late 1960s to 1970s in Craiova and Bucharest [Pop 1969a:3; Kligman 1981:144]. Kligman comments:

It is difficult to ignore the economic motivation for the dancers, especially now. To this very day, *Călușari* enjoy the profits of dancing in the cities. We encountered several different groups in Craiova, j. Dolj, and in Slatina, j. Olt, most of whom performed in front of stores or restaurants. The *Călușari* provided an enjoyable distraction from what might otherwise have been a dreary daily routine for the many who gathered to watch and enjoy. [Kligman 1981:36]

Each year in the cities of Craiova and Giurgiu on *Rusalii* Sunday parades (*alaiul*) of *căluș* groups are organised by the local cultural centres. These involve a procession of the participating groups through the city centre followed by short ‘interactive’ performances by each group after which some of the groups continue to busk around the city centres. Other locations in southern Romania organise festivals of *căluș* in the weeks around *Rusalii*.²⁰ These range from small festivals with a few local groups to larger events, that include groups from a wider area of southern Romania and beyond. The longest-running festival is ‘*Călușul Românesc*’ a competitive festival that first took place in 1969 in Slatina, Olt county, later moving to Caracal where it continues to take place annually [Pop 1969b]. Giurchescu explains that in the communist period this festival was deliberately organised at *Rusalii* with the intention of “hindering the practice of *căluș* in the villages at its ritually prescribed time”, although she was told by the *vătaf* of the village Optași-Măgura that in order to solve this dilemma they organised two groups, one to participate in the competitive ‘*Călușul Românesc*’ festival in Caracal and the other to dance in the village thus fulfilling the ritual [Giurchescu 2008:18].²¹ However, since 1993 the local organisers changed the date to the following weekend so the ‘*Călușul Românesc*’ festival takes place after *Rusalii*. Apart from one year, it remains a competitive festival for local Romanian groups with two categories – *căluș* with ritual and *căluș* dances without ritual – thus incorporating participation from both groups that retain the ritual version and children’s groups that perform *căluș* dances.²² In addition to these

festivals, groups that perform *căluș* dances participate in many local village fairs throughout the summer and on national holidays such as Romania day on 1st December. Less often, but also important, is their participation in weddings and funerals for members of their *ceata*.

Memories of *căluș* in contemporary overlapping contexts

Romanians living within Romanian and in the diaspora continue to retain memories of the significance of certain elements of the *căluș* custom that are evident within the various overlapping contexts of *căluș* discussed above. These include collecting souvenirs of pieces of wormwood, garlic and broken pot, and of the importance of making sure their children dance with the *călușari* for their good health.

Each year we have been at the *căluș* parade in Craiova the highlight of the morning for the local audience is the moment at the end of each group's informal performance when those watching are able to crowd into the centre of the dancers and take a piece of wormwood, garlic or broken pot in return for payment with 1 or 5 Romanian lei notes. Also during the 'Călușul Românesc' festival in Caracal, at the end of their performance on the stage, some of the groups throw wormwood into the audience and the spectators rush to pick up a piece. Similarly in the villages, during the house-to-house visits once the dancing has stopped those watching put 1 or 5 lei notes on the floor in front of the *călușari* and take their chosen 'souvenir' in return. Giurchescu (similar to Kligman in the quote above), refers to this as the economic gain. She described how in 2008 "people, especially women, crowded around the huge sack with wormwood and garlic carried by the 'mute' in the village as well as in the town [...] For each performance in a courtyard, every baby who was" jumped over "and each branch of wormwood sold, the group was rather well paid" [Giurchescu 2008:24].

After the *călușari* have danced *sârba călușarilor*, the dance that marks the end of their performance, they invite those watching to join them to dance *hora călușarilor*. This takes place in the courtyards of houses, open spaces in the village streets, and during the *căluș* parades. Mothers hand their children to the *căluș* dancers who hold them in their arms so they can be danced by the *căluș*, for good health, and to make them brave and strong [Proca-Ciortea 1978:5; see also Vuia 1935:99]. In Craiova during the 'Alaiul călușarilor' in 2016 one woman close to me was having difficulty in persuading her shy young son to join the circle of dancers 'you must go to dance with the *călușari* so you will grow up strong and healthy' she told him. He continued to be reluctant so eventually she took him by the hand and they both joined the circle of dancers.

Memories of these elements of the *căluș* custom are also retained within the Romanian diaspora. After the *călușari* from Optași-Măgura were invited to the Smithsonian festival in the USA in 1999, the *vătaf*, Marian Scarlat, related in an interview with Anca Giurchescu, "[p]eople from the audience danced with us the final *hora* [...] everybody gave us children to 'be danced' for protection, health and luck. The audience paid by throwing money on the floor or into our hats" [Giurchescu 2001:66].

Călușari and *călușeri* dancers today: Village, urban and (evolving) gender roles

The local village *căluș* groups in southern Romanian are either adults' groups, some of which retain the locally specific ritual version,²³ mixed age groups who present elements of the *căluș* ritual/custom with its associated dances, or children/teenage groups that are comprised of boys and girls whose *căluș* only includes dances who also dance other suites of local dances. The latter, as well as taking part in village celebrations, regularly travel to festivals, mostly in Romania but sometimes abroad. In cities located in the heartland of the southern Romanian *căluș* area, amateur and professional urban based folk ensembles regularly include a suite of

căluș dances as part of their core programmes when travelling outside southern Romania.²⁴ Ensembles from other regions of Romania and the Republic of Moldova still include a suite of *căluș* dances within their performance repertoire, although they only perform this when on tour abroad or in occasional local performances in Romania where a wider repertoire is included.²⁵

The focus of this panel was on Romanian men dances. Within ‘collective memory’ the Transylvanian *călușeri* and southern Romanian *căluș* ritual, custom and dances are both regarded as specifically male activities, but this ‘title’ does not necessarily exclude active or semi-passive participation by women and girls. Although the main active participants in both *căluș* and *călușeri* historically are men, over time gender roles evolve and nowadays it is not uncommon to see girls dancing alongside the boys, although this mostly takes place in local children’s groups that perform *căluș* or *călușeri* dances and not in the other elements of the customs, or else they join in the dance suite(s) that follows the *căluș* dances during an organised performance. However, the teams of older men in villages where *căluș* continues to follow the ritual version and the *ceata* in Transylvanian *călușeri*, both of which groups are bound together by an oath, are essentially men’s clubs. It is not that women are excluded but more that the local men and women have their separate roles in village life. Also, it should be noted that historically the women have played and still play, important roles as semi-passive participants by providing hospitality, food and drink during the house-to-house visits that form part of both Transylvanian *călușeri* and southern Romanian *căluș*, by making costumes, and participating in social dancing that takes place in courtyards and on the street during the day and at the evening balls that are funded by money collected during the house-to-house visits.

Conclusion: Continuity in collective memory, myths, symbols of Romanian-ness

Anca Giurchescu argues that “only those practices that make sense” to people are maintained and transmitted within their collective memory [Giurchescu 2012:107]. After 1918 the pre-unification desire to demonstrate Romanian identity in Transylvania was no longer viewed as so important although memories of the role played by Transylvanian *călușeri* dances as a demonstration of Romanian nationalism are still perpetuated among Transylvanian *călușeri* groups that wear tricolour ribbons as part of their costumes.

Myths regarding the links between *căluș* and Dacian or Latin origins are still perpetuated in written literature and oral memory among Romanians. The *căluș* dancers at the 1935 festival in London continue to be mentioned in both academic articles and news reports with corresponding myths, that perpetuate accuracies – the *căluș* dancers made the biggest impression at the festival, and inaccuracies – the Romanians did not win first prize as the London festival was not competitive.

After the Second World War the southern Romanian *căluș* was appropriated as a symbol of the Romanian nation. However, as in the case of Transylvanian *călușeri* in the earlier period, the version promulgated was the arrangements of *căluș* dances for staged performances to a non-participating audience and not the village ritual version of *căluș*. It was only in the 21st century, following the proposal by Romanian academics to list the *căluș* ritual as ICH, that the focus has turned back onto the southern Romanian villages and what takes place there, and the continuity (preservation) of this ritual/custom as an emblem of Romanian-ness. Even in this period, as Anca Giurchescu questioned, it was not clear as to which version of *căluș* was listed as ICH and what it was essential to ‘preserve’ to retain this listing.

However, today in Transylvania and Banat the local *călușeri* continue to visit houses in villages over the Christmas period as well as taking part in festivals and processions both during this period and at other times of the year, and at *Rusalii* southern *căluș* groups dance both in their villages and in nearby towns and cities. The local audience still holds a strong belief in

the ability of the magical powers of the *căluș* to drive away evil spirits, they take part as semi-passive participants by paying money for small pieces of broken pot or wormwood and giving children to be danced in the arms of the *călușari* and joining in the *hora călușarilor* although nowadays, beyond the local, the *căluș* is often better known as a spectacular performance dance. This reinforces that *căluș* is polysemic and exists in various parallel contexts for, as Anca observed:

The fact that one person can attribute several meanings at the same time, resides in the ambivalence of the mentality that unites tradition and modernism, magical thinking and a pragmatic vision of reality in a contradictory unity. [Giurchescu 2009:2]

Here Anca reflects Victor Turner's [1974:55] view that symbols are 'multivocal', hence one symbol can be interpreted in different ways by individual people. As I commented in my first paper on *căluș*, "[t]he use of symbols is an essential part of ritual". However, "symbols are also vitally important to nationalism and identity-forming, especially [...] where claims to national, local or ethnic roots play a multifaceted role in the very being of existence" [Mellish 2006:1]. Thus, the connections between both *călușeri* and *căluș* as men's Romanian group dances, rituals, and customs, and their promotion as symbols of Romanian-ness over a long period of history, have earned, and retained their respective places in Romanians' collective memory.

Endnotes

1. This paper draws theory on collective memory, archival research, a review of the extensive published literature and a decade of fieldwork by the author.
2. Appadurai claims that a culture needs a set of norms to limit the effects of cultural change. He proposes four minimum norms that are needed: a consensus regarding the origins of the culture (authority) and the depth (or antiquity) of the authority cited, continuity of the documented past, and a minimum level of interdependencies necessary with other adjoining pasts [Appadurai 1981].
3. The unification of Transylvania to the Principalities of Romania took place in 1918 following the 1st World War and was ratified in the Treaty of Trianon in 1920.
4. Ștefan Emilian (professor) and Iacob Mureșianu (composer).
5. The newspaper, 'Drapelul' was published in the town of Lugoj in south western Romania between 1901 and 1919, and the report on the *călușeri* dances by Rotariu was in the first issue. Giosu gives the aim of this periodical as "to enrich the richest treasure of a people which is their national conscience" [Giosu 1982:279]. He notes that in 1911 there was plenty of commentary in the newspaper columns that was also used for 'lively' national propaganda [Giosu 1982:284].
6. ASTRA (The Transylvanian Association for Romanian Literature and the Culture of the Romanian People) was founded in 1861 to promote Romanian identity in Transylvania.
7. See Verdery for a detailed discussion on the reassertion of national ideology in Romanian culture and politics, the question of origins and how Romanian identity was represented. She explains that the emphasis on Dacian origins 'strengthened Romanian claims to continuity on the territory they inhabited' [Verdery 1991:31–34, 37, 116–121].
8. These myths have been perpetuated in many writings about *căluș* by scholars. For discussions on this topic [see among others Vuia 1922; Vuia 1935; Oprișan 1969:22; Proca-Ciorțea 1978; Semuc 2009; Alexa 2022].
9. *Rusalii* is a transitional (or liminal) period [Rapport and Overing 2000:229] between spring and summer when, according to Romanian and Slav folklore, malevolent fairies, known as *iele* are at their most active.
10. For more details about ritual *căluș*, the oath, the flag and the role played by the mute character, garlic and wormwood see among others [Proca-Ciorțea 1978; Kligman 1981; Giurchescu 1990:51; Mellish 2006:2–3; Alexa 2022].
11. There are no clear answers to these two questions recorded in the literature. It seems likely that Brăilou thought of the *călușari* as he had seen them dance in Bucharest and also knew of the village ritual / custom from his

research. However, the reason why he chose *căluș* to represent Romania at the London festival is not documented in any texts I have read to date.

12. For a detailed and entertaining account of their journey by rail and sea, and their meeting in Paris with Brancuși see Harry Brauner's chapter entitled 'Preludiu Călușăresc' in his book 'Să auzi iarba cum crește' [Brauner 1979:38-58]

13. One of the earliest mentions in a book was by Varone in 1938 who commented that that 'their performance was 'unanimously recognized by all English and French newspapers' [Niculescu-Varone 1938:photo46].

14. Other myths include the number of groups that participated in the festival. The Romanian press claims that there were groups of dancers from forty-two countries in Asia, America, Europa, Africa and Australia [Ionel 2019; Grigorescu 2019]. However, according to the festival programme: 'Five hundred dancers, representing eighteen countries, are [...] the guests of the International Festival Committee, and offers of collaboration from non-European lands have, regretfully, been refused as outside the scope of the present meeting' [English Folk Dance Society 1935:2]! Cruceana claimed in 1979 that "[t]he result was that the Romanian calusari received the 1st prize with a diploma, a gold medal, cash prizes, gifts and were filmed" [Cruceană 1979:114]. However, as Pakenham records, Maud Karpeles the main organiser "lamented, later, that no film was made and there was as yet no public television. She regretted this particularly on account of what she thought the most memorable performance. that of the Romanian Călușari, who showed us a dance connected with an ancient Whitsuntide ritual ceremony in which the healing of sick persons played an important part. The vast audiences were thrilled and transported by the sense of mystery and magic which the dance evoked." [Pakenham 2011:201; Foley et al. 2022:23]

15. It is worthy to note that this paper was published in 1990, immediately after the fall of the Ceausescu regime and so reflects Giurchescu's thoughts at that time, without the input of subsequent events including the ICH listing.

16. The most renowned and spectacular choreography of *căluș* dances dating from the early 1950s is known as the '*căluș* tower' where a platform made of sticks is carried onto the stage by four *călușari* dancers with another dancer standing on it, who jumps off the platform when they reach centre stage and immediately starts dancing.

17. For further discussion on *căluș* and its ICH listing see [Giurchescu 2001:66; Giurchescu 2008; Giurchescu 2012; Mellish 2006; Mellish and Green 2013].

18. Fieldwork with my husband Nick Green included following the *călușari* from house-to-house in the Olt county villages of Brancoveni (2022), and Tia Mare (2023), attending the *căluș* parades in Craiova (2016,7,8) and Giurgiu (2019) and *căluș* festivals in Caracal (2016,7,8,9), Slatina (2019), Sirinestî, Vâlcea (2022), Hârșești, Argeș (2019).

19. Spectators come and go during the tour of the village, and any 'hangers on' are also included in the hospitality.

20. For example, *Căluș* festivals are organised annually in Caracal, and Slatina (Olt county), Pitesti, and Harlești (Argeș county), Râmnicu Vâlcea, and Sirinestî, (Vâlcea county) etc (see Note 19).

21. In her 1990 paper Giurchescu give another example from 1969. She explains that on the day of the 'Călușul Românesc' festival in Slatina "we could follow, together with some foreign tourists, traditional groups of Căluș enacting the ritual form of căluș through the streets of Slatina, before and after having performed in the context of the festival competition. Ritual objects such as: flag, mask, sword, and a wooden phallus were left at the stage entrance [...] These two conflicting forms of căluș could be carried out simultaneously because of the performers' psychological ambivalence" [Giurchescu 1990:53] that enabled them to tailor their performance according to the prevailing circumstances.

22. 'Călușul Românesc' is also nowadays an international festival with groups invited that mostly perform an associated tradition that has some parallels to *căluș*, such as English Morris teams, Portuguese *Pauliteiros*, and groups of *căluș* dancers from northern Bulgaria villages (Harlets, Zlatia).

23. For example, the villages of Giurgița and Dăblueni. Dolj county.

24. The amateur ensemble, Romanăți, Caracal, Olt county, professional ensembles, Maria Tanase, Craiova, Dolj county, Doina Oltului, Slatina, Olt county and Dorul, Pitești, Argeș county.

25. Despite *căluș* being a national symbol, dancers in groups based in the southern Romanian 'heart' of *căluș* area have a special quality in their dancing not seen elsewhere; an energy, a fury, and not knowing when to stop. Dancers from other areas of Romania and the Republic of Moldova can dance *căluș* very proficiently because of their training but they do not have these 'special' qualities.

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Sevi Bayraktar
(Germany/Turkey)

Folk dance and dissenting politics: A dance historical approach to workers' mobilization in Turkey¹

In my broader research amalgamating history and ethnography, which delves into the role of dance in dissenting political protests in Turkey, I engaged with protesters who were active during the 1960s workers mobilizations and the 1970s left-leaning uprisings. They conveyed that folk dance was pivotal during those decades for mobilizing masses and expressing political ideals of various groups. This essay revisits this phenomenon, posing inquiries such as: How can we contextualise folk dance traditions in the history of dissenting politics in Turkey? How did labour and socialist movements employ folk dance to counter the capitalist worldview and bourgeois values? How did differences in ideology influence the dance styles embraced by grassroots movements, both on the left and right? What are the continuities and discontinuities in repurposing folk dance for anti-hegemonic activism in Turkey? Lastly, how can we acknowledge the involvement of women workers in progressive politics, given their limited presence in historical records and photos? By employing dance as a lens to examine labour struggles, I draw upon union archives, newspapers, memoirs, and audiovisual materials to contextualise dissent and folk dance in Turkey's modern history.

Keywords: folk dance; *halay*; labour movement; workers; dissent; Turkey.

This essay aims to discuss the role of folk dance in Turkey's dissenting political history through an examination of workers' mobilization in the 1960s and questions its continuities and interruptions in contemporary resistance movements of women workers. The institutionalisation of folk dance in Turkey has long been studied through the extensive and pioneering research of many Turkish scholars [Başgöz 1972; Kurt 2017; Özbilgin 2014; Öztürkmen 1998, 2001, 2002; Sümbül and Arslantaş 2016]. Arzu Öztürkmen's studies explicated how today's national folk dance repertoire was significantly shaped by the efforts of the People's Houses (*Halkevleri*), a nation-wide network of state-sponsored community centres, which organised an annual folk dance festival in the capital city of Ankara from 1932 until they were closed down in 1950. During two decades after the closure of the People's Houses, private companies, public initiatives, and university students' organizations continued to disseminate folk dances in urban contexts by organising and participating in national and international festivals, competitions, and tourist performances, and contributed to the expansion of folk dance to formal education and school curricula.²

Since the early twentieth century, scholars and researchers of the nascent Turkish state assumed that reaching out to rural populations, considered to have been neglected by the Ottoman urban elites, was the key to finding the true essence of the Turkish nation. One way to recover this essence was through expeditions to the rural hinterland, aimed at revealing the arts, traditions, and culture of "the long-forgotten people of Anatolia" [Mümtaz 1998(1928):292]. Dance was perceived not only as a crucial part of national culture but also as a collective activity which proves how members of a nation could work together and think together in ways that create aesthetically beautiful outcomes [Eyüboğlu 1967:88]. A group of men and women holding hands in a folk dance circle, semi-circle or line was considered a manifestation of secular and modern values of the republic against the Islamist conservatism, whose advocacy of gender segregation in the public sphere was criticised by the modern folk dance and music critics and ethnomusicologists [see Baykurt 1995; Gazimihâl 1961; Eyüboğlu 1967].

State institutions, private companies, and associations of arts and culture gave great importance to folk dance to mark the social, cultural, and political values of the emergent nation-state. In addition, political parties and grassroots organizations regarded collective forms of dance as an incentive to gain more supporters and disseminate their political values. Starting with the multi-party period that began in 1945, political parties adopted the use of dance as a tool to connect with the growing rural-urban migrant populations which they saw as an important part of their electoral base. Trade unions on the left also found folk dance a productive tool to bridge and mobilise various unprivileged and marginalised groups in the city while creating a sense of workers' community among these groups. Towards the end of the 1960s, folk dancing was increasingly visible in public political gatherings such as demonstrations, annual celebrations, election meetings, and trade union activities. In fact, the use of folk dancing in political meetings was so prevalent in this period that it became a matter of concern to some folk dancers:

Our folk dances are performed everywhere even when it is needless [...] A few impertinent people import them into night clubs (*pavyonlar*) and political meetings, where they are deployed during the speeches just to recruit an audience. [This is] the clearest evidence that we have moved away from the purpose [Akın 1969:5407].³

Folk dancer and writer Erol Akın's quote highlights the ubiquity of folk dance performances during political meetings by the end of the 1960s. For the right-leaning and populist political actors of the time, folk dance was a tool to reach out the masses, particularly those who recently migrated from their villages, seeking for an opportunity to advance their material situation without completely dissociating themselves from the culture of the hometown. For example, during the 1961 national elections campaign, the right-wing and populist Justice Party (*Adalet Partisi*) supporters were dancing in Istanbul's Fatih district, an area closer to urban working-class neighbourhoods in the historical peninsula. A group of male participants formed a semi-circle and moved counter-clockwise, as we could see from the position of the lead dancer who holds a white handkerchief on the left side in figure 1. This seemingly energetic *halay* or *bar* style is fostered by the accompaniment of one *zurna* and double *davul* players. Participants compose lines, circles, and semi-circles in both *halay* and *bar* dances, using a variety of handholds and shoulder holds. *Halay* is more common in the majority Kurdish southeast, while *bar* is rooted in the cultural geography of northeastern Turkey.⁴



Figure 1. The populist and right-wing Justice Party (*Adalet Partisi*) organised a public meeting in Istanbul a day before the general elections on October 15, 1961. The caption of the newspaper defines the dancers in the photo as supporters of the party and praises their dancing [Gece Postası 1961].

For political organisations on the left, on the other hand, folk dance was made to suit the themes of labour, productivity, class consciousness, and the promise of a better future where men and women would participate side by side in the country's social and economic development, themes also popular in the socialist realist art and literature of this period [Oktay 2021(2007)]. Parties like the Turkey Labourers' Party (*Türkiye Emekçi Partisi*) regarded folk dance as both a symbol of and a tool for worker-villager unity [Aysan 2013:291]. Although both right and left-leaning parties and organisations in Turkey's political spectrum valued folk dance as a means to attract urban migrant workers, it was particularly in labour rights campaigns that folk dancing, approached as the embodiment of socialist moral values over bourgeois materialism, achieved a prominent place in Turkey's public political culture.

This essay suggests that we understand dance not only as an instrument of state-making but also as a drive of resistance that has an important role in the political history of Turkey. In this history, I argue, the 1960s workers movements were foundational to the repertoire of resistance in which folk dance has emerged as an embodiment of dissent, which today continues to demarcate an anti-hegemonic praxis of assembly [Bayraktar 2019].⁵

Folk dance in the 1960s workers' mobilisation

Between 1945 and 1960, population growth, limited agricultural production, and, to some degree, the mechanization of agricultural work, for example the use of agrimotor, created massive migration from rural areas [Yıldırımaz 2021:90–94] – and, as a consequence of world wars also from the former Ottoman territories – to urban industrial centres which resulted in a numerous presence of first- and second-generation migrants among industry workers. The workforce was mainly composed of three different groups: villagers who produced agricultural goods in the village and worked at factories during the rest of the year; previously self-employed labourers such as *hamals*, porters carrying goods particularly at the city ports; and craftspeople or artisans whose labour lost significant value between the two world wars due to industrialisation and mass production [Metinsoy 2015].

New neighbourhoods rapidly emerged at the urban peripheries and were mostly composed of migrant workers [Baydar 1998:74]. These neighbourhoods were marked by a phenomenon of squatter settlements, or *gecekondu*, which were defined by law in 1966 as “dwellings erected, on the land and lots which do not belong to the builder, without the consent of the owner, and without observing the laws and regulations concerning construction and building” [Karpas 1976:16]. The residents of these settlements were usually low-income individuals and families seeking work opportunities and better life (with educational and cultural opportunities as well as possibilities of financial advancement and personal development) in the city [Karpas 1976:35]. The rural migrants were both developing new skills and ways of living in the urban environment and also continuing their relations with the village and “retain[ing] elements of their village culture”, which had important impacts on both city life and the life in their villages [Karpas 1976:4, 36]. In this context, folk dance continued to be performed as a communal form of association, celebration, and a pastime activity among migrant workers and their families in the squatter settlements, creating hybrid identities in the city and new understandings of urban culture. *Gecekondu* residents' engagement with folk dance and songs not only transformed urban and national audiences but also enabled them to transmit traditional art forms across generations even though they were born and grew in the city [Karpas 1976:163–164]. As an embodied form of connection with the rural culture and tradition, folk dances provided familiarity with the recently settled urban life and helped to deal with forms of oppression that this new life entailed.⁶

The extensive popularity of folk dance was therefore a result of government policies, national and international scale competitions and festivals, and the changing urban culture. A variety of folk dances were visible in a plethora of social spaces including universities and formal education institutions, folk dance associations, public parades and celebrations, working class neighbourhoods and also factories. During the 1960s, workers performed folk dance genres such as *halay* and *hora* during factory strikes and occupations, which became widespread after the Collective Bargaining, Strike, and Lockout Law number 275 of 1963 legalised the workers' right to strike.⁷ One of the most important strikes after the passing of this law took place in Istanbul's Bereç battery factory. The strike began on 7 December 1964, and continued until 16 January 1965, ending with the workers' victory. The men and women strikers at Bereç borrowed from the repertoire of stratagems used in the Kavel cable factory strike the year before, and in turn became the model for the Paşabahçe glass factory strike of 1966. In all these strikes, workers gathered daily in front of their factories, blocked the main entrances to prevent other workers, suppliers, or buyers from entering the building, carried banners and signs emblazoned with their demands, set up tents for eating and camping overnight, and deployed folk dance to boost morale and demonstrate solidarity.

The Bereç factory strike: *Halay, Bar, and Hora*

The factory strikes and workplace occupations of the 1960s indicate a repertoire of action whereby folk dance was used as a form of solidarity among workers and unionists. The factory was located on the outskirts of Istanbul in the Taşlıtarla (later Gaziosmanpaşa) neighbourhood, where many migrants from the Balkans and eastern provinces of Turkey came for work and living opportunities starting from the 1950s. Located nearby newly established factories, Taşlıtarla grew rapidly as a working-class district in the 1960s. The folk dance troupes' selection of repertoire when visiting the strike to offer solidarity seems to be influenced by the regions from which the striking workers had migrated. During the 1964 Bereç battery factory strike, three dance styles appear to have been prominent: *halay*, *bar*, and *hora*.



Figure 2. The headline reads, “With the participation of 790 women workers at the Bereç strike, women are on picket duty. The boost to morale was great.” Below the photo of four dancing men, the caption reads, “Petrol-İş general president and Türk-İş representative follow the unions’ demands in national dance performance” [İşçi Postası 1964].

Figure 2 depicts union leaders dancing at an event to which a group of university students came to perform folk dances in solidarity with striking workers. Appearing on the front page of the union newspaper, *İşçi Postası* (The Worker’s Post), the picture shows male union leaders and representatives, including the general president of the umbrella Petroleum Workers Union (*Türkiye Petrol, Kimya, Lastik İşçileri Sendikası*, known as *Petrol-İş*), enthusiastically dancing together during this performance organised by the union as a part of an evening program at the Tunca theater.

Out of one thousand and ten workers at the Bereç battery factory, nine hundred were female manual laborers. Seven hundred and ninety of them joined the strike. In figure 2, the front page of the newspaper *İşçi Postası* seems to juxtapose a photograph of the all-male union leadership folk dancing with a four-line headline celebrating such a high rate of female participation on the picket line and more broadly, at the forefront of the strike. The juxtaposition produces an ironic effect, since it is likely that without the massive participation of women –the majority of the workforce at the factory – the strike would have been impossible. Although women participated in the strike in very high numbers and played important roles in the strikes’ success, they endured discreditation and sexual harassment during the strike. Feminist unionist Necla Akgökçe, who studied the strike, calls the Bereç factory strike a “women’s strike” due to women’s persistent work to organise and maintain the struggle. Despite all their efforts, it was overwhelmingly run by their male colleagues and unionists [Akgökçe 2020].

The labour struggle for women is obviously not a recent development and dates back to the late Ottoman society. Women had participated in the industrial workforce since the nineteenth century and worked excessively in the fields of weaving, food, tobacco, and chemistry [Saygılıgil 2018:77–78]. Women workers staged large scale strikes, such as the 1910 strikes in the thread/yarn factories of Bursa, where at least 3000 workers participated to demand higher wages, shorter work hours, and at least one hour lunch break [Van Os 1997:8]. In the late nineteenth century, they even performed Luddite protests and stopped the machines which threatened their jobs [Balsoy 2009:64; Güzel 1996:35 cited in Saygılıgil 2018:78]. When it comes to the strikes in the 1960s and throughout the 1970s, women workers struggled not only over wages and work conditions but also against their lower social status within the factory and the paucity of options for workplace advancement, a common situation for female workers at the time [Baydar 1998:74; Yılmaz and Kurşuncu 2020]. Their demands included having childcare facilities at workplaces and earning equal income with their male counterparts [Ekmek ve Gül 2022].

Folk dance repertoire in strikes and other political events

In his memoir, Özkal Yici, a representative of the Petroleum Workers Union at the Bereç factory at the time, notes that in the above-mentioned evening organised by the union, the National Turkish Students’ Union (*Milli Türk Talebe Birliği*)⁸ folk dance team performed *halay* and *bar* dances from Turkey’s eastern provinces of Gaziantep, Erzurum, Bitlis, Van, and Elazığ. He recalls his appreciation of the brilliant university students whose dancing, he claims, demonstrated the people as the true owners of the homeland against the elite who think that the land belongs only to them. In Yici’s words:

The world around has been suddenly shaken by the roaring of the *davul* and gurgling of the *zurna*. *Dadaşlar*, brave young men of Anatolia, whose eyes emanate science and knowledge, filled the stage in their full monumentality. Colourful vests, brocaded *yemenis* (a type of village shoes), ornamented headgears were intermingling, expressing the call of reality to those who think these lands are only their own [Yici 2010:53].⁹

In the context of the 1960s, it is possible that the choice of *halay* and *bar* was meaningful and marked a popular stance that refused to be explicitly labelled as either left-wing or right-wing. İlke Kızmaz’s oral history research with professional folk dancers in the 1960–1980 period demonstrates that different political groups were inclined to perform different dance forms. Folk dance teacher Ömer Işık explained to Kızmaz how left -and right- wing groups distinguished themselves from one another through the use of their dance styles. “In those

times, for some reason, during left-leaning [events], [dances from] Diyarbakır [and] Tunceli were widespread. Particularly Diyarbakır. But in right-leaning events the Kars area was distinguished. Or Turkish dances from abroad” [interview with Ömer Işık quoted in Kızmaz 2013:106], by which he meant dances from Azerbaijan [interview with Ekber Yeşilyurt in Kızmaz 2013:102]. Other teachers active during those decades confirm Işık’s observation that leftists preferred to work with *halay* and rightists performed *bar* dances seen as characteristic of the interior towns and cities of Anatolia [Kızmaz 2013:107].¹⁰

Musician Musa Uzunkaya, who took part in many folk dance gatherings and accompanied most of the dance troupes during this period with his masterful *zurna* tunes, noted that the *halay* was particularly popular at leftist gatherings because those coming from the eastern and southeastern regions of Turkey where *halay* is rooted were very active in leftist organizations. It is for this reason that *halay* styles gained more visibility at protests, strikes, and other dissenting political events [interview with Musa Uzunkaya quoted in Kızmaz 2013:107]. In our conversations in 2017, some activists who dance at protests supported this point. For example, a former member of a leftist coalition party in the 1990s and a Kurdish feminist activist, noted that because Kurds and Alevis were active in leftist struggles and predominantly dance the *halay* in its various stylings, this genre became more popular among dissenters of the 1960s and 1970s.

Although particular folk dances were generally associated with left -and right- leaning groups, with *halay* usually identified with the left, these boundaries were not always clear-cut and could be ambiguous and even complex. During the 1965 party congress of the right-wing Republican Villagers’ Nation Party (*Cumhuriyetçi Köylü Millet Partisi, CKMP*) in Ankara, the predecessor of the ultranationalist far-right Nationalist Movement Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*), Diyarbakır party deputies appeared on the front page of the popular national newspaper, *Milliyet*, dancing the *halay* under the headline, “CKMP Grand Congress Gets to Work”. The photograph captures the dance from above, revealing a moment where five male dancers squat together, gravitating toward the floor while holding one another’s hands. This virtuosic performance of *halay* differs from the styling leftists often chose for public gatherings and performances. For some folk dance teachers, the *halay* enables a large circle formation and evokes feelings of solidarity and togetherness among large numbers of participants. The step patterns in leftist renditions are more accessible, since one can enter the circle and “dance comfortably by going forward in three steps and back in three steps. [...] [*Halay*] is simpler and warmer. You can hold hands, you can make a tour of the square [while dancing]” [interview with Celal Aslan quoted in Kızmaz 2013:104].



Figure 3. Workers and unionists are dancing when the strike ends with workers' success. The caption reads, "when the strike was succeeded workers dance the *hora* with joy" (18 January 1965) [*İşçi Postası* 1965:4].

This kind of accessibility and invitation to dance can be also seen in another documented use of folk dance at the Bereç Battery Factory strike. A photograph featured in *İşçi Postası* on 18 January 1965 (figure 3) depicts striking workers holding one another's shoulders to perform a dance captioned as a *hora* in celebration of their strike victory. *Hora* is danced by holding hands or arms in a chain-like alignment that is similar to *halays* and *bars*.¹¹ The shoulder holding, straight posture, closed legs with very little knee bending, and, on the left, the lead dancer's forward motion toward the camera bring this semicircle vividly to the back page of the union newspaper. There is a kind of casualness in their act of moving together. Their postures and energies vary and there is no fixed distance between the dancers, who look in different directions, some to the side, some at the ground, some toward the camera positioned near the ground. To the left of the circle, two women spectators standing on the side-lines to watch the men dance are also looking at the camera. The camera angle marks the heroism of the men, making the dancing workers look bigger at the centre of the frame. This representation of the dancing body in public political assembly as male was clearly out of sync with reality on the ground. If the *hora* was used to signify male workers' resistance and their heroic strike victory, women were the majority at the strike and located in the core of its success. In this gap between the heteropatriarchal myth and the many-gendered reality, folk dancing in protest offers a way to surface the otherwise invisible histories of women's dissent, struggles which also derive today's activists and protestors.

Folk dance in contemporary workers' strikes

The 1980 coup d'état led to many social, political, and economic changes in Turkey such as liberalization of the national economy and privatization of many formerly state-owned industries. Moreover, new laws were introduced after the coup such as the Labour Unions Law number 2821 and Collective Bargaining, Strike, and Lockout Law number 2822 of 1983 which

significantly restricted union activities. Nevertheless, drawing on the history and repertoire of resistance established in the 1960s and symbolised by the Bereç strike, women workers continued to gather outside of their factories and demand better working conditions, higher health and safety measures, and their right to be organised in trade unions in order to fight effectively against the regulation and control of their bodies.



Figure 4. Flormar beauty and care products workers on strike are dancing near their workplace in Gebze, an industrial zone located in the south of Istanbul. Source: Reprinted with permission of the photographer, Helen Mackreath, 2018.

In the 2000s, strikes at the almost all-women employees *Novamed* drug factory (2007) and *Flormar* cosmetic products (2018) symbolise women workers' powerful protests. In addition, a handful of striking workers in other companies, such as the *UPS* transportation (2011), *Bericap* plastic closures (2011), *Serapool* ceramics (2015), *LC Waikiki* clothing (2016), and *Migros* supermarket chain (2022) among others were also women who resisted against the oppressive work conditions and gender-based discrimination. For example, to avoid providing pregnancy or maternity leave, employers used to force women to resign from their jobs under such circumstances [Saygılıgil 2018:89–90]. The regulation of bathroom breaks, long work hours – often as much as 16 hours a day (131) – unsafe and unhealthy work conditions, and lower wages and less career options than men (129, 139) continued to be among other forms of gender-based discrimination that striking women highlighted.

Like many of these factories, Flormar beauty and cosmetic factory is an international company, partially owned by the French firm Yves Rocher. The factory was located in Gebze Organised Industrial zone in the south of Istanbul just outside the city limits. The women workers' resistance started in April 2018 against the factory management's prohibition of unionization and continued for 297 days. As part of their working conditions, the employer allowed women workers to use the makeup and cosmetic care products that they produce, but only inside and not outside the factory. The management's regulation over the women's self-care and makeup was carried to the protest as a strike motto: "The resistance, not Flormar, makes us beautiful!" [*Flormar değil direniş güzelleştirir!*] By rejecting the capitalist

international company's makeup products as means of beauty and offering instead women's resistance as the source of glamour and visibility, striking Flormar workers positioned the body politics of female beauty on the side of resistance.

All these strikes were typically accompanied by a variety of folk dances (figure 4). In her observations during the Flormar cosmetic company workers' strike in 2018, writer and researcher Helen Mackreath notes that striking women were arriving at the picket line early in the morning and staying there until the afternoon on a daily basis. Instead of going inside the factory they gathered on the pavement outside the factory, where they would sit and exchange stories. Among these daily activities of women workers on strike, there was also folk dancing. Mackreath adds:

Every now and again an outburst of energy takes them to the open road for a spontaneous *halay* folk dance, accompanied by the loudspeaker of their shuttle bus and honks of passing heavy freight vehicles ("*Halay* is like a battery," says one of the resisters) [Mackreath 2018].

Not completely spontaneous, in dancing the *halay* Flormar women workers on strike could connect with those other workers whose protests had been significant in political histories of labour and dissenting activism in Turkey. In a similar vein, on March 9, 2022, the twenty-second day of their strike, workers at Pas South factory, a producer of electromechanical, cable, and plastics equipment for world-famous brands like Bosch, were also seen dancing a *halay* style that circulated on national broadcast news and social media.¹² In the video, five female and one male dancers hold hands in front of their workplace and take three steps forward and three steps back, struggling to stay upright on the snow-covered ground in Çerkezköy Organised Industrial zone located in the north of Istanbul. Holding hands, sharing one's weight with another, leaning on the neighbour's shoulder, nourishing a collective energy while in motion, and circulating emotions of joy, hope, and courage among the group, they create intimate spaces through dance in the public space of protest, which charges strikers with energy as if it were, in the words of Mackreath's interlocuter, a battery.

In the 1990s, left politics became more diverse and decentralised with the inclusion of cultural minority rights, LGBTQI+ and women's movements, and anti-nuclear and environmentalist struggles. Moreover, many leftist groups reformed their political agenda with the inclusion of identity politics in addition to class politics. Issues that were hitherto marginalised in leftist organizations, particularly ethnicity and gender, became more visible, and this visibility was also represented in the choice of dance forms. Some examples are the use of a variety of Kurdish dance styles with significant footwork and shoulder shimmying nuances; the *horon* styles that are mainly formed as open or closed circles with a *tulum*, a bagpipe, musician at the centre and performed by minoritised Hemşin and Laz communities of the Black Sea region; and the 9/8 rhythmic improvisations of the Roma that highlight a variety of torso movements and hip accentuations, which used to be seen as improper and inauthentic attitudes for a female folk dancer's body [Bayraktar 2022; Kurtişoğlu 2014]. In the context of the diversification of public space politics since the 1990s, some folk dance genres or their stylings were adopted by new grassroots movements or used in specific struggles, thereby becoming associated with a particular cause. For example, in the Eastern Black Sea region of Turkey, *horon* became linked to the environmental struggle following the landmark popular resistance to the Dilek-Güroluk dam project in Fırtına Valley in 1997, and continues to symbolise this struggle against neoliberal "mega-projects" that lead to environmental exploitation and land dispossession in the region [Bayraktar 2020].

The growing heterogeneity of the dissent, diversification of protesting groups, and innovation in protest repertoires since the 1990s and 2000s are reflected by the proliferation of these different folk dances as part of dissenting political praxis, and folk dancing continues to be one of the most popular forms of assembly and demonstration. Today's digital and online platforms help activists to widely circulate the videos and images of their radical dancing and inspire other movements on the left. At the same time, the growing interest of arts institutions in documenting and archiving artistic practices that reconfigure public spaces enables us to see how profoundly developments in arts and politics influence each other.¹³ Against this backdrop, dance history, as this paper suggests, offers a unique perspective to understand embodied forms of interaction in Turkey's contested public spaces. Dance as a bodily practice and collective embodiment of dissenting tradition and culture in Turkey bridges social struggles today and those of past decades. A reconstruction of Turkey's modern political history through the lens of dance shows not only varying uses of folk dance for anti-hegemonic purposes but also reveals the central place of women in the making of these histories of political transformation and resistance.

Endnotes

1. The title has slightly changed from the one presented in the conference program. All translations from Turkish sources and the translation of the interview excerpts are by the author.
2. More specifically, among those institutions, the private company Yapı ve Kredi Bank established the Foundation for Disseminating and Reviving Turkish Folk Dances (Halk Oyunlarını Yayma ve Yaşatma Tesisi) in 1955 in order to continue folk dance research and dissemination through folk dance festivals. Its annually organised Folk Dance Festival (Halk Oyunları Bayramı) was a major dance event until 1969. In 1966, the National Folklore Institute (Milli Foklor Enstitüsü) was established by the Ministry of Education and Cahit Öztelli was appointed as the head of the institute. In the 1970s, Milliyet national newspaper held popular folk dance competitions among high school students. The State Folk Dance Ensemble (Devlet Halk Dansları Topluluğu) established in 1975 constituted the apex point of regulation and stage adaptation of folk dance traditions. The opening of the folk dance departments at state universities in the 1980s disciplined the dance genres and contributed to the institutionalization and standardization of the national folk dance repertoire.
3. Original quote in Turkish: "Halk Oyunlarımız yerli yersiz her yere sokulmakta ve gayeden uzaklaşmaktadır. Birkaç kendini bilmez pavyonlara soktuğu oyunlarımız, siyasi toplantılarda dinleyici temini için, yapılacak konuşmalar sırasında yaptırılan gösteriler, gayeden uzaklaşmanın en canlı delilleridir" [Akin 1969:5407].
4. A group of select Kurdish chain dances generically called *halay* in Turkish and *govend* in Kurdish represent both the eastern and southeastern regions located along Turkey's borders with Syria, Iran, and Iraq as well as the southeastern part of the Mediterranean region. Following the 1941 First Turkish Geography Congress, the *bar* represented the easternmost region of Doğu Anadolu Bölgesi, East Anatolia Region, and particularly its subsection area of Erzurum-Kars. Controversial among Turkish scholars due to the use of the term *bar*, which means "dance" in Armenian, *bar* styles were eventually marginalised due to its reference to the centuries-long Armenian cultural heritage in Anatolia (see also footnote 10).
5. Views and insights of women and queer women activists from different generations, cultural backgrounds, and political positioning in contemporary anti-authoritarian protests informed the arguments presented here in multiple ways. This aspect of the study is based on ethnographic fieldwork that was conducted in Istanbul and in the Black Sea region. An uninterrupted period of fieldwork took place between September 2016 and October 2017 with follow-up research periods in 2018, 2019, and 2022. I would like to thank sincerely those who participated in this research and shared their insights, experiences, and movements with me with great generosity.
6. Forms of oppression and marginalization can be social, cultural and economic. In Turkey, the squatters' wages were at least 30 per cent below the average monthly earnings of regular industrial workers [Karpas 176:39–40].
7. The formation of the labour movement was supported particularly by two laws in Turkey: Labour Law number 3008 of 1936 and Collective Bargaining, Strike, and Lockout Law number 275 of 1963. The 1936 law enabled unionization even though the right to strike was not yet recognised in that period; whereas, the 1963 law authorised collective bargaining and the right to strike, but also confirmed the employee's right to lay off workers through the declaration of "lockout," creating legal grounds for polarised relationships at the workplace. Workers' mobilization increased in 1964 and continued to shape national politics until the 1980 coup d'état.
8. The National Turkish Students' Union in the early 1960s involved a progressive political discourse. During the Democratic Party leader, Süleyman Demirel's government of 1965, right-wing and conservative students were

encouraged to take over the majority in the students' union. This government-supported group became the majority first in the National Turkish Students' Union and later in the National Turkish Students' Federation (*Türk Milli Talebe Federasyonu*), another progressivist students' association [Zarakoğlu 2020].

9. The original quote in Turkish: "Ortalık birden davul kükremesi, zurna çağlaması ile sarsıldı. Gözlerinden ilim irfan fışkıran aydın dadaşlar, Anadolu'nun yağız delikanlıları bütün heybetleriyle sahneyi doldurdu. Renkli cepkenler, sırmalı yemeniler, işlemeli serpuşlar birbirine karışıyor, bu toprakları yalnızca kendilerinin sananlara gerçeğin seslenişini dile getiriyordu" [Yici 2010:53].

10. The *bar* was canonised in the national narrative as a genuine Turkish dance. Particularly in the second half of the twentieth century, it occupied less and less space in the official maps of folk dance heritage, whereas *halay* emerged as the representative genre of eastern, southeastern, and east-central Turkey, consisting of almost two-thirds of all Turkish folk dance. At the first national folk dance seminar held in 1961, Şerif Baykurt claimed that *halay* styles make up only 10 percent of Turkish folk dance, while the *bar* genre accounts for 20 percent [Baykurt 1996, 63]. A decade later, however, folklorist Sadi Yaver Ataman [1975] claimed that *bar* dances make up 10 percent of all Turkish folk dances and *halay* 30 percent (4).

11. *Hora* is commonly referred to as the dance of Turkish communities in the northwestern Thrace region of Turkey including towns of Kırklareli, Edirne and Tekirdağ [Baykurt 1965:16,19; Ataman 1975:5,112]. *Hora* is also presented as not a dance form but a dance movement that marks stomping the foot on the ground at once and therefore can be found in many dance sequences [Demirsipahi 1975, 259–260]. Others suggest that this stomping movement is actually specific to *Kasap oyunu* (Butcher's dance, or *hasapiko* in Greece) that is considered a slower form of the Greek *sirtos* dance [Öztürk 2017]. Following the 1941 First Turkish Geography Congress, *hora* was gradually and predominantly represented dances from the northwestern part of the Marmara Region surrounding the Marmara Sea and reaching to Turkey's borders with Greece and Bulgaria. In this newspaper caption (figure 3), which meaning of the dance term *hora* was meant is unclear.

12. Since this video is no longer accessible via Yol TV, please see a still from the video in another source [Net Haber Ajansı 2022] as cited in the reference list.

13. The 1990s is also considered as a decade in which city residents become accustomed to performance through public space interventions and "happening" style events. Artists' use of urban common spaces rendered squares and evacuated industrial areas as spaces of performance and transformed everyday life. Performances of individuals centred on recently opened private television and radio channels at that time. In this period, public protest movements also highlighted collective performance as a public action [Salt Online 2022].

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Gonca Girgin, Elif Özen
(İstanbul, Turkey)

Authority, crisis, reconciliation: Toramanlı Karagöz tells about

This study aims to constitute a dialogue between *Karagöz* plays and their social history narrative. In this paper, the focus of the inquiry will be the *Toramanlı Karagöz*. *Toraman Karagözü* or *Toramanlı Karagöz* is the jargon for the unobtrusive historical genre of *Karagöz* play with sexual references. *Toramanlı* or *zekerli* refers to the phallus on the figures. Apart from considering the genre as a basic form of pornography, it is more functional to consider it as an intermediary form that provided some functions of sexual education for society. *Toraman Karagözü* continues to be registered as an alternative content without being included in the main structure; although reconciliation has updated the erotic content on a legitimate basis, it is not enough to bring it to the centre. In this direction, the study will try to describe the role of *Toramanlı Karagöz* plays in social history in between the crises and restrictions.

Keywords: *Karagöz*; Turkish shadow play; Ottoman traditional theatre; *Toramanlı Karagöz*; obscene plays.

***Karagöz-Hacivat* plays with erotic context (*Toramanlı Karagöz*)**

Karagöz & Hacivat is the general name of a Turkish Shadow play that is performed with two dimensional characters made of leather that act behind a white curtain. The roots of the genre have a variety of narratives in history. In this study, rather than the roots of the play, we will focus on the specifically erotic content of *Karagöz* plays, which is called *Toramanlı Karagöz*. From the literature about the play, we learn the relation of the name of the genre with this topic. Even though there is not any play text named as *Toramanlı Karagöz*, erotic context is included especially in some of the play texts. We know about this jargon especially from the European traveller's notes about the contexts of the shadow play.

A review of the literature about the *Toramanlı Karagöz*, will be used to describe its role in social history in between the crises and restrictions. This question is examined comprehensively using the categories of restrictions / proliferations, culture / authority and conflict of desires and social living. In the literature of the *Karagöz*, several authors refer to the topic of obscenity in the plays with the name of *Toramanlı*, and these kind of *Karagöz* plays were performed in palaces, wealthy mansions and public places like coffee houses. It is possible to see erotic content in different ways. One of them is the characters with a phallus or the naked images as in the example in Figure 1.



Figure 1. *Karagöz* figure with a phallus, Hamburg Anthropology Museum Collection, 1985 [cited in Mizrahi 2009:53].

The second one is the erotic subjects that were included in the classical play texts. Beside these, historical narratives also give us information about this genre. Dating back to the 17th century sources of the manuscripts of the traveller, Evliya Çelebi's, there was performer in a *Karagöz* play named Kör Hasan (Blind Hasan) who was punished and tied from his phallus to the outside of the bathhouse [Özhan 2020:119]. This narrated source gives us the information that this topic dates back to the 17th century. In the 19th century, European researcher F. Von Luschan described one of the *Karagöz* figures with a gigantic phallus as can be seen in the second image (Figure 2). Moving forward to the 20th century, we can observe an increase in the written sources. Another European researcher, Helmut Ritter, describes the *Karagöz* characters as nasty, erotic and with a phallus [Ritter 1914:139]. From the Turkish literature of the 20th century, there are disdainful comments from various authors. Nurettin Sevin, in his book *Türk Gölge Oyunu*, describes the plays as hideous, vulgar and obscene [Sevin 1968:44]. He also claims that this kind of obscene *Karagöz* play should be banished in every country because of its depraved features. Another negative comment is written by Enver Şapolyo who comments that these plays are immoral. He also relates the emergence of *Karagöz* with the decline of the Ottoman Empire [Şapolyo, 1947:44]. On the other hand, there are also researchers such as Metin And that approach the topic of obscenity in a positive and comprehensive way. And approaches obscenity and the use of phallus images as a common feature of the shadow plays in various cultures [Özhan 2020:116]. Both of these comments provide us with information that an obscene kind of *Karagöz* existed.

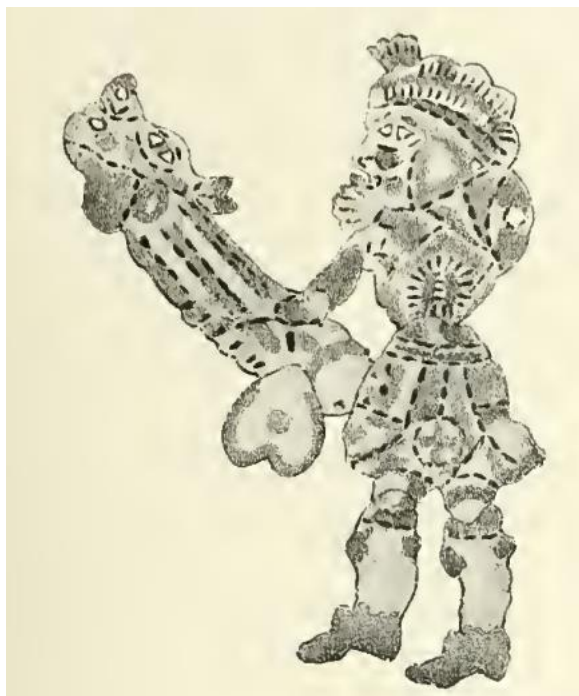


Figure 2. *Toramanlı Karagöz* figure with phallus, Vienna collection [Luschan 1889:141].

Another clue of the obscenity in the *Karagöz* plays comes from the classical play texts in which there is an obvious topic of sexuality. *Salıncak* (Swing) is one of the prominent examples of this category, with the comment that *Karagöz* has an erection for the woman on the swing. In *Hamam* play's text, *Karagöz* is punished and tied up from his phallus [Kudret 2013]. There is also another example in which sexuality is not a direct, but a related topic in the story. In the *Abdal Bekçi* play, *Karagöz* is responsible for guarding the brothel in the neighbourhood. So, there is a concrete sexuality topic that takes place in those plays. And these instances can be multiplied. With the increasing available sources about cultural productions of the 19th century, there is an inevitable question regarding the era's social structure. How was the social structure changing in this century and how did it affect *Karagöz* plays?

19th century Ottoman Empire and the performance

The social structure during this century had a close relationship with the places where performances took place. This genre was performed in several places including palaces and wealthy mansions. Also in the 19th century, it became more accessible with the increasing number of public places such as coffee houses. Even though the narratives about sexuality of *Karagöz* date back to the 17th century with Evliya Çelebi, the importance of the 19th century becomes visible by the increase in the sources that we can access. For the cultural life of the society, there was an increase in 'Western' ideology in people's lifestyles in big cities. According to Şerif Mardin, this era is called 'hyper-westernization' in the Ottoman Empire [Mardin 1991:23–81]. Mardin analysed that process using Turkish literature novels and explains the growing importance of urban life in transforming the context of cultural change. He explains that the dysfunctionality of the Janissary institution, and bureaucratization of the military system reshapes the class that surrounds the palaces. That process increased the separation of that elite class from the general public. The cultural difference between the elite and public cultures increased and a new division occurred in urban life in between these two different cultural classes, based on their economic difference [Mardin 1991:58]. So, this term

refers to the increased differences in class culture that can also be seen in performance fields such as in *Karagöz*.

Mardin comments on these reflections in several ways. Elite palace culture comprises soldiers, bureaucrats and some clergymen. Its language is Ottoman, but the mass culture is Turkish. The lower class, public society is aware that the palace culture disdains them and responds to that disdain with mockery. The fundamental feature of *Karagöz & Hacıvat* plays emerges out of the contrast between the class cultures. This urbanized public culture creates humour through that contrast. *Karagöz*, as the representative character of the public culture, always misunderstands the character of *Hacıvat*, with his literate way of talking as he belongs to the elite culture. But *Karagöz* uses his disdain as the basis of mockery using his language. The impression that the audience gets from these misunderstandings is on the edge because it is not always clear whether *Karagöz* purposefully mocked the language of the elite or could he really not understand what *Hacıvat* said? This dilemma supports the humour in *Karagöz* plays in a literary way. There is also a physical clue that points to the different class identities of *Karagöz & Hacıvat*. The colours of the characters' costumes are a symbol of classes. For the *Karagöz*, the figure's costume has more red colour in it while *Hacıvat* has more green in his. The colour green refers to wealthiness and was more expensive than any other colour. It also refers to the meaningful content in the Islamic religion that refers to life, nature and peace. Thus, with his mainly green costume and literary language, *Hacıvat* symbolizes the bourgeois culture and upper mindset. On the other hand, *Karagöz* was an ordinary citizen, mocking *Hacıvat*'s speeches. This mocking has the metaphor of the illiteracy of the ordinary public class that is reinforced within the scope of *Toramanlı Karagöz*, with his primitive desires. In this case, the situation is also similar, *Karagöz* is the one that behaves according to his primitive impulses, and *Hacıvat*, as an upper-class person, tries to educate *Karagöz* regarding his behaviour. Another comment on this class issue can be developed through the *Karagöz* music. In the musical sections of the play, there is a common feature that has leitmotif structure. There is generally a special song for the incoming characters. These songs change in relation to the identity of the characters as Rum (Greek origin people live in Turkey), Jewish, Arab, or Persian. Comparing the character of the songs for *Karagöz* and *Hacıvat*, there is a controversial issue in which the class identity is reflected. The musical pieces for *Hacıvat* are mostly from the classical music repertoire, which can be considered as evidence of him being close to the elite class. On the other hand, the songs of *Karagöz* do not refer to the elite culture unlike *Hacıvat*'s songs. Thus, this gives music a role for reinforcing the class difference between them.

Towards the end of the 19th century, beside the tendency of hyper-westernization, the *Karagöz* play was subject to restrictions but also proliferated. Those restrictions were following directions from the government. In the very beginning of the 20th century, in the governance of II. Abdülhamit, the *Karagöz* plays were banned. Also, humorous magazines were forbidden for almost thirty years. Similarly, in the nearby geographies like Tripoli, political satires in *Karagöz* plays were banned [And 1975]. At the same time, the popularization process for *Karagöz* was also working within the urban culture of İstanbul. The cultural difference between the classes in İstanbul, made it more possible for the *Karagöz* play to be popularized in the city because the cultural differences in the city resembled those in the play. The cultural differences are based on the Islamic traditions of the neighbourhood as public culture and Beyoğlu as elite culture on the other hand. Mardin suggests that this contrast is the reflection of 'hyper westernization' [Mardin 1991:23–81]. Popularization of the *Toramanlı Karagöz* was also related to that reflection of hyper-westernization.

Another important point to comment on is the transformation of temporality in the era. Until that era, as for most performances, *Karagöz* plays were not recorded. But with the technological developments of the time, and with the transformation to the inscriptive culture,

it became necessary to record and document the plays. So, they started to become permanent. This situation may possibly be both a reason for its restriction and popularization.

As evidence for restrictions, in Figure 3, there is a document that says it is a common tradition to perform *Karagöz* in coffee houses during Ramadan, but it also announces the requirement to have a licence in order to perform in public places. This was due to the morality of the play's content [Köse and Albayrak 2015:35]. This document shows us that *Karagöz* was popular in the city but it was also controlled by the government.



Figure 3. Document for *Karagöz* from the Ottoman archive [Köse & Albayrak 2015:35].

Clearly, *Karagöz* or *Toramanlı Karagöz* was not the only popularized performance genre. *Kanto*, *meddah*, *çengi* and *Karagöz* performances were all popular in Direklerarası as a public entertainment place. The increase in the liveliness of İstanbul as an entertainment place was not only because of the growing population, but also because of places like hotels, coffee houses and public areas. Thus, the increase in the popularity of the performances can be related to the rise in public places in urban life. The legality of the topic of obscenity among these popular genres differs for *Karagöz* because of its non-living performers as puppets. In other words, the elites attempted to control sexual desires and religious practices with restrictions. According to Z'evi, this situation allowed the legitimization of the sexual content of the plays with non-living puppets. On the shadow screen the rules of the government were inverted [Z'evi 2006:50]. Similarly, as Daryo Mizrahi writes, the social structure of the society in which women and men are strictly separated is inverted in the *Karagöz* plays, and the humour is based on this paradox of social life within the plays. It is legitimate to represent the sexuality factors as a phallus or a woman's breasts when they are non-living objects [Mizrahi 2009:52]. In this way the desires of the people are also transformed to the non-living characters. People have found different outlets for similar desires over the centuries. It is very possible that one of the possibilities could be that *Toramanlı Karagöz* was one of the legitimate actors for these desires in the 19th century. Şapolyo relates immoral, obscene and erotic performance practices with Greek, Armenian and Jewish performers in İstanbul. He considers that in the 18th and 19th centuries, entertainment genres were mostly performed by the non-muslim population of İstanbul [Şapolyo 1947:98]. The existence of *Toramanlı Karagöz* is considered as depravity for Şapolyo. He also writes in the second half of the 19th century, that women started to appear in public places as well as in performance areas. Even the obscene type of *Karagöz* was

performed to audiences with women and children. This quotation from the traveller Gautier, confirms his statement regarding the audiences.

The garden was full of people when we arrived. Children and little girls were there in their particular abundance; and their appreciation and enjoyment of a performance much too gross for description was by no means the least singular part of the exhibition. Karagheuz is often sent for to perform in harems; the females witnessing the exhibition from curtained and latticed 'boxes' or enclosures; which is singularly at variance with the severity of restriction imposed upon the females [...] the performances of Karagheuz have been submitted to 'censorship'; and that much which was rather extreme in action has been reduced to words, and the words themselves very freely excised; for, in truth, in its original form, the representation could hardly have been described to European readers; although, as performed before an audience consisting entirely of men, and those men Turks, it used to be considered quite proper, and in no way censurable. [cited in Z'evi 2006:146].

As it is written above, Şapolyo describes *Toramanlı Karagöz* as the immoral kind of *Karagöz*. The *Karagöz* performer Katip Salih Efendi tried to remove this immorality from the play texts. Şapolyo also claims that there were three types of *Karagöz*; *Toramanlı Karagöz*, *Lover Karagöz* and the moral *Karagöz* [Şapolyo 1947:102–103]. Among these names, *Toramanlı* and *Lover Karagöz* were the immoral ones.

In the combination of hyper-westernization, upper class minds in *Karagöz* plays are portrayed in a variety of ways. *Hacivat* represented the upper-class mind of society with his appropriate morality. In the neighbourhood culture, he represented the imam or religious characters as upper-class people [Mardin 1991:59]. As a well-fitting demonstration of his idea, in the classical play *Salıncak* (Swing), the separation of the morality of characters is clear. *Karagöz* represents the impulsive and immoral personality. In the story of that play, *Karagöz* has an erection for the woman on the swing and does not share the money with *Hacivat* as he promised at the beginning of their deal. This event can cause people to think that *Karagöz* is the representation of the public culture and *Hacivat*, on the other side, is the representative of the elite and moral culture who is helping *Karagöz* to earn money from the swing.

Conclusion

In this paper, we try to place *Toramanlı Karagöz* in three areas of conflict and understand its role in these areas. These are titled as city entertainment and social class, conflicts of authority and production, and consumption sub groups. Under the first heading, the conflict is between the bourgeois and the public culture in the city. *Toramanlı Karagöz* gained a place for itself with a humour reflecting desires. Since erotic topics have been included in many examples of theatre for a long time, it is not surprising to see versions in a city-oriented performance genre like *Karagöz*. The *Toramanlı Karagöz* play gained a place for itself in the cultural conflict between bourgeois and public culture. The sensitivity of the topic requires a tool for survival of the genre and humour can be this tool because of its inclusive feature. Cultural and economic differences can become less significant within the concept of humour. The second conflict is with the authority of the era. In the 19th century the *Karagöz* plays both proliferated, and were subject to restrictions. In this clash, *Toramanlı Karagöz* obtained the advantage of educational support for the public. Since sexuality is not a topic openly talked about, it is not easy for young people in society to learn about it. But being an entertainment genre helped it to be accepted as legitimate in the public sphere. At the same time, the public had the possibility to be educated on a sexual topic. Besides, soon after the 19th century, there

were new *Karagöz* plays written with the mission to teach sexual life that shows education can gain a legitimizing space in the conflict with authority. For the third point, production and consumption of the *Toramanlı* genre can be evaluated as a conflict. Similar to the educational compromise, there is a reconciliation between the social life and the desires of people. *Toramanlı Karagöz* might help to establish a legitimate arena at this point. This situation caused the genre to become popular at that time. After this, there were big changes in the consumption areas of performance but for that specific timeline, it is possible to think that *Toramanlı Karagöz* was helping to achieve a compromise between the immoral desires and social lives of people. Today, unsurprisingly, the *Toramanlı Karagöz* genre is no longer commonly known and so can possibly be considered as an ignored side of *Karagöz* through the centuries. Despite this the topic of obscenity has retained a place for itself in Turkish Shadow Theatre and the conflicting areas among the public shows us that it has survived in some ways.

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Natalia Koutsougera
(Athens, Greece)

“The street is my name”: Lgbtqi+ and women in rap and urban dance scenes of Greece

This paper explores lgbtqi+ and women’s performativities in hip hop, street and urban dance scenes of Greece. It revolves around the constructions of gender and sexuality among male-dominated, female-dominated and queer-dominated zones in rap and urban dances which correlate with afrodiasporic and latinodiasporic global flows. Specifically, it delves into a multiplicity of issues related to women’s and gender queers’ positionalities in these particular dance and music scenes: street and hip hop femininities and masculinities, gendered neutralities, gendered resistance and conventionalities, the visibility of women and lgbtqi+ collectivities in public and virtual spaces, negotiations of sexism and misogyny, feminist activism, female emancipation, women’s solidarity and queering, gendered de-authentication of hip hop cultural axioms and norms. It also explores the ways hip hop and street gendered categories intersect with national gendered idioms and emotions, gender politics and wider contemporary feminist claims.

Keywords: street culture; hip hop; rap; Greece; femininity; queering.

This paper explores gender issues, and mainly women’s and lgbtqi+ performativities in the hip hop, street and urban dance scenes of Greece. Specifically, it revolves around the constructions of gender and sexuality among male-dominated, female-dominated and queer-dominated zones in rap and urban dances which correlate with afrodiasporic and latinodiasporic global flows. My ethnographic engagement with the fields of hip hop and street culture in Greece began in 2009 with the purpose of the accomplishment of an ethnographic film entitled “Born to Break” [Koutsougera and Fotini 2011], capturing the breakdance communities of Athens through aspects of gender, class, ethnicity and breakers’ identity. It continued with the film “The Girls are Here” [Koutsougera and Fotini 2015] which captured gendered aspects in the hip hop and street dance scenes of Athens outlining the friendship of two female hip hop/street dancers. Following these leads I continued participant observation amongst rap communities and rap femininities. I am still conducting audiovisual hip hop fieldwork on the gendered dimensions of rap and hip hop/street dance cultures and creating my third ethnographic documentary on hip hop and street dance femininities entitled “Girls wanna JUST dance”.

Methodological and theoretical framework

The recent research is an anthropological work which entails online and off-line participant observation amongst rap communities and street dance femininities as well as audiovisual semi-structured interviews with rap and street dance practitioners who participate in the forthcoming ethnographic film “Girls Wanna Just Dance” [Koutsougera 2023]. The theoretical framework draws from a ‘queering’ perspective reflecting on queer bodily processes mobilised by (cis)feminine performative subjects with unexpected subverting results [Koutsougera 2021, 2020 2019, 2018a or 2018b, 2012]. It is preoccupied with liminal femininities and ‘elastic femininities’ [Trajtenberg 2016] – oscillating between traditionalities and feminist claims – within hip hop and social dance realms and milieus. The concept of ‘performativity’ [Butler 1990] as repetitive stylistic performance in a framework of heteronormativity has proven to be very useful for the exploration of hip hop subjectivities. In a similar vein to the construction of gender, identity in hip hop is established through ritually stylised and repetitive bodily procedures which create potentialities of gendered subversion

and hip hop reinvention in the framework of hegemonic hip hop discourses and landscapes of recognition.

The historical framework of hip hop, rap and street dance cultures in Greece

The popularity and integration of hip hop and street scenes in Greece, in a similar fashion to other places of our postcolonial world, was part and parcel of Greek society's embracement of American lifestyles and the stable and evolving youth's engagement in rap, street arts, sports and graffiti, the proliferation of movies, hip hop music and music videos in the media and the promotion of hip hop and street dances through talent TV shows (*So you think you can dance, Greece you have talent*). Hip hop global expansion depends on discourses and flows of media and people based on the cultural-imaginary construction of a 'hip hop nation'. In my ethnographic perspective, the hip hop scene in Greece with its four main elements DJing, MCing, Graffiti and Breaking (including all hip hop dance styles) may exceed a solid hip hop ethos or 'nation' and designate further problematics and politics which concern local constitutions.

Rap scene

The rap scene was undoubtedly the most predominant scene that was formally identified with Greek hip hop culture and it evolved quite topologically.¹ Most of the first rappers of the 1990s were white males of Greek descent who had their cliques in different areas of Athens and Thessaloniki. Looking at the bigger picture of rap experience in Greece, by the beginning of the millennium the distinctions between mainstream and underground hip hop were evident in public culture through clear-cut polarities between TV commercial rappers and crews (Nivo, Going Through) representing hip hop aimed for mass consumption and pop music industry [Elafros 2013] and more underground scenes (for example Mitakidis, Active Member) aiming at special crowds depending on locality or genre of rap.

By the beginning of the 2000s a more distinctly politically-conscious rap scene began to be established, as a consequence and continuation of the previous radical rhyming during the 1990s in conjunction with several other factors such as the drop of record sales in the Greek music industry, inside antagonisms and subcultural struggles and conflicts for authenticity.² A new wave of predominately male rappers started to use do-it-yourself production strategies taking advantage of the advent of YouTube and other free streaming and downloading websites to facilitate the promotion of their tracks [Efthymiou and Stavrakakis 2018]. The last decade's financial turbulence and austerity in Europe and Greece with its peak between 2008 and 2012, known locally as 'the crisis', reinforced hip hop affiliations in the country together with a growing return to the moving and protesting body, public space and the street as sites of recreation, political resistance and alternative discourses on pleasure, kinship, gender, national and political identities. Rappers of a politically-conscious rap scene, frequently and generally referred as 'underground'³ usually perform in alternative outdoor music festivals, occupied and self-organised spaces and very often are intimate to anti-establishment and antifascist groups.⁴

Pivotal rhymes and oratorical schemata which female and male underground rappers use revolve around street wisdom, the journey and the search for street spirit. The notion of the street is constructed not so much as a heterotopic space but rather as an organic refuge of selfhood. Indicatively the title of this paper derives from a relevant song where the person in its interpellation is related emotionally with the 'street'.

Especially during the peak of the Greek crisis (2008–2012), the lyrics of revenge, rage and aggression towards police and governmental power as well as the critique of an urban society of human apathy and decay were rising (for example Intifada "Mohito and Revolution",

2011). This lyrical revengefulness is graphically portrayed in the music videos of the tracks on YouTube. The crews seem to perform the poetics of a deprived, either working class or classless subjectivity, who resists all kinds of power regimes. As the first intense years of the Greek crisis passed, nihilistic, cynical and pessimistic rhymes won ground as well as emotions of intense melancholy, despair, complaint and grievance as signs of a meta-traumatic but sustaining precarious state. These emotional assemblages left a huge tradition for the new rap generation elaborating lyrically trauma and distress which continued all through the pandemic era conjoint with several rap genres (for example drill rap, trap). Commercial rap however – explored mainly through trap techniques – took a different road which still crosses with the developments of Greek popular music (*laikó*).

Hip hop and street dance scene

As far as the hip hop and street dance scene in Greece is concerned, breakdance began its official journey as a hip hop dance form in the mid-1990s across the two major cities of Greece, Athens and Thessaloniki, performed primarily in underground spaces by male migrant and native youth populations, rather separately from the other elements of hip hop. Throughout the next decade (2000s), breakdance moved together with other hip hop and street dance styles towards more popular and vernacular appropriations and heretofore they form a rather distinct culture from the other elements of hip hop.⁵ Nowadays, a lot of young people who form breakdance or street dance crews, and participate in local, national and international hip hop and street dance competitions, are of non-Greek descent, a large number of them originating from Albania.

Globally, during the last ten years there has been a rapid expansion of street and hip hop dance competitions which, apart from the original dance styles (breakdance/popping), include competitions which blend hip hop with urban dance styles, called ‘all-styles’ (or mix-styles) battles. In all-styles battles crews and individual dancers fuse different street, hip hop and urban dance styles, which are danced on hip hop, funk, house and disco rhythms. Some of these styles such as waacking, voguing, new-style/lyrical hip hop, house dance, dancehall etc, are highly contested as to whether they correlate or derive from hip hop, according to dominant hip hop authenticity discourses. Very often, particularly in Greece, these styles are disputed for lacking hip hop authenticity or maleness by the male (old school) breakdance community, in spite of being included in hip hop umbrella’s contexts and performed by hip hoppers.⁶

Women and lgbtqi+ in hip hop and street dance

As in many places around the world, street and hip hop dance culture in Greece is mainly appropriated by working-class and lower middle-class males and, therefore it can be considered as a male-identified and dominated culture. Especially this applies to breakdance. For a long period of time ‘breaking’ was the most popular hip hop dance in Greece and was appropriated mainly by boys. Today this gender specificity has not changed much. Young Greek girls who practice breakdance are scarce and they often experience mansplaining and sexism (figure 1). B-girls keep a low profile and are notable for their shyness – an attribute unique to a traditional Greek female positionality encountered ethnographically in the embracement of shame on the part of Greek women in juxtaposition to the embracement of honour by Greek men [Campbell 1974].

The majority of female dancers – coming from working class, lower middle class and middle class backgrounds – usually experiment with other non male-dominated hip hop styles such as new style hip hop, hip hop party dance and other funk, disco, house and club dance styles such as waacking, voguing, dancehall, house dance, commercial etc., every one of which may fall under the category of ‘club’, ‘house’ and ‘urban’. Young women combine these styles

in all-style hip hop competitions or in separate competitions for each style. In most cases, male breakers are those who hold the reins of power and recognition and can be judgmental over the authenticity of dancers and street competence.⁷ However, in all-style competitions crews are more gender-mixed. Women and gender queer people have the opportunity to participate more actively in comparison to breakdance or popping events where women are unable to remain for a long time in crews either because of strategic sexism or androcentricity.



Figure 1.

As my extensive audiovisual fieldwork in Athens and Thessaloniki [Koutsougera 2018a or 2018b, 2019] has designated in the growing hip hop/street dance arena there are influential cisgender female hip hop dancers who experiment from an early age with these different hip hop, street and urban dance styles. Some mix styles, others follow one particular style. They participate in competitions for their own styles (breaking, popping, waacking, voguing) as well as all-styles or freestyle hip hop competitions and in group choreographies for shows and hip hop theatre. They perform fluid and combative femininities, raising anti-sexist voices especially in male-dominated hip hop spaces. These female figures form empowering sisterhoods inside hip hop through female affectivity and battle spirit. They are represented by their male co-dancers as ‘dangerous’, spoiling the ‘good energy’ of hip hop and they face many attacks from male breakers who call them freaks or crazies. They struggle as ‘sisters’ to build a reputation as women who support female power in Greek hip hop contexts. They participate in underground rap events supporting women rappers and enact powerful female figures in their choreographies. Their unities as manifestations of transindividuality [Read 2015], multiplicity and ‘agonistic intercorporeality’ [Butler and Athanasiou 2013:176] reflect on their movements’ exchange, sharing and embodiment.

Recent developments in the Greek ‘Ballroom’ scene, which have evolved through hip hop communities, absorbed a wide range of trans and queer populations as well as cisgender women who equally participate in hip hop culture and raise straightforward confrontations against heteropatriarchy, misogyny and femmephobia. ‘House of Kareola’ for example participates in queer demonstrations and queer activist acts such as the protests against the murder of the trans activist, Zak Kostopoulos (Zackie Oh). In these ways cisgender and queer subjectivities and collectivities are mobilised conjointly keeping an ambivalent stance towards

hip hop. Through contested choreographies which fuse original hip hop and urban dance styles these relatively marginalized populations queer the dominant norms of the male breakdance scene, introducing new authenticities, embodiments, imaginaries and subjectivities through their performances.

Rap scene women and lgbtqi+

What happens now in the realm of rap in terms of gender discourses? As Efthymiou and Stavarakakis [2018:209] mention, since the beginning of hip hop in Greece most lyrics convey and produce a particular, localized type of masculine identification to measure masculinity on the basis of US models such as street credibility, illegality, drug use, misogyny and violence as well as traditional performances of manhood in Greece which favour honour/shame gendered distinctions, breaking the law, resisting authority, being aggressive and spontaneous, losing control due to excess passion and so on.

Today, there is a strong resistance of female and lgbtqi+ rappers against these masculinist frameworks mostly in underground frameworks, expressed more blatantly comparing to the street and hip hop dance realm. With the advent of the crisis and especially after the assassination of the underground rapper Pavlos Fyssas (Killah P) by members of the far-right movement, the public discourse on sexist issues in hip hop and mainstream versus underground hip hop was intensified and strongly expressed in public culture such as the social media, popular TV youth programmes like Greek VICE, informal everyday discussions and hip hop congregation spaces, such as occupied spaces, hip hop youth clubs.

The production of anti-sexist and anti-homophobic rhyming is constantly rising among several underground female rappers although their images, discourses and public performances differentiate significantly. Greek society is still not very tolerant and familiar with eccentric female performances in public spaces much less with queer and non-binary performativities.⁸ However the last three years, we observe the massive development of clearly feminist rap crews and open queer confrontations, although there are still few rappers who openly manifest queer or gay identities (for example Dolly Vara, Chraja), while there are equally few female rappers who display discursively and stylistically a lesbian identity.

Until very recently, from a stylistic, performative and lyrical point of view, female rap performativity was elaborated through a binary. Female rappers adopted classic punk/rock/hip hop looks (wearing jockeys, tight jeans, glam-rock makeup, t-shirts) and used more battle rap and old school techniques, avoiding dresses and distinctively women's outfits. On the other hand there were female rappers who were not afraid to play out their femininity through a more destigmatized identity not avoiding the proud display of traditionally sexualized parts of the female body e.g. the breast (the female rapper Sara) and miniskirts (the female rapper Tomaraki & Alliage) and who may experiment with more poetic and melodic techniques and music styles (the female rapper Semeli). The seeds for a sensual and anti-patriarchal female rap performativity were there from the very start with previous female rap pioneers (Sadahzinia, Dogmother, Errinies).

However lately new female rap figurations (for example Penny, Aeon x Topo, Saw, Rap Skandalo, Ski-fi river) made an outstanding entrance to disrupt the past binaries introducing new multilayered, rhizomatic and hybrid figurations of "badass femininities" [Johnson 2014], pop hip hop femininities, fem-rap femininities and so on. Fem rap collectivities support queer artists and vice versa and they use an anti-sexist and anti-nationalist discourse. They turn against masculine self-centrism. Their lyrics are against heteropatriarchy, violence against women and lgbtq+, populist nationalism, capturing the hard life of working class and in general

alternative in life-style (e.g. tattooed girls with badass behaviors) women in everyday Greek metropolitan life.

In contrast to previous decades, the lyrical content of female rappers often straightforwardly addresses sexism within intersectional frameworks while parallelly addressing other socio-political issues through aforementioned sentiments of complaint, social suffering and distress. Sara with Greek-Egyptian descent for example featuring Iro-ini in her 2017 feminist rap track *Stekw ginaika* [“I stand as a woman”] raps in both Greek and Arabic:

*I stand as a woman against whatever wants me subordinated from birth,
I am the woman stoned in Pakistan.
I am the woman that you pay to get laid.
I am the raped woman who commits suicide.
A woman who caught now the stone.
A woman who does not forgive any more.
For every oppressor I am now the menace.*

Sara in another rap track (*Supernova* featuring Viral, 2017) attacks a macho behaviour employed by a male anarchist subject. Another female rapper Sharp Sun recounts in her 2016 rap track *Koinonia wra mia* [“Society time one”]:

*...Society time one,
The books are a fake but it is not a coincidence,
while education is selected for the few...
Violent fascists are supported by the police,
I don't forget the church and priests,
and they blame the mosque and homosexuality.
Tell the child not to open up because homophobia is prevalent,
as well as silent rage in hospitals and
mute silence for all things which cannot be interpreted.
Salvation is very slow in this society.
Society your time is out!*

During recent years the issue of sexism and sexist lyrics arose as a pivotal political issue inside Greek hip hop settings. A number of feminist, queer and other political groups have tried to intervene in cases where hip hop artists expressed blatantly sexist views in their lyrics [Efthymiou and Stavrakakis 2018:209]. Female rappers have become more alert and accuse male rappers not only of practicing sexism in their lyrics or promoting rape culture but also of extensive hypocrisy in their feminist statements which disassociate with their everyday practices and treatment of women. These realities cultivate a feminist pedagogical atmosphere⁹ in the territory of the underground rap scene which implicitly exhorts male rappers to become more tolerant towards women, more aware, cautious and sensitive in their use of language, their performances, stances and practices. However, still some of them excuse themselves for the use of sexist language by insisting that they use lyrics that degrade women unconsciously or symbolically to attack social normativities, state power and social injustice, without having pure sexist or misogynistic intentions.

What is important is that a new mentality is making its way, signifying a new era of politically-conscious rap crowds and publics who would potentially respect women and queers inside and outside the hip hop and street cultures' spheres of Greece.¹⁰ Taking into account that street and hip hop cultures are massively appropriated by the young generations in Greece, one can fathom the possibilities of these transformations. The pandemic condition intensified the expression of young people through rap in accordance with issues of sexuality, gender

emancipation, and resistance to governmental power and repression. It fostered more experimentations with femininity and mobilized a huge female interest in rap as young women had the time to form collectivities in the streets as a resistant way to suppression which coincided with many dreadful incidents of femicide and rape in Greece and the spreading of feminist ideals through the Greek #Me Too movement.

Queering Greek hip hop through femininity

Women with their ambiguous performances alongside non-binary and queer collectivities in rap and street dance disrupt the boundaries of cis straight femininity and expand its meaning while exposing even cisgender identity as drag, as parody through a peculiar street “elastic femininity” [Trajtenberg 2016]. Both lgbtqi+ and female groups consciously or unconsciously expose the illusionary status of gendered normativity inside hip hop. And drawing on Judith Butlers’ analysis [1990] in such terms the authenticity of hip hop performance in Greece is rendered endangered, ambivalent, vulnerable, fluid and contested. Individual gendered authenticity is negotiated and renegotiated through constant and repetitive performativity.

‘Female dangerousness’ as a border and reference point of gender power is not a newly discovered phenomenon in modern Greece as it is a common topic of exploration in cultural and anthropological works [Campbell 1974; Du Boulay 1974; Herzfeld 1986; Cowan 1990; Koutsougera 2012, 2013; Papagaroufali 1992; Gefou-Madianou 1992; Spyridaki 1996]. Eventually this female dangerousness in hip hop and street dance cultures constitutes a mosaic of both traditional Greek elements and imaginative diasporic black and latinos’ nuggets. In those dangerous girls’ and queers’ practices and performances we can recognize an agonistic politics “making room for dissent and dis-identification vis-à-vis the sedimented power structures that have authorized the norms of identification, articulation and belonging” [Athanasίου 2017:41] in Greek hip hop.¹¹

In May 2022 the song *Buy* with the sarcastic chorus *Say goodbye to the cop* performed by the queer rapper Dolly Vara and the queer artist Chraja gathered 93,322 views on YouTube. It popped up as a response to increased police violence and surveillance, the Greek government new law stationing police on public universities’ campuses and coincided with the acquittal of the policemen accused for the murder of the drag activist Zak Kostopoulos (Zackie Oh). In the music video of *Buy* Chraja in a hyperfeminine and hypersexual performance dancing vogue femme and posing naked raps against the idea of a sexual relationship and intercourse with a cop. The feminist rap collective *Rap Skandalo* promptly welcomed Chraja’s and Dolly Vara’s endeavour and wrote on their facebook page standing up for fem rap:

We will fight and we will stand by every femininity, every queer person until we’ll have open mics for every oppressed soul. Kicks with high hills to transphobia. Queers and perverted females stand together against patriarchy!

This incident highlights the new terrain of queer and fem rap visibility which maps an alternative road where femininity fights back masculinity in hip hop.

I will conclude with a remark from my implication as a female ethnographer and director in the hip hop field which I think is important for the elaboration in this paper. Despite women’s and queers’ struggles and agonism in Greece throughout my long-term research I have observed highly antagonistic groups amongst Greek female hip hop practitioners with respect to social status and gendered issues in hip hop. These antagonisms sometimes prevent women from creating feminist emancipations and forming empowering collectivities. On the one hand there are women with latent internalized patriarchy and/or machismo – with whom I have to

say I collided in certain cases – and on the other there are politically-conscious feminist hip hoppers struggling blatantly heteropatriarchy. These two antithetical positionalities and the constant tension between them, however, spark the ongoing potentiality of feminist emancipation in Greek hip hop. Hip hop as Tricia Rose [1994] has mentioned after all is a constant battlefield (despite the principles of peace, love, unity and having fun) for authenticity and in the case of feminist praxis a constant battlefield of gendered experimentations and feminist refamiliarisations.

It is true that as a researcher it was difficult to discern the ‘original’ feminist emancipation at first sight while I have been a victim of internalized machismo on the part of female hip hoppers very often. This occurs for three main reasons: Firstly, because as other scholars [Pabón-Colón 2018] have mentioned, women in hip hop may not be self-identified as feminists but may act in feminist ways according to their occasional feelings, aspirations and profits. Secondly, because their gender identities are elastic and oscillate between traditionalities and radicalities [Trajtenberg 2016]. And thirdly, due to Greek #Me Too movement and glocal feminists discourses and the mobilizations against augmenting femicides, slutshaming and rape culture, women’s reactions in Greece have become quite popular in interclass crowds. Thus, while it is easy for some women to turn against the specific exploitations of men, it is not equally easy for them to follow feminist beliefs on an everyday basis as a permanent tactic. But in order not to be unjust, I argue that all these feminist reactions, more or less struggling, authentic or superficial, resonate with a significant shift from previous decades that definitely goes far beyond rap and beyond hip hop.

Endnotes

1. Movies played a crucial role in the spreading of hip hop culture in Greece. As a result of the emphasis on breakdance and graffiti in these films many of the earliest rap practitioners began their careers as graffiti artists and breakdancers [Terzidis 2003:30–32; Elafros 2013]. However both in the public sphere and hip hop circles rap officially represented the genre of hip hop while its other three elements, graffiti, breakdance and DJing were subordinated for many years. For further exploration on the trajectory of rap in Greece also see Efthymiou and Stavrakakis [2019].
2. This new generation abstained from battle rap (e.g. Terror X Crew), gangsta rap (e.g. ZN) and comedy rap (e.g. Imiskoumbria) patterns.
3. It is important though that in this context the term ‘underground’ is rendered an ambivalent, suggestive, surface and subjective term which does not always function as identity marker or indigenous signifier. Here it is rather applied as an umbrella term to differentiate this kind of rap and hip hop from mainstream, apolitical and strictly commercial rap. Most politically-conscious Greek rappers however, while differentiating themselves from the mainstream, claim that the term ‘underground rap’ does not correspond to any reality since its boundaries are very fluid. Speaking roughly undergroundness in Greek hip hop is connecting with a countercultural racial history, an anti-authoritative and rebellious identity.
4. Occupied spaces in Greece are both public and private properties occupied illegally. The squats increased during the crisis and clashes between the police and squatters were intensified with the advent of the new conservative government in 2019. Anarchists and far-left collectivities sustain these places where hip hop and other cultural events take place. Squats in Greece are also places where marginalized groups (e.g. immigrants) find refuge. However in most cases the participation of rappers in occupied spaces does not preclude them from performing in small clubs.
5. In 1998 a Greek breaker from Sweden, Stammis Chris, came to Greece. He transmitted a more structured knowledge on breakdance as an element of hip hop, taught in dance schools and organized the first official breakdance competitions in Athens. He performed in the music video of one of the first rap crews in Greece Terror X Crew entitled *The taste of fury*.
6. Especially *waacking* and *voguing* relate, and originate from, gay black communities of the United States and in this sense they viscerally encapsulate effeminate and queer elements. In Europe and the United States, while they are not officially classified as hip hop dances, their rejection from breakdancers is not as harsh as in Greece, on the one hand because their development and dissemination was different than breakdance and on the other because they did not claim common profit, visibility and space from the original hip hop styles. Their relationship with

hip hop culture is accepted by many US old-school hip hop practitioners who recognise that some of them have a blatant motional, historical and topological connection to the ‘original’ hip hop dance styles.

7. A small number of them are non-native female dancers mainly originating from Albania and the Balkans, albeit the vast majority of female hip hop and street dancers are Greek. The more conservative gendered structure in immigrant, non-European families is probably the reason for less participation of girls who are focused in their studies or work.

8. The killing of a young Lgbtqi+ activist Zak Kostopoulos (Zackie Oh) in 2018, who was brutally beaten to death in broad daylight on a busy pedestrian street in Athens, mobilized agonistic rageful discourses, protest and other manifestations on the part of the Lgbtqi+ movements and the Greek academia including the local Ballroom (Voguing) scene. Indicatively in the song Barrikade of Krav Boca featuring Sara, Sara’s lyrics refer to this killing: “We are the generation of 500 euros [...] the generation of Alexis (Grigoropoulos), Pavlos (Fyssas) and Zackie”.

9. For strategic female performance and pedagogical potential in hip hop performance enacted by women see also Pabón and Smalls [2014].

10. Of course the situation is not the same for Greek commercial rap where women are sexually objectified and intimidated.

11. Athena Athanasiou [2017] exploring female mourning in the politics of the transnational feminist and antimilitaristic movement, *Women in Black*, expands Chantal Mouffe’s (Marxist) perspective on agonism against deliberative liberal paradigms of democracy as a negotiation between interests and consensual resolution of conflicts. Female mourning emerges as an open-ended agonistic contestation at the very level of the established matrix of intelligibility.

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İdris Ersan Küçük
(İzmir, Turkey)

Analysing being a male dancer in a patriarchal society by ethnochoreohistory: the example of the Eastern Black Sea region

The Eastern Black Sea region is a place where cultural identities are very dominant in the social life of Turkey. In this region there are especially some unwritten rules for dance that are difficult to observe from outside. Patriarchal manners are applied by society to most of the cultural elements of the Black Sea region. In this study, the experiences of male dancers who were encultured in the eastern Black Sea region and chose dancing as a profession are examined. The research considers the 30-year period from the 1990s to the present in the terms of ethnochoreohistory. While the question of ‘what kind of situations do they face?’ shapes the research, the question of ‘then what happens?’ tries to explain the male dancers of the Eastern Black Sea region. All these modest enlightenments are framed by ethnochoreohistory which is a brand-new proposed term for the history of dance.

Keywords: dance; gender; ethnochoreohistory; Black Sea.

Introduction

As dance research expands in the light of the social sciences, the formation of new approaches, assessments and suggestions come with it. International and national scientific organizations are also very active in determining the direction of current research. In addition to the criticisms directed at the ethnocentric approach of evolutionism, which was the dominant approach of anthropology in the 19th century, inquiries into masculinity gained momentum at the beginning of the 20th century. The first mass wave of feminism was also created during this period [Özbudun and Şafak 2006:321–323]. This was followed by a second wave in which women struggled for bodily rights, and finally the third wave feminists who emphasize the value of existing differences rather than absolute equality between men and women [Taş 2016:169–172]. The quests for the equalization of women in gender roles have also raised the questioning of masculinity. Since the 1970s–1980s, the phenomenon of masculinity has been handled in many ways and has been graded in the direction of hegemonic masculinity, which is controlling, dominant and limiting on women. Patriarchy has been the dominant element of such a hierarchy [Duman 2022:463]. It has been observed that masculine behaviours, which have become a social decision mechanism, have sanctions not only on women but also on men over time. Patriarchy means male power in the shortest and simplest sense and has a history of about five thousand years [Korkmaz and Başer 2019:72]. In addition to existing female-oriented gender studies, it is thought that analysing masculinity will help reveal the main motivations of genderism and show in which contexts it affects gender inequality [Sakallı and Türkoğlu 2019:53]. Since dance is one of the active contexts, this study aims to question the subjects of dance and masculinity together and present information on the scale of an ‘introduction to the subject’ for researchers. In this article, evaluations will be made on stereotypes about being a male dancer using the method of ethnochoreohistory, and regional criterion in the Eastern Black Sea region that reveal the elements that determine masculinity, masculine ways of behaviour, and the behavioural reflexes of male dancers.

The method preferred in this study covers the purposes of all research designs except the action research design [Yıldırım and Şimşek 2011:79]. The new historiography approaches both represent a methodological break and raise the question of ‘who is the subject of history’. The daily life experiences of the ‘ordinary people’, the social segments that have been ignored,

silenced or excluded by history, have also started to be discussed [Öztürkmen 2013:134]. The ‘ethnochoreohistory’, which is predicted to be a methodological break within the scope of traditional dance, is the main method to be applied in this research. This method incorporates the Annalles school and a Boasist¹ approach is embedded in it, as it takes what is thought to be the ‘other’ into the centre of the research [Küçük 2021:176]. As the pre-acceptance of this method, dance is seen as ‘other’ in terms of historiography, and traditional dance is seen as ‘other’ in terms of dance historiography. In this research, which consists of male dancers living in the Eastern Black Sea region or who have been encultured in that region and then migrated from that region, a 30-year period from the 1990s to the present will be used to shed light. There are also special difficulties in conducting research on a concept belonging to the private domain of the individual, especially gender. For this reason, care has been taken to analyse the data with ethical value judgments and to transfer them to the reader.

Social structure and dance in the Eastern Black Sea region

If it is assumed that the geographical area where a dancer is encultured will influence the works s/he produces or will produce in the future, it will be useful to make a brief assessment on the region that is the subject of the research. The structure of kinship communities, place of residence and traditional inheritance rules all seem to favour men in the Eastern Black Sea region. Many behavioural patterns in the region are closely aligned with extreme patriarchal discourses. The emphasis on the honour of men and the virtue of women are the most obvious indicators of the patriarchal structure in the Eastern Black Sea region. Individual armament is common and the gun is a flamboyant symbol of male power. At the same time, the gun is an effective tool for the solution of concepts such as honour and dignity in the case of a social conflict initiated by men [Bellér-Hann and Hann 2012:172–174].

Most of the sociological implications do not cast doubt on the patriarchy in the region. However, if the subject is evaluated through statistical data, a picture that does not seem hopeless according to women’s studies is encountered. Artvin, Rize and Trabzon are among the top three cities after Tunceli with the highest average age of first marriage for both men and women in 2021, when the research was conducted [TÜİK 2022a]. The highest female employment rate in Turkey in 2020 belongs to the TR90 (Trabzon, Ordu, Giresun, Rize, Artvin, Gümüşhane) region with 34% [TÜİK 2022b]. In the light of these data, it cannot be said that women are oppressed by men or that women are not equal to men, but it should also be taken into account that the trust in the reference institutions affiliated to the government, from which the data were obtained, has been shaken in recent years.

If we do not take into account that the *karşılama* dance is more common in the region located from Giresun to Tirebolu in the Eastern Black Sea region, it is seen that the *horon* dance is performed commonly in the region. *Horon* is mostly referred to as a man’s dance. What is agreed by *horon* trainers about the women’s *horon* is that these are male *horons* in a form that is shaped according to the female body [Aşkar 2021:22]. According to this view, *horon* was transmitted to women through systematic education. In the public sphere, the *horon* is not only for men, but there are high-sanctioned rules for the inclusion of women in the *horon* including being relatives, neighbours or close acquaintances, etc. The patriarchal practices, which affect the role of women in *horon* and *karşılama*, also affect men and force them to be the protector and supervisor of these rules. While this subject is being considered, it provides methodological convenience for examining it in historical periods and to make geographical distinctions due to ethnochoreohistory. It was observed that the male dancers who were the subject of the research were clustered around 3 different basic characteristics. To list them; The men who live in the region and see traditional dance as a part of their daily life, men who perform the

dance in the region as a profession, and male dancers who have been encultured and migrated from the region to big cities.

1990s – our essence, our culture

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Eastern Black Sea region witnessed suitcase trading in this decade and open markets called ‘Russian bazaars’ were established in almost every settlement. The variety of goods sold in these markets is also an indicator of how extensive the cultural exchange is between the people of this region and the neighbouring country, Georgia. It coincides with the fact that male dancers in the region will watch and be influenced by Georgian state ensembles, but contrary to popular belief, it will be through VHS tapes brought by expats from Europe, not from the interaction in these markets [Küçük 2021:152]. If we go deeper, it can be said that the Georgian ensembles are the continuation of the Moiseyev Russian State Academic Folk Dance ensemble model. When we consider this information as interconnected, it can be thought that the male dancers in the region were shaped by an art perspective from the north. In the natural environment of dance, it was not unusual for men to dance together with women following particular rules [Kurt and Şekercan 2009:81]. However, it should be noted that it is difficult to talk about a dance understanding other than folk dance in this period. While folk dance is explained with the term “playing folklore” [Öztürkmen 2016:123], the expression ‘dancing’ refers to European ballroom dances performed in couples. What is acceptable in terms of masculinity is the folk dance associated with heroism and power. For example, private ballet courses were opened especially in Giresun and Trabzon during this era, but the participants were girls [Küçük 2015:84]. The *Çandır Rifle karşılaşma* in Giresun, the *Maçka Soldoy Knife horon* in Trabzon or the Artvin Acara *horon* are the symbolic dances of the masculine order. Even in village theatrical plays, the female character is played by the male. There is a male-dominated education system in the working environment of the folk dance teams that take the stage. The head of the team is usually men and the trainers are also men. In the rehearsal halls, attention is paid to male-female relations in the group. While some trainers support dating situations within the team, some trainers want the dating situation to be invisible in public. The motivation of both views is based on the protection of women by men and ensuring the continuity of the group. If there are many couples in the team, they will want to go to every show together, so the team will be protected and the responsibility of ‘women’s virtue guard’ will be shared. According to the other view, if it is forbidden to accept couples in the team, the fathers or boyfriends of the female dancers will be easily persuaded to consent to the participation of the women in the team work. Although this attitude has not completely disappeared, it has weakened and continues to the present day.

2000s – we love salsa too

By the 2000s, the discourse of the millennium age was in circulation all over the world. For this reason, some conservative views of the 1990s were abandoned for reasons such as being open-minded and keeping up with the world. The effects of this idea are most clearly seen in the ‘Sultans of the Dance-Fire of Anatolia’ ensemble in terms of dance [Aşkar 2014:39]. Male dancers – including a few female dancers – who migrated from the Eastern Black Sea region to big cities such as Istanbul and Izmir to study in the folk dance departments of the conservatories, took part in the first formation of this ensemble. Then, ensembles such as ‘Night of the Sultans’, ‘Shaman’ and ‘Hürrem Sultan’ showed that the profession of dancer can have a manifestation outside of ballet in Turkey. These groups, which show structural similarities with the ‘River Dance’ company, which was established in Ireland as a model and influenced the whole world, are the projection of the Western world’s ‘show business’ understanding in Turkey. While creating stage shows based on traditional dance in these years was the flavour

of the period, there are also opinions that these shows are a commodity of the culture industry. Male dancers from the Eastern Black Sea region have experienced aspects that they have not experienced in folk dance groups during their professional life in these ensembles. For example, wearing tights and suspenders, putting on stage make-up or dancing with dancers of different sexual orientations, etc. Similarly, while male dancers only hold women's hands in folk dance groups or in the traditional dance environments, in these ensembles they 'lift' or do 'contact improvisation' exercises with female dancers. These experiences gave them the opportunity to get rid of patriarchal stereotypes in male-female relationships. While these dance ensembles continued to appear in summer venues and hotel shows in the second half of the 2000s, it is obvious that they broke new ground in the name of traditional dance in Turkey, despite losing their popularity of the first years.

In these years, Latin dances were popular in the social dance environments of big cities, as another type of dance to meet the movement needs of people, apart from traditional dance. Latin dances were divided into two genres as social and sportive dance. In the next decade, dance options such as kizombo and zumba were added to these dances, which consisted of the social Latin dances namely salsa, bachata and merengue. Especially popular with white collar workers and university students, these dances have more expensive courses than folk dances, and there are dance nights in which income is based on alcohol sales. During these dance nights, in a legitimate environment where men and women can dance in close contact, male dancers from the Black Sea first gained attention with their 'funny Lazish' character, and then turned this attention and dance skills into economic gain. Towards the end of Salsa nights, primarily in Izmir, a short suite consisting of *horon kurma-sallama-sıksara* began to be performed. While these dancers were seen as 'womanizer men from the Black Sea' in their social environments in the big city, they were exposed to masculine slang terms referring to different sexual tendencies in their hometowns. In addition, they were pressured by their families to quit this job, although not very strongly. At this point, it is seen that the economically lucrative aspect of Latin dances prevailed against gender sanctions.

2010s – return to homeland

The dance market in big cities had expanded considerably and competition had increased, so those who practiced dancing as a profession competed to open dance courses in other regions. These courses were initially mainly ballet and gymnastics for children and later expanded to teach the middle age working group through parents. Eastern Black Sea male dancers, who gained experience in dance ensembles and Latin dances following their conservatory education in the 2000s, brought Latin dances to their hometowns. First of all, Latin dance courses that started in Giresun and Trabzon extended to Rize and Artvin, but dance nights were limited to Ordu, Giresun and Trabzon. In these nights, it is seen that the elements of patriarchal oppression are partially distanced. In the first nights held in the region, it was observed that the men followed the patriarchal rules or exhibited timid behaviour when inviting their partners to dance. It will become clear in the coming years whether the couple dance environments, in which the number of participants continued to increase until the pandemic process, bring an innovation in the perception of women for male dancers in the region. However, if we look at the period from the 1990s to the present, the change in the spiral of Black Sea masculinity with patriarchy, religion and nationalism can be observed in dancers. Another actor of this change is the increase and differentiation of communication tools and the formation of new stage tastes. Dance troupes, the foundations of which were laid before the pandemic and continued after the pandemic, started to exhibit traditional elements with bright stage outfits. In other words, the formation of 'Fire of Anatolia'-like ensembles is seen among the dancers who are traditionally interested in folk dance in the region [BirGün 2022]. Although

it is observed that the male dancer from the Black Sea region has broken his shell about stereotypes, the idea that the dancing profession should be done as a hobby and for a temporary period [Kurt and Şekercan 2009:81] is one of the indicators of the continuity of the patriarchal structure. The patriarchy reflected by traditional dance and the pride from the past have only changed shape with costume, stage and repertoire choices.

Conclusion

When we look at the history of Western dance, we see successful female choreographers from the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, for example, the pioneers of the English ballet Marie Rambert or Ninette de Valois, also Valois is considered the founder of the Turkish Ballet [Valois 2003]. On the other hand there is a school of Isadora Duncan and Martha Graham that shaped modern dance and spread from America to the world. From this point of view, the dominant gender of the dance is women, but when we look at traditional dance, the situation is seen as the opposite. If the tradition of the society under the spotlight is patriarchal, it is seen that the dominant gender in the name of dance is also male. Researchers who managed to bring the male and female figures side by side with the influence of the post-modern movement have been active in the last 30 years. Gender roles are a concept that is not only internalised by women but also by men [Girgin 2011:13]. It is possible to see this bondage in the behavioural practices of male dancers from the eastern Black Sea region. For example; although they were educated in the folk dance departments of the conservatories, danced in the ‘Fire of Anatolia’ and similar ensembles, and had experience in Latin dances, they remained distant from the genres of ballet and modern dance. It can be thought that the motivation for this attitude is the tendency to see the ‘West’ as feminine and the ‘East’ as masculine, from an orientalist point of view. Although there are examples of the opposite in Asia [Weng 2014:142], it does not affect the situation in the perception of dance in Turkey.

A persona has been created for the Black Sea man by the society in Turkey and it is presented as a humorous element of folk narratives by being identified with the names Temel, Dursun, İdris. However, current studies mention the Black Sea man side by side with the concepts of football [Bozok 2012:413], cars, guns, prostitution, alcohol, nationalism and political Islam [Yıldırım 2018:106–109]. Apart from these inferences, there are traditional folk songs in the region that give an idea about the concept of masculinity and accompany the dance by containing words that insult women.

“Chickens are scaly, I don’t marry that kind of widow”

“If I flick it, blood drips from its red cheek”

The profession of dancer can contribute to the awareness of the gender roles of the Black Sea male who grew up with lyrics such as in the above. At this point, interpreting the issue with a catharsis approach seems to be the way out. Because catharsis is a purification process that saves people from selfish and pointed emotions that are harmful to their soul and brings them to a healthier soul [Şener 2008:47]. Another method is to shape egalitarian culture and arts policies for the future by the state. Keeping the traditional dance culture alive is a very common discourse among dance researchers. In this respect, scientists can interfere with lyrics or chants that humiliate women.

The male dancers from the Black Sea region of the 1990s adopted a conservative patriarchal attitude on and off the stage. It should be mentioned that there is a community that maintains this stance until today. Choreographies with a conservative approach in folk dances are described as follows; There is an artificial enemy everywhere and they are trying to invade our lands every time, so we must protect our land and our women [Başbuğ 2013:104]. Such depictions are very common not only in the Black Sea dance culture, but also in all Turkish

folk dance scenes. By the 2000s, the desire to be admired on stage went beyond traditional responsibilities. Male dancers from the Black Sea region took a position accordingly and even added Latin dances such as Salsa and Bachata, which are popular dances of another patriarchal society in the world, to their repertoire. After the 2010s, it was observed that this dance repertoire expanded and moved to the hometowns of the dancers from the region.

Black Sea male dancers mostly have a culture with an entrepreneurial spirit and a local identity. There are many role models in front of them regarding the dance profession. However, some dancers did not want to join dance groups. The reason for not participating is not an attitude towards gender roles, but the preservation of dance culture from their own perspective because they thought that the repertoire performed by the dance ensembles corrupted the regional dance culture. Despite being seen by patriarchal society as a flirtatious straight or gay man, in reality there are too many decent dancers who just want to dance better or dance as a profession.

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Dilyana Kurdova
(Sofia, Bulgaria)

Dancing women: Bulgarian folklore traditions today

This paper examines the participation of women in the *Koukeri* festivities in the areas of Sofia and Petrich, Bulgaria. Starting with some background and presentation of the rite and its attributes, the article continues by explaining how the ritual developed to become a national icon during Communism. The research, based on fieldwork conducted between 2017 and 2020, follows the development and dynamics of the *Koukeri* ritual and gives a snapshot of today's idea as to what it represents and how women take part in it.

Keywords: mask; ritual; carnival; Bulgaria, *Koukeri*.

Masquerade is a cultural phenomenon spread all over the world. Here in the Balkans the masked people and the mask itself are amongst the most beloved research topics for scientists in many areas. This work will brush upon the ritualistic background; however, the core subject is how and why women take part in the *Koukeri* festivities based on the author's ethnographic field material gathered between 2017 and 2020 during the Surva festival, in the town of Pernik at the end of January, the *Koukeri* ritual in the village of Selanovtsi in mid-January and the Starchevata festival in the town of Razlog held on 1st January.

Traditional Bulgarian culture in its local varieties differs in connection to its surroundings, nature as well as geographical, climatic, biological, and other features. It is multifaceted because every part of Bulgaria has a different mix of the above – for example a mountain population would have certain differences from its seaside cousins in terms of everyday life. Thus, traditional culture developed and adapted, passed down orally from one generation to the next, and later on via records and documentation as well. What distinguishes it from popular culture is that it is in its heart anonymous – there are no claims for authorship, everything belongs to the community, to the 'common body'. Indeed, authors do exist, they are known and acknowledged among their peers, however in a traditional setting no one distinguishes himself or herself, it is community that comes first. Whatever the creation, it is there to contribute to the wellbeing of everyone – it has the cumulative knowledge (customs, rites and traditions) and can be passed on to the generations that follow. What would constitute the difference between a rite and a custom? When a certain rite is in decline and the knowledge about its elements and their meaning is lost, then one could say that there is a custom, it is a rite no more [Mishev 2022].

I consider myself a keen observer of folklore culture wherever possible, albeit an outsider to my own since I was born in a big city to parents who were not particularly involved in folklore festivities. My interest in the female *Koukeri* was sparked by my own question whether I could become a masked person and experience the *Koukeri* custom in an emic rather than the usual etic way. In search of an answer, I decided to observe various masquerade-related festivals in Bulgaria having in mind that folklore culture has been adapted and – as mentioned above – is quite multilayered. The methods I use in this paper are mainly ethnographic as well as historical. By employing the works of renowned researchers in the area of Bulgarian masked traditions, I try to build on the information gathered throughout the years before/during/after Communism and analyse it in comparison with the present. While working on my doctoral thesis about the transformation of traditional dances within newer contexts, I had the possibility to be both an observer and a participant in the Starchevata and Surva festivities in 2017, 2018 and 2019. The data gathered from this fieldwork aided me in forming the hypothesis that

women started to take part in traditionally male festivities during Communism in line with the party's support of equal opportunities and rights.

Verse

Mask as a term has its Ancient Greek version: *prosopon* (πρόσωπον). It is a combination of *πρός* and *ὤψι μετωπον* which with my Ancient Greek knowledge I would roughly translate as 'in front of the face', however in the Bible and in new-Greek language it translates as 'face'. In this sense, a *prosopon* would both mean a mask and a face. *Prosopon* was also used in Greek theatre with the same meaning since actors wore specific masks on stage in order to reveal their character and emotional state to the audience [Meyendorff 1989:191]. This would also be the idea behind wearing a mask in traditional culture – it is not a mere enactment of a role; it is in a way becoming one with the mask – the face behind it and the mask fuse together.

"The mask was often a disguise. It was a method of hiding the identity of an individual for purposes of spiritual transformation or supernatural communication" [Edson 2009:6]. The reasons for wearing a mask in rituals could be different, however the one thing in common is that being a masked person means the bearer is transported through it into another world. As Oettinger puts it, masking is a universal ritual for protection, for invoking fear, for stating a social status. Masks are worn to inspire and entertain; however, they all take the bearer to a world which cannot otherwise be reached. They are a means of "letting off steam", removing social taboos and connecting people [Oettinger 1985:9]. When one is masked, he abides by the rules of this 'other' world, he is no longer his previous I. Last, but not least, since the person behind the mask is not among the inhabitants of this world and he is no longer his I, the mask must stay on until the end of the ritual [Mishev 2022].

In the context of Bulgarian traditional folklore calendar, there is a stable division of the male and female rituality. During the course of the year male ritual masquerade takes place mainly in connection with Christmas up until the first week before Easter, whereas maidens and their rituals happen mainly during spring and around Easter. The logic behind this is that winter is associated with the hibernation of nature preparing itself to become fertilized and bear fruit in spring [Kraev 2003:13]. Masquerade was considered a part of young men's initiations into manhood. The origin of the word *kouker* still has many interpretations. According to Mihail Arnaudov it has to do with the word *koukla* (puppet in Bulgarian) because of the ritualistic clothes of the masked person [Arnaudov 1996:555]. According to the linguist Ivan Dobrev its origins should be traced back to Slavic and Baltic origins and the root *-kouk* is explained through an analogy with the word *izkoukourigal* (literally: bonkers, totally crazy) [Dobrev 1982:39]. Another hypothesis of the same author states that *-kouk* can be translated as the 'demon of death' (due to the horns of the most popular masks among the *koukeri*).

In its purest form, as mentioned above, the *koukeri* games are male initiations aiming at transforming oneself thus transforming the world around from chaos to order [Zhekova 2008]. Through their mask and costumes, they access the supernatural world and gain inhuman abilities. The time frame during which those rituals take place is liminal, in traditional culture those periods are believed to bring humanity the closest possible to the nether world, the world of the dead. The *koukeri* games defragment and put back the world of the living in its natural order, protecting it with their newly acquired supernatural powers. Because of his (there is no 'hers' in the ritual's traditional form – women cannot take part) liminality – he is between the worlds – the *kouker* is allowed to have an 'irregular' behaviour, i.e. an erotic one, a wild one. This type of behaviour was not allowed in everyday situations within traditional communities; this is why the masked person had to stay masked in order not to reveal who he was [Zhekova 2008].

Today *koukeri* festivities are as popular as ever in Bulgaria. They have altered enough to allow women and children to take part. Masks and costumes also have changed immensely throughout the years becoming more colourful and made of different modern materials, even adapted to look more like their Halloween counterparts in some places. In other areas it is a matter of pride to keep the long tradition of breeding animals with a special fur in order to use it in the creation of the zoomorphic mask typical for the region (for example in the town of Razlog).

Chorus

In Bulgaria today when the word ‘folklore’ is uttered people have certain images that first come to their minds – *koukeri*, *nestinari*, *ensembles* (not necessarily in that order). Most commonly the answers to my question of ‘what people connect ‘folklore’ with’ are ‘stage’: stage as in of performances by recreational and professional ensembles as well as the stage in the national festivals like the open-air Koprivshtitsa festival which takes place every 5 years.

Communism used folklore as the face of Bulgaria towards the world along with rose oil export – a product for sale, a marketing tool to present an imaginary Bulgaria. Substantial sums of money were invested in researching and preserving it, but also in turning the village art into a higher form, a stage folklore. Zygmunt Bauman concludes “Communism was [...] modernity streamlined, purified of the last shred of the chaotic, the irrational, the spontaneous, the unpredictable” [Bauman 1992:2].

It is not a well-known fact that traditional dances and festivities were stopped when Communist regime took over Bulgaria. After 1878 when the country was liberated from the Ottomans, the church could finally take its place. For centuries it had fused together pagan and Christian into an inseparable amalgam of traditions and holidays. In line with the Soviet anti-clergy sentiment, anything that had to do with church matters was banned and so folklore festivities were no exception. A whole generation of Bulgarians up until the late 1950s were driven away from the masquerade tradition [Kraev 1985:45]. It did not die out, however its regulative function as an initiation into manhood was diminished whereas its artistic importance was underlined and strengthened instead. Thus, the sacral was deliberately turned into a type of a play rather than perceived as a ritual.

Politically there had been other changes taking place in Bulgaria – women were given full electoral rights with a law from 15th June 1945 which was solidified in the new ‘Dimitrov Constitution’ in 1947. So, when the pioneers of Bulgarian ethnomusicology and ethnochoreology (also members of the ICTMD for a long time) – prof Raina Katsarova – Kukudova and prof. Anna Ilieva – started their crusade for saving traditional folklore, the road to change had already been taken. By the time the first open-air Koprivshtitsa took place (1965), the ‘revived’ masquerade rituals were looked upon with the eyes of modernity: the new generations perceived traditional culture not through the ‘classic’ way (within the family and the village) but with the eyes of a people, relishing it as a matter of cultural importance, not a life necessity. Non-professional art took over the leadership in the villages’ folklore tradition by streamlining it via the cultural centres (*chitalishte*). The *chitalishte* institution has a long history dating back to the Bulgarian Renaissance of the 19th century and could be found in almost every town and village.

Several changes occurred:

- 1) participants in the newly revived masquerade games were no longer the medium between the worlds *stricto sensu* and as such they had the freedom to be themselves under the masks;

- 2) the costumes were unified, the *koukeri* were in a way an ensemble, a unified group of people, representing their village on the big competitions and festivals organized centrally by the government;
- 3) the *koukeri* ritual was no longer connected to the ritual calendar of the traditional society and was free to be moved along the calendar as the party would deem necessary according to the cultural plan [Kraev 1985:46] and so *koukeri* and *sourvakari* were deliberately separated with invisible ethnographic boundaries of East and West. Last but not least:
- 4) since *koukeri* was more a theatre rather than a ritual, it acquired a scenario and roles with – in some cases words of the different ‘actors’.

Durkheim claims society is more real when celebrating. To him public festivities and rituals are a way of maintaining society’s consensus by a means of disciplining the mind via an idealized reality. Gradually the *koukeri* became what we know today – a colourful display of costumes, a deafening bell sound ‘that chases away bad spirits’, a gathering of people celebrating being Bulgarians by one of the staples of Bulgarian folklore: the masquerade ‘rite’. ‘*Koukeri* festival’ and ‘*koukeri* carnival’ are much more common as denominations among my respondents compared to ‘*koukeri* ritual’. In a carnival anything is possible, so why not allow women in?

Bridge (Today)

The Surva festival in Pernik started in 1966 and is the biggest venue gathering *koukeri* and *sourvakari* from all around Bulgaria but also since 1985 masked groups from all over the world. I have observed three of its editions in 2017 (27–29 January), 2018 (26–28 January) and 2019 (25–27 January). Note that the dates are always chosen to be the last weekend of January. In all three editions women were present as performers. Some of them were dressed in male folklore costumes, others were masked (see Figure 1).

The lady under the 10-kilogram costume is Vanessa Victorova, daughter of the mayor of the village of Dragichevo, Pernik area. In an interview for a local Pernik newspaper she explained that the first time she took part in Surva was in 2008 as a part of the wedding tradition enactment. In 2014 she got a mask and a costume with bells and became a regular *kouker* along the guys from the village. Asked about her opinion on the fact that she is a woman participating in a male tradition, she answers that Bulgarian traditions must be upheld, and people must unite around the preservation of such customs. She adds that times now are different, and it is normal not to have the same traditions as centuries ago. To cite prof. Todor Ivanov Zhivkov here – “Folklore tradition disappears but folklore stays” [Zhivkov 1981:321].



Figure 1. Vanessa Victorova by Assen Velikov, 2018.

At the village of Selanovtsi I observed the *koukeri* tradition in 2018 (13–14 January) – the time frame is always the same, it is the night of New Year’s Eve according to the ‘old calendar style’. In the evening around 23h *koukeri* groups from the four quarters of the village gather in the centre holding lit-up torches and jumping in unison to produce a strong bell chime. There were no women there, however lots of teenagers and small boys in costumes.

The *Starchevata* festival in Razlog takes place during the day of 1st of January and I took part in it both in 2017 and 2018. The local tradition has masked people as well as many people from all quarters of the town in traditional costumes, many women dressed in male ones (see Figure 2). The musical addition to the festivity is very interesting – every town part has its own musicians (usually 2 *zurna* players and 1 *tupan* player).



Figure 2. Starchevata, Razlog. 1st January 2017. Personal archive.

I asked as many participants as I could during all of the activities I observed to share their memories and opinions on women and children taking part in the *koukeri* masquerade. Most of them replied – “it has been like this”, “why not”, “our *koukeritsi* are the best”. All in all, accepting and positive answers. There is however, another opinion which came from a respondent residing in Petrich town. Dimitar Yakov is one of the people who revived the *Rusali* tradition in the area and shared his own take on why women must not, and have never taken part in the *stanchinari* and *koukeri* tradition there. I have not yet been able to see this custom for myself or ask people to confirm his answers. Nevertheless, he said that the masking tradition never ceased to exist there mainly because the people from there are ‘wild’ and ‘crazy’, but also because the governor of the area during Communism was a local and loved his family roots and traditions. Regarding the question on whether or not women have ever been a part of the ritual, he exclaimed “Definitely not, this is a male tradition” [Yakov 2022]. Afterwards added that a woman alone amongst men was not a good idea and no man would let his daughter or wife become a part of this.

Outro (Conclusion)

The presence of an audience and a type of stage (performing in front of the crowd) inevitably opens the way to changes in folklore traditions. Moreover, participants in the enactment of a tradition have been mostly chosen amongst their peers in order to have a good-quality ‘troupe’ and perform and look the best possible way. Elaborate costumes, beautiful women, great dancers and singers, scary, but in an acceptable way, masks.

According to Huizinga play “is a free activity standing quite consciously outside ‘ordinary’ life as being ‘not serious,’ but at the same time absorbing the player intensely and

utterly. It is an activity connected with no material interest, and no profit can be gained by it. It proceeds within its own proper boundaries of time and space according to fixed rules and in an orderly manner” [Huizinga 1949:10]. This could as well be the definition of carnival nowadays. Carnival is the second life for people, it is based on fun and laughter. In carnival a man is as if being reborn and goes back to his real happy self; fights stop for a moment [Bahtin 1978:20–23].

Women *koukeri* are more and more often seen in between the men, they also equally hold their weight of brass bells. There are those who sulk at the sight of them and others who applaud the ‘bold’ emancipation stating the beauty that female participation adds to the ancient tradition. Adapting flexibly to newer times and beliefs, *koukeri* women are here to stay. Indeed, why not? All is allowed in a carnival!

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Dóra Pál-Kovács
(Szentendre, Hungary)

Transgression movements in dance and outfit

I attempt to pinpoint feminine and masculine gender roles in certain gestures and touching movements of a twentieth-century couple folk dance from Magyarózd (Ozd), a Hungarian village in Transylvania. I also examine which of the touching movements can be regarded as transgressing and what factors influence their perception. In fact, one of the main questions of my research is whether dance carries only the gender roles existing in society, or some of its movements may be interpreted as transgressing. One of the basic hypotheses of my paper is that the boundaries of dance conceived as a part of society and culture were mastered unconsciously by the members of the community through the processes of learning and inculcating. Transgression breast touching belongs to a segment of twentieth-century dance culture that repeatedly occurs, although not constantly but only on occasions, during couple dances.

Keywords: Transylvania; gender; couple dance; transgression.

At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, the gender division of labour and social expectations of behaviour were characteristic of peasant societies throughout Europe. As a consequence of this distinction, I have assumed that gendered patterns of behaviour may also be manifested in dance as a socio-cultural phenomenon. On the basis of this assumption, I initiated a research project to analyse the behavioural patterns in male-female relations in traditional dances in Magyarózd, a village in the Maros-Küküllő region: I analysed the gender roles in the village's couple dance, the *csárdás*¹, typical of the second half of the 20th century. The present study analyses one of the sub-themes of the research started in 2012, the so-called 'extra touches' of the couple dance (I will define the term below), and will show how the perception of extra touches is influenced by the outfit. A further aim of the paper is to show the socially legitimate and illegitimate aspects of certain dance movements in the light of dressing. My choice of topic is motivated by the marked male centrism² of Hungarian folk dance research and the scarcity of research on couple dances and gender roles.³

The research framework

In order to examine the aforementioned hypothesis, I have compared the female and male versions of *szegényes*, which are usually performed only by men in the tradition, and in my dissertation I revealed several relations between male and female roles in the social and dance life of the village [Pál-Kovács 2019:58–97].

One of the most fascinating questions of my research is whether dance is only a representation of gender roles in society, or whether some of its movements, especially the touching, can be interpreted as a transgression. Touching in public spaces was presumably only possible during dancing, while in everyday life and other areas of social life it was inconceivable.

In my study titled *The (additional) touches of the Magyarózd Csárdás*, I addressed the question of whether touches during the Magyarózd Csárdás can be discovered that can be considered as transgressive movements, and whether these movements only fit into the framework of the dance (or not). The questioning of this issue directed my research towards further problems. This study seeks to answer the question of whether there is a factor that influences the way touch and tactile movements take place. Another way of approaching the

topic is to ask whether circumstances influence how dancers themselves perceive touches that are particular and strange to the outsider.

Methodology

The field of research

Magyarózd is located in Maros county, România, 20 km south of Luduș (Luduș). Along the Maros-Küküllő region, in the valley of the Ózd river, also known as the Malozsa valley, there are seven villages, the two largest of which are Csekelaka (Cecălaca) and Magyarózd [Horváth 1980:20].

In a village with a predominantly Hungarian population, the economic and social changes after the Second World War put more strain on men, who died earlier, so there are far more widows than widowers in the village. The village's population has been declining steadily since the First World War, falling below 300 inhabitants by 2015. There has been no significant change in the ethnic and religious divisions, and census data clearly show that from the 19th century to the present day it has been a Hungarian-majority, Reformed Church settlement.⁴

Sources and collection methods

During the first three years of my research (2012–2014), I explored the broad spectrum of the dance tradition in Magyarózd with help of several short fieldwork trips. In 2015, I supplemented this research with four months long fieldwork. Even if only for a short period, I became an 'inhabitant' of the village, so I was supposed to comply with the norms and rules of the village, which were expected to be respected by the community. This helped me to understand the gender roles that existed in the village at the beginning of the 21st century.⁵

In addition to archival material⁶, the research was based on my textual collections, dance filming (organising a carnival ball) and dance analysis. My research informants were women and men over sixty years who were active in the village dance life in the second half of the 20th century. In addition to the older age group, I also conducted interviews with middle-aged people and young adults too.

Due to the complexity of the research, I also initiated interviews with male and female revival dancers⁷ who had danced with local informants on several occasions during their fieldwork, and their personal experiences helped me to understand the topic more fully.

Theoretical background

Theories of gender studies

The focus of my research is primarily on dance as a cultural and social phenomenon, and thus my research focuses on the interpretation of the meaning (presumably) expressed by dance and, in this context, on the analysis of gender roles. Based on this approach, I consider the approaches and methods of dance anthropology⁸ to be predominantly applicable.

My research focuses primarily on the relations and behaviour of women and men in dance, the relationship between them as gender roles in dance, and the possibilities of interpreting all this, thus my research is based on gender studies, and the theories of gender, which has become a popular and accepted topic in postmodern social sciences.

In my view, the American historian Natalie Zemon Davis most clearly articulated the direction of gender studies in academic discourse in 1975:

Our goal is to understand the significance of gender, of gender groups in the historical past. Our aim is also to explore the diversity of gender roles and gender symbols in different societies and periods, to determine their meanings, and to learn how they have functioned to maintain social order and to promote its changes. Our aim is to explain why gender roles were sometimes strictly defined, sometimes freer, sometimes noticeably asymmetrical, sometimes more evenly distributed [Zemon Davis 1996:78].

In my research, following Mária Neményi, I consider gender as a cultural interpretation of biological sex [Neményi 1999:13], which sets patterns of expectations for individuals, regulates the social processes of everyday life, and is embedded in the basic institutions of society, the economy, the family, and politics. One could also say that dance, which is seen as part of society, also has patterns of expectation, but these are not permanent, not eternal, but constantly changing from culture to culture and from age to age, as Davis alludes to in the quote.

A brief understanding of the body

As we are talking about gender roles, couple dancing and touching, we cannot avoid a brief clarification of the concept of the body. Different disciplines have given different definitions of the body - it is not the purpose of this paper to explore and detail all these. In my paper I only describe some cultural anthropological and ethnological approaches that are relevant and have guided me in my work.

Ortner interprets the body in three categories: as nature, as social construction and as embodiment [Ortner 2003:195–215]. This study takes the socially constructed body as the interpretative framework because in perceiving it, members of society follow their own social and cultural practices, i.e. they associate with a given biological body the pattern of behaviour and socialisation role they expect, which boys and girls acquire in childhood [Ortner 2003:195–215].

Ortner's perspective reflects Bourdieu's observation that of all the manifestations of 'personality', the body becomes one of the most perceptible forms. Bourdieu interprets the body as a language "which is not so much spoken by us as it says something about us, behaving as a language of nature" [Bourdieu 1978:151–152]. Even our own images of our bodies - what is beautiful, what is fashionable, what is acceptable in male and female dress, etc. - are determined by social constructions. Cultures, societies and groups (for example the peasantry) thus determine their own images of the body, define their own boundaries, and legitimize or reject interventions (e.g. a new hairstyle, different clothing, etc.) [Bourdieu 1978:151–152].

European ethnological research also deals with bourgeois and peasant interpretations of the body. Jonas Frykman and Orvar Löfgren, in a detailed analysis of examples from Sweden, state that - in contrast to the peasantry - the bourgeoisie was characterised by a 'hidden' body, by prudery, and the body and anything concerning the human body were practically taboo. Peasant children - if they were mature and observant enough - learned (for example, from the reproduction of animals) how a child was born, how to care for and feed a baby. The mother was a constant presence in the peasant family, and the children inevitably saw her in her underwear. In contrast, in the bourgeois milieu there were no animals, children saw their mother and nanny all their lives only buttoned up to the neck, and birth and baby care were understood as a private matter for the mother and the baby [Frykman and Löfgren 1987:160].

The findings of the Swedish authors can also be considered valid for the Transylvanian peasant culture, on the basis of which sexuality could become a natural part of life here, too,

but the public expression of intimacy is subject to a completely different perception. In my research, I consider the body not only as a natural object, but also as a socially and historically defined concept.

The concepts of transgression and additional touches

The movements, touches, judgements and consequently the boundaries of couple dancing are all determined by socially constructed patterns of expectation. The term ‘boundary’ does not, of course, refer to a physical limit, but is a metaphorical reference to social relations, to belonging to or exclusion from a community. It also refers to the boundaries within social relations, which are more strictly regulated by social conventions the closer one moves towards the socially intimate bodily areas of the individual [Donnan and Wilson 2002:120]. When applied to dance, the term social boundary also includes socially permissible movements and touches, as well as the possibility of transgression, since each dance has internal norms and regulating factors that individuals know, accept and use while dancing, and which provide them with a sense of being a member of a community.

Michel Foucault writes about the transgression as follows:

Transgression is an action which involves the limit, that narrow zone of a line which it displays the flash of its passage, but perhaps also its entire trajectory, even its origin; it is likely that transgression has its entire space in the line it crosses. The play of limits and transgression seems to be regulated by a simple obstinacy: transgression incessantly crosses and recrosses a line which closes up behind it in a wave of extremely short duration, and thus it is made to return once more right to the horizon of the uncrossable. [Foucault 1977:32–33].

I consider the boundary to contain the whole world of movement, and that by crossing the boundary for a short period of time, the individual leaves the whole of the known and used zone and enters another territory. In other words, at the moment of transgression, the individual is in a specific public space, on the very concrete or even abstract border, and has a momentary view of the territory both within and beyond the border. In my interpretation, the transgression can never be permanent: once the border has been crossed, we almost immediately step back into the known, legitimate zone, from which the transgression can happen again and again.

In our case, this needs some (historical) explanation. According to the sources, during the change of European couple dances, the contactless dance gradually evolved into a closer grip, and then we can date the appearance of closed grip couple dances from the 15th to 16th century [Felföldi 1997:75]. In the Alpine-Carpathian region, couple folk dances are characterised by the fact that the dancers can touch or hold each other’s backs up to the hip line and the whole arm during the dance, and that they necessarily hold each other by the grip when turning. The dance films of the Magyarózd couple dances show that, in addition to the above mentioned touching, the men touch the women’s breasts and bottom with their palms, fingers and fingertips in certain situations. In my interpretation, these touches belong to the category of transgressive touches, or additional touches.

Additional touches in the Magyarózd *Csárdás*

Additional touches in public space

There are countless culturally and socially defined written and unwritten rules of physical contact that are known, accepted and used by the individuals. In the course of my research I had the opportunity to observe and experience a number of phenomena related to this topic, of

which I will highlight only a few illustrative examples in this study, such as the couple dance in the village. I hope that it will become apparent to what extent the perception of the touches that I consider to be transgressive is influenced by the personality of the individual, in addition to socialization.

The *csárdás* in Magyarózd, a common case of additional touching in films is when the man, in an almost natural-looking gesture, grabs the breast of the female dancer in a change of direction, as if to maintain a closed grip.

I have conducted several interviews on the subject of the additional touches, in which I have asked about this movement. One response was:

- because sometimes he just touches her hand, but sometimes they turn around and then he puts her hand like this [my female informant reached under my arm and touched my breast with her palm].
- And wasn't that intrusive?
- No. It was dance. (Interview with G. E.) [Pál-Kovács 2018]

It was noticeable that the elderly local woman had no difficulty in talking about what I considered to be an intimate matter, for her this kind of touching was part of the dance, not at all taboo. My informant was born and grew up in the village, and her husband is also an inhabitant of the village. During our conversation, she gave me the impression that nothing could be more natural than this, and she did not quite understand why I was asking this question, why it could be important to me.

In a conversation with another elderly couple in Magyarózd, both husband and wife were rejective from the very first moment about the additional touches, denying the existence of the phenomenon. However, at the end of the conversation, when saying goodbye, the elderly man reached under my arm with both hands and touched the outside of my breast with his palm. This transgressive gesture was unexpected for me, and I had not experienced anything similar before, I did not know how to react in such a situation. Similar touches related to leaving were also mentioned by my female revival informants, who only after several incidents were able to react in a meaningful way to the unexpected and occasionally unpleasant touch: to prevent such touches, they took the man's hand at the moment of saying goodbye. It should be noted, however, that this is not related to a dancing situation, but it serves as a good illustration of the social, interpretative complexity of my topic.

The examples mentioned above illustrate that the perception of transgressive touches is not uniform among inhabitants socialized at the same time in the same local community, with reactions ranging from agreement to complete rejection.

The additional touches and the outfit

According to ethnographer Csilla Könzei, the female researchers from the city were considered unique in the villages in the 1980s and were probably 'underdressed' for local men. They wore urban summer clothes, for example shorts and small tops, which were not common at this time. Plus the female researchers behaved differently from the norms of women's behaviour in the village: they initiated conversations, asked questions to the local inhabitants, their behaviour was different from the local women.

György Martin was the photographer in the village in 1969 (Figure 1). It is clearly visible that the women dressed for this occasion in the traditional costume of the Maros-Küküllő region, which was still maintained in the 20th century, with a white shirt, a short dark-coloured vest, a skirt with a white apron. In contrast, in the next pictures the woman wears a dark skirt

with a white loose and casual shirt (see Figure 2). This picture shows that Csilla Könczai's idea was right.



Figure 1. Women dancers in front of the castle in Magyarózd in 1968. Photo taken by György Martin, 1969, Magyarózd, HAS Institute of Musicology, Tf.23988.



Figure 2. Moments from a dance lesson. Recorded by János Fügedi, 1990, Magyarózd, HAS Institute of Musicology, Vt_63_VHS_Magyarozd_1990.avi, 0:50:42.

Generally we can say that the peasant costumes press down the breasts, while the hips and bottom were emphasized. From the above mentioned few examples, it is clear that the outfit itself does not influence the happening of transgressive touching, but the cloth that she wears largely determines the perception of the woman. The outfit can be understood as a kind of protection, as a boundary, it also serves to hide the body and its sexuality, and gendered nature. In other words, the woman experiences these touches differently when she wears a heavy and tight shirt/vest. In my view, the extent to which we perceive these touches as intrusive or embarrassing depends on socialization, personality, and local cultural norms.

Conclusions

The aim of this study was to show how the gender roles can be understood in the gestures and touches of a couple dance in a Transylvanian Hungarian village in the 20th century, and which movements of the dance can be considered as transgression and which factors influence the perception of these. I have highlighted a few examples from Magyarózd in which these phenomena can be illustrated.

The people in the community have acquired the frames and boundaries of dance during the socialisation and the learning of the dance without being aware. We could say that the gender roles are constantly changing, so in anthropological research of a dance we would understand the gender at a certain time and place. Also, the particular social patterns show different characteristics from time to time and place to place.

So, we can therefore conclude that dance gives more opportunities for physical contact between a man and woman than everyday situations, and can also legitimize touching that is not allowed in the public spaces of everyday life. Just as the phenomenon of transgression, social constructions determine the perception of the body. Transgressing breast-touching could occur in the dance of the 20th century, but of course not on a permanent basis.

From the above mentioned examples, it is clear that we cannot ignore the outfit in the research of transgressive touching, especially as the female perception of touch is highly dependent on the clothing that the woman is wearing during the dance. In the Hungarian traditional peasant culture the women felt these touches less, and perhaps considered it less intrusive in the thick and tight clothes in contrast in the thinner and looser clothes of the modern, urban culture.

The examples presented reveal that there is no general view or practice in the village about the open communication of these touches. I mean it depends on personality too. This study was a part of a larger research, in which we could understand not only the gender roles in this particular village but also more additional information on the gender relations in the 21st century as well.

Endnotes

1. In the book *The Dance Life and Dances of Lőrincréve* by Zsigmond Karsai and György Martin we can find the most accurate description of the Transylvanian Maros-Küküllő region's couple dance: the *csárdás*. Although it belongs to the new style of couple dances, in terms of its motif and structure it can be classified more as an old style of couple dance. The name of the dance was clearly influenced by the wave of the new folk music style. The dance is simple in form, with a quarterly rhythm, and its formal units do not fully fit the structure of the accompaniment melody. The couple's grip during the dance is characterized by a relatively constant, closed shoulder-waist grip, which only opens out during the changes of direction [Karsai and Martin 1989:268–270].

2. György Martin also recognizes that in the relatively few Hungarian dance historical sources, data on male dances are much more common. He attributes this to the fact that for observers from abroad, these dances were considered unusual and strange [Martin 1997:132–135].
3. For example, Lujza Ratkó explains in one of her studies where and how the place of women appears in Hungarian dance tradition [Ratkó 2001:263–277]. In the author's view, it is primarily the *karikázó* that represents the true, genuine female genre, and she also goes into the formal characteristics of this genre in detail. In two separate chapters, the reader can read about the dances in which women can be considered equal partners - such as the dance with fighting character, which is performed without any contact - and the dances in which the dance is about the subordination of the two ("Female roles"). Ernő Pesovár's monograph, *The Hungarian Couple Dances*, contains historical contributions to dance, but does not discuss the gender roles of men and women [Pesovár 1997]. In her monograph, Edit Kaposi describes the good female and male dancing qualities of the villages in Bodroghöz [Kaposi 1999:39].
4. I explored the population structure of the settlement, its demographic pattern, ethnic and religious changes, occupational distribution and educational qualifications using a village structure questionnaire [Kovács 2017:11–19].
5. I agree with Boglárka Bakó that such fieldwork also provides an insight into the inside picture, from which the community's conflict resolution strategies, male-female roles, child-rearing practices, and bureaucratic background can be analysed in a different way than from "external data" [Bakó 2004:389].
6. The manuscripts and dance scripts used can be found in the collections of Research Centre for the Humanities Institute of Musicology: Akt.1388; Tit.1244, 1245, 1248, 1979, 1310, 1323, 1334, 1395, 1397, 1398, 1399, 1400.
7. Károly Marót considers the revival as a cultural phenomenon that is revived and reinterpreted after a previous loss of function, and that in the new socio-cultural environment additional functions emerge. Following Marót's formulation, revival dancers are those dancers who no longer learnt dance in a traditional way, but who learned the different dances of the dance dialects in dance groups and from dance teachers, and who socialised within the revival movement, when dance was removed from peasant society and appeared in urban space [Marót 1945:5–9].
8. In his doctoral dissertation, Máté Kavecsánszki deals with the folk dance approach typical of East-Central Europe; the distinction between dance folklore and dance anthropology, which expanded dance folklore at the beginning of the 21st century [Kavecsánszki 2015:15–22]. According to Kavecsánszki, "[dance folklore] is fundamentally interested in morphological, structural, functional and historical issues", whereas anthropology "takes a more complex approach, starting from the semantic study of the movements and movements of the human body" [Kavecsánszki 2015:150]. To add to this, Sándor Varga notes that, although dance folklore does indeed attempt to understand the social context of dance, it does so mainly in a descriptive way [Varga 2016:86–89.] Since the early 2000s, the Department of Ethnography and Cultural Anthropology of the University of Szeged and the Institute of Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences have been conducting more and more research on dance anthropology and social history [Szőnyi 2018; Varga 2013; Székely 2022].

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Sanja Ranković and Mirjana Zakić
(Belgrade, Serbia)

Cultural leadership and musical activism of Serbian women in Kosovo and Metohija¹

In this paper, we will show how the role of Serbian women in Kosovo and Metohija has changed from limited positions in social action and expected participation in the musical life of the community to taking leadership positions in the local environment, achieved in the context of the unstable political situation in this territory. In that sense, we refer to the successful activity and dedicated work of Jadranka Vasić, the director of the primary school *Desanka Maksimović* in Kosovska Kamenica, and of Snežana Jovanović, the director of the professional ensemble *Venac* from Gračanica, whose contributions are visible in the field of the educational and cultural system of Kosovo and Metohija. By taking leading positions, both women are aware of the complexity of the political situation, so they have expanded their activities and taken over not only the administrative management of the institutions they head, but they have become involved in musical activism and creation of Serbian cultural identity and education, thus influencing the survival of the Serbian community in Kosovo and Metohija.

Keywords: leadership; Kosovo and Metohija; Jadranka Vasić; Snežana Jovanović; musical activism.

Through the lenses of feminism, gender studies, and suitable identification stances, newer publications from diverse sectors of social sciences, humanities, and natural sciences powerfully reinforce the position and role of women. The study of women's leadership in music and the broader artistic and social spheres, on the other hand, remains an understudied area. The project *Female Leadership in Music: a Cross-Genre Research of Women's Roles, Agency, and Collaborative Music-Making Practices in Serbia*, implemented by the Department of Ethnomusicology, Faculty of Music in Belgrade, in collaboration with the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade, brought this topic up to date. Within the scope of the project, we concentrated on the role of women in the preservation of traditional music, as well as the organisation of the Serbian community's social and cultural life in Kosovo and Metohija.

In this study, we will explain how the role of Serbian women in Kosovo and Metohija has evolved from restricted social activity and anticipated participation in the community's musical life to taking leadership roles in the local environment, all while the region's political situation remains unstable. In this regard, we refer to Jadranka Vasić, director of the *Desanka Maksimović* elementary school in Kosovska Kamenica, and Snežana Jovanović, director of the professional ensemble *Venac* from Gračanica, whose contributions are obvious in Kosovo and Metohija's educational and cultural systems.

Jadranka Vasić (née Nikolić) was born in Kosovska Kamenica in 1980 (a town and the seat of the municipality which is located in the eastern part of Kosovo and Metohija and belongs to the Kosovo-Pomoravlje administrative district). After graduating from primary and secondary school in her hometown, she enrolled in the Department of Geography at the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics in Priština, which she completed in 2003 in Kosovska Mitrovica (see Figure 1). In the same year, Jadranka began her pedagogical career as a teacher in Kosovo Pomoravlje's communities, teaching in high, primary and economic schools. Her main educational activity is tied to the *Desanka Maksimović* elementary school in Kosovska Kamenica, which was founded in 1870 and whose premises have been shared by the primary, technical, high school, and kindergarten for many years. According to Jadranka, following the unfortunate political events at the turn of the century, the school building was returned to the

Serbian community for use in 2000 thanks to UNMIK (United Nations Mission in Kosovo), albeit in poor condition and with a ruined inventory.



Figure 1: Jadranka Vasić in her office (photo by Mirjana Zakić and Sanja Ranković, 21st October 2021, Kosovska Kamenica).

Even as a young girl, Jadranka exuded tenacity and vigour. She helped her mother with countless domestic chores as a child, growing up in an impoverished family with a disabled father, a younger brother, and a sister whom she looked after. Despite the fact that “it was not easy to live in this environment even before the events of 1999”, as she says, “this complete struggle made me a strong girl, someone who wanted much more” [Vasić 2021]. In pursuing her objectives, she had the unwavering support of her family, who, believing in the soundness of her beliefs, delegated all major choices about the family’s life and progress to her.

Her ability to ‘create something out of nothing’, as she puts it, has had a significant impact on her professional life. She painted and outfitted her office with complete instructional material that could have been obtained from nature while working primarily as a geography teacher. It was evident to her, that students “require not just book knowledge, but also application of book knowledge in practice, inventing new ideas and sharing those ideas, because shared happiness is twice as powerful” [Vasić 2021].

Since 2015, when she was the elementary school principal in Kosovska Kamenica (which until then had 80 employees, and 148 in 2021), Jadranka has demonstrated great entrepreneurial energy. She worked hard to restore the school’s interior with the help of Arnaud Gouillon, a French and Serbian humanist who is the founder and director of the French NGO ‘Solidarity for Kosovo’ and the acting director of the Directorate for Cooperation with the Diaspora and Serbs in the Region, as well as priests and support workers. The *Warm School* project was developed in collaboration with the European Union (with a Priština-based organisation), and included changes to the carpentry, electrical installation, roof and other insulation, boiler room, and everything else required for adequate teaching. The rest of the materials were utilised to decorate an Albanian school at her request. The following initiatives by Jadranka Vasić yielded the following results: a workshop for wood and metal processing was built with financing from the teaching fund and humanitarian action in which parents and students took part; a workshop for making folk costumes was built in the basement’s unused space (which now houses eight old looms, one new, and two small ones where children can study), as well as a workshop for making woodcarvings (see Figure 2). This sparked pupils’ interest in learning a variety of

artistic, craft, and domestic skills.² She also organised seminars for producing jewellery for traditional costumes and embroidery in two rural schools. Jadranka employed parents of children and young people who were in financial need on the school's craft premises, thus providing them with additional financial support. The products created in the workshops are intended for the use of this school and other educational institutions in the area, not for resale. The amazing ambience of the school (with 286 students) is due to Jadranka's knowledge in the additional field of spatial planning at the university, but most importantly, to the principal's motivating desire for collective action and visible results that contribute to people staying in Kosovo and Metohija. Without a doubt, such a unique setting with varied workshops as part of official educational activities serves as a model for profiling, arranging, and implementing a combination of academic knowledge and practical skills in Serbia's general education system.³ She made the following public announcements about her early acts and their effects: "It was tough at first to get people to understand that we are all here for the children and that we work for them. However, now that people have seen the effects, they believe in it, and we have a lot of support from parents and others. I am also grateful that I am frequently asked to present our school's best practices. Everything we accomplish should have a long-term impact and inspire others" [Kosovo Pomoravlje 2020].



Figure 2: Weaving and handicrafts workshops in elementary school *Desanka Maksimović* in Kosovska Kamenica (photo by Mirjana Zakić and Sanja Ranković, 21st October 2021, Kosovska Kamenica).

Jadranka is a mother of three children who has strong family support, and she views herself professionally as a dynamic teacher and a fulfilled, joyful administrator who works tirelessly to stimulate students and enhance their skills.

"She is ambitious, a great fighter [...] She turns every concept into action", music instructor Nikolija Bogdanović (born in 1997 in Kuršumlija) said of director Jadranka Vasić, also testifying to her extremely dedicated, energetic and inspiring work. "For her, words like "I can't", "I don't want to", and "I won't" don't exist. She always comes up with a solution for everything. [...] and it's always for the advantage of the kids and us teachers. She always underlines that all she has accomplished has been the result of teamwork" [Bogdanović 2021]. Nikolija believes that such principal's activities are vital for Kosovo and Metohija's culture, and that it is her mission to preserve the Serbian ethnicity and Serbian traditions in Kosovo and Metohija. Jadranka was born with leadership qualities, according to this music teacher, who describes her as a brave, determined woman who is full of love and faith in people and everything she does; she is honest, fair, and transparent in her actions; she has organizational

skills, a clear attitude, vision, and mission. Nikolija decided to work in Kosovska Kamenica, at the elementary school *Desanka Maksimović* after graduating from the Department of Music Arts at the Faculty of Niš, where she founded a women's singing group and, more recently, a school choir, all due to the principal's strong support and personal qualities.

Snežana Jovanović was born in Priština in 1980 and received her bachelor's degree in Entrepreneurship and Marketing from the University of Priština's Faculty of Economics, with a temporary headquarters in Kosovska Mitrovica (see Figure 3). During her studies as the president of human resources in the Priština branch of the international student organization AIESEC (Association internationale des étudiants en sciences économiques et commerciales / International Association of Students in Economics and Business), she demonstrated leadership abilities. She earned additional competencies and experience working in the public and non-governmental sectors in the disciplines of finance, marketing, and human rights after graduating from the faculty.⁴ Since 16th August 2013 she has been the director of the professional ensemble of Kosovo and Metohija traditional dances and songs *Venac* from Gračanica. The local government appointed her to this post in order to improve the folklore troupe's long-term financial and working performance.



Figure 3: Snežana Jovanović, director of the Ensemble *Venac* (Photo from the personal archive of Snežana Jovanović).

Snežana Jovanović had various challenges when she took over as director, including a lack of workspace and technical equipment, administrative headquarters, an archive, adequate folk costumes for the show, professional personnel, an insufficient number of employees, and more.⁶ These flaws in *Venac*'s operation have resulted in work indiscipline and an extremely low number of performances per year. Snežana's education, professional expertise, and excellent organisational abilities supported her in resolving the majority of technical, legal, and administrative issues. Despite the fact that her education was not in the arts, she noted a lack of program planning and artistic work creation. As a result, she attempted to observe the Ensemble's program demands in collaboration with personnel and experts from relevant organisations. In this regard, collaboration with educational and artistic institutions was established, and the Art Council was founded, consisting of famous cultural specialists as well

as professors from the Department of Ethnomusicology at Belgrade's Faculty of Music. She took over the role of artistic director, marketing engagement, and financial affairs management because she did not have the resources to hire more people. Thus, during the seven years of managing the Ensemble *Venac*, she made multiple contributions and enabled the development of folklore professionalism because she provided temporary premises for the work of the Ensemble within the House of Culture in Gračanica, and increased the number of employees;⁷ she also improved technical working conditions;⁸ raised the professional capacities of the Ensemble and connected *Venac* with other institutions; increased the number of all-night concerts in the country and overseas from 10 to over 50 per year; established a youth ensemble in Gračanica and five children's groups in the surrounding villages;⁹ expanded the repertoire with fresh choreographies for which appropriate folk costumes were produced; supported ethnomusicological and ethnochoreological field research in Kosovo and Metohija; established a Facebook page, a YouTube channel, and an Instagram account; she established the Digitalisation Centre, which started operating at the end of 2020, and she managed to boost the budget for performing artistic events thanks to strong commercial results. Snežana was able to define the institution's strategy more clearly as the Ensemble *Venac* progressed in all areas, which is being implemented in multiple directions. One of them is the preservation and presentation of Serbs' intangible cultural heritage in Kosovo and Metohija, both in the country and abroad [Ranisavljević 2018:361–370]. Furthermore, it is critical to position *Venac* as a socially responsible institution that plays a vital role in bringing the Serbian population in the area together.

Snežana Jovanović's positive work outcomes are the consequence of her hard effort and a unique perspective on leadership, as she puts it: "I regard the position of director through time, not the amount of income". This position, however, was met with strong opposition, both in the collective and in the local environment, where Snežana's work ethic was misinterpreted as careerism. They dubbed her "the Iron Lady or Angela Merkel" because of her dedication and strictness [Jovanović 2022].

When it comes to Serbian women in Kosovo and Metohija, Snežana Jovanović believes that female participation in leadership roles is insufficient. Women, for example, continue to find it difficult to engage in various forms of tasks, preferring instead to "select more comfortable lives" [Jovanović 2022] and are satisfied with the established roles and stereotypes they have within the patriarchal community [Klenke 2018:10, 20].¹⁰ "A woman should not pay attention to gender", she says, "since that emphasis reduces her impact in a given context" [Jovanović 2022]. Furthermore, as she herself states, women in leadership roles must "have two men in them" [Jovanović 2022] and be willing to strive, be determined, persistent, strict, and competent.

Conclusion

Despite the lack of music education and conventional music and culture education, both interlocutors have a direct or indirect influence on the development of musical and cultural activities at their institutions. Within the school, Jadranka Vasić established workshops for making folk costumes and encouraged employees to participate in traditional singing, while Snežana Jovanović organised Ensemble concert activities, participated in the creation of the Ensemble's artistic policy, and advocated ethnomusicological research and traditional singing and dancing workshops. As both interlocutors point out, long-term success stems from their entrepreneurial drive, organisational abilities, strong work ethic, and high-quality collaboration with professionals of appropriate profiles. Their entrepreneurial and managerial talents, which they honed during their higher education and job experience, are significant features of

leadership roles, as evidenced by recent literature [see for example: Martić and Kuran-Mečev 2018].

A leader, according to the interlocutors, is a person with tremendous ability, strong character, integrity, self-confidence, desire for innovation, and willingness to collaborate; he or she is communicative, authoritative, and publicly visible. According to Snežana Jovanović's personal experience, there is still mistrust about women as leaders in Kosovo and Metohija, which she attributes to the region's strong patriarchal character. In this sense, we also refer to the words of Karin Klenke, Peter Northouse, and Iva Nenić, that since each context has its own recognizable characteristics, they often interact with assumptions related to female competencies and stereotypes regarding gender roles [Klenke 2018:6–34];¹² [Northouse 2008:188–196; Nenić 2019]. Alternatively, to quote the words of Ellen Koskoff, recent suspicions of female folklore and culture suggest that “in many societies women and men seem to occupy separate and independent musical cultures, rather than two differentiated but complementary and overlapping halves of culture” [Koskoff 2014:32].

Because both women were aware of the complexities of the political situation, they expanded their activities and took over not only the administrative management of the institutions they lead but also musical activism and, more broadly, the (re)creation of the Serbian community's cultural identity in Kosovo and Metohije.

Endnotes

1. This study was prepared as a result of work on the project *Female leadership in music: a cross-genre research of women's roles, agency and collaborative music-making practices in Serbia (FLIM)*, grant no. 6066876, within the *PROMIS* program of the Science Fund of the Republic of Serbia (2020–2022).

2. See Kosovo Pomoravlje [2020].

3. “Everyone who enters this enchanted instructional zone claims that everything splits into real and imaginary after they arrive. You are greeted with a warm welcome, warmth, and delight from the moment you make your first step in. They value visits, and those who have returned to the Kosovska Kamenica school have seen how it evolves and modernizes from year to year” [Kosovo Pomoravlje 2020].

4. Snežana Jovanović worked as the director of the Gračanica-based Cultural and Educational Community in Priština, a loan officer at Raiffeisen and KEP Banks, a clerk at the Health Insurance Institute, a financial officer at MOCART, a project coordinator at the Media Center, a communication and external liaison officer with families of missing persons (outreach officer) of the Department of Missing Persons and Forensics in Priština, public opinion researcher for BBC Gallop, and project coordinator at CARE International.

5. This is the Ensemble that was founded in Priština in 1964 under the name *Shota* and renamed *Venac (Wreath)* in 1993 [Ranisavljevic 2018:364]. Following the NATO bombing of Serbia in 1999, the Ensemble was split into the Albanian *Shota* and the Serbian *Venac* by the state authorities. Since the bombing, the majority of the Serbian population was compelled to flee Kosovo and Metohija, and *Shota* continued to operate in Priština, while *Venac* operated in Niš for several years. The dancers, however, insisted on returning to Kosovo and Metohija in 2003, and the institution is now housed in the House of Culture in Gračanica.

6. See <<https://www.ansamblvenac.rs/>> (accessed 2022 September 26).

7. Prior to Snežana's appointment at the helm of *Venac*, the institution employed 42 permanent employees and 15 ‘illegal’ personnel who did not have adequate contracts or grounds for employment. The Ensemble now has 42 full-time employees, 30 contract employees, and 20 associates with temporary employment contracts for special projects and jobs.

8. Snežana technically equipped the rooms in which the Ensemble *Venac* worked by purchasing a dancing floor and a piano, as well as restoring the hall and other items, thus creating the appropriate working conditions.

9. The children's folklore groups are made up of children from twenty Serbian communities gathered in the settlements of Gračanica, Donja Brnjica, Gušterica, Livađe, and Laplje Selo in central Kosovo and Metohija.

10. “I had to treat certain men as if I were a judge, a policeman, a lawyer, someone who knows more, who is more knowledgeable, to defend and protect myself”, Snežana said of her drive to apply specific leadership ideals and challenges in communicating with her colleagues. “Sometimes a lady must act more like a male” [Jovanović 2022].

11. Karin Klenke paid special attention to the issue of criticality of different contexts in women's leadership (at the level of nation, religion, political systems, corporations and business organisations, information technology, media, sports, army, education, art and science and global scene. "Each context has its distinguishing characteristics and features which interact with assumptions regarding women's leadership competencies and sex role stereotypes which, in turn, are subject to temporal and cultural fluctuations" [Klenke 2018: 20].

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Ayano Tamaki
(Kanagawa, Japan)

Sexuality of the *chalga* singer Azis: Focusing on the change of sexual expressions in his performances

In Bulgaria, *chalga*, a mixture of elements of Turkish and Romani music and Western-derived popular music, has gained popularity from the late 1980s when the communist government started to topple. Since Bulgarians sought liberty from the oppression by the government at that time, *chalga* singers have used sexually explicit styles of performance in their music, as a way to resist the regime. In this study, I focus on Azis, one of the most popular male *chalga* singers, as the most noteworthy example. Although it is still not clear whether Azis is actually bisexual or not, he has emphasised his gender and sexuality through his career, so both femininity and masculinity can be found simultaneously in the homoerotic setting of his performance. From around 2012, however, those characteristic sexual expressions in his performance have diminished. Here, I attempt to examine how Azis has altered the type and degree of his sexual expression from social, political, commercial viewpoints and his individual reasons.

Keywords: Bulgaria; *chalga*; post-communism; sexuality; gender.

Chalga (pop-folk) is a genre of Bulgarian popular music, which consists of the harmony and structure of Western pop, and Turkish- or Romani- derived sounds and rhythms. Its sexual expressions in lyrics, movements and the costumes of performers are characteristic. This genre became very popular among Bulgarians from around 1990, after the end of the communist regime in Bulgaria and citizens started to appeal for freedom. Azis is one of the most popular Bulgarian male singers in the *chalga* scene. He was born in a Romani family and he has performed as a singer since he was a teenager. His sexuality as a gay (or a bisexual) has a great impact on his performance style. He has become a professional singer since 1999 and has succeeded both in Bulgaria and overseas, not only as a singer but also as a TV programme host or an entertainer [Ayano Tamaki 2021].

Since around 2013, the sexual (and gender) exaggeration in his performances, which had been one of the biggest characteristics of his music since his debut, has decreased. In this paper, I would like to make clear in which aspects Azis's performances have changed through the process of the decline of his gender/sexual exaggeration and examine the social/personal factors which led into the change of his performance style.

As the method of this research, I firstly made a comparison between Azis's performances from 1999 to 2012, and those from 2013 to 2022, from the three viewpoints; style and elements of music, lyrics and themes of songs, costume and gesture. Here, I analysed the following six pieces, using YouTube as the source; *Ledena Kralitsa* [AZIS 2004], *Sen Trope* [Diapason Records 2011] and *MMA* [FEN TV 2012] as examples of his music released from 1999 to 2012, and *Habibi* [FEN TV 2015], *Tsiganche* [AZIS 2019] and *Tochno v tri* [AZIS 2021] as examples of his music released from 2013 to 2022. As the next step, I examined what the factors of the changes were by following the recent trend of inclusion and exclusion of sexual minorities in Bulgaria, focusing on some noteworthy social and political events.

In which aspects Azis's performances changed?

In this paper, I show the result of the analysis which makes clear how Azis changed his music style in the beginning of the 2010s.

Firstly, I begin from the illustration of the former style of Azis's performances. The theme of the song *Ledena Kralitsa*, whose name means 'Ice queen', is a romance. In *chalga*, 'romance' (one-night love, rather than pure or sincere love) is one of the most typical themes. In the communist period, impure love has been regarded as an indecent thing which can make Bulgarian people and the nation appear vulgar. Therefore, one-night love could not be chosen as a theme of any kind of arts by artists, who created works within the frame of 'tradition'. On the other hand, *chalga* singers prefer selecting these kinds of common topics, to seek freedom in the culture scenes, representing Bulgarian folk. In terms of music elements, melisma is conspicuous in this song. Since melisma is known as a peculiar element of Turkish and Romani songs, it can be regarded as an impure element, which is contrary to the 'pure' Bulgarian culture or the exclusion of other ethnic elements which were promoted by the then government [Silverman 2021:28]. As for costumes and gesture, Azis expressed a sexual boldness with flashy makeup, a revealing feminine costume and seductive movements (showing his hip or shaving his legs, touching these parts of his body himself, etc.). *Sen Trope* is known as the most popular piece by Azis. In this song, the rhythm of *kyuchek* (Figure 1) is one of the most characteristic elements as the element which plays a similar role in the performance to melisma. *Kyuchek* is the Romani solo dance, in which dancers improvise with unique kinetic movements, such as "hand movements, contractions of the abdomen and pelvis, shoulder shakes, movement of isolated body parts (such as hips and head), and small footwork patterns" [Silverman 2021:18]. The lyrics in this song do not have a clear meaning, but the words *Sen Trope* (Saint-Tropez), *Maudivite* (Maldives) and *Dubai* are metaphors for the luxurious way of living, which Bulgarian citizens had sought after during the communist period, when they were forced to live frugally. As for costumes and gestures, they show same trend as the ones used in *Ledena Kralitsa*. *MMA* also shows similar characteristics to *Ledena Kralitsa* and *Sen Trope*, in all items of the analysis, musical elements, the theme of lyric and costume and gestures.

In comparison to these former styles, Azis's performances from 2013 show a different trend in lyrics, costume and gestures, whilst the musical elements are almost the same as previously. As for the theme of the lyrics, *Tsiganche* and *Tochno v tri* these suggest the social problem of discrimination against Romani people, as if these lyrics send them words of cheers and convey their pain and sadness to audiences; his background seems to affect these new trends. He was born in a Romani family so he might try to make the problem rise to the surface and make Bulgarian citizens consider this situation more seriously. In addition to the change in the theme of the lyrics, there are remarkable changes in costume and gesture. For example, in *Habibi* (that means my love), he is singing in his daily attire, such as a shirt or a jumper, a jacket and jeans. Furthermore, in *Tsiganche* (meaning Romani child), Azis shows only masculinity; without flashy makeup, and with a hoodie, and a shirt and trousers. On the other hand, sometimes he still shows feminine aspects as well. For instance, in *Habibi*, his gestures are sometimes feminine: he smiles putting his hands under his chin. Besides, his appearance in *Tochno v tri* can be said to be a mixture of masculinity and femininity: a combination of a black leather jacket and a pink fluffy skirt, without flashy feminine makeup. However, although there are still some gender-related elements which remind us of his original sexual expressions, I would like to underline that there are no longer any sexual 'exaggerations' in his new type of performances, such as seductive movements or revealing feminine costumes.

The result of comparison between Azis's music released in 1999–2012 and 2013–2022, is that it is that his performance changed as follows: the mainstream of the theme of lyrics changed from the symbol of Western freedom (romance, traveling abroad, etc.) to Azis's personal problems, as a Romani person; costumes and gestures changed from the exaggeration as a drag queen to the way Azis is. Whereas there are two outstanding changes in his way of

performance, there are also unvarying characters: there was hardly any change in features of melody, harmony and sound.

Factors of the change of Azis's performance

In order to understand the causes of the change of Azis's performance, it is crucial to compare the year when his pieces were released and recent social/political movements in Bulgaria. I made a chronological table of Azis's musical activities and some public issues which can be estimated to be factors of the change in his performance (see Figure 2).

Before I refer to the causes of the change, we need to understand the background of *chalga* itself. Through the 1990s, Bulgarian people had sought liberation from oppression by the communist regime. Even after the de facto collapse of the communist regime in 1989, when Todor Zhivkov was forced out from power, Bulgaria had remained as a developing and conservative society until the 2000s; the subject of sexuality or gender was taboo and their lifestyle were still frugal. In this context, *chalga* singers suggested the topic of freedom of sexuality and gender, and dreams of leading a wealthy life (both of them were regarded as the symbols of the West among Bulgarian) in their performance [Kurkela 2017], on behalf of ordinary citizens of Bulgaria, who envied the freedom in Western countries. Kourtova [2013:58] explained "The term *chalga* [...] gave rise to [...] the political and economic corruption associated with the transition from Communism to capitalism". As can be seen by the lyrics of Azis's pieces which were released from 1999 to 2012, he was also one of those *chalga* singers.

However, he made changes in his policy on performance from around 2013. In order to consider the causes of the changes, the following two events seem to be key factors: 'The murder of Mihail Stoyanov' and 'Sofia Pride'.

The murder of Mihail Stoyanov

In 2008, a 25 year old medical student, Mihail Stoyanov was killed in a park in Sofia. The criminals, Radoslav Kirchev and Aleksandar Georgiev were members of a group which aimed to "be cleansing the park of gay men" [Amnesty USA 2013]. Although they testified that they killed Mihail because he looked a gay, it is still unclear if he was actually gay or not. The reason for this case was, not only because of the cruelty of the crime but also because the trial was not settled for 10 years. As can be seen in Figure 2, although the suspects of this case were arrested in 2010, a sentence had not been pronounced for the defendants and the trial was not even brought to a conclusion. Human rights organisations and citizens conducted campaigns in 2012 against the slowness of this trial. In an open letter issued on 25th September 2012 by Bulgarian Helsinki Committee and Amnesty International to the prosecutors who were in charge of the case, the two organisations expressed great concern about the progression of the trial:

The Bulgarian Helsinki Committee and Amnesty International are writing this letter to you to express deep concerns with respect to the legal proceedings in the case of Mihail Stoyanov's killing, which occurred four years ago, on 30 September 2008, in Borisova Garden, in Sofia. [...] The Bulgarian Helsinki Committee and Amnesty International are deeply concerned that the procedure is currently at a standstill. Although the investigation was completed on 28 May 2012, it has not been followed up to date. [Bulgarian Helsinki Committee and Amnesty International 2012:1]

Furthermore, they also underlined the importance of proper handling for the discrimination against sexual minorities:

We also reiterate that authorities have the duty to take all reasonable steps to unmask any discriminatory motive, such as the real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity of the victim, on the basis of which a crime can be perpetrated. Whenever the investigation establishes credible evidence of the discriminatory motive, the latter should be duly taken into account in the prosecution phase and adequately reflected in the sentence should the suspects be found guilty. [Bulgarian Helsinki Committee and Amnesty International 2012:2]

After the issue of this letter, although the defendants Radoslav Kirchev and Aleksandar Georgiev were sentenced to prison in 2013, the final sentence was only pronounced in 2018 after two retrials. Due to the brutality, long-term coverage and controversy of this case, the murder of Mihail Stoyanov can be one of the biggest causes that Bulgarian people started to consider the rights of LGBTQ seriously. In fact, according to Bilitis, a Bulgarian organisation which develops and supports sexual minorities and their communities in Bulgaria, new legislation on crimes regarding sexual minorities was proposed by the Ministry of Justice after this murder [Bilitis 2022].

Sofia Pride

The entry to the EU in 2007 triggered the public movements to claim the right of sexual minorities in Bulgaria. From 2008, the ‘Sofia Pride’, the campaign which aims “to counter the forces and mechanisms of [...] oppression and ultimately, liberation of LGBTI¹ people” [official website of ‘Sofia Pride’] has taken place in Sofia. The organisers are volunteers, who are motivated to make an equal society for all people [Sofia Pride 2022]. The scale of this campaign has enlarged, and currently the four human rights/LGBTQ organisations; Bilitis, Action, GLAS and the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee, are supporting the management of the Sofia Pride [Sofia Pride 2022]. According to the official website of ‘Sofia Pride’, although the number of participants in the Sofia Pride was only about 300 people, it increased to about 800 people in 2010, and about 2600 people in 2012.² Since the effect of the campaign on Bulgarian society and citizens has been great, many people, from children to adults started to wonder themselves, “Am I a gay (or lesbian)?” [Ayano Tamaki 2022].

From these situations, it can be said that interest in, and awareness of, sexual minorities has increased from the end of the 2000s in Bulgarian society, so that the topic of sexuality or gender has become no longer neither taboo nor a special topic for Bulgarian citizens. Since one of the selling points of Azis’s performance was sexual expressions as a drag queen, he must have thought that he had to change the orientation of his performance. Furthermore, he became confident in exposing his natural self as he was already a famous star by the beginning of the 2010s, so that he might not need to rely on gender-related charms. In fact, in an interview which was held by Nova Televisia (a Bulgarian broadcast station), Azis explained that he could not realise that he was famous, and become confident in his sexuality as a gay, until he accidentally heard the conversation between passers-by, who were talking about Azis [Publitsistika na NOVA 2022].

Conclusion

In this research, the analysis of the change in Azis’s *chalga* performance and the examination of the background of the change were attempted.

From the analysis of Azis's music and performances, it turned to be clear that Azis changed the theme of his music from a romance or a rich life (as a symbol of envy toward the Western freedom) to his personal topics, such as difficulties of living as a Roma or a gay, whereas there is no definite change in the musical characteristics. In addition, he gave performing as an extremely flashy drag queen and started to expose how he really is.

At the following step, as the backgrounds underlying this trend change, the rise of awareness of, and interests, in the rights of sexual minorities through social events such as the murder of Mihail Stoyanov and the Sofia Pride was examined. The murder of Mihail Stoyanov received public attention due to its cruelty and the slowness of the sentence, whilst Sofia Pride has bridged the local/world-wide connection between sexual minorities. Since the topic of sexuality or gender became common and no longer taboo in Bulgaria, it is presumed that Azis decided to change his policy on performance, as a commercial strategy. Moreover, there can be a personal reason for his change in his performance. Probably Azis started to realise that he had already become famous and popular so that he did not need to continue his original style, and then he might be trying to express his natural self and suggest the social problems regarding his background, the discrimination of Romani people in Bulgaria. However, this is also the argument that Azis's gender as a gay is a complete disguise because of a commercial strategy and he is not gay. Although he has declared that he is a gay, it is very difficult to make clear whether Azis is actually a gay or not, because Azis himself is the only person who knows the answer to this question.

Endnotes

1. 'I' of LGBTI means 'Intersex', "a general term used to refer to individuals born with, or who develop naturally in puberty, biological sex characteristics which are not typically male or female" [LGBT Center 2022].
2. About 1500 people participated on site, and around 1100 people from all over the world were watching the live stream of the parade [Sofia Pride 2022].

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Gamze Tanrıvermiş and Abdullah Akat
(Trabzon, Türkiye / İstanbul, Türkiye)

Ritual and gender: Exploring the gendered performative and musical practices of the rituals *Berikaoba* and *Kalandar*

This paper seeks to evaluate the rituals of *Berikaoba* and *Kalandar* with regards to the gendered representations involved. These two enduring rituals take place in two neighbouring countries, Türkiye and Georgia, and have similar musical and performative aspects. They also have something in common, which is their attitude towards gender. In the performances of *Berikaoba* and *Kalandar*, only men take part and some of them disguise themselves as women. In this study, first these rituals will be introduced together with their shared connection with the cult of Dionysus. Then, the representation in their performative and musical practices will be evaluated from the perspective of gender. In conclusion, it is intended to reveal that the present practices of both rituals are gendered, so their link with the Cult of Dionysus has been affected. It is believed that this paper will pave the way for further investigations on this subject.

Keywords: *Kalandar*; *Berikaoba*; ritual; gender; Dionysus.

Introduction

The rituals of *Kalandar* and *Berikaoba* dating back to ancient times are still active today and have many elements in common. However, it is interesting to discover that no literature can be found with regards to their similarities. This paper intends to demonstrate their similarities and particularly, their gendered performances with no female performers involved.

Kalandar is a ritual which still takes place in the Eastern Black Sea region of Türkiye and mainly in the city of Trabzon. The name comes from *calandae* in Latin, referring to the first day of the month. It is also similar to calendar in English and *calendrier* in French. This ritual is celebrated on the 13th of January, which corresponds to the New Year's Eve in the Julian Calendar. Thus it is the name of that night and also of the New Year celebration. Trabzon was once home to the Empire of Trebizond and this ritual is said to be inherited from those people, however it is also accepted as a pagan ritual considering that Trabzon and its surroundings date back to ancient times [Kantarci 2017:493].

Berikaoba is a ritual which is celebrated in Georgia. It generally takes place during the spring solstice but is also replicated [Abakelia 2008:112] in the New Year during winter solstice like *Kalandar*. The name *Berikaoba* derives from the word *bera/beri* which in Georgian means child, or offspring. Together with other elements, this indicates the relationship of this festival with the theme of reproduction in parallel with *Kalandar*. *Berika* and *Berikebi* (plural form of *berika*) are the main participants-performers of the festival. *Berikebi* is a group of young mummers dressed up in special ritual costumes with zoomorphic masks, performing dances and various songs [Tsitsishvili 1998:2].

Description of celebrations

The celebrations of *Kalandar* and *Berikaoba* are very similar to each other. Even though there is no script, there is a specific story taking place. The storyline of *Kalandar* in general is as follows: the young men make a big fire on the square of the village and put a huge boiler full of snow on it. Making a circle around this boiler, they start to sing folk songs and dance *horon* [the folk dance special to the Eastern Black Sea region of Türkiye]. They also tell *manis* [short poems] and tongue twisters. Then the young men and children head for the houses in the

village in order to perform a play called *Momoyer* or *Karakoncolos* which means mountain man or bear in Greek. They go around the houses and ask for gifts and food. As they are disguised, if the householder does not recognize them, he has to give them some gifts and food but if he recognizes them, then he puts some yarns, or rags in a bag and throws it at them. In the main story, there is a wedding ceremony. A man is masqueraded as the bride and there is a naïve groom. According to the observations of Kantarcı [2017:496–497] in Livera village of Trabzon, in addition to the bride and groom, there are also the guard of the groom, an old man and old woman, people masquerading as a sheep, bear and wolf, a folk singer, a *kemençe* (traditional instrument, fiddle) player, an imam, the drunk man, the messenger and saddlebag carrier. All the characters are performed by men. The performers put black paint on their faces in order not to be recognized. They all improvise based on the current events of the village and the main action is to be ‘unable to perform the wedding ceremony’ due to various obstacles such as the bride behaving flirtatiously, kidnapping of the bride, etc. and as a result, the performers start to fight and the whole event turns into a *horon* dance and they go on fighting and performing while dancing and singing (see Figure 1). During the ritual, people also cook traditional food and eat together.



Figure 1. Masqueraded performers during *Kalandar*, Maçka, Trabzon, 2019 (<https://www.haber61.net/turistler-trabzonda-kalandari-boyle-kutladi>).

The similar storyline of *Berikaoba* (see Figure 2) is as follows: a group of young men wear special costumes and masks and put black paint on their faces and go around the village and visit every house. They ask for donations and in return, the household asks for a blessing. If they are not happy with donations, then they would curse them [Abekelia 2008:12]. The main *berika* is accompanied by a queen called *dedopala*. There is a wedding ceremony here as well. But in this one, after a faked intercourse between bride and groom, the groom is killed by an Arab or Tatar. Then the participants mourn over him and splash him with water. Then he comes back to life. After his resurrection they go around the village and ask for donations again. The main characters are: *berika*, *dedopala*, the goat *berika*, the pig, the Arab, the Tatar,

the priest, godfather, the basket-carrier, singers and players. Folk songs always accompany the whole event. There are three categories of songs: 1. Carols; the group of participants dress up in animal fur and zoomorphic masks and go around the village and visit every house and perform a song which is about a blessing. 2. Songs; performed outdoors or at the village playground and based on a particular ceremonial activity for fertility, and 3. Songs performed indoors [Tsitsishvili 1998:11].



Figure 2. Berikaoba Festival, Didi Chailuri, Georgia
(<https://www.thevagabondimperative.com/guides/berikaoba-a-monstrous-fertility-festival-in-rural-georgia/>).

As seen above, the storyline, the wedding ceremony taking place at the centre of the actions and the characters are very similar. The performers masquerade as animals, bridegroom, basket-carrier or saddlebag carrier, priest-imam who performs the wedding are common in both rituals. The flow of the events, including going around the villages and asking for donations, are also common. In both, actions are blended with folk songs, traditional instruments, traditional dances and grotesque imagery.

Relation with the cult of Dionysus and gender

Both in *Kalandar* and *Berikaoba*, only male performers, musicians and dancers take part and some of them disguise themselves as women. Although it is not known exactly when these rituals started to be practiced, most of the researchers agree on the fact that they date back to the ancient times and to the Dionysian rites in which women played an important role. After Christianity was introduced, it is believed that the above rituals were preserved as the New Year celebrations.

Dionysus is associated with fertility and vegetation, and he was also one of the several deities that people had invented at the time in order to interpret the seasons, the flourishing and the withering of nature. He died and was reborn like the gods of Adonis, Attis and Osiris who

are also associated with fertility and the changing of the seasons and today there are many village performances and rituals in Anatolia that remain out of the rituals dedicated to those gods including Dionysus and *Kalandar* is said to be among these rituals [And 2019:64]. The common opinion suggests that Dionysus is descendant from the earliest forms of religion in the Mediterranean where a great-mother goddess had existed. Women play an important role in Dionysian mythology as an extension of the previously existing female deity. Euripides' play, *Bacchae* gives us not only mythological but also historical evidence about the key role women played in Dionysian rituals. In the play, the 'Maenads' who were the female followers of Dionysus have a rebellious character which is quite contrary to the women living in the city of Athens. The title of the play *Bacchae* meaning female participants of *Bacchus* (Dionysus) also emphasizes the focus on women [Colclough 2017:xi]. "The spotlight Euripides places on women in the cult conveys the significance of gender in the worship of Dionysus" [Colclough 2017:2].

The main ancient festivals dedicated to Dionysus are as follows: *Anthesteria* or Flower Festival, *Lenaea*, *Elephebolion* (City Dionysia) and the Dionysiac mysteries.

Anthesteria or Flower Festival was celebrated in February when the wine was ready to be drunk. It was the symbol of fertility and abundance. Young men and women attended these rituals. There is also a wedding ceremony in which Dionysus marries the wife of the judge who led the games involving drinking wine. He was accompanied by girls.

The second festival *Lenaea* was celebrated on the 12th, 13th and 14th of January as a winter festival. It was celebrated for the awakening of vegetation. The *Lenaea* has been identified as the fest of the 'Maenads' who were also called *Lenae*. They would dance around the wooden statue of the god ecstatically. This festival included the plays in which the rebirth of Dionysus was performed. In the 5th century B.C., it started to be celebrated as a dramatic competition. It is also argued that drama (tragedy and comedy) originated from these rituals.

Elephebolion (City Dionysia) was celebrated in March. It was a *dithyrambos* (Greek hymn) ceremony in which dancers and choirs performed. It also turned into a literary festival for playwrights and poets in the 5th century BC.

The Dionysiac mysteries are said to be attended exclusively by women. They were also mentioned in the play *Bacchae* by Euripides. The women would dance rhythmically in order to achieve a higher level of consciousness from the God, Dionysus.

As is seen, women were the participants of these rituals and even in some of them, they had a leading role. Many vessels (from late 6th century BC to early 5th century BC) show Dionysus with his male and female worshippers. One of these vessels can be seen in Figure 3, showing the worship of Dionysus' during *Lenaea*. On the one side of the vessel, we see a Satyr (male worshipper), a Maenad and Dionysus. On the other side of the vessel, a Dionysian procession is taking place. During the festival of *Lenaea*, the participants went around the city on carts and made fun of the people they met on the streets. The *Lenaea* have been defined as the feast of the Maenads who were also called *Lenae* [Aggelakou 2015:15].

It has been argued that *Kalandar* and *Berikaoba* are related to the cult of Dionysus considering the time period of the year when they are celebrated and the themes pertaining to them. *Kalandar* is celebrated on the 13th day of January which corresponds to the Ancient Greek festival *Lenaea*. In this festival, there was a group of women wearing costumes that were disguised and ran after Dionysus. As also mentioned above, in *Lenaea*, the Maenads who were the female worshippers of Dionysus were an indispensable part of the ritual. *Berikaoba* which is mainly celebrated as a spring solstice festival corresponds to *Anthesteria* (Flower Festival) or City Dionysia. Kantarcı says that these arguments could potentially be substantiated because

the themes pertaining to *Kalandar*; fertility, abundance, reproduction and rebirth were also the main themes of the Ancient Greek festivals mentioned above [Kantarci 2017:494]. The wedding ceremony which takes place in both rituals symbolizes fertility and reproduction. In *Berikaoba*, the groom killed by an Arab or Tatar is brought back to life like the death and rebirth of Dionysus in the ancient ritual. The winter solstice symbolizes death and resurrection, as the old year passes and the New Year comes. Also, the spring solstice which could be reflected in the wedding ceremony symbolizes fertility and reproduction. When the performers go around the village and visit every house, they ask for donations of food or gifts and at the end of the performance, they eat together, which could be seen as a reflection of the theme of abundance and fertility.

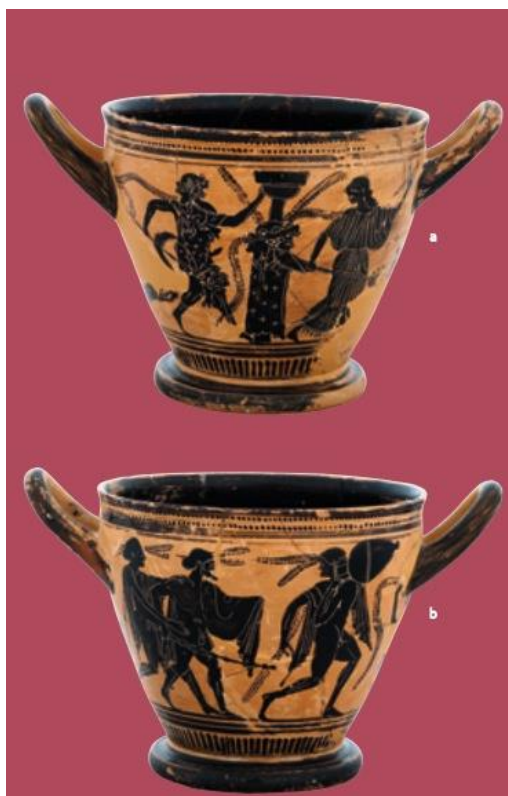


Figure 3: Drinking cup (*skyphos*) with scenes from the cult ceremonies in honour of Dionysus 500–495 BC, National Archeological Museum, Athens, Greece.

Just like *Kalandar*, *Berikaoba* is related to the Christian and pre-Christian periods. The time period, zoomorphic masks and the themes are reminiscent of the ancient totemistic cult [Tsitsishvili 1998:7]. The performers wear zoomorphic masks representing sheep, goats, bears, etc. *Berikaoba* resembles many festivals in Anatolia that are argued to be descendants from the agrarian festivals of fertility dedicated to the cult of Dionysus. *Kalandar* is one of these festivals that is still celebrated.

Apart from the above elements, these rituals show the characteristics of ancient agrarian rituals which were studied using the concept of performance developed in the 1960s when theatre studies made connections with other disciplines including anthropology. These rituals are reminiscent of some contemporary theatre productions staged at different locations (or floors of buildings) in which the audience move together with the performers. However, we know that these rituals that take place today are not the imitations of these contemporary style performances but rather were inherited from the ancient times. The elements of the above

rituals which put them under the concept of performance are as follows: the unrepeatable character, audience and space, the lack of text (improvised) and musical and physical aspects.

Both rituals take place spontaneously and cannot be repeated. There are certain actions but we cannot talk about a definite story. Instead they are based on the improvisations of the performers. We may evaluate these rituals as standing at the threshold of life and art. When the performers go around the village and visit every house, they dive into the real life of people and make them a part of the ritual.

As is seen in written sources and some photos, there is not a strict separation between audience and participant-performers. The whole village is both performer and audience. There are certain characters performed by specific people but the ritual embraces all village people. Additionally, there is no stable place for performance but rather the performers go around the village and visit every house, make fun with the villagers and perform dances and short plays and finally ask for donations. Thus, the whole village becomes a performance space just like in the Dionysian procession where the dancers went around the city on carts and made fun of the people they met on the streets.

With regard to the text, as far as the sources reveal, there is no fixed text. However, considering the transfer of the ritual directions and main actions from generation to generation, we may talk about an unwritten script. Although the participants perform according to a series of actions including making a fire, visiting the houses and performing the wedding ceremony, extensive improvisation is involved. In the rituals, moving from audience to performer or vice versa is possible. A villager watching the ritual can immediately participate in singing or dancing with the performers. Or a performer who is singing or dancing may switch to be among the audience for a while. Also in Dionysian ritual, there was no written text. Text was introduced when the Dionysian ritual turned into drama as we know today.

In these rituals, folk songs, dances and poems are an integral part of the event and they reflect the main themes of fertility and reproduction. In *Kalandar*, singing with *kemençe* and *horon* dance constitute the main element of the ritual. Likewise, in *Berikaoba*, carols and other songs performed outdoors with traditional instruments are essential. They represent the performative qualities of the rituals. Performance is not only for seeing but also for hearing. In this regard we remember that theatre originated from Dionysian rites. As Berberovic suggests: "Ancient Greeks performed myths and stories, and acted out social and religious rituals, using text, music, dance, costume and impersonation in some combination or other. Ancient Greek rituals had a vital narrative and a performative aspect, put together as myth and ritual. Greek religious choral song, hymns, paeans and dithyrambs feature the telling of myth as part of a ritual performance" [Berberovic 2015:33]. *Dithyrambs* which were ancient Greek hymns dedicated to Dionysus were replaced by the local folk songs in ritual performances of *Kalandar* and *Berikaoba*. By physical aspects, we also mean mime, mummery, masquerading etc. as mentioned before. Mummery or performers masqueraded as animals can be seen in the performances of the Dionysian rituals. Also the mummery in *Berikaoba* is explained differently: "On the New Year as well as in spring, the participants of *Berikaoba* wore black masks, blackened their faces with soot or smeared each other with mud. The customs of presenting the face in black (wearing a black mask, drawing lines on the face with charcoal, covering the face in soot or smearing it with mud) are connected to the constant revival of nature, fertility and propagation" [Abekelia 2008:112]. Despite changes over years, these rituals give us a glimpse about what they could have been like originally.

We do not know exactly when these rituals started to be practised exclusively by men but we know the fact that drama/theatre assumed to originate from the Dionysian rituals, did not involve any female performers on the Ancient Greek stage while in the rituals, women

played an important role. In the middle ages, only some dancers and pantomime artists were women, i.e. Theodora, the empress of the Byzantine Empire. In theatre, this did not change until the 17th century. It is argued that the omission of women from the ancient Greek stage resulted from the new economic and cultural understanding of the ancient Athenian society. Regarding this matter, Case states as follows: “Our notion of plays, acting, physical theatre, space, costume, mask and relation of play to audience begins with these Athenian festivals. In the 6th century BC, both women and men participated in these ceremonies, but by the 5th century BC, when the ceremonies were becoming what is known as theatre, women disappeared from the practice. Scholars do not record any evidence for specific laws or codes forbidding women to appear in the songs and dances, nor is there any evidence for the specific date or occasion of the beginning of their omission” [Case 1985:319]. Within the new socio-economic development of city life, the Dionysian rituals were restricted to private celebrations and resulted in the exclusion of women. “The maenads must dance into oblivion, while satyrs (male celebrants of festivals) must become the first choruses of the drama” [Case 1985:321]. With the exclusion of women, the stage was represented by male performers only. “Invention of acting was gender-specific- the actor was satyr” [Case 1985:321]. In this gendered state of theatre, a male actor would need to perform the female role and this was the same during the Elizabethan Era. Young men disguised themselves as women. Women only began to perform on stage after the 17th century. It seems that the women’s appearance on the theatre stage did not have any influence on *Berikaoba* and *Kalandar* probably because they have remained as isolated rural theatrical performances. In these rituals, we still do not see any female performers today, except for during a very few celebrations in recent years. However, these few cases could not be interpreted as the ‘appearance of female performers’.

Conclusion

The enduring rituals, *Kalandar* and *Berikaoba*, date back to ancient times. It is suggested that they were inherited from the ancient Dionysian rituals which evolved into drama/theatre after the 5th century BC. The main elements that show their relation to the Dionysian rituals are as follows: the calendar, the themes, the wedding ceremony taking place as a central performance, zoomorphic masks and masquerading at first glance. In addition to them, these rituals have a performative character which is reminiscent of today’s contemporary performances which are shaped by the concept of performance developed in the 1960s based on the ancient rituals. These performative elements include the unrepeatable character, lack of text, changing space and interactive nature, physical and musical aspects which are seen in these rituals and they help us understand their connection with the Dionysian cult.

Despite the aforementioned elements that are potentially a reflection of the ancient rituals dedicated to Dionysus, *Kalandar* and *Berikaoba* have no female performers. While in the Dionysian rituals, women played an important role, in *Kalandar* and *Berikaoba*, only men take part as musicians, performers and singers and they also disguise themselves as women. Theatre as we know today, that is regarded to have emerged from the Dionysian rituals, was gender-specific with no female performers on stage. Likewise, *Berikaoba* and *Kalandar* have a strong connection with the Dionysian rituals, but as they have also been gendered, their genuine link with the Dionysian festivals has been degraded. Although we do not know when they were first practised without any female performers, it could be linked to women’s disappearance from public life and accordingly the ancient stage during the 5th century BC. However, further research on the matter is necessary.

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Theme 2: Music and dance in virtual communications

Joško Čaleta, Iva Niemčić
(Zagreb, Croatia)

Croatian traditional music and customs - survival in new conditions

The epidemiological madness that has lasted for almost two years, accompanied with various introductions and relaxation of measures, has largely changed our lives by directing every segment of social life to digital socialising. This article will try to illustrate the new ‘everyday’ life with two examples. In light of the new normality, we were monitoring the continuity in the development of traditional customs in the local community through the example of the Lastovo Carnival (*Lastovski poklad*). On this occasion, the “closed” island community showed all the ingenuity, astuteness, and folk wisdom as qualities that have helped for centuries to maintain the custom to this day. Traditional vocal music-making has similar experiences. In this period the traditional singers also shared the fate of a closed public performance space. Shared virtual space was their only opportunity for any socialising and musical communication. The examples of good and different practices will present diverse approaches to activities, transmitting and learning vocal music in the new circumstances.

Keywords: Lastovo carnival; Croatian traditional music and dance; Croatian traditional vocal music; Covid time; virtual social life.

The epidemiological madness that has lasted for almost two years, accompanied with various introductions and relaxation of measures, has largely changed our lives by directing every segment of social life to digital socialising. Physical distance, as one of the fundamental requirements in the time of the coronavirus pandemic, has brought significant changes in the presentation, production, and reception of all artistic and cultural formats, including traditional practices. According to Naila Ceribašić, in traditional music making “distance practice and experience” was mostly introduced, which fundamentally changes the performance relations between presenters and receptors – the interaction of performers and audiences.

This paper illustrates the new ‘everyday’ life with two examples. In light of the new normality, we were monitoring the continuity in the development of traditional customs in the local community based on the example of the Lastovo Carnival (*Lastovski poklad*). This custom, in which more than 150 active performers have participated for the last twenty years, with several hundred observers – locals, journalists, researchers, and courageous wintertime tourists, had to adapt the form of its public rite to current epidemiological measures. On this occasion, the “closed” island community showed all the ingenuity, astuteness, and folk wisdom as qualities that have helped for centuries to maintain the custom to this day. The bearers of the tradition in an appropriate way found the right solutions that enabled the continuous unfolding of events while consulting both government services and expert advice of researchers.

Traditional vocal music-making has similar experiences. In this period the traditional singers also have shared the fate of a closed public performance space. Moreover, on several occasions in the media they were named as responsible for spreading the epidemic. Shared virtual space was their only opportunity for any socialising and musical communication. The examples of new virtual vocal practice have had their effect and ensured apparent continuity in the new (impossible) conditions. The examples of good and different practice will present diverse approaches to activities, transmitting and learning vocal music in the new circumstances.

How the Carnival survived Covid-19

The Lastovo carnival is a recognisable symbol of the local identity of Lastovo, a small South-Dalmatian island where, according to the 2021 census, only 744 residents permanently reside. The carnival wakes up the island and the islanders from their winter sleep. The winter is ending, and before the demanding agricultural work and increasingly successful tourist season begin, the carnival time is reserved exclusively for Lastovo residents. Carnival events bring together the community, from native Lastovo residents who live on the island to emigrants returning from faraway places (Australia, USA, Canada) or newcomers who, by marrying into the Lastovo families, became part of the community. The notion of everyone simultaneously coming out of their safe, comfortable, hidden corners of life is widespread. Masked members of carnival groups adorned in their most beautiful uniforms start milling around the streets, paths, and roads, basking in the winter sunshine and calling for the awakening of nature and a new, better life.¹ The custom reflects the power of the community, and participation in the custom reproduces the sense of belonging. For the islanders, Lastovo Carnival (*Lastovski poklad*) is the most important custom, a tradition that they actively cherish, but also a social event that determines the rhythm of the year, an entity to which they adapt, through which they think, reflect on society meaning, togetherness, forgiveness and kindness. The Lastovo Carnival is a step out of everyday life, but it also mirrors, builds and nurtures that very same everyday life, emphasising its values and educating the children and the community as a whole. In the words of one woman from Lastovo: “The Carnival is much more than mere fun, it’s a way of life at that time of year. Besides being the ultimate entertainment for all the island’s inhabitants, which takes a long time to organise and lasts a long time, the Carnival is also a period of calm and truce between the quarrelling sides, the initiation of the young people into one extraordinary world, the peak and the end of winter”.

For many years we, the researchers, have been visiting and observing the Lastovo Carnival² to bear witness of the importance of this event. It is the special moment in time that unites all the positive powers of the community, solidifying the notion of belonging to a community. It is a place where culture/tradition is created. Over time we have observed all the important changes that Lastovo Carnival projects; its social importance from its adaptability to changes in local political situation, changes in political systems on the state level, various restrictions, change of new generations as leaders of the carnival events. At the same time, we witness the notion of persistent consistency with the very essence of the custom.

The epidemiological madness that has been going on since 2020, with alternating periods of lockdown and relaxation measures, has greatly changed everyday life by directing every segment of social life to digital sociability. Physical distancing as one of the fundamental requirements of the pandemic age has brought significant changes to the presentation, production, and even the reception of all artistic and cultural formats, including traditional practices. According to ethnomusicologist Naila Ceribašić, there has been a widespread effort to introduce “distance practice and experience”, which has fundamentally changed the performing relationship between the presenter and the recipient – the interaction between the performers and their audience [Ceribašić 2020:35–36].

The same Covid-19 restrictions struck the island of Lastovo. Our research goals this time were focusing on the ‘new’, Covid-19 restricted Lastovo Carnival performance, different from the event which in the previous ten years had involved around 150 active performers and one hundred spectators – locals, journalists, researchers, and brave winter tourists. The 2020 Lastovo Carnival was held just before the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, when the gatherings and celebrations involving a large number of people were still happening in ‘(old) normal’ circumstances, as it was happening in many previous years. The 2021 Carnival,

however, took place in the ‘new normal’, where everything that used to be regular and common was no longer so. At the same time, the 2021 Lastovo Carnival was held at a time when the ‘second Covid-19 wave’ was beginning to show signs of subsiding, which led to a moderate easing of lockdown measures. The ‘easing’ enabled regular in-person school attendance and allowed gatherings of up to 25 people but with strict adherence to social distancing and the wearing of masks. In the meantime, the vaccination process had just started but was carried out only in nursing homes and among medical staff and senior government officials. It is important to emphasise that Lastovo, due to its distance from the mainland and rare daily connections, was for a long time Covid-free. But the very same isolation that enabled this also increased the feeling of fear of Covid-19 penetration on the island as a serious threat to the lives of the largely elderly population.

Throughout its history, the Lastovo Carnival faced many difficulties and bans, but it was almost always held, even if only in a reduced and adjusted form. Bearing in mind both the benefits of our live presence at the carnival and the danger we posed to an isolated island community, we did not even think of coming to the island and following the carnival events in person. Each outlander’s arrival to the island and even islanders’ arrival from other places was a potential threat to the island community in general.

This position obliged us to adapt to the new situation and satisfied our research curiosity through telephone conversations. A few days before Shrove Tuesday, we called our long-time associate, informant, and friend, the *lira* player Eduard Bačko. We wanted information on the preparations and organisations of the Carnival. Knowing the power of the community’s desire for the continuation of the most important event we were assuming that organisers would find new ways to adjust custom rules towards the existing epidemiological measures.

Yet despite the epidemiological measures and bans, the residents of Lastovo never doubted whether the 2021 Carnival should be held or not. The only question was how they would adapt to the measures. They unanimously cancelled all the parties and gatherings organised indoors throughout the Carnival period for the sake of safety, yet fully intended to perform the outdoor events of the final day of Carnival in their entirety.

I don’t think that anyone was strictly against it, they just didn’t want too many people to attend [...] As far as I know, no one was against. They just told us to hold it with as few people as possible. It should be held even if there is only one group of *pokladari* present, and the puppet is slid down the rope and set alight! [Niemčić and Čaleta 2023:6]

In order to achieve this, they negotiated with the authorities at the local, county, and national level, all of whom had to reach a joint decision.

Well, yesterday we were discussing whether to draw the names of *pokladari* or [...] My idea is to form two groups of twenty *pokladari* and one group of twenty pretty masks and let’s go, brother, what will be, will be! No one from outside the island will join the *pokladari*, no one from outside will come to the carnival! Nothing, nothing! No evening dances, we stick to the measures. There wasn’t one single dance evening, not even on Candlemas, we were just walking in the procession and shouting “Uvooo! on Candlemas Day.

There was no lunch on Fat Monday either. We skipped all indoor events, we wouldn’t risk anything, no one complained, we do all we can so that everything turns out all right. Let us just slide Poklad down the rope! How would it be if

there was only one group of *pokladari* and no pretty masks? The *lira* will collect the eggs! We have already shouted ‘Uvooo!’ once, tonight we’ll do it for the second and the third time, we’ll cover it all, but we haven’t had a single event inside, we stick to the measures. We are doing all this to be able to hold the carnival on Shrove Tuesday. Now, we cannot agree among ourselves, this one is a policeman, that one is something else, you know, that’s our little village [...] [Niemčić and Čaleta 2023:2].

With strong support from the local authorities and the Local Civil Protection Headquarters, they exchanged information with the County and National Civil Protection Headquarters on a daily basis. The first restriction referred to public gatherings of up to 25 people. It did not allow cultural events; the processions typical of the Lastovo Carnival, however, fit into what was permitted. In any case, the group of 25 *pokladari* would not have to abandon their procession. As a part of the ‘new normal’, the names of all the *pokladari* and *lijepe maškare* taking part in the event were required, which is why the potential participants had to apply beforehand. The problem arose when the submissions arrived, with 20 pairs of *pokladari* and 10 pairs of *lijepe maškare* applying. It was clear that the limit of a maximum of 25 people was unacceptable. One way of dealing with this problem was to choose an allowed number of ‘lucky’ participants among those who applied. Another way was to include all who applied, dividing them into three groups with a maximum of 25 people each. The first variant, consistent with the guidelines by the national and regional civil protection task force, was quickly rejected as it would displease and disappoint too many people. It was decided to fight not only for the preservation of the continuity of the custom but also for togetherness, joy, and a cheerful collective spirit of the island community.

A new request for at least one hundred participants was sent to the civil protection task force. The participants would strictly adhere to all Covid-19 preventive measures and be divided into smaller groups, each with a maximum of 25 people. The response that arrived was to reduce the number of participants to less than 100, without specifying the maximum number of people allowed. This is where the harmonious island community saw its chance to bring this ‘new normal’ Shrove Tuesday as close as possible to all the jubilant and playful Shrove Tuesdays before it. Accordingly, the *pokladari*, who at Carnival typically wear only richly decorated hats on their heads, were also given red face masks that matched the colour of their uniforms. Due to a large number of participants, their procession was divided into two smaller processions that followed each other but never went alongside or visited the same households. There was only one procession of *lijepe maškare* since fewer of them applied than in previous years. They also wore protective masks in addition to their characteristic Carnival eye masks.

Finally, the *Poklad* puppet was lowered on the rope accompanied by the explosion of bombs as the custom requires. At the very end, before the *Poklad* puppet was set alight, the *pokladari* and *lijepe maškare* did not merge and dance the chain dance together as they normally would. Instead, each procession danced its own chain dance, never exceeding the allowed number of 25 people. After the *Poklad* puppet was totally burnt and the lyre player and donkey left, the participants and audience did not gather at the Hall to dance and enjoy themselves until morning. There were few people in the audience since expatriates did not return for Carnival in 2021, and neither did the Lastovo inhabitants who work or go to school on the mainland. Rare queries from journalists and tourists asking whether it was worthwhile to visit the island and follow the events received the unanimous reply that the custom would take place on a modest scale and only within the community.

“They called me from Radio Raguza to tell them what we would do, I said I hoped we would lower him and set him alight, there isn’t much less than that. But seriously, I don’t want anyone to come, let’s just do it and avoid seeing our names in the newspapers later.” [Niemčić and Čaleta 2023:4]

Finally, on Ash Wednesday, when it is all over and the organisers come to pay for the Hall (to cover the costs of the event) when the impressions subside, people sit together and recount the exciting events of the previous day, eating hard-boiled eggs and *prkle*³, drinking wine. But it was different this year. The people of Lastovo came and paid for the Hall⁴ although they did not use it (there were no organised dances in the Hall at the weekends), in order to pay for the costs of organisation of the modest event. They took one egg each and went back home. No one stayed around for socialising, for a small talk...

A Croatian proverb states: “The village may vanish but not the custom”. The custom has survived, and the village has not vanished either; luckily, since the arrivals on the island were kept to a minimum, the Covid-19 also failed to arrive. Long live the *Lastovski poklad*!

Vocal traditional culture in ‘new normal’ conditions

Croatian vocal traditional culture is an integral and important part of Croatian traditional culture. The main characteristic is the diversity of vocal styles in different Croatian regions deployed in different ethnographic zones [Bezić 1974; 1981]. Since the middle of the last century, many of the vocal styles have undergone various stylistic changes through the performances of different ensembles while others have more or less managed to survive in their original form [Čaleta and Ceribašić 2000].

The reason for such a development was the rapid economic and social development that promoted new ways of life. By then the large rural population was moving to urban centres to become an essential labour force. Leaving their old way of life, they also left their habits. Singing was one of the strongest links that bound them to their previous lives. In many situations, the role of the bearer of the tradition has been taken over by organised folklore groups, which most often perform performances of music and dance of the former tradition. At the same time, the way of life in the countryside is changing, resulting in the loss of a large number of archaic repertoires. For many years, it has been difficult to imagine the most remote communities without radios, TV sets and today mobile phones that bring new information with their media influence, but also new repertoires and ways of standardised singing that is slowly becoming a musical idiom of these communities. They are the strongest and today they are bimusical, performing equally old and new repertoires that the community has adopted with the help of prominent singers. Rural public events, choirs, farewells, parties, fairs continue to be informal public performance spaces for many traditional music genres as well as formal stage performances performed by folk singers / dancers on stages across the country.

The Homeland War also had a great influence on the development of traditional vocal music, after which newly established folklore groups emerged in many returnee communities, thus inheriting the memory of recognisable idioms of the local community. As an example, I can point out the Zadar area where before the Homeland War there was no organised folklore group, and by the late 1990s there were more than 70 of them, of which a significant number still survive today. The repertoire performed on stage is the reconstruction of contextual situations from the past. Singing in these performances is an integral element that emphasises their uniqueness in relation to both the first neighbours and the wider community. At the same time, the first wave of UNESCO awards for intangible cultural heritage is taking place, in which traditional singing has several examples of good practice. *Ojkanje* [Čaleta 2002], *bečarac* [Ceribašić 2013], *two-part singing in Istrian scale* [Bonifačić 2001], *klapa singing*

[Ćaleta 2008] are some of the recognised ways of singing that have received a significant boost with UNESCO recognition. The work within the UNESCO documents defines the concepts of tradition, folklore and intangible heritage and focuses on the presentation, promotion and consumption of forms of traditional culture in the media and cultural industries. Exposure and adaptation to the mass media are processes that have consequences for the authenticity and preservation of forms of traditional culture and folklore. One of the better consequences of this situation is more frequent public performances where singing becomes an even more significant part of the performance, encouraging both singers and presenters in search of older, forgotten layers that they represent in their performances.

In the last two years, they all shared the same fate of the closed public performance space, which they could only replace with a common virtual space. Many events or happenings in the history of mankind have changed the course of history and caused periods in which ‘nothing is as before’. The coronavirus pandemic postponed all events, including the cultural ones. For a long time, we were under bans – there are no concerts and performances for the audience, and all those who deal with music are left to, like everyone else, sing at home ‘in the shower’. However, a number of different approaches presented according to all pandemic measures this time in the imaginary space – virtual space - have shown that culture does not stand still in the time of quarantine. Why I say imaginary is simply because singing in a traditional context presupposes interaction, concrete human interaction. Here in cyberspace it is just a distant imagination trying to imagine what we can actually do even when we are in an almost hopeless situation like this. It is safe and constant in the modern age and consumer industry to exchange information, messages, directions, consumer roles and identities. Today’s media icons hint at the change and transience of identities that depend on consumer trends and their media representations – advertising, fashion and identity. Entertainment provided by the media is often very enjoyable and uses images, sounds and performances to seduce the audience and lead them to identify with certain points of view, attitudes, feelings and positions.

Examples of good and different practice that present diverse approaches to activities, transmission and learning of vocal music in new conditions are numerous.

There are several models in which folk singers have presented their music virtually. The most common way of presentation were the videos that they simultaneously recorded in individual, private spaces – their homes where they lived during the pandemic. Neatly edited, more inventive examples in virtual spaces are marked by ‘clicks’, where the number of ‘clicks’ indicates the number of visits, i.e. ratifying the popularity of a specific video. In some cases, the effort paid off with a large number of ‘clicks’, although the long-established fact of marginality of traditional music has again been confirmed by many examples.

No virtual interaction can compensate for human contact, which in this case is an extremely important element in the process of music-making. A considerable number of concerts of traditional music were held in the virtual world (although much less than would normally be held live), which enabled joint performances by performers from various places, regions and countries. The virtual world has also made it possible to hold at least a minimum number of otherwise regular rehearsals and singing workshops. Namely, today’s traditional vocal music depends on the activity of organised associations which requires regular practice (rehearsals) that was impossible to carry on in this period. Rehearsals and workshops via Zoom replaced regular live meetings to some extent, but could not replace the emotional states that singers experience during performance interaction. The timbres of the voices, the dynamics of the performance, even the rhythm of the performance were more difficult to achieve virtually. The situation was even more difficult when it came to the transmission of tradition. In this period, oral tradition that used to be almost the sole way of transferring knowledge of the most

archaic vocal styles and genres relied on the exclusive will of an individual to find the ‘source’ of learning in available archival and recorded materials. Ethnomusicologists played an important advisory role in those situations. The number of queries from the informants increased greatly during the pandemic. The interest of younger generations for the musical traditions of their predecessors presented a great challenge, so the advice from ethnomusicologists was valuable to young female and male singers in finding certain repertoires and mastering new material.

At the same time, there had been the examples of a reverse process, when the informants regularly sent the recordings/videos of their internal performances or newly-discovered digitised recordings to their ‘advisors’ – ethnomusicologists, which added a completely new layer of meaning to the term ‘fieldwork’ and deepened the communication and trust between researchers and singers, the bearers of cultural heritage. To get a video clip from the foothills of the Velebit mountain or of a meeting with an older informant/singer has become an almost regular occurrence for this particular ethnomusicologist. In addition, the new situation prompted like-minded people to bond even more tightly, and so, as a rule, each clear-cut inquiry received a quick and high-quality answer. One of the most interesting examples of this new interaction between traditional singers was the ‘challenge’ that young female and male singers of traditional music from various parts of Croatia set to each other. The two young male singers from Lika challenged two female singers from Slavonia to try and sing some songs from Lika, who in turn challenged two singers from Dalmatia to sing a song from the Zagorje region. In this way, they had fun while at the same time learning about new musical styles and attracting the attention of a virtual audience who rewarded them with a large number of ‘clicks’.

Examples of new virtual vocal practice have had their effect and ensured apparent continuity in new (impossible) conditions. We can say that these examples through this process deepen the importance and necessity of heritage, as well as the problems that may arise in the context of good examples of intangible cultural heritage. This situation, summed up by Ernesto Ottone Ramirez, UNESCO’s Deputy Director-General for Culture, in the words “A world without culture is a world without a future” [UNESCO 2020] emphasised the importance of transmitting intangible cultural heritage. With the application of today’s technologies, the song once again served as a motive and message that music breaks down all barriers, that music has no boundaries.

Endnotes

1. The two most visible processions are *pokladari* (male procession) dressed as soldiers with the swords and *lijepe maskare* (female procession) dressed in carnival costumes. Both processions are led by commanders (*pokladari – kapo; lijepe maskare – oficiri*) and *lira* players (*sanatur*). For more information on Lastovo Carnival see [Čaleta and Niemčić 2022].
2. Iva Niemčić first visited the island of Lastovo and the Carnival as a researcher in 1999, and Joško Čaleta has participated in the research of the island’s musical heritage since 2009. The result of their long-term work has been published in the 2022 book “*Uvooo! Eviva nam kumpanija, poša nam je alavija!* – the ethnography of the Lastovo Carnival” [Čaleta and Niemčić 2022].
3. A typical islanders cake prepared in Carnival time.
4. The Hall – (*Sala*) is the community hall where all the indoor events (dancing events – *balo, pokladari* gatherings) during the Carnival take place.

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Daniela Ivanova-Nyberg
(Sofia, Bulgaria/Silver Lake, USA)

What did we learn? Why does it matter? Observations on outcomes of teaching and learning Bulgarian dance via Zoom in the period 2020–2022

This study addresses aspects of teaching and learning Bulgarian dance via Zoom under pandemic restrictions. Interpretation are made based on the outcomes of surveys conducted with Bulgarians and non-Bulgarians, teachers, and dancers living in Bulgaria and the United States. The research raises these questions: what did instructors learn about their profession (or passionate hobby) through their efforts to teach Bulgarian dance via Zoom? What did dancers learn? What aspects of Bulgarian dance and dancing became (more) prominent for the various parties involved? What happened on the creative side in using the advantage of technology? The survey responses revealed ‘hidden’, new, or taken-for-granted aspects of Bulgarian dance and dancing, teaching and learning, and the nature of our under-pandemic experiences as human beings. Finally, the analytical overview offers opinions on why it was necessary to reflect on Zoom dancing in 2020–2022.

Keywords: Bulgarian dance; teaching; learning; Zoom; human experience.

Introduction

I bravely put “What did we learn” in the title of my paper – in my attempt to put together multiple voices and draw conclusions about the nature of our dance experience under pandemic restrictions. However, I am aware that this is me, a particular researcher and a practitioner, reflecting on her experience from her two-year fieldwork. Whatever I learned is my learning and hypothesis, although I made my inquiries. Insights came from surveys and informal conversations with Bulgarian dance teachers and dancers in Bulgaria, members of Bulgarian folk dance communities in the United States, international folk dancers, and Western Washington University (WWU) students. In reaching out for various opinions, I wanted to see what was similar to expectations or insightfully new, considering the different circumstances/contexts. In addition, I wanted to explore the self-reflective anthropological perspective by asked myself: what will this bring to illuminate my own work – exclusively online and in circumstances where my living room was also my ‘field’. The latter was also a place (and space) to stretch, teach, read, drink tons of coffee, and communicate with the world.

The bottom line of my research was given by Ingold’s “we study with people, rather than making studies of them” [Ingold 2018:11]. Under the pandemic, Ingold’s reminder provoked reflections not only on Bulgarian dance and its ‘many faces’ but also on the nature of folk dancing as a community practice and the notion of a community of practice. So, these fuelled the framework of my study that rested on four pillars: 1) ethnographic and anthropological-self perspective¹, 2) surveys, 3) via media resources, and 4) literature, addressing issues of internet and technology, individuals and society, virtual community, virtual community of practice, mediatization, and the future of culture and humanity.²

My personal reflections, first of all, came out as a result of answering positively to the question, to-zoom-or-not-to-zoom (however, the consequent Zoom meetings with adults were called, “Stand up from your computer!”). My online classes with adults and children were shaped into doing stretching and energetic movements to folk music, although the teaching component was also present. Zoom sessions from home also included classes with Western Washington University (WWU) students, most of whom have never been to the Balkans and have never been exposed to Bulgarian music and dance. The combination of the above

experiences provoked an interest in researching the zoom dance and dancing from an interdisciplinary perspective. The latter, in my case, began with collecting ethnographic documents and placing them meticulously on my research table. Below I present my ‘bricolage’.

Ethnographic documents (surveys, email communications, and other online resources)

In January 2021, I created a survey about horo dance and Covid-19 (in Bulgarian). I distributed it among the largest Bulgarian Facebook groups for folk dancing, such as *Sakrovishtnitsata* and *Vlyubeni v horoto*, and among the Bulgarian folk dance communities in the United States. I also shared this survey on Academia.edu. The survey was twofold: one version was addressed to folk dance leaders [Ivanova-Nyberg 2021b] and another – to amateur dancers [Ivanova-Nyberg 2021c]. In the introduction to both, I wrote:

Zoom folk dancing is *contradictio in adjecto*. However, under pandemic restrictions, some folk dance leaders and participants decided to use the available sources for virtual meetings and do “something,” at least for physical movement.

I was aware that some leaders and group members saw this ‘something’ as being so different from the ‘real’ folk dancing shared with other people that jumping in front of the monitor in isolation appeared somewhat depressing to them. So, I started with these questions:

Did you decide to teach (participate in) folk dances via Zoom?
If yes, why? If not, why?

Then I went further by asking:

What are the approaches to teaching and learning folk dances via Zoom?
What happens to a round dance when it is taught and learned on Zoom from one’s living room?
What did you personally realize from the lack of opportunity to practice your beloved dance form in its ‘natural’ habitat?

After I shared my two-fold survey via Academia.edu and Facebook, I received an email from Steve Ayala, a long-time folk dancer. With the help of a Bulgarian friend, he translated into English, word by word and sentence by sentence, my entire survey (30 questions), addressed to teachers. I appreciated the gesture and thanked Steve, who also suggested distributing the study among the international folk dance community and not just among the Bulgarians. He himself shared my survey with the board of the National Folk Organization – NFO and several leading dance teachers in California. And here I received the following response from Loui Tucker,³ whom I quote with her permission:

I am not using your survey to respond because I’m one of those teachers/leaders who did not join the Zoom movement, so your survey doesn’t really allow me to voice my feelings. There are many teachers like me and you are not getting any input from them. So, I’m writing this email. [Tucker 2021]

Of course, I was interested precisely in this kind of open communication. I wanted to see what was acceptable or unacceptable by different folk dance and community leaders. “What did we learn?” was not simply a question about dance and dancing. It was also about one’s willingness or capability to adapt to specific circumstances. It was also about our relationships

with technology, our readiness/agreement/disagreement – due to the circumstances – to put our entire life into a single device.

Loui continued:

I find Zoom dancing and Zoom dance parties to be both depressing and frustrating. It just reminds me of what I'm missing. I feel cheating and abandoned. Dancing is important to me, but just as important are the people. I want to hold hands and feel the power of the circle. I want to hold another dancer in a circle of two and spin, spin, spin. I want to smile at friends across the circle. I want to dance in a room full of the sound of music (live music as well as recorded). I want to hear when everyone in the room claps or stamps at the same time. I want the endorphin rush of being in a room full of people who love to dance as much as I do. Zoom can't give me any of that and it empties me out with longing [Tucker 2021].

After sharing her frustration with the little squares and the people inside, eating, drinking, wandering around, the sound of the speakers, the annoying chat, and the frustration with technology in general, Loui goes back to the topic of community:

Although my home is not well-suited to teaching or running a dance session on Zoom, I could have made the effort to move my computer into the biggest room in the house, re-arrange the furniture, and lock the dogs and cats outside the room. I chose not to disrupt my life to create an environment I don't like. Yes, I'd get to teach dances and lead dances for people who are watching, but that's not why I lead a group. I lead a group to bring people together and build a community. Zoom makes you get thousands of people from other countries to join your event but, to me, that's not a community any more than a community is created when thousands of people tune into the same television program [Tucker 2021].

This paragraph raises the vital question, what does community mean? Can we say that a new international folk dance virtual community now exists? Or is this instead 'an imagined' community?

At the end, Loui wrote:

I know I am not alone in these feelings. I have emails from friends and colleagues and I've talked to others who feel as I do. They all tried it once, maybe twice, and they now refuse to have anything with Zoom dancing. They intend to wait until they can dance in-person again. Thank you for listening [Tucker 2021].

I did listen to her. I also listened to other voices that addressed the advantage of the Zoom format.

Excerpts from the 2021 survey

It is hard to say how many groups continued their activity virtually.⁴ Those that did share that about 25 to 50 percent of their members attended the weekly classes for about an hour and a quarter to an hour and a half.⁵ Balkan/International class dances were primarily from Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, Croatia, Turkey, Macedonia, Greece, and Armenia but there were dances from Portugal, France, and other countries.⁶ A guiding principle for selecting material

for a one-hour session was: fun dances with good music, a mix of countries, and dances that would work in small spaces.

Below are a few Q and A from the survey that appeared to be representative to those who went online to teach and dance:

Q: What elements of regular, face-to-face instruction, do you most miss during Zoom classes?

A: *Holding hands in a circle – it's harder on online because you don't get the help/balance that you get when you are holding hands. Plus having more space to move. And missing folks we don't see.*

Q: What is the biggest inconvenience of the Zoom platform which especially annoys you?

A: *I'm not annoyed – I think it's working really well for this moment in time.*

Q: What reason(s) do group members who haven't joined these Zoom sessions give (if you know)?

A: *Some folks just don't want to dance on Zoom, or do not have the technological capacity to do so.*

Q: What have you personally come to realize about dance, the act of dancing and teaching? Even if it's something which you knew before, but that now you understand much more clearly, please share in a line or two.

A: *It has just made it even clearer to me how much I love to dance and to teach dance, and I am grateful that I can continue to do so in a context that was foreign to me at first but has become easy and normal.⁷*

This 'chart' is also representative in suggesting the motives of those who joined the Zoom sessions:

- ☒ At least we can see one another.
- ☒ Despite the constraints, this is a chance to be active.
- ☒ Without these meetings, I wouldn't get up from in front of the computer.
- ☐ I cannot speak for my dancers or their motivation.
- ☒ Something else (Please specify)

We get to hang out with each other, and we have a lot of fun. Zoom also makes it possible to dance with dance friends who wouldn't be able to come to our in-person classes because they live far away.⁸

These responses are congruent with the answers from Bulgarian folk dance teachers and community leaders. The one, but vital difference, lies in the section 'something else', though. For Bulgarians in Bulgaria, Zoom never became the platform for dancing with friends living far away.

NFO panel, April 2021, excerpts

In April 2021 I attended a panel organized by the National Folklore Organization (NFO), discussing Zoom dancing. And here are some excerpts:

- ⇒ Yes, I call it the Zoom Magic Carpet; you can be anywhere, instantly. And much less overhead – no travel, no venue rental, no accommodation expense.
- ⇒ The Zoom connection around the country and around the world is Irreplaceable and I don't want it to dim out either!
- ⇒ Now that we've all started dancing with people all around the country/world, how can we stop?
- ⇒ [...] online gatherings also create accessibility for people who might have health or transportation or careering challenges to be able to participate [...]
- ⇒ There will be people who are unable to go to in-person events for various reasons, so a hybrid approach includes them as we've become accustomed over the past year.
- ⇒ It seems like Zoom could continue to be a great boon for teachers. No more tours. Opportunities to teach in very separated places.
- ⇒ I appreciate being able to see everyone's faces. In person that won't happen since we'll be masked. It has been doing my heart so much good to see so many different human faces during these festivals.
- ⇒ When I can dance in person I will do it locally, but Zoom has allowed me to dance with people from places where I will never have the opportunity to dance. Pre-pandemic I was dancing once or twice a week. Now I am dancing 4 or 5 times a week with people from around the world. It's terrific!
- ⇒ Zoom has certainly given me opportunities that I would never have. We don't have folk dance where I live anymore. I have also loved learning from so many of the teachers from all over the world. I probably will never be able to go to Stockton in person, but have been grateful to have been able to virtually attend the summer and winter and camps.
- ⇒ Zoom is what it is, but connecting via zoom is much, much better than not connecting at all.

I will leave these excerpts with no comment at this point but will return to them later.

Insights from the 2022 survey

Almost a year later, I created a new survey entitled, "What did we learn? Why does it matter?" [Ivanova-Nyberg 2022b]. My aim was now to stimulate reflections on a more extended experience. Among the anonymous responses were the following:

We learned that dance is not valued by today's society and that there are many things people would rather do. We learned that some dancers are not motivated to learn if there is no peer pressure to try hard. (At home no one knows if you sit down.) (Anon.)

Zoom dancing was a lifesaver during the isolation especially during the first year. Met so many people, learned more dances than I can possibly retain. Very impressed with the positive, upbeat, always-cheerful manner of all hosts and emcee's, even when there were good reasons to be frustrated. After about a year I was sick and tired of Zoom and cut way back; but after about 6 months I started coming back and now I go to 3 or 4 short ones a week. 60 to 90 minutes is a good length. I much prefer small groups of people I know and dances I know, instead of huge groups and too many dances I don't know. You wouldn't think that knowing or not knowing people would matter, but it did to me. (Anon.)

Be kind. Stay positive. Keep on dancing. When we started back in person after about 15 months off (we did 2x/month Zoom dances but only about 10 dances each time) we found we had forgotten so much! It took a few months before we were collectively back at a skill level we were happy with. (Anon.)

I also asked about the approaches of teachers who presented Bulgarian dance or dances from the Balkans on Zoom. The response below reveals the vital part the language began playing in the Zoom classes, the capability to name things 'properly':

In a live class, I'm OK if the instructor doesn't speak English. But on Zoom it was very important that the instructor spoke English. I relied as much on the audio as the video. Instructors who were used to being online obviously had an advantage. (Anon.)

In the Bulgarian context, videos posted by people who did not use 'proper' dance terminology received a lot of critique and sarcastic comments.

Insights from a survey with WWU students

I had three Zoom classes with Western Washington University students within the Dance and Movement course offered by Penny Hutchinson from the Dance Department – in 2020, 2021, and 2022. After the third class, I asked Penny to share my survey with her students. While reviewing these responses [Ivanova-Nyberg 2022c], I realized that students learned a lot about Bulgarian dance in our 75-minute class. However, they did not experience Bulgarian dance.

What did we learn?

Picture at large

Though there are many shortcomings to Zoom dancing, we have had the opportunity to connect with old friends across the country and meet new ones, giving new meaning to 'community.' (Susie Shoaf, President, Kopachka Folk Dancers, California)

I really missed holding hands with people - partly for the comradeship and helping with balance, but also because there is a lot of information we gather by means of our peripheral vision, and I didn't have anyone to cue off of. (Anon.)

I am happier when I dance, even if it's only online. (Anon.)

Zoom dancing is not for me. (Anon.)

I think we are limited only by our desire and creativity. (Anon.)

The ‘newness’ for me from my research came on various levels. Among these 1) the newly-realized nature of folk dance by my informants and survey respondents, 2) the multitude of understandings of community, 3) the creative side of us as humans, turning disadvantage into an advantage by using technology, and 4) the potential for further interpretation and analyses.

Through experiencing Zoom dancing, many deepened their awareness of the multi-dimensionality and complexity of their dance practices. Mutual playing/dancing/rehearsing – in a hall and with other people, breathing freely and holding hands – was realized to be essential. A true wealth.

My respondents’ interpretations of community evoked topics of the virtual community, online community,⁹ the virtual community of practice. Apparently, there is an international folk dance virtual community (or many communities) of practicing dances from around the world. These communities do something together; they not just passively watch a TV show.

The relationships between dance and technology became a topic more prominent than ever, along with the newly developed and adopted teaching and learning methods.

The increased attention to, and appreciation of, ‘proper’ verbal coaching raised various questions. These are related not only to dance terminology but to the descriptive language oriented to people who cannot physically see the teacher or the rest of the dancers.

A topic of its own is the analysis of the motivation of people who decided to use the Zoom format for dancing. Such is the case of Zoom repertoire(s).

The Zoom ‘boom’ also provided new insights into understanding dance as a product with its copyrights and dissemination. Music included.

Zoom is not a format to teach little children how to sing and dance; the past two years may be considered a lost time. Working with children and conducting rehearsals for a performance may be done only in person in a rehearsal hall.

Each of the aspects above, including one’s relationship with the internet and technology,¹⁰ one’s need to dance, and dancing as an essential part of our human nature, requires specific attention that this paper cannot follow. The complexity is even bigger because there are three cultural entities and contexts: Bulgarian dance and amateur folk dancing in Bulgaria, International folk dancing in the US, and Bulgarian dance and folk dancing in the Bulgarian diaspora in the US. And the latter also fills up the cup of a scholar involved in migration studies.

On cultural differences

Learning from other teachers via Zoom was appreciated by every one of the folk dancers active on Zoom. However, learning a new dance from a new teacher is not the primary motivation to do folk dancing for members of the Bulgarian dance community. The main reason to dance is to do Bulgarian dances with the people from one’s community.

For Bulgarians, the Zoom dancing never became satisfactory in the way it was appreciated in the States; Bulgarian groups are not about learning dances from around the world. Some key components were missing for Bulgarians in the Zoom format; these were related to social interaction while dancing for fun, or preparing performances and programs for dance events and competitions.

To Bulgarians abroad, dancing together in a dance hall brings a connection to the homeland. It is not purely a physical and social experience but is also related to the experience of an ethnic community.

Summing up

In my paper, I paid considerably more attention to the international folk dance community because, as a whole, Americans were more appreciative of the Zoom platform. Online classes provided an opportunity for everybody in good physical condition or with some sort of disability to meet teachers from around the globe and learn new material. Of course, international folk dancing is about the community, but learning international repertoire is at the core of American folk dancing. The American international folk dance groups are ageing. Many people cannot drive a long distance for a dance workshop. These folks sincerely appreciated the opportunity to dance and stay connected. They attended classes, workshops, and parties. However, most of my respondents shared that they preferred smaller gatherings; they wanted to be recognized as individuals and not feel like a particle of an amorphous mass of spectators.

Dancing in person and joining hands may be essential for supporting each other. We indeed receive a lot of information while dancing with others, and we, ourselves, are sources to others in this multi-dimensional, multi-layered exchange. Still, this notion of support goes beyond dancing. Such support is for keeping alive our human nature, our mere understanding of life that happens outside our devices. While put to the test, humans may use technology to maintain personal connections, exchange ideas, stretch, and talk about community dance. But they cannot experience community dance, which became so clear and treasured in the time of social distancing.

Further thoughts

A Zoom dance may be considered a ‘mediated’ dance, as derived from theories in mediatization.¹¹ If reaching further – borrowing terms from post-culture, post-cultural, and even post-human era studies – it could be described as a ‘post-cultural’ and a ‘post-human dance’. The question however is not about the naming. It is about broadening the perspective that would deepen the previous ways of thinking about dance and technology, community, globalization processes, and humanity.

We use the internet and technology – this is our world. Still, dancing is one of the ways of not allowing the internet and technology to eat us up entirely. And this really matters.

Endnotes

1. Insights on contemporary fieldwork and hybrid ethnography came also from the work of Przybylski [2020].
2. See for example Smith [2022], Elias [2001], Silver and Massanari [2006], Feenberg and Bakardjieva [2004], Andreatos [2009], Cheney-Lippold [2017], Lundby [2009], Correia [2022], and others. I also explored Wenger’s notion of “community of practice”, while addressing issues on cultural transmission, see Ivanova-Nyberg [2022a].
3. See Loui Tucker’s website <<https://www.louitucker.com>> (accessed 2022 September 20).
4. A few groups, American and Bulgarian, decided not to meet on Zoom but to dance occasionally outdoors by modifying their dance sessions.
5. Susie Shoaf, the resident of Kopachka Folk Dancers, California, responded: “Approximately 50% of members plus an equal number of ‘friends’ for a total of 30-35 participants per gathering with several joining from the East Coast, Canada, and Australia due to the Zoom platform” (Survey, 15 February, 2021).
6. Among the favorite non-partner dances for *Petaluma* folk dancers, for example, are: *Furla*, *Ciganskoto*, *Setnja*, *Armenian Shuffle*, *Paidushko*, *Racénica*, Sandy’s *Cacak*, *Jerusalem*, *Tsamiko*, *Ya Da Kalunishku*, *Tik*, *Milisso*, *Tricot*, *Narino* (Carol Friedman, Survey, 15 February, 2021).
7. A selection of answers to Survey 1, Daniela Ivanova-Nyberg, personal archive.

8. These representations reflect responses from Survey 1, Survey 2, and personal communication (68 written responses).
9. See on this matter Abfalter; Zaglia, and Mueller [2011].
10. On this matter and on new solitudes, see Turkle [2011].
11. See for example Livingstone [2009].

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Gül Kaplan Ekemen
(Sakarya, Turkey)

Folk Dances from tradition to digital: “#Evdekal” virtual stage performances

During the Covid-19 pandemic, people have been exposed to conditions that radically changed their daily lives. Within the necessity of physical isolation, stay-at-home calls were made all over the world and social and cultural productions went beyond the walls of the pandemic. A digital environment for presentations was created by editing many music and dance performance videos and sharing them in virtual environments. In this paper, selected examples of folkdance performances shared with the hashtag “evdekal” [Turkish version of stay-at-home] are evaluated in terms of production and sharing. The process of transforming folk dances – which are performed side by side in tradition – into virtual shows by combining and editing the images of individual videos will be analysed sociologically and technically.

Keywords: pandemic; evdekal; tradition to digital; virtual dances; digital presentations.

Facing the conditions of Covid-19

At the end of 2019, WHO [2022] announced the presence of the Covid-19 virus which affected the whole world in a short time, within three months. Wide-ranging measures were taken all over the world to deal with this extremely deadly virus, aimed at raising people’s awareness of the transmission and spread of the disease. As the Covid-19 virus can spread from an infected person’s mouth or nose in small liquid particles when they cough, sneeze, speak, sing or breathe, WHO warned communities to protect themselves and others from infection by staying at least one meter apart from others, wearing a properly fitted mask, and washing hands or using an alcohol-based rub frequently and by getting vaccinated. WHO also advised contact tracing, quarantine and processes of isolation to control the spread of the virus and to fight against the disease. In addition to these measures taken individually, there were processes of closure that included curfews on a global basis to prevent the spread of the virus. The processes of closures were decided by each country according to their own sociological conditions. It was attempted enforce these with various penal systems for example it was announced that fines and prison sentences would be imposed for those who violate the bans in Turkey.¹

The fact that the closures were announced without making the necessary regulations, and that they were long-term in Turkey, brought along many difficulties in meeting the daily basic needs of the people. Situations such as the continuous implementation of bans for many hours of the day for some age groups, the closure of entertainment venues, and the imposition of a ban during weekends when there was no ban during weekdays led to cynical criticism of the spread of the virus. Despite this, the bans were maintained by being organized on a daily-hourly basis with constantly updated variations, and were announced to the public in sometimes confusing formulae.

Full-closure periods necessitated the regulation of living conditions according to the new situation. During the curfews, which were implemented to ensure full closure, virtual environments were used to meet the needs of daily life. In order to minimize the risk of the spread of the disease around the world, closing crowded environments such as workplaces and schools became mandatory and distance education and working from home was introduced. This new ecosystem, in which face-to-face life is carried on behind the safe walls of our houses, started a new communication process in which everything necessary for the continuation of daily life such as shopping, work, education is transferred to the internet environment.

Negative effects of the life in the full-closure periods

According to WHO [2022], health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. During the Covid-19 pandemic, reasons such as the suspicion and fear of illness; the pressure of social isolation and full closures, revealed a health problem other than being infected with the physical presence of the virus.

The closure processes have been criticized by various dissident views around the world and discourses were spread suggesting that there was actually no pandemic. Similar processes have taken place for vaccination studies, and anti-vaccine campaigns have been launched, especially through social media. The feeling of loneliness emerged together with depression and confusion caused by rumours about the disease, so many wanted to break the ban of the curfew. As a result, there were revolts in different parts of the world against the closure processes imposed by the governments. These anti-lockdown protests sometimes led to violent clashes with police forces all over the world.

In order to control the spread of the virus, face-to-face communication environments such as cafes, bars, restaurants, theatres, cinemas, concerts and exhibition halls around the world were kept closed for a long time. Besides the lack of cultural and artistic satisfaction of society, this process has brought many people working in related sectors face to face with unemployment and economic distress. Some of the unemployed individuals had the opportunity to receive state support from the country they lived in, while others, in places including Turkey, could not find support. Some of these people, who were crushed by long periods of unemployment and financial problems, ended their lives by committing suicide.

#Stay-at-home campaigns

In order to eliminate the depression of feeling imprisoned caused by curfews of Covid-19, stay-at-home campaigns were undertaken around the world. These campaigns were started to counteract the worldwide protests of people tired of the lockdowns, and were aimed at persuading the masses to stay at home and wait for global health to improve.

In the scope of the stay-at-home campaigns, many concerts, shows, performances took place on the internet. Many music groups, orchestras, dance troupes and circuses made their previous show and concert recordings available on the internet to meet the social needs of the people during curfews. Professional artists, musicians and dancers arranged the images they took in the environment of their own homes with various editing programs and transferred them to the internet, online concerts and shows were held, and a virtual presentational environment/stage was created. People from different homes, cities, countries and even slums performed virtual performances in the same digital presentational environment, making the far appear close. The new generation, whose consumption habits are in favour of digital environments, allowed these campaigns to spread and become popular in a short time. Audiences accessed virtual performances over the internet without leaving their homes and became consumers of new media spaces transformed by traditional performance environments. Many campaigns were launched in Turkey as well with “#evdekal”, which is the Turkish translation of the “#stay-at-home” call.

Technology and digitalization saw this process as an economic opportunity, and new ideas were constantly produced to eliminate the mutual hunger for stage performances. Some entrepreneurs² even set up live performance-oriented digital performing arts platforms that create a new economic ecosystem for artists by evaluating the process of restrictions and changes in people’s communication and sharing habits at home. All these efforts, which are

based on the desire to provide social satisfaction while keeping the virus spread under control, paved the way for various activities to take place in the virtual world.

“#Evdekal” folk dance performances

Folk dance performances are an activity that widely take place during official holiday celebration ceremonies in Turkey. Many primary and secondary schools prepare their students for these performances during all of the year through the courses they organize. Similarly, folk dance associations open folk dance courses that stage a performance at the end of the year. During the closure process, the celebrations for “April 23, National Sovereignty and Children’s Day” and “May 19, The Commemoration of Atatürk, and Youth and Sports Day” were cancelled. Virtual folk dance performances were held in order to alleviate the negative impact of the cancellation of these ceremonies for which they had been preparing throughout the year and the closure that would continue for an indefinite period. Attempts were made to create the spirit of being side by side together by editing the individual videos of the students taken in their homes. By adding examples prepared by folk dance associations to these examples made by schools; folk dances, which are traditionally danced side-by-side, were turned into a virtual show through digitization. Some of these digital performances were prepared by a professional team, while others were prepared by amateur volunteers which resulted in them containing some technical errors. We came across many folk dance video performances, but in this article selected samples which were shared within the concept of the stay-at-home campaign that will be evaluated in terms of video shooting and editing errors. In order to see the technical problems in the examples selected, the relevant parts of the videos were cut and shared using QR codes below. For those who are interested, a full version of the video links of the samples examined are added to the endnotes.

Example 1: “#Evdekal Balıkesir”



QR-1 (<https://youtu.be/9jyVHt9ZKHE>).

In the first 16 seconds of the video (QR-1), there is a video of a competition³ that the group participated in before the pandemic. Later on, an attempt was made to achieve the stage patterns danced in the competition by making two edits, which are obtained by bringing together the performances of different dancers in the first, and by reproducing the performance of the same dancer in the second. The first noticeable problem of the first edit⁴ is the framing problem. In the three-split screen between 17–19 seconds, the heights of the recorders from the ground and the distances to the dancers are different. That is why when the videos are side by side, the dancers’ sizes are different from each other and seem to be aligned from the lower left corner to the upper right corner. By the 19th second, the screen was divided into 16, and in each column, videos of four girls and boys were placed on top of each other, in this way it was attempted to create a stage pattern consisting of rows of girls and boys. As of the 22nd second, the screen was divided into 32 and the gradual standing-up section from the ground was made with 32 videos. While trying to fit the videos with different sizes to the screen, it is seen that

the images were deformed and some parts of the dancers disappeared off the frame during the performance.

In the second edit⁵ starting at 28th second, the complexity of the first edit was tried to be eliminated by multiplying the video of the same dancer, but the ensemble performance feeling was lost in it as well. Even in the edit made by using the same video, the frame sizes of the videos edited in this section are different from each other, and in some the dancer's head and feet come out of the frame.

From the 40th second, the angles of the camera and the distance to the dancers are different, so the size of the dancers are different from each other. Here, again, during the editing, performance videos of different sizes were compressed from the top and expanded to the sides, trying to fit them into the screen frame which deformed the image. In all of these performance videos, the light, resolution, colour, white balance and the backgrounds of the images are different from each other so it is tiring to watch the edited output properly.

Example 2: “#Evdekal Kütahya”



QR-2 (https://youtu.be/r8Ik8_2gbm4).

In the first 15 seconds of the video (QR-2), there is a video of a competition⁶ that the group participated in before the pandemic. In the competition, a gradual turn was made in a canon formation from the front row to the back. From the 16th second onwards, in the edited video⁷ of the same group, the images of the dancers were placed on the screen as blocks coming one after the other, and the canon rotation was made from left to right. All of the dancers wore black clothes in order to ensure unity in the image. Although a white background is chosen in most of the backgrounds, the different furniture in the background makes it difficult to watch. The fact that some dancers were shot in a brighter environment and some in a darker environment caused sharpness problems and the camera was blurred from time to time. In this example, the dancers are close in size because the camera distance from the dancer is less of an issue and the images are probably reframed in the edit. Also, a black frame was used around each dancer to ensure integrity in the video.

In the male performances, which can be seen from the 32nd second, the video of the dancer in the second frame from the left in the top row remains frozen for 5 seconds. Possible reasons for this may be that the recording camera records in a different format than the others, the editing program cannot read that video or format, and the video is corrupted during recording or transmission.

Example 3: “#Evdekal Erzurum”QR-3 (<https://youtu.be/pkKdaSHyKFk>).

Erzurum *Hançer Bari* is a dance performed by two people swinging the knives in their hands towards each other's faces. It requires both dancers to be qualified and to trust each other, as they risk harming each other. At the beginning of the video (QR-3), *Hançer Bari*⁸ is performed during a wedding. From the 30th second of the video, we can see *Hançer Bari*⁹ performed within the scope of the #evdekal campaign. The framing of the performances is set vertically, not horizontally, in order to create the perception of facing each other in the editing.

The dancer on the left of the frame appears lower than the one on the right. This is because of the placement of the camera which has different height from the ground and different distance to the dancer in each video. This is actually a problem that can be solved in editing, but probably because it was done by a volunteer who did not know the framing details of the editing program, so the dancers appear far apart and below or above each other, even if they dance synchronously. The objects in the background cause a lot of stimuli in the atmosphere, and the dancer on the left even occasionally hits the chandelier. At the end of the video, the dancer on the left disappears from the frame.

Example 4: “#Evdekal Yalova”QR-4 (<https://youtu.be/xkYMh4l3xo8>).

In this example¹⁰ (QR-4), to ensure video integrity, the dancers were placed in different scales in the frame, such as the chest plan (dancers on top), the height plan (dancers in the middle), and the knee plan/American plan (the dancers on the sides). With this arrangement, close-up shots are adjusted in the editing so the problem of distance to the camera has been largely resolved, and the unity of the background has been partially achieved. The constant sharpness setting effort of the device that records the male dancer shifts the perception to that frame. Since the synchronous error was made while editing the images, the movements of the performers do not rhythmically match each other, and the up and down spring movements seem different from each other in the side-by-side images.

Example 5: “#Evdekal Tire”QR-5 (<https://youtu.be/qeKnCuuemvM>).

The images in this example¹¹ (QR-5) show the complex background, different light and white balance issues we mentioned earlier. Due to the fact that the performers are children and the handheld camera operators are standing, most of the cameras are positioned at an upward angle, and since the tripod is not used, the images shake too much, which makes it difficult to watch. The dancers are not positioned directly in front of the camera, their directions are different from each other and were recorded from different angles. In addition, since the distances of the dancers to the camera are different, there is no unity in the image plans and the feet and arms of the dancers come out of the frame during the performance.

Technical problems and proposed solutions**1- Problems with the video recording environment and proposed solutions**

The main problem encountered in amateur videos, and the first that is noticed, is related to the environment in which the performance is recorded. There are different depths, backgrounds, floors and furniture in the background of these images that were recorded by each dancer in their own environment. Every object in the frame establishes a relationship (semiotics) with the viewer. Every camera movement the viewer sees in the video and every light, colour, item and decor placed in the frame is a message. By combining these images recorded under different conditions, each different stimulus in the frame makes it difficult for the audience to focus on the performance itself or the whole video. In order to eliminate or minimize this problem, the backgrounds on which the camera is placed should be determined in advance and have common features or at least be determined in a way that creates the perception of being in the same place. Thus, the number of visual messages sent to the viewer will decrease, which will make it easier to be watched.

2 - Problems with the recording device and proposed solutions

Every amateur content producer shoots their performance with different recording devices, in different quality and sizes. When these videos with different technical features are brought together and turned into a single video, whether they consist of images arranged one after the other or they are brought together to create the illusion of a collective activity, it becomes difficult to be watched. Therefore, the following features should be considered while recording:

- **Recording Size and Format:** Each device records in a pre-determined image format and size in the factory settings which generally may be different from each other. For example, one performer's device may shoot at 1920 x 1080, while another's device may record a 720 x 576 video or one device can shoot HD, while another can shoot 4K. This creates a difference between the size and therefore the quality of the videos. For this reason, it should be decided in what size the device will shoot before recording, and all recording devices should set to take

images in the same format and size. For example, if all the videos are shot in 1920 x 1080 size and 25 frames, this integrity will be achieved.

- **White Balance:** The automatic white balance setting of recorders may differ from each other, or each image may be recorded in a different white balance, since the light of the recorded space will be in different degrees of kelvin. This causes the colour of each video to be different from each other. Since it is difficult to interfere with the light of the recording space in amateur recordings, the white balance of the recording device should be the same for each device. If there are manual options in the video recording features of the mobile phone used for recording, this should be fixed to a common value for each device. If there is no such option, an automatic white balance setting must be selected for each device. Before the editing process, the performance artists can shoot and send a sample video, to decide on the common values such as white balance for the video recording and only after that record the performance to be used as this will largely solve many similar problems.

- **Framing:** It becomes difficult to ensure image integrity when editing videos shot with different framing settings. For example, the diagonal junction of the floor and the wall in the place where the framing is set up leads to a different sense of depth, causing an illusion of perspective. In addition, the trapezoidal framing causes the horizon line not to coincide in side-by-side image edits. Also, if some of the shots are taken with the device held vertically and some with the device horizontal, there may be problems while editing.

The distance of the camera to the performer and the angle at which the performer is shot are also factors to be considered while framing. Some performers are positioned so far away from the frame that they seem tiny, some so close that they come out of the frame, and when the images are brought side by side, the performers appear to be different sizes. If the angle to the performer is changing (as from the right, from the left, directly opposite or from above, from the down, from the eye level) in each video, when the images are brought together the angular and bodily integrity is disrupted. In order to eliminate these problems, the placement angle of the recorder, its distance from the dancer, its height from the ground and the direction that the shot was recorded in (horizontal/vertical) should be determined beforehand. Thus, standardized recordings can be processed during editing and the image size can be adjusted.

One of the main factors determining the framing is the properties of the lenses on the recording device. Each device can have lenses that shoot at different scales (wide or narrow). In this case, even if the distance between the recorder and the recorded object is adjusted correctly, the area occupied by the performer and the recorded place in the frame will be different from each other, causing each performer to appear in different sizes when the videos are combined. If this problem cannot be solved by taking the recording at the same scales and dimensions, it should be solved by enlarging or reducing the image in the edit. Therefore, every video should be shot with a slightly wider angle than normal. Thus, the editor will have the opportunity to equalize each performer by playing with the video dimensions.

Another problem is related to performances that travel forward. In such examples, some performers who walk in front of the fixed camera may partially or completely leave the frame even though they are shot at the same scales. For this, the distance between the performer and the recording device should be determined from the very beginning, taking into account the limits of the area to be used during the performance.

- **Sharpness and Focus:** Some recorders are manually adjusted, while others focus automatically. Depending on sufficient light, especially autofocus devices try to focus on moving objects at different speeds. For this reason, these kinds of collective events may contain sharp motion videos besides videos which lose sharpness from time to time, creating an extra

movement in the whole of the edited image, shifting the focus of the viewer towards it. The first way to solve this is to keep the light of the recording location at a good level. Another way is to set an average sharpness manually, if available in the recorder's options. Also, if the image is shot at the widest scale, the focus will spread throughout the image and the main subject will not lose its sharpness.

3 - Problems with editing images and proposed solutions

In most amateur content, since all the features of the editing programs are unknown, the editing possibilities cannot be used such as sync setting, framing, white balancing and colouring. Also, the editor must ensure that the performances in the images used are in harmony with the music and in sync with each other.

Another problem is that editing programs do not accept the recording format of every device. For this reason, some videos in the editing program stream smoothly, while others hang or do not open at all. In order not to have any surprises in editing, not to encounter a problem after the video is output, and not to have to re-record in a different format, shooting should be done in recording formats where the editing program to be used will not have any problems while running. If it is necessary to use images in different formats, the recording formats must be converted before editing.

Conclusion

During the curfews that brought full closure, a digital presentational environment was created beyond the walls of the pandemic. It is certain that humans always find a way to communicate and make cultural production even in the most difficult conditions. As we experienced, one of the strongest and widespread campaigns the #evdekal created a new digital stage to carry folk dances from traditional environments to virtual space by the people in Turkey. Folk dance performances, which are performed side by side by their usual environment, have turned into virtual shows in digital presentational environments by combining individual videos recorded in different environments using editing programs and sharing them on the internet.

Under the severe conditions of the curfews, these performances were made by amateur volunteers to support the #evdekal campaign. They were sincere and well-intentioned attempts at overcoming the depression of being socially isolated and created the feeling of being, and performing side by side, as opposed to the feeling of loneliness. From this point of view every single one of them is precious and has to be appreciated. Although it is hard to shoot and edit the videos under different conditions, we must accept that there are many technical problems as mentioned above. It is important to develop our video shooting and editing skills in order to avoid technical mistakes if we want to use the facilities and advantages of the technological developments of this era.

Every technological development offered by the new world eventually becomes a part of our lives. Technological developments and virtual environments in our lives are leading to the formation of a new cultural production environment day by day. People who have become both consumers and slaves of the technology, are the producers of digital culture, which is an inevitable stage of development for the people of this age. It is a fact that the production and consumption habits of the new generation, defined as digital natives, are in favour of digital environments. Whether we accept it or not, this change seems inevitable. Who knows, maybe we will discuss the performances in the alternate universes such as metaverse soon. Only time will tell.

Endnotes

1. The fines announced for the sentences: Those who do not comply with the curfew during the full closure period, are fined 3.150TL in accordance with Article 282 of the Public Health Law No.1593, and those who do not comply with the curfew for the second time are decided to initiate action pursuant to the provision “Anyone who does not comply with the measures taken by the competent authorities shall be sentenced to imprisonment from two months to one year” in Article 195 of the Turkish Penal Code, titled “Behaving Against Measures Regarding Communicable Diseases”. See <https://tu-ga.com/covid-19-kapsaminda-uygulanan-idari-para-cezalari/> (accessed 2022 August 08).
2. For example, Çağrı Bozay’s digital music and performance platform called ‘Musixen’ is a new economic channel where artists open up to the whole world with their unique live performances and earn income from ticket sales, without being dependent on anyone. See <https://youtu.be/0ZYYKk7DwuQ> (accessed 2022 August 06).
3. In Example 1 “#Evdekal Balıkesir” there is a video of a competition that the group participated in before the pandemic, the original is available at <https://youtu.be/2Vg2dv_AoaQ>.
4. In Example 1 “#Evdekal Balıkesir” 17–19 seconds shows an example from the first edit, the original is available at <<https://www.facebook.com/zeyrekakademibalikesir/videos/239390047387029/>> (accessed 2020 May 18.)
5. In Example 1 “#Evdekal Balıkesir” starting at 28th second shows an example from the second edit, the original is available <<https://www.facebook.com/zeyrekakademibalikesir/videos/643238212892274/>> (accessed 2020 May 3.)
6. In Example 2 “#Evdekal Kütahya” there is a video of a competition that the group participated in before the pandemic, the original is available at <<https://youtu.be/LhrqD4psc7E>>.
7. In Example 2 “#Evdekal Kütahya” from the 16th second onwards, the original is available at <<https://youtu.be/Ncjj1AM1-0w>>.
8. In Example 3 “#Evdekal Erzurum” *Hançer Barı* is performed during a wedding, the original is available at <<https://youtu.be/1vhAufpYKYs>>.
9. In Example 3 “#Evdekal Erzurum” from the 30th second of the video *Hançer Barı* performed within the scope of the #evdekal campaign, the original is available at <<https://youtu.be/rXrBTQR0p6s>>.
10. Example 4 “#Evdekal Yalova” original video is available at <<https://youtu.be/b9ta3nZmUdg>>.
11. Example 5 “#Evdekal Tire” original video is available at <<https://youtu.be/kfXzP4HuWOo>>.

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Muzaffer Sümbül

(Adana, Türkiye)

The digitalization of Turkish folk dances during the Covid-19 pandemic: The projection of the digital communication transformation of local dances from tradition to stage, visor to screen

The digital culture that developed before the pandemic, and the digital folk dance culture formed accordingly, have become a new research area. In this paper, the presence of Turkish folk dance studies in digital cultural environments during the Covid-19 epidemic and its analysis in regards to digital communication will be discussed. The work, or the impression it gives, is faced with a contextual confrontation in the concepts of monitoring because folk dance education and demonstration are not face to face or side by side any more, turning into a new style which is seen or monitored. Thus, folk dance has ceased to be the inner restlessness of the human body and has turned into another process through technological devices. Within the scope of this study, the projection of these transformations along with my personal experiences in the teaching and viewing process of Turkish folk dances during the pandemic will be discussed.

Keywords: Homo Ludens Digitalis; Covid-19; education; folkdance; visor.

Dancing was among the daily chores of man as a vital activity. With his work *Homo Ludens: A Study of Play-Element in Culture*, the historian Huzinga [1938] examined man and his nature in the context of the culture of playing by using the concept of ‘Homo Ludens’ for the first time. There is a different form of play in almost every entertainment and ritual. Man plays, dances and socializes. Different games are performed according to the purpose of the ceremony. In these processes, people dance, set up games or play console games. In this way, the ones who live with a different game content for each period also equip themselves with the game culture required by the era. For this reason, the qualification ‘playing person’ is an explanatory definition based on cultural production. Based on Huzinga’s conceptualization of this cultural dimension, the playing person of the digital technology era should be referred to with a new name as “Homo Ludens Digital” which means “Playing Digital Human” [Sümbül 2017:56]. The concept of the digital playing human expresses the transformation of playing states, and explains the human connection with the game along with social development. Therefore, digitalization in this area started before the Covid-19 outbreak. As seen in the Covid-19 pandemic period, people play in all conditions. The play reflects the projection of social life. On the other hand, it also provides qualities that enable people to live in a certain order.

Humans play by nature. From the moment the internet started to be used, the digitization of the game has become very quickly widespread. In a previous paper [Sümbül 2017], the author discusses these developments and the digitalization process of folk dances, and reveals the dimensions of digitalization with netlore data. Evaluating folk dances with an anthropological point of view, Sümbül [2017:55] states:

Another feature of the human being, adapted to the digitalized social life, has been defined as Homo Sapiens Digital. It is seen that the digitalized people are differentiated according to the way they play games, acquire new features, and adopt the identity of Homo Ludens Digital as ‘digital playing human’ as a naming emphasizing the player feature of the digital era human being.

Digital communication

Individuals who are in another state of visibility by moving away from the real world into virtual reality or cyber media turn into the object of a second life. According to Robins [2020:65], “[t]he cyber-world is a utopia because it is a world of order, an ordered world; it is first and foremost a visual world”. Therefore, cyber life turns into a directed set of images full of illusions because virtual environments in which the states of impersonation occur by breaking away from daily life bring along a conflict of identities. This situation brings the issue of identities and privacy of bodies to a different dimension. This life, which develops in the virtual reality world, is more than an individual choice, it integrates with the possibilities offered by technology and ensures the normalization of digital surveillance.

According to Lyon (2006) this change in surveillance stems from the characteristics of postmodernism. In the postmodern culture, people are no longer subject to surveillance by any pressure, fear or coercion from outside. They accept being subject to surveillance voluntarily at the expense of their own security and privacy, and they are happy about it. [Okmeydan 2017:56–57]

Okmeydan [2017:47] explains a power relationship established through the eye as follows:

The ongoing asymmetric surveillance between the power and the individual continues in the omnipticon as well as in the panopticon. However, in omnipticon, asymmetric surveillance cannot be noticed or ignored when it is noticed, due to the pleasure of being visible and the willingness to be seen. Surveillance based on external coercion in the panopticon has evolved into voluntary surveillance that is heartfelt and has enjoyment of being visible in the omnipticon. Postmodernism, which places visibility at the focal point of the pursuit of fun and pleasure, facilitates the changes in the phenomenon of surveillance.

The use of existing communication technology has increased greatly, in other words, digital literacy has increased and the use of tools has become very common. We have seen that spatial limitations pushed interpersonal communication towards digital platforms during lockdown. Being in front of the camera and screen has become common. When your communication turns into traditional digital communication, from the sensory organs to the ear-eye, from the personal memory to the digital storage areas, it is seen that the target audience has become unlimited, criticisms are instant, and interactions are instant and retrospective. With the digitalization of communication, the number of people that can be reached has also become infinite. The fact that the means of reaching the target audience is by using technological devices also causes many people to see and monitor strangers, and to show themselves by sharing their own images.

For a large amount of people, being monitored and monitoring others are ordinary and impartial (neutral) facts that refer to indispensable life blessings such as to see, to show, to be seen, thus, to be admired, to be appreciated, to be envied, even to be feared” (Ataman and Çoban 2016:35). This situation brings continuity to the desire to be noticed in social media and places with hedonism at the focal point in all areas of life. [cited by Okmeydan 2017:53]

These concepts including monitoring and being monitored that explains the looking and being under surveillance, are also called the power of the eye, and they explain the situation of the power to keep large masses under control through surveillance.

What happened during the Covid-19 pandemic?

The Covid-19 pandemic has also enabled the rapid digitalization of practices in daily life with the features of the network society, and the increase in digital literacy, combined with the problems brought by spatial limitations. This situation rapidly spread the use of digital channels and mediums, and a versatile usage network was formed. All kinds of content about daily life reached the masses through the tools of social media. Local dance practices also began to take place in these channels in a normal way. The teaching of lessons from private areas at home turned into teaching processes through short promotional videos on accounts and YouTube channels.

These restrictive new regulations in Turkey were very challenging for folk dancers. This period was very difficult for trainers and dancers who earn their living only by dancing as everyday life took a new form with many restrictions in the trilogy of contact, distance and hygiene. While it was necessary to dance in bodily contact holding hands, shoulder to shoulder, the restriction made this impossible. Was there any other way to dance? Despite the pandemic, there had to be a way. Folk dance activities, which were carried out both as lessons, education and hobby activities, started to take place online. Especially lessons became a part of distance education because of physical, time and hygiene restrictions. Lessons, private courses, even sports and other physical activities were transformed in this context. Although it is not very suitable for the nature of dance to hold the lessons remotely and to be in different places, we got used to this situation.

The period of lockdown and spatial limitation that were applied in the first phases of the pandemic also transformed the habits of playing. Body-based performances such as dance began to be performed in front of the camera. Various physical activities were done in the small spaces we created inside our homes. We shared these movements over the network through digital communication tools. Even ordinary daily life activities have been transferred to third parties from these platforms. Therefore, surveillance is the technological aspects of monitoring and being monitored; so a relationship between the viewer and the person using the visor was formed.

In this period, it was impossible to come together in traditional learning, teaching and presentation settings. In this process, the mirrors became orphans, the stages were dusty and the audience was deprived of the performances. All these changes and transformations have forced us to think deeply about the duality of stage and screen, screening, performance, dance, dancer. It brought with it a confrontation or questioning of concepts such as watching and being watched, and monitoring. What kind of performance will dance be, whether it is a local or stage performance, without providing its own existence, the sensual contact, in this digitalization process? How will the visor provide spiritual contact in the relationship between the performer and the viewer? These questions force us to confront digitalization, because dance has ceased to be the inner restlessness of the human body and has taken a different form through technological devices.

Method

In this study, I discuss how folk dance activities were carried out in Turkey during the pandemic (2019–2022 period) with regards to surveillance and digital culture. While doing this, I used a methodology based on my own experiences and netlore data. I analysed the data

which I obtained within the scope of panopticon [Bentham 1791; Foucault 2013(1975)], synopticon [Mathiesen 1997] and omnipiticon and liquid surveillance [Bauman and Lyon 2013]. In this context, I combined my folk dance activities with a corporate account working on the internet, with the analysis of a few personal accounts. These are the sources I reviewed:

1. Folk Dances course I was conducting at Çukurova University, Faculty of Sports Sciences.
2. *Adana Çiftetellisi* Digital Choreography

Findings and discussion

Autoethnography: self-reflective states

The online-offline learning experiences

It is seen that the increase in digital literacy and the internet as a learning environment have become commonplace. The google search engine is right next to us as a learning environment used to learn about almost any subject. It is possible to reach many visual learning videos with searches such as: I want to learn *Zeybek*, I want to learn *Halay*, how to play *Roman* dance? It is seen that learning and teaching processes have become widespread through watching videos or live broadcasts via social media accounts. Could this be a learning style? How to learn dance remotely? How about distance education as a new learning style for folk dances? How can a motor and sensory bodily movement be provided with online learning?

My self-reflexive states

As Çukurova University, we used the Teams system. With virtual classes created on this system, students could see all their lessons. Since I used online teaching environments such as google classroom before the pandemic in my courses at the Faculty of Communication, this transition was not that hard for me. During the pandemic, I experienced many online courses that require theoretical, narrative and technical knowledge. However, teaching folk dance online with a motor learning style for the first time created a mixture of anxiety and excitement for me. With these feelings and thoughts, I started the lessons.

First Lesson

I have been conducting folk dance lessons for many years at Çukurova University, Faculty of Sports Sciences, Department of Physical Education and Sports Teaching. As in the usual conditions of the pre-pandemic period, I took my bag on the first lesson day and came to the hall where I used to do my lessons. I opened my computer and started the course online. I started my first lesson speech and made explanations about how I would conduct the lesson by looking at the profiles of all students with their cameras turned off, some with photographs and some with letter symbols on their profiles. I felt alienated from the environment and situation, away from the nature of my work. Is not dance a communication established through the body, a powerful energy formed by the coming together of bodies and spirit? So how would I achieve this? I started to think about what I could do.

I rolled up my sleeves to do my folk dance class at the Faculty of Sports Sciences face-to-face and online, and to create the necessary environment. I was in a rush and excited. Since a different teaching process started from the previous lessons, I had to provide a classroom, sound system and a good visual environment accordingly. For this purpose, when I went to the Faculty of Sport Sciences and I met a student by chance. I asked this student “Can you attend the class and be in front of the camera during the teaching process?”. The answer I got was yes. This made me happy. I thought that if I could find a few more students who would attend the

class live, my other students would be able to follow the lesson better in front of the screen. I tried very hard to connect with my students in the first lesson. A good internet connection was needed to turn on the camera and connect the students to the lesson remotely, and to synchronize the music and broadcast. I made the controls by making sure that my students, who attended the lesson face to face for the first time, were connected to the lesson by phone, everything was ready.

I started my face-to-face class with a few students at the beginning, and within a few weeks I had increased it to 20–25, my goal was to have ten to 15 students in each lesson. If the demand was high, I planned to divide the class into groups and take the groups to the lesson separately every 30 minutes and conduct the lesson in this way. In a class of sixty-five people, I thought of giving everyone a chance to teach face-to-face by periodically changing the students in the class by taking fifteen students in each lesson. For this reason, we moved our lesson to the small hall in our university's gym. The airing of the classroom, the reduction of the risk of contamination, and the adherence to the rules of contact, hygiene and distance would be ensured as my lessons progress. We started to do the lesson in groups of 15 people in the gym. As the classes progressed, the effort to follow the rules of contact, hygiene and distance was felt very much, and the masks never came out.

Not all lectures were recorded. The first, the last lesson and the final lessons were recorded. This was my choice. There were several reasons. The fact that the course is online allows it to be watched synchronously. On the other hand, I preferred not to record in order to enable students to attend more face-to-face classes. I chose to teach the dances of *Harmandali*, *Misket*, *Çiftetelli* and *Haleb*, which would reduce the contact of our students with each other, and limit the holding hands and coming together.

Alone with my contradictions: surveillance or face to face.

I needed to see my students while teaching the moves. I was seriously concerned about how the movements I made were perceived without seeing because I think that dance should be taught face to face. Bodily movements are created by motor learning. We cannot achieve this with remote instruction. By dividing the class into groups, we continued our lessons with a solution in the form of face-to-face participation and online participation. The number of my students who attended almost every lesson in the classroom space increased. This situation showed that my approach towards the lesson actually had an effect on my students. A certain group began to come to class regularly. However, some of my students preferred to attend the class online. There were crowds at the door of the hall for a few weeks, our students who were waiting for their turn were very insistent to follow the lesson from the inside. Due to mask and hygiene contact concerns, I could not fulfil this request. Over time, a group of 20 began to attend the class regularly, face-to-face, and up to 15 students occasionally attended the class face-to-face. The rest of our students watched the lesson online. Unfortunately, I could not see any of my students who participated online doing the movements in front of the camera. They turned off their cameras and watched us from where they were. As well as being partly disturbing, it was a choice that also reduced the efficiency of the lesson.

In this context, when I started to think about the power of the eye such as being watched, monitoring, looking, it was unsettling that the other party was watching me without being seen. When we are not side by side in the construction of the body, doing the action we would have done mutually; it could not be understood that there was a folk dance movement teaching beyond looking, seeing and being watched. Being watched made me uneasy, the dance should have been side by side. Although I am a digital playing person 'Homo Ludens Digitalis', who conceptualized the digitalization of folk dances by writing in 2017, why did it make me so uneasy when my students were in front of the screen?

Following the lesson by watching from a distance ensures participation in the lesson. On the other hand, being followed in this way without making yourself visible and never turning on your camera gives you the feeling of peeking. The fact that the students that never turned on their camera were constantly watching, observing, looking and peeking at their friends who were in the lesson and me as the instructor, created a sense of panopticon surveillance in the construction of the body through vision. Over the time, in order to ensure the participation of my students who chose this path, I turned on the camera from the moment I started the lesson and taught the lesson with a certain number of students in the class, forgetting that we were being monitored.

Conclusion

Surveillance of the body: folk dance exercises from panopticon to liquid surveillance

In this study, the projection of these changes and transformations in my personal experiences in the teaching and viewing process of folk dances during the epidemic, and various examples realised on digital culture platforms and their theoretical evaluation were made. The Covid-19 pandemic affected daily life in many ways in every corner of the world. The epidemic has made digital technology an active part of everyday life. Art, as an ordinary activity, has become a part of communication between individuals, communities and cultures on digital platforms.

The digital culture that emerged in the so-called network society transformed communication into a different form. The stage has merged with the screen, and the communication through dance has also changed. The body, as a tool, has become digitalized by taking a new form in conveying its message directly to the audience. While dance was a direct means of communication as a body, the pandemic prevented the contact of the bodies, so dance performances turned into a different form from their usual state. Technologically, no new invention, nor new tool was created during the pandemic period. The use of existing tools was expanded and necessary improvements were made. The formation of digital communication through dance and its existence in itself are multi-faceted. It includes differences in both performance and viewing contexts. In particular, dance enables the body to become a communication tool. Thus, whether the dance is local or on the stage in many ways it becomes a means of expression as a cultural form in the expression of all emotions. Another important finding is that the knowledge, skills and habits for the correct use of these tools, called digital literacy, have increased rapidly. This led to the creation of a new digital life culture. It ensured the normalization of viewer, performer, monitoring, observed, and surveillance.

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Ivanka Vlaeva
(Sofia/Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria)

Crypto music in a world of virtual communication: Some peculiarities and challenges

The world pandemic situation opened new horizons for music. New conditions expanded the place of crypto art and crypto music – digital art treated as physical art that has authenticity and ownership. Its unique ID is verified using NFT (non-fungible token) that made crypto music ‘one-of-a-kind’. A new way of distant music communication and commodification has emerged. The aim of my study is to analyse what crypto music is and how it works thanks to virtual communication. I show its context and systematize its peculiarities. I also observe the challenges of crypto music for musicians, audiences, and creative industries. The focus is on crypto music and musicians from Southeastern Europe. Thus, crypto music is presented as a product of online communication and a sign of changing times. It shows new opportunities for the dissemination and purchase of music from Southeastern Europe and blockchain challenges for decentralized media, peer-to-peer distribution, and contacts with fans.

Keywords: NFT; blockchain; crypto art; crypto music; Southeastern Europe.

Virtual world and virtual art – new context and new communication

Virtuality is not new for people in the 21st century as a whole, but the technical tools and media provide new opportunities for communication. Among the older forms of virtuality are word, writing, and printing [Adams 2014], as well as sound and movement and their recordings, in my opinion. They work with the help of symbols and imaginary creations, which currently are largely technically supported by various means and media. Since 2020 the world Covid-19 pandemic situation has been suitable for some continuing tendencies in the art through virtual communication on the Internet. It opens new horizons for music as a performance experience, creation [Biasutti 2015] and educational process [Rucsanda, Belibou, and Cazan 2021], but also as a commodity [Harris and Thomas 2021]. Cultural and creative industries and the art market allow new correlations and processes in the field of culture.

The new environments give birth to new concepts in the field of art – the NFT (non-fungible token¹), blockchain, crypto art, crypto art movement, crypto art marketplace, and crypto music. They show specific correlations with the place of art in the virtual market that revolutionizes the current state of the music culture and music industry. Game items, digital art, music, video, domain names, physical assets, and event tickets are most popular among others.

In short, crypto music is digital art treated as physical art and has authenticity, ownership, and uniqueness. This newly coined term is part of the crypto world and a new way of distant music communication and music commodification by cryptocurrency. There are opinions that most likely crypto music will revolutionize the music industry due to the direct, decentralized communication between users that Web3 opens [Exposito 2022; Petkanics 2022].

The aim of my study is to analyse what crypto music is and how it works thanks to virtual communication. I show the context in which it is created and systematise its peculiarities. I also trace the new logic of music sales in my research and observe the challenges of crypto music for the creators, musicians, audiences and creative industries. I focus on crypto music in Southeastern Europe.

Peculiarities of crypto art and crypto music

Currently, the explanations of crypto music are not many and they differ according to the person who makes this and the purpose. In my research in 2022 I did not find the term in specialized music literature and online encyclopaedias (which are more flexible to the newest phenomena than traditionally published works), but I found the concept mainly in Internet sites and blogs in the field of economics and finance. It is just mentioned briefly in sources in the area of music performances. Crypto music has become part of the crypto world and crypto market, where purchases and sales are made in cryptocurrency like Bitcoin (BTC) or Ether (ETH). This concept received popularity after the extraordinary success of crypto art in millions of dollars sales of both cartoon game images (digital art) and traditional art assets. Famous auctions like Sotheby's and Christie's take part in the crypto market. The digital artworks (see *Everydays — The First 5000 Days*) by the artist Beeple was sold for \$3.5 million in 2021 at Christie's, which is "the auction house's first sale of a solely digital artwork" [Thaddeus-Johns 2021]. Such an interest provokes more attention to crypto art and reaction to crypto music.

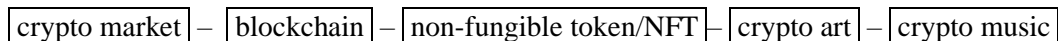
In general, crypto art is "digital art that is treated like physical art due to the ability to have verified ownership of the piece" [Hassenfratz, Winkelmann, Allen 2021]. It is possible to authenticate physical artworks through special crypto technology. Crypto art is an opportunity to make digital art unique and to secure it.

In 2015, the concept 'crypto music' was used (for the first time) by DJ Spinn [Admin 2022] as a crypted or encrypted music released online. Some years later, it was part of crypto art, which has to be authenticated and received in crypto space using cryptocurrency and a changed idea for ownership. The verification of crypto art is completed using NFTs – non-fungible tokens. "A non-fungible token (NFT) is a cryptographic token that records who owns a piece of digital content on the blockchain" [Vermaak 2022]. NFTs "are unique, digital items with blockchain-managed ownership" [Finzer 2020]. Each NFT is a unique digital asset with special codification, and in this way, it secures crypto art – images, audio and video items, other objects, even tweets and important sports events. Musicians can create their own NFTs, which they can purchase or receive royalties from their next sales. The unique ID of crypto music is verified using NFT, which has to make this music 'one-of-a-kind'. Sometimes it is associated with "a unique ID number assigned to the art" [Lum and Clark 2012], but in the crypto space, this is an alphanumeric identification number.

As well as traditional art, digital art could be purchased, sold and collected. Sometimes it is possible to receive partial royalties and reproduction of an entity of crypto art. Usually, crypto art is digital but could be physical artwork tokenized and tracked on a blockchain – a cryptographic technology. Blockchain is "a system in which a record of transactions made in bitcoin or another cryptocurrency are maintained across several computers that are linked in a peer-to-peer network" [Lexico.com. 2022]. Thus, the artwork (image, audio, video, etc.) can be differentiated, verified and secured from forgery and scams because the encrypted data is unable to be changed on a blockchain. Ethereum blockchain (as Solana, Audius and others) is such a platform that is suitable for crypto art and music NFTs. If the consumer wants to use it a blockchain music streaming platform app is needed. Ethereum was created in 2013 by Vitalik Buterin and allows a fast-growing crypto art market which released a million dollars. A forecast is for expanding this market to the amount of \$7.5 Billion in the Global crypto art market by 2028 [Adroit market research 2021].

Crypto music and the chain (system) in which it works

The chain of crypto music includes some important elements, as explained above. They are connected in a peer-to-peer system which allows decentralization and direct access to each user on a blockchain. These are the main elements:



In this way the processes of dissemination of music are accepted as much easier, faster and safer. Different actors (creators, performers, mediators, and audiences) use peer-to-peer distribution in these decentralised forms of digital media. They digitalised and stored music content using NFTs and have immediate opportunities for direct actions – saving, bidding, purchasing, selling, collecting, and receiving royalties of music goods. Thus, questions arise about new media organisations in Web3 as well as about the benefits and disadvantages of the crypto world.

Challenges of crypto music

The global Covid-19 pandemic provoked and deepened the changes in the creative industries. The necessary social isolation in musical life and the stay-at-home shift much more towards digital media and blockchains. According to research from Middlesex University and partners in the UK, more than 90% of musicians and fans believed that virtual live streaming would be a successful tool and desired for music dissemination for many, even after the pandemic world [Kavanagh 2021]. In the new context of cultural industries, the use of NFTs is transforming music consumption and commodification faster than ever before [Vermaak 2022]. What are the challenges that crypto music meet? Analysts point out positive and negative aspects of these processes that have effects on each segment of the music system (creators, musicians, performers, audiences, fans, creative industries).

Some benefits look attractive. A new niche of crypto music has been approved. The opportunity for creators to own their businesses on the Internet by themselves is open. They could create NFTs, navigate and decide what to do with their works directly without mediators. The processes have been democratized due to the decentralized music production and circulation. Also, the time and cost for each action is reduced because of live streaming and instant interactive communication. Musicians earn much more by selling their own works directly to fans than any record label would have paid them [Newton 2021]. The result is that creators and performers eliminate the labels, receive real-time revenue, and fans become marketers investing directly in artists. All processes are shortened. Techno-obsessed groups (enthusiasts) believe that crypto music will give much more power to artists and this is the way towards a new financial system for music [Hisson 2021]. “Every resale benefits the original artist. The blockchain allows people to verify authenticity” [Music Business Podcast 2021]. Also, event tickets could be purchased without frauds and sales on the black-market.

At the same time, crypto music raises doubts. Some people cannot understand what this is, while others are sceptics [Finzer 2020]. Disadvantages and problems are pointed out. They are provoked due to many fewer or non-regulated mechanisms and opportunities in this area. Despite ideas for democratization of the music market the situation is mainly appropriate for the wealthy – those who have money, with the opportunity to pay for tokenizing music and fame. The system works successfully mainly for the famous names in the music field. Thus, the use of NFTs makes the music industry more elitist [Vermaak 2022]. Virtual assets also provoke scepticism. Crypto music works are not real ones, but something like a receipt proving ownership and the concept of owning a thing [Bokat-Lindell 2022]. This is happening in a

society obsessed with the virtual world and the opportunity to buy and sell everything as much as possible. Crypto music has an owner, but it can be downloaded, duplicated, or screenshotted, which leads to doubts and misunderstandings about virtual ownership. Some comments on the topic in internet chats are like this: “[...] if someone re-records the sound of a music file – there’s no recourse. Whom the heck cares if you are the owner of it or not at that point” [Music Business Podcast 2021], and one more opinion in this way of thinking: “The file or art is not what is valuable in this context. That is what makes this so crazy. The world gets to enjoy the work, and it can still be sold to collectors at the same time” [Music Business Podcast 2021]. Another disadvantage is minting NFTs that need too much energy and destruct the environment. A fact is that the mining of Ethereum in 2018 has used more energy than the country of Iceland [Vermaak 2022]. There are opinions that due to climate change issues, it is possible that cryptocurrency will become obsolete very soon as an archaic technology that destroys nature and costs too much. Currently, cryptocurrency mining costs many times more than gold mining. Also, the electricity price increase in 2022 has led to a very large increase in the cost of cryptocurrency and crypto art.

Crypto music in Southeastern Europe and Bulgarian experience

The Adroit Market Research points out that North America is the most significant crypto art market and prosperous field for investments, but Europe is the next big market of crypto art. The forecast is that music and paintings are among the most lucrative niche [Adroit market research 2021]. A year ago (2021) first crypto art festival was made in Lisbon, Europe that wants to be a hub of crypto art [Toscano 2021]. It was named *Rare Effect Vol2* hosted by The Association Arroz Estúdios.

In the global context, Kings of Leon (an American rock band) are among the first musicians who received great popularity with the tokenized album *When you see yourself* in 2021 and crypto music sales for \$2 million. The musicians have launched an album as NFT. At the same time, DJ 3LOU (pronunciation Blau) registered 33 NFTs which he sold for \$11.7 million. Another performer – the rapper Snoop Dogg has intended to turn his acquired Death Row Records into a NFT recording label. Stars like Eminem and Lil Pump are among others. Currently, it seems that DJs and rappers are among the most open-minded to crypto music, and it is they who have placed their music in the blockchains.

What is the situation in Southeastern Europe? Is there an interest in the crypto world and music? Currently, it is not easy to find enough information due to: the short history of crypto music in general, the practice of using pseudonyms in crypto spaces, and perhaps because of the smaller share of the regional music (mainly for local use) compared to the European and global music industry. In spite of this I found some traces of interest in crypto music in the region among entrepreneurs and artists.

Initially, the crypto space found a place in Southeast Europe through cryptocurrency. Bulgarians Kosta Kantchev and Antoni Trenchev created Nexo that is a lending platform for cryptocurrency. This is one of the worldwide leading digital assets companies that have \$12 billion in activities, over 4 million users around the world, and \$80 billion in transactions. From the end of 2021, Nexo expanded its access to crypto in collaboration with another company – Fidelity Digital Assets for storage of digital assets. This allows Nexo to work with new products and lending agreements which are intended for institutional investors [Zlatareva 2021]. Recently, Kosta Kantchev and Antoni Trenchev have also bought digital art in Christie’s first NFTs auction in Europe for \$1.3 million [Howcroft 2021].

The strong traditions of IT specialists in Southeastern Europe perhaps are the reason to make and invest in Blockchains made by other regional actors. Thus, Viberate, located in

Ljubljana Slovenia, was pointed out in 2021 as “the world’s largest live music database, featuring more than 460,000 artists, 5,000 music festivals and 500,000 global music events” [Daley 2021], which intends to become like IMDb in music. DJ Umek, Matej Gregorčič and Vasja Veber were its founders in 2015. They claim that “data is a new gold” [Alldridge 2022]. The main aim is to connect different segments of the music industry in a chain that works directly with musicians, event organizers, agencies, and fans. Viberate has also intended to release 200 million VIB tokens (ERC20 standard) and plans to organize a Digital Ticket Exchange (ticket booking service).

The rapper, songwriter, and record producer Boro Purvi (Boro the First) is the performer who traced the way towards crypto music in Bulgaria. His interest in the crypto world and Bitcoin leads him to the next step. He makes music NFTs and became the first Bulgarian artist who placed his own music on the Ethereum blockchain, according to the information I have. The album *SUPERBORO* from 2019 was tokenized in 2021 and marks his crypto music collection. While studying in France, he understood the mixture of Balkan music, where many different influences coexisted. Boro Purvi explains his style as a hybrid of urban trap beats and up-tempo electronic instrumentals with some traditional Balkan melodies and emotions. His videos have millions of views on YouTube. His most viewed tracks on 18 September 2022 are *Kucha marka* (phraseological unit, something that not worth it) - 1 717 945; *Maiko Maiko* (Mother, mother) - 3 714 738; *Freestyle* - 5 274 220; *Vivaldi* with Tita - 11 973 853; *Get Together* David Guetta & Boro Purvi - 1 426 905. The album *SUPERBORO* has 11 tracks (32 minutes duration). Collaborations with other artists, including UK Grime artists and David Guetta, have broadened his audience and popularity. The idea for music NFTs comes into the mind of this Bulgarian rapper from his desire to receive income in a new way that tokenized audio allows. The rapper’s future plans include creating *crypto muzika* (crypto music) produced especially for crypto audiences and regarded as a new sub-genre, expanding his own NFT collection, and collaborations for music production in crypto games projects – digital games are another important field in crypto space.

Recently, on 13 July 2022, information about Bulgarian *chalga* music that has been purchased as crypto music was distributed on the Internet. Famous pop-folk singer Emanuela announced that she likes innovations and new world technologies. For this reason, she made her first NFTs music collection. Crypto music was based on her project named *Crypto*. It is a visually provocative release in which another two young pop folk singers – Vaya and Kiara, took part [Emanuela 2022]. The single *Crypto* was also released on Emanuela’s YouTube channel.

The themes of the songs related to the crypto world are another important fact about the impact of a new area in the music world. Proof of such interest is Boro Purvi’s song *Ethereum*. The singer explains in an interview that he would like to share his knowledge of crypto with more people, to provoke more interest in this new field, to amaze the audience, despite the weaker interest of his fans in this field. He understands that the topic is not very popular among a large number of people (YouTube views of his songs are proof), but he sees the results – a growing interest in crypto. Boro Purvi also aimed to explain his feelings and hopes when he started working with cryptocurrency, as well as his hopes for a new turning point in history and new horizons. He would like to support the growing crypto culture and admires the possibilities of the technology to bring about total democracy in this area as well [Balevski 2022]. Another impressive example is a song *Bitcoin* by the Eastern European rapper KDDK together with Macedonian singer Elena Risteska [KDDK rap 2018].

Conclusions

The global Covid-19 pandemic has increased the number of musicians who have lost income due to health bans and social exclusion. The result of this situation is a shift to crypto music by more artists, increasing music NFTs and a growing crypto art market. They are revolutionizing the creative industries and creating challenges.

Crypto music has been presented to some extent as a product of distant online communication, a sign of changing times and a way that is reshaping the music industry. The changes in the music market are faster than ever. They show new opportunities for the dissemination and purchase of music from all over the world and from southeastern Europe. The Blockchain challenges for decentralized media and peer-to-peer distribution to allow better engagement with the audience presents arguments with both pros and cons. Advantages are seen in the democratization and decentralization of both music production and dissemination; reduction of time and costs; receiving much more power to each actor in the creative industries; opportunity for creators to own their business and to operate directly; more resilience for the independent musicians and labels; real-time revenue. There are also disadvantages and doubts: the crypto market is risky; crypto music is best suited for wealthy owners; NFTs are successful mainly for famous names; the concept of owning a non-physical thing and virtual ownership seems strange for many people; there are big frauds in the NFTs market despite the blockchain safety statements and technologies used to avoid these.

The physical world is being replaced by a virtual world, and this idea is difficult for many to accept. Buying art that you cannot touch is still a dilemma. Crypto music is risky as a segment of a stock market where information, forecast and fast reaction work together. The technology, finance and creative industries are working in a new system. The big companies became involved very soon in participating in the crypto art market and shifting part of their business into the crypto space because more financial resources mean more return on investment. The opposite tendency also works – the purchase of a one-dollar product that a million people need to buy. It is difficult to predict, but the virtual world is already a fact in our lives as well as in the music space.

Endnotes

1. Token – something that you do or a thing that you give someone, that expresses your feelings or intentions, although it might have little practical effect [Cambridge dictionary 2022].

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Theme 3: Legacies of Empires on dance and music in Southeastern Europe

Panel 2: Cultural Ottoman reflections in traditional, family, and social ceremonies in Kosovo

Kosovo, located within Southeast Europe, is the youngest country in Europe, having declared independence in 2008. Yet, its geographical position has historically been a crossroad for multicultural contacts. The long imperial dominances in this region have reflected norms of the dominant powers leaving traces in the cultural heritage of this country. Inhabited by a majority of ethnic Albanians, along with other ethnic minorities, Kosovo's cultural heritage consists of a rich, hybrid and complex cultural diversity.

At the Symposium of ICTMD in Istanbul in 2022, the panel from Kosovo, consisted of four presentations. The topic of Women's celebration *Dhjetësahatëshi*, of Gjakova Men's *Aheng*, of the Wedding's semi-circle dances or *Vallet në gjysëm rreth*, and of the Bride's farewell or *Hallallaku*, represented the various cultural aspects of traditional ceremonies in Kosovo. Having in mind that cyclical moments have dominated life, these life moments are characterized by collective manifestations accompanied by rites and rituals, music, songs, and dances, in which cultural, traditional, folkloric, musical, and ethnographic features are identified. Therefore, within our panel "Cultural reflections of Ottoman Empire in traditional, family and social ceremonies in Kosovo", and our four presentations, we focus primarily on how Kosovar Albanians celebrate the cyclical moments of life. We are particularly interested in understanding also whether influences of Ottoman culture coexist with ethnocultural characteristics and how these influences and reflections are shaped today.

Therefore, this panel provides valuable insights into understanding cultural connections between traditional ceremonies and the historical legacy of the Ottoman Empire that bind the past and the present of Kosovar Albanians.

Arbnora Dushi
(Kosovo)

***Dhjetësahatëshi* (ten-hours): A traditional women's ceremony in Kosovo**

The influence of Ottoman heritage has been present until recently in many traditional ceremonies of Albanians in Kosovo, especially in those that are related to family rites. Among these, there has been a ceremony known as *Dhjetësahatëshi* (Ten-hours) which used to be organized by urban wealthy families, a few days after the traditional wedding-day. The ceremony would be attended only by a considerable number of women, mostly of kinship relationships, who would dance solo or in couples. During the ceremony they would eat, talk, laugh, sing, and stay at the event for ten hours. Spending ten hours in such ceremonies has been considered a form of freedom for women, knowing the fact that they usually stayed most of the time within their homes. In this paper traces of Ottoman culture in the Ten-hours ceremony compared to the local traditional one will be taken in consideration.

Keywords: Kosovo; Albanians; ten-hours; urban; Ottoman.

If we refer to the historians and anthropologists of the Balkans, today, more than a century after the Ottoman Empire left the Balkans, we can freely say that there is not a living person who can give us a personal narrative of the experiences from the time of that Empire, but on the other hand, the stories of each family, transmitted through the generations, are full of events and folklore from that time [Lory 2013:359]. Ottoman domination in the Balkans, for centuries, gave the possibility of a coexistence for the smaller groups of ethnic peoples, who were united as much as divided, in languages, religions, and traditions. In addition history, geography also contributed to this [see Samson 2013].

Coexistence under a dominant Ottoman law for such a long period of time, including periods of war and loss of property and inheritance during forced migrations, caused many of these ethno-cultural differences to flatten, while at the same time common traditions were established, but nevertheless also others were preserved, which under the Ottoman cover, had survived with difficulty. Such evidence from the field has also created dilemmas as to whether there is a special Balkan culture, when we consider the fact that multiethnicity, here more than anywhere else is the representative culture of the region [Todorova 2019:221].

In this context, what would be valued today as an Ottoman heritage, refers to a collection of memories of traditions from the past, which have managed to survive thanks to memory, which, in addition to being unwritten, have survived to the present day only in the form of customary practices, the only explanation for which was many times in the form of ‘so it was *adet* (customary)’. So we refer to them as Ottomans, knowing the jargon from that language, without having a factual knowledge of them, but because the hereditary reference comes from that period. They may have been adapted, of course, to the local, social and economic circumstances of the area where they were practised. Because, after all, most of the inhabitants of the Balkans, like most people everywhere, adhered to cultural practices and values that evolved over time and not to the immutable structures and norms imposed by the ruler - whoever he was [Buturovič and Schick 2007:3].

We will concretize this concept through the introduction of a tradition practised for a long time in a city of Gjakova in Kosovo, whose traces today can be found quite modified and adapted, even occasionally as invented traditions [Hobsbawm and Ranger 2012]. It is about the tradition of the women's ceremony called *dhjetësahatësh* (ten-hour), an Albanian-Turkish language term meaning ten hours (*dhjetë* (Albanian) = ten; *sahat* – (Turkish) = clock but also

hour). In this meeting women gathered and stayed ten hours of the day together, having fun, dancing, singing, eating and celebrating. In the Balkans, where the role of women was conventionally reduced to the private sphere and considered irrelevant to history; we will instead approach it internally to see the way of organizing, dancing, singing and other features of this ceremony, to see what was oriental in this tradition and what may have been a distinct local, non-Ottoman cultural feature.

The Gjakova customary tradition itself

The city of Gjakova (Kosovo), with its urban and cultural heritage from the Middle Ages, is known for the old traditions that it has preserved and passed on with great dedication. These traditions, whose respect and continuation testify to the quality of citizenship, have historically identified the inhabitants of this city. Respecting family rites and especially rites of initiations, which were accompanied by ceremonies and practices, were very prominent in this city.

In the eighth book of *Seyahatname*, the travel writer Evliya Çelebi, when describing his visit to the people of Rumelia in the 1660s, also writes about the city located in the southwest of Kosovo, Gjakova (in Turkish: Yakoviçe)

Continuing on from here we arrived in Gjakova. There is another Djakovo in the sandjak of Požega, but this Gjakova is in the sandjak of Dukagjin. It is a flourishing and attractive town consisting of 2,000 houses, all of stone with [...] roofs and gardens. It is ruled by a voyvoda and has a *kadi* with a salary level of 150 *akçe*. The public buildings are situated on a broad plain. They include two richly-adorned congregational mosques; several prayer-houses; some hans with leaden roofs, which at present are stocked with munitions for the Kotor campaign; a delightful bathhouse; and about 300 shops like nightingale-nests. Because of the mild climate, the young boys are very pretty. [Dankoff and Elsie 2000:27–57]

These city records lack data on women due to the fact that their life was behind the walls of the house. As with other peoples in Rumeli, women at that time did not lead a public life. Woman's activity with all its dynamism did not go beyond the stone walls of backyards [see Backer 2015]. According to the reminiscences of a British Counsellor's wife who served in the Balkans in the nineteenth century:

The Albanian women are lively and of an independent spirit, but utterly unlettered. Very few of the Mohammedans in Lower Albania possess any knowledge of reading or writing. They, are, however, proud and dignified, strict observers of the rules of national etiquette; and they attach great importance to the antiquity of their families, and regulate their marriages by the degrees of rank and lineage. [Blunt 1918:83]

Their life and daily life belonged to the commitments around the family and the rites that accompanied these obligations. But even within these practices, women from local populations found the opportunity to express their desires and needs, which from a current perspective, show their role in the processes of cultural and social interactions which we find everywhere in the Balkans [Buturovič and Schick 2013:3]. According to this logic, I am inclined to interpret this gendered ceremony as coming from a need for freedom. Their meetings with members of the same sex where they talked about the daily topics that preoccupied them, their desires, needs, and concerns, while simultaneously presenting themselves with the most beautiful

appearance they had, I see as a desire for freedom. It is a fact that speaks for a level of social development.

Family rites and especially initiation rites, were accompanied by ceremonies and ritual practices which required a large number of participants. In cases of family reunification with new members, birth of children or marriage, moments of joy were shared with others by organizing group meetings. This tradition was especially respected and valued by women. There were even certain days when women were allowed to make such visits to give wishes for occasions of joy. Tuesday and Friday, each week, were the days when women were particularly engaged in these visits and were known as 'women's days'. The women had no commitments in the public sphere, but their preparation for participation in these ceremonies required long preparation and great investment in their appearances, including costly costumes, gold ornaments, and face makeup, an investment that every woman made, because it reflected her and her family's prestige. This activity of women, on two days of the week, was not resisted by men. It even transformed men into supporters, tolerant of demands for daily commitments around the house, such as preparing food and caring for children. The visits were entirely within the family sphere and the participants were close cousins and friends. Judging from today's perspective, this seems anachronistic, but there are differences between public and private in relation to women in Ottoman society which are different from Western theories. According to Peirce, the Ottoman urban space was created on different principles towards authority and the public / private division should be understood according to the privileged / ordinary, sacred / profane ratio - differences that pervaded the harem as a privileged private space only for women in relation to ordinary public life made by men. Therefore, the privileged lived 'private' and shared life, the common was 'public'; in other words, 'private' meant power. This power was manifested by women in Ottoman society, but in secret [Peirce 1993:8].

The features of ten-hours ceremony

Meetings and parties of women with same-sex companions where they could freely express themselves, communicate with each other and display their graces, and express their competitive spirit by comparing themselves with each other for beauty and dress, showed a spirit of freedom. The freedom of movement of women during these two days of the week, where they were preoccupied only with themselves and the other married women of the family, indicated a privilege for them. This ritual was not practised in other cities of Kosovo. Gjakova women continued to practise it even in the time of industrialization when women were engaged in education and public life, with small modifications shifting it to a day of the week such as Saturday, gradually reducing its hours, but retaining the name.

The ten-hour ritual was organized by the family which had an occasion of joy such as the birth of a male child, the marriage of a son or circumcision. Organising this activity required a lot of preparation for the host family because a few dozen women were invited to participate, inside the house. They would be hosted with the best food, and would be offered the opportunity for entertainment with good music and dancing. In addition to the food and entertainment, the attire and costumes that the participants had to wear was of a completely oriental and layered design (Figure 1). Ottoman women's jackets embroidered with gold thread, *shalvars* (wide women's trousers) and shirts from materials imported from Turkey, headdresses with woven flowers, along with costly gold ornaments, were indispensable clothing accessories (Figure 2). The groom's family was obliged to give the bride an entire outfit for the outfit would testify to the status of his family.



Figure 1. Photo from 1955 in Gjakova, from a *Dhejtësahatësh* which shows women in their costumes participating in the ceremony.

This is what an eighty-year-old woman from Gjakova recounts, who remembers this ritual when she was a bride:

When I got married, we were two brides. My mother-in-law was alive. When there was a family occasion of a wedding ceremony it was a custom to go for a visit. In this case the mother-in-law was organizing a visit together with the two brides of her two sons. We had to be well-dressed with all the parts of the costumes. I put on the white shirt (shorte) and then the jacket with two wings, embroidered with golden thread, with dimija and all the jewellery. It was time when we couldn't go out uncovering the face and body, so above all the costume I had to put the black sheet, only eyes open. [...] This is how we looked on the street when going for the visit with my mother-in-law. We visited on certain days, Tuesday and Friday, which were women's days. On women's days, men stayed at home with the children because they knew that they were women's days. We had to cook lunch earlier and to have it ready because we knew they were hungry when coming from their work. After the evening fell, a little before dawn, we returned to the house. There was a lot of order and discipline back then. [...] When we went at the family where the ceremony was held, there we found more women gathered. The musicians were Ruka and Baja or later Esmoja and Sadija, who played tambourine and sang. The women met there. There were usually daughters-in-laws with their in-laws. We were competing: which one is better looking, which one is the most beautiful, whose costume are the best [...] Daughters-in-law had to dance and the mothers-in-laws applauded. When her daughter-in-law was dancing her mother-in-law would give money to the singer. For those who were better dancers they would applaud more, while for others not so much [...] It was not always necessary for the bride to be a dancer, but it was preferable. In Gjakova many women knew to dance, because for the *Dhjetesahatësh* there was a specific style of dancing, slowly and with the meter. [Interview recorded in 2005, from an 80 years old lady].



Figure 2. Women's dress, typical for *Dhjetësatësh*. Photo from 1975, Gjakova.

Ten-hours was a family event, including recipes from Ottoman cuisine for soups, meat-rich dishes to sweets such as *baklava* and other delicacies. The whole menu was served hour by hour for the attendees, until the end of the day. The Roma ladies frame drum players were a necessary part of the ten-hour ritual; no other community provided them. Samson says that Roma as musicians were highly valued in Kosovo, while this community at large had a low social status [Samson 2013:77]. The pairs of Roma women, who performed according to a specific rhythm by playing the tambourine (the *def*) and singing were the only music for the ten-hour ceremony. In addition, a specific dance was performed by young brides, usually in pairs or solos, who danced in the middle of the room in front of other spectators, sitting around applauding.

Space was also specific for this type of party. The ten-hours ceremony was organised in the largest room of the house, which was built specifically for family gatherings. Each family that had a slightly better standard of living was required to have a large guest room, which was not used on a daily basis and was reserved only for special occasions. In cases when the weather was good and when the host family had a large yard, the ten-hours ceremony could also be organized in the yard, in which case a large carpet was laid there and around it chairs or the seats improvising the room (Figure 3.)



Figure 3. This photo is from a family occasion in Gjakova, in the 1970s, organized in the backyard. The photo was taken from the Facebook page *Gjakova djep i kulturës*.

The ten-hours ceremony and the connection with the Albanian tradition

Except the Ottoman traditional cultural elements that can be identified easily in this ritual, like the food menu, clothing, music, dancing, etc. some features from Albanian local traditions could be also identified such as customs regulated by the *Kanun of Lekë Dukagjini*, for which Albanians are traditionally well known. The custom of hospitality, generosity, highly appreciating the guests, providing food by sharing with others that was believed to increase food and wealth, respecting the hierarchy of family members, etc.

First, we mention the very purpose of this gathering, was sharing joy with others, such as when the family has a new member, new-born baby, or new bride, which is an important moment for the Albanian family, and especially when this new member (new-born baby) is a new male.

The other element is the custom of hospitality, in this case the hospitality of the wife and the host family towards the guests, where the one who ‘opens the door’, that is the one who has brought joy to the family, offers generosity and hospitality, and offers food and comfort for free to the participants in her party. Also, in this party, the guests have the place of honour and they are given a higher status than the family members themselves, including the owners of the house, according to these rules which are codified with the *Canon of Lekë Dukagjini*.

The other element is the giving of bread to the guests, an old Albanian custom, whereby you offer the products of the family budget, thus sharing it with friends and they bless you; it is believed that by sharing it with others, your family wealth will increase.

The hierarchy of position in the family is also from the Albanian tradition, which imposes respect for the elders. This is related to the organization of large families where the order and position of family members is determined according to age, gender and of course according to the division of labour and participation in material goods. In the case of the ten-hours ceremony, this hierarchy is very visible, where for example the mother-in-law’s word is an

order for her daughter-in-law, where the daughter-in-law does not have the right to make any decisions for herself, including where to sit, when to get up to eat, or when to change her wardrobe.

The tradition of ‘ten hours’ marks a ceremonial ritual from the traditions of the city of Gjakova. It as such is no longer practised, but is still fresh in the memory of middle-aged women. To follow such a tradition requires a woman to have a lot of free time, to have fewer general social commitments and preoccupations, to have a high standard of living. The change in the social status of the Albanian woman has made traditional customs like the ten-hours die out and remain only part of collective memory; all we can do to record and document them for the next generations, whose way of life will produce other forms of collective organization.

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Bubulinë Syla
(Pristina, Kosovo)

(Semi) circle dances among Albanians in Kosovo: The case of wedding ceremony

The Ottoman Empire ruled Albanians from the 15th until the beginning of the 20th century, therefore its traces can still be perceived today among rituals, music, and dances. Specifically, (semi)circle dances are part of almost all wedding ceremonies in societies where Ottomans have ruled (including Kosovo). They are accompanied by folk songs and instruments, most often by *davul* and *zurna*. A group of people hold each other's hands, whose movements are determined by the music, and initially form a semicircle which constantly expands. The movements are guided by the first dancer leading the whole group, holding a cloth in the right hand while keeping the left hand held with the right hand of the next dancer. The (semi)circle dances have no names and are referred to as free dances, but these types of dances are practiced from an early age in many celebrations, especially in weddings, including participants of all genders.

Keywords: dance; Ottoman; wedding; Kosovo; tradition.

Kosovo is the youngest country in Europe having declared independence in 2008. Its geographical and political position have historically been a crossroad for many years; the long dominances of the Ottoman Empire have influenced everyday activities and tradition of cyclical moments such as birth, marriage, and death rituals of the majority of ethnic Albanians living in Kosovo. Therefore, such moments are characterized by collective manifestations accompanied by rites and rituals, music, songs, and dances, in which cultural, traditional, and ethnographic features are identified together with the impact of the dominant imperial culture on them.

One of the most widespread traditions among Albanians in Kosovo at weddings is the dance in a semicircular setting, which is also very popular and is the central form of dancing in every manifestation (and wedding ceremonies) in Southeast European countries.

The celebration starts when someone announces the *Aheng* (which is a pleasant occasion, during which people play, sing and dance with enthusiasm). They [the participants of *Aheng*] '*kapen për dore dhe formojnë rrethin*' – grab each other's hands and firstly form a semicircle which constantly expands. Sometimes there is not enough place to fit one circle, so they form a second circle, which goes in the same line as the first one. The movements and steps are mostly guided by the first dancer leading the whole group, holding a cloth in the right hand, constantly waving it over their head or behind their back, while keeping the left hand held with the right hand of the next dancer. These movements are not fixed, so the dancers can manoeuvre with such special movements.

Meanwhile, the last dancer in the circle keeps the left hand still or places it behind their back. Dancers keep moving in counter clockwise direction, smiling, and tracking their steps, looking down to their feet from time to time, making sure they are all following one another, while the movements of the hands for the rest of the other dancers remain the same. The role of the leading dancer can change within time, as the dancers offer each-other to be the next one leading, or they willingly start dancing as a leader in the chain.

Having that said, the purpose of this paper is to analyse the rhythm and movements of (semi)circle dances among Albanian weddings in Kosovo, and show or identify the shared cultural traditions of Balkan countries that were ruled under the same Empire, by asking the following research questions: How do Albanians in Kosovo perform (semi)circle dances at

Aheng? What are the characteristics of such dances? Are there similarities and differences of movement and rhythm to be seen and identified between Albanian (semi)circle dances and Balkan countries?

This paper is based firstly on literature (international and national) of many scholars, who have conducted fieldwork. One of them is Janet Reineck [1991] who conducted fieldwork in the Region of Opoja in 1980, providing us useful practical videos and a rich perspective of analysis in choreology, explicitly of wedding semi-circle dances.

“The final goal, of which an ethnographer should never lose sight [...] is, briefly, to grasp the natives’ point of view, his relation to life, to realize *his* vision of *his* world” [Malinowski 1922:25]. Due to my ‘native’s point of view’ [Malinowski 1922] I have also been able to observe and analyse as a ‘native dancer and participant’ the rhythm and the movements of such dances during the previous years, but specifically during the Summer 2022, which I present in this paper.

Semi(circle) dances at weddings in Kosovo

The wedding ceremony among Albanians takes place through numerous practices and rituals, which are culturally defined on a local and regional basis. In this important event, of course, a very special role is played by cheerful rituals, such as music and dance, and the desire for a happy atmosphere during the event. The analysis starts from the event that takes place and the joy that is shown for a marriage in society and family. In Kosovo and other Southeastern European countries as well, semi-circle dancing is an integral part of many family and social events, as I have already mentioned above and I experienced it through weddings in the previous years and specifically the last summer season of 2022.

The semi-circle dance for Albanians in Kosovo is characterised as a free dance, that has neither a specific name nor a fixed structure of steps. Usually performed as a four-step dance, it begins by placing the right foot in the air, and then making a small step forward, alternating legs, that is right-left-right-left alike, and left in the air, and the scheme is the same for the continuation of the dance.

With that being said, in such dances, we notice that we are dealing with a certain spontaneity in which a great role is played by the individuality of the first dancer, both in the combination of steps and in the improvisation of moments and dance performers [Agolli 1965].

Holding hands with each other in almost every dance is in the same line and does not constitute any particular movement, but it is essential that the dancers place their feet in a similar way. Sometimes they put their hands down or slightly bend down for a few moments on rare occasions, while retaining their free movement. Hence, in this type of dance we distinguish the movement of the legs, the movements of the hands, the movement of the body, the head and the facial mimics or expressions, all interacting with each-other [Agolli 1965:9]. All fractures, fast, slow or normal body movements are generally seen during the performance of dances in a beautiful and continuous connection [Agolli 1965:10].

An interesting phenomenon in these dances is that the people who participate in them do not have the same dancing skills, so they do not move their feet the same way the others do. However, based on their knowledge and desire, it happens sometimes that within the dance an arrhythmia takes place in the execution of movements and choreographic motifs [Bogdani 1995:37].

According to scholars [such as Bogdani, Agolli, Berisha etc.], and my observations this dance is part of the lyrical wedding dances, which can be danced by all its participants and it

is easy to follow. It has one motif, which means that the motif is constantly repeating throughout the dance.

It has been supposed that the opening of the circle has ritual functions, but with time such dances have departed from any ritual content and today constitute one of the most widespread phenomena of our folk choreography from the most crystallized inherent ways of its compositional presentation. Some of these dances are distinguished by three features: the case that the half circle closes and opens alternately during the movement from the right. Secondly the choreographic motif can be danced by the participants even when this is unidentified. Third, the dancer or the first leading dancer has an important role in the elaboration of the dance, so must have talent for dancing [Bogdani 1997:59].

In these dances a wider plasticity is observed, with measured steps and movements of the hands in tune with each other, and with more vivid body movements. An indefinite number of dancers can enter the dance. These dances can be performed in other ceremonies as well, but the brilliance is best expressed in the wedding ceremony [Berisha 1986:116].

It is shown that both men and women, young and elderly dance in a uniform manner. Yet, we have some parts of the dance performance by a group of men, sometimes holding their hands or shoulders more tightly, where the first dancer, who also leads the dance, makes a few more moves than we have previously seen. Usually this performance takes place when we have the *davul* and *zurne* in the background, and when the atmosphere has reached its highest peak.

But as the ethnomusicologist Felix Hoerburger¹ points out, the second dancer has an important role to play, as he enables the first dancer to move, holding him when he falls to the ground, and when his feet are in the air: One holds the other and allows him an otherwise impossible posture and movement [Hoerburger 1963:26].

Hoerburger speaks about the major role of the deep steps and the deep bending down to the ground, possibly backwards, as is known from drum acrobats here and among the Turks, especially where the figurative couple has completely detached itself from the dancer community and become independent.²

The choreologist Ramazan Bogdani describes the type of the semi-circular dance, as a simple (without a compositional structure) dance. The structure of this choreography is based on free walking (*ecje e lirë*). Bogdani also mentions some kinds of dances in Lurë/Albania, which are danced in a closed circle, and called *Hore*. Moreover, this term is not only used in Albania or Kosovo, but it is also known in other Balkan dances of other nations [Bogdani 1995:233]. This term was also heard from participants of the wedding in which I was part of, in the context of *hajde hyjmë në Horë, ta fillojmë Horën* (meaning, let's be part of the dance, or start to dance). But also, *merre mindilin e ngrehe horën* (in the context of take the cloth and be the dance leader).

Each individual dancer in such ceremonies seems in one way extremely focused on their own movement, but also very relaxed, enthusiastic and in a good mood in another way. Again, the interplay of a free community is also important as it gains something more sublime and prouder, because the circle is so large and the distance between the people is so wide [Hoerburger 1963:19].

Music and instruments accompaniment

Ramazan Bogdani, an Albanian scholar of choreology, has emphasized the accompaniment of the Albanian folk dances in general, which he divides in these categories:

- 1) pre-musical instruments (stones, bells, sticks, pots, whistling, etc.)

- 2) vocal accompaniment (homophonic and polyphonic)
- 3) membranous instruments (*dajre* and drum or *davul*)
- 4) aerophones instruments (flute, fife, *zurna*, *zumare*, bagpipe, etc.)
- 5) string instruments (double-string instrument, *sharkia*, *bakllama*, etc.)
- 6) *zurna* and *davul* (drum)
- 7) folk orchestral groups
- 8) vocal and instrumental accompaniment [Bogdani 1991:333].

Also, the music of Albanian folk dances, generally speaking of all dances, as an important part of the whole folk music, has a very rich rhythm: “(two units: 2/8, 2/4; three units: 3/8, 3/4), composite rhythmical measure (four units: 4/8, 4/4; six units: 6/8, 6/4), mixed (five units: 5/8, 5/4; seven units: 7/8, 7/4; nine units: 9/8, 9/4; twelve units: 12/8) and at free rhythmical measure: *rubato* or *ad libitum*” [Bogdani 1991:327].

The dances of each region have their special characteristics too and they can be danced differently, depending on the occasion and context. “On the other hand, the changes in the rhythms in the choreographic accompaniments are conditioned also by other indices. Thus, for instance, the women’s dances are characterized by simple rhythms, whereas those for men by composite and mixed rhythms” [Bogdani 1991:327].

Specifically speaking about semi-circular dances, at weddings, there is a distinction from those danced during other events. It is very common that at weddings there are different vocal accompaniments, different membranous instruments, aerophones, and other orchestral instruments. But the most characteristic is the music and the beat of *davul* and *zurna*, which makes the wedding ceremony a very loud event with a tremendous atmosphere. During my observation at weddings last summer season, in three out of five weddings that I personally participated, there was at least an hour reserved for a spectacular performance of *davul* and *zurna*, danced mostly in semi-circle, or in a couple in the middle of the room, whereas later everybody started dancing in an unstructured dance-type. Such combination is very common for Kosovo-Albanians, but according to the literature [Hoerburger 1963] this phenomenon is also to be seen in other Balkan countries, North Macedonia, Turkey, Romania, as I have also personally experienced while observing the participants of ICTMD Symposium, dancing and all catching the steps very easily.

When the *davul* is beaten at a wedding celebration, it can be heard from afar, including the frame drum pounding from inside the house. Apparently, the *davul* is not only intended to encourage dancing, but to excite the entire community in a village as well [Hoerburger 1963:50].

In such cases (even when the drum is played together with the *zurna*), the thick stick (in the right hand) is used to make the character of dancing even more pronounced, whereas the wand is used mainly to encourage the speed of movements, and, generally speaking, of all the performance of the dance [Bogdani 1991:330].

When you watch the drummers (the players of *davul*), you always get the impression that they feel the beat mostly, and that they are beside themselves and they inspire everyone around them to be beside themselves. That is what makes the tremendous force of the blow with the crooked mallet, that is what makes the extraordinary tension of the rhythm that slides freely between faster and slower, that is what makes the drummer’s dance-like movement [Hoerburger 1963:176].

The Albanian *Lodertar* (drummer), like the drummer of other nationalities, enters a closer relationship with the group of dancers. He does not just give them the beat, of course not just the musical accompaniment for their actions, he dances along himself and pulls the other participants in the dance after him. While the *zurna* player remains outside the circle of dancers, at least as a rule, the drummer is more connected to the dancers than to his fellow musician. He sneaks behind the dancers, goes deep into the ground, turns on one leg around his own axis, so that the instrument hanging over his shoulder is lifted by the centrifugal force, or he even lifts it upside down and continues to play it without a break in this attitude [Hoerburger 1963:188].

The type of melody with a constant, fixed shape corresponds in the text to the formula of the frequently encountered refrain, or individually inserted words, which in terms of their meaning are not particularly connected with the text content, such as *mashallah*, *aman*, *aman* or others stereotypical formulas, plus the ‘o’ thrown in again and again [Hoerburger 1963:58].

Ottoman influence

Taking into consideration that the Ottoman Empire ruled Kosovo from the 15th to the beginning of the 20th century, it is obvious that its traces can still be perceived today among many things in traditional music, dance but also in vocabulary used in it [Ahmedaja 2007:1].

so möchte ich doch nicht an ein zufälliges Vorhandensein primitiver, von einander unabhängig entstandener Allgemeinformen, sondern an einen gemeinsamen Besitz bei Albanern und Türken denken, wobei es offen bleiben mag, ob die Albaner den Typus mit so vielen anderen Elementen türkischer Kultur übernommen haben, oder ob die Türken die empfangenden gewesen sind bei denen ja die Arnauten Jahrhunderte hindurch eine so große Rolle, vor allem in der militärischen Organisation gespielt haben [Hoerburger 1963:20].

As we may read in the above quotation by Hoerburger, says that, “I do not think of an accidental existence of primitive general forms that developed independently of each other, but of a common possession among Albanians and Turks, whereby it may remain open whether the Albanians took over the type with so many other elements of Turkish culture, or whether the Turks were the ones who received it, as the Arnauts for many centuries, have played an important role, especially in military organization” [Hoerburger 1963:20].

Another fact given by scholar, Gabriela Ilnitchi, is about the instruments such as *davul* and *zurna* which are well known in the Balkans, and are mostly played by Roma people, as they are in Kosovo as well. Nevertheless she also mentions that as far as these instruments are involved:

The post-Byzantine tradition positions them in an internally coherent iconographic scenario with strong Ottoman overtones. The available iconographic data indicates that while the double-headed drum is part of the Byzantine model from the late thirteenth century onward, the *zurna*-like instrument is a post-Byzantine addition, for it does not appear in the Balkans before 1500, and initially not coupled with the double-headed drum in a self-standing duo, but in the context of a *mehter*-like ensemble. It is not until the seventeenth century that the *davul* and *zurna* were iconographically brought together in an independent ensemble, at times in the hands of players, who, based on their distinctive clothes or physiognomies, may have been Roma [Ilnitchi 2007:214–215].

Rudolf Brandl also points out, that the *davul* and *zurna* instruments “entered the Balkan village musical traditions probably sometime in the seventeenth century and through the mediation of the Roma, many of them stationed at the numerous Ottoman garrisons throughout the Balkans” [Brandl 1996:16–18].

Furthermore Ilnitchi emphasizes, that regarding the

Areas such as Kosovo, Thrace, and geographic Macedonia, which not only benefitted from a large Romani population, but also possessed a large number of Ottoman garrisons and at times, a significant percentage of Turks among the local populace, are precisely where the *davul-zurna* ensemble became a well-established presence both in the traditional musical practices and as an iconographic motif [Ilnitchi 2007:216].

Jane Sugarman concludes that a common Balkan music is emerging, blurring the lines between what is Serbian, Bulgarian, Greek, Albanian, or Turkish music. The spread of these genres throughout the region is now all-encompassing [Sugarman 2007:301]. Considering this,

[...] It is possible to postulate that the kinship among these styles – and the not infrequent borrowing that goes on among them – signal an exploration of commonalities in sensibility and experience that might lead the region’s national groups to affirm a common ‘Balkan’ identity. For observers within and outside the region, such a development would be a welcome sign within communities whose relations over the past two decades have often been destructively fractious [Sugarman 2007:270].

Eventually to conclude here, that there are clearly some interesting similarities and distinctions to be noted, on closer inspection, they are still distinctly and even deliberately national in their stylistic references, and their social role is often experienced as ethnically specific, as is said by Jane Sugarman [2007:270].

Conclusion

With a variety of works from different scholars [Hoerburger, Ahmedaja, Berisha, Agolli, Sugarman, Reineck, Ilnichi, Brandl etc.] and my observations made in the field, this paper does still not have definite answers about the influence of Ottoman tradition in semi-circular dances among Albanians in Kosovo. But as for now, it is clear that the long-lasting Empire has affected many activities in our society. Nowadays we have in a way a cultural connection among post-Ottomans countries, i.e., the rituals and the scheme of wedding celebrations, accompaniment of instruments and music, the movements and the ‘walking free’ steps, the accessories used in festive days, other circular rituals such as death, circumcision, the meals and activities around them, the Muslim feast, such as *Bayram*, Ramadan, and many other everyday activities. However, this is also ethnically and deliberately different in a way, as Sugarman noted.

We have seen presentations and topics regarding Ottoman traditions, presented throughout the last Symposium in Istanbul by the ICTMD Study Group of Southeastern Music and Dance, concluding the similarities and differences that are to be noted when speaking of Ottoman traditions. We have also been dancing together, while holding each other’s hands, and moving in counter clockwise direction accompanied with live folk music and hand clapping. Practically, this has proved my hypothesis that semi-circle dances in Balkans are something acquired from the Ottoman Empire; however, it is still not theoretically proved.

Whether and to what extent are the patterns of the semi-circular dance at Albanian weddings in Kosovo shaped by the Ottoman traditions, are scholarly questions that still remain to be addressed and answered in continuous scientific symposiums and papers.

Endnotes

1. The books from Felix Hoerburger consist of more than just one edition, which he named *Valle Popullore* (traditional Dances of Albanians in Yugoslavia) and was divided in three parts: Liber I, II and III. The main topic of these papers is the traditional dance of Albanians in Kosovo. As for the author, he mentioned that his fieldwork took place in Summer 1959 in Kosovo, as part of his Habilitation, which was published in 1963 by the Faculty of Philosophy of Erlangen University in Nürnberg. These versions that I have now, were part of the library of Rudolf Brandl at the Phonogram Archive in Vienna, and as part of my previous project, they gave me access to this fascinating old print version.

2. Original in German: [“Die Tiefschritte und das tiefe Hinabbeugen zur Erde, womöglich nach hinten, so wie man es von Trommelakrobaten hier und bei den Türken kennt, spielen eine große Rolle, vor allem dort, wo sich das figurierende Paar ganz von der Tänzergemeinschaft gelöst und verselbständigt hat”] [Hoerburger 1963: 25].

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Krenar Doli
(Pristina, Kosovo)

Tradition of *aheng* in the city of Gjakova¹

The *aheng* includes a musical repertoire of civic folk songs and dances which in the organisational structure displays the layer of modal-diatonic music, and the layer of modal-chromatic music, as part of oriental culture and tradition, which were spread by the Ottoman influx, in Kosovo as well as in the folklore of other Balkan regions. We find this influence especially between the 18th to 19th centuries where the *aheng* from the Ottoman culture has significantly overlaid many musical terms from the oriental tradition which include names of musical scales, and names of musical instruments. Who were the first pioneers of the Gjakova *aheng*? What was the character of the songs and dances of the Gjakova *aheng* where the subtle feeling of the popular creator was best expressed? What was the diatonic aspect as well as the interval extension of these songs and dances? Questions like these assist in finding the commonalities of the Gjakova *aheng* tradition with the imperial heritage in the music of Southeast Europe. The paper will also emphasize the fact that the repertoire of the Gjakova *aheng* has played an important primary role, both for the preliminary reference of the concept of originality, as well as its gradual music and accompaniment with instruments, that later became a reformed part of the Gjakova *aheng* in the new century.

Keywords: tradition; Gjakova; music; song; dance.

The term *aheng*, in ethnomusicological studies, refers to an important layer of the repertoire of Albanian civic song. This phenomenon developed organically at least from the end of the 18th century (when we have the first testimony) to, around, the middle of the 20th century, constituting the core of traditional music of Albanian cities. In Albanian ethnomusicology the oriental influences of this repertoire have often been discussed, especially when we consider its birth and development in the context of Albanian civic life during the period of Ottoman rule and the administrative and social cultural system that characterised it.

Although the term *aheng* derives from the Persian language, it is important to analyse the specific use of this term. All dictionaries we have consulted, regarding the term *aheng*, contain three main meanings as follows:

1. Harmony, agreement, achord;
2. Agreement, compliance;
3. Musical entertainment with instruments.

In classical Ottoman literature (*Divan edebiyatı*), the term *aheng* was used in the sense of harmony or as it is otherwise called stringed musicality and this is one of the central categories in the creative poetics of the authors of this literature [Isen 2006:186].

In the Albanian language the term *aheng* has entered with a narrower meaning compared with the uses we noticed in the Persian and Turkish language. It is reduced to a term with a purely musical meaning. Meanwhile, it has mainly two meanings looking from the musical viewpoint: on the one hand, in the general sense mentioned above, it is perceived as “musical entertainment with musical instruments”, while on the other hand, it is perceived as a certain musical repertoire created under the influence of the music of the Middle East countries which spread mainly in the key Albanian cities [Koço 2002:161].

In general, ‘the *aheng*’ is considered to be very old but it is not known exactly when it began due to the reason that most songwriters are not known. Its organisation in the form that

has come to us today, based on data taken by the Gjakova *aheng* itself, that seems to belong to the first half of the 19th century. Looking from a narrower musical focus, the *aheng* includes a certain musical repertoire of traditional civic songs as well as special orchestral melodies which in their organisational structure display:

- the old original layer of Turkish pre-occupation, of modal-diatonic music;
- the layer of modal-chromatic music, as a part of oriental culture, which was spread by the Ottoman influx, both among us and in the folklore of other parts of the Balkans as well;
- the layer of Balkan music [Tole 2010:12].

Traditional song was created as a human necessity of thought and emotional outburst, as a transmitter of feelings and as an eternal companion of humans, thus harmonizing the beauty of the artistic word with the musical one. The song from Gjakova was like that and its beauty lies not only in the selection of the melody, but also in the harmony, intonation, and in the wide vocal range, especially in the regular and irregular rhythm which is one of the special characteristics of this musical creativity.

According to tradition, the solist-singer at the *aheng* was mainly tenor, rarely any other voice like a baritone singing voice. What gave the time meaning to the beginning, progression and the end of the *aheng* were the selected types of songs that, through a very wide melodic development, faithfully maintained the order of the *aheng* songs and dances. This was one of the reasons that the *aheng* was sung by proven and selected soloists, with vocal resistance, because the melodic cantilever and the degree of difficulty of these songs surpass the characteristics of simple songs and make them often rank with the character of romance or even a *jare* [Doli 2010:321].

We have received, so far, very little data and documents about the beginnings and development of the *aheng* in the Gjakova city; they have, more, an oral character and are sometimes inaccurate, both as regards the vocal character of the singers and also as regards their technical and artistic level.

Based on the research and the data collected in this field, we found out that the presentation of the first musical formation in the Gjakova city took place in the first half of the 19th century. This *taif* formation, known as the oldest in the city of Gjakova, consisted of Hamëz Kovaçi-Çarkaxhiu, who is also considered to be the leader of the first Gjakova formation who played the *sharkia* (saz) instrument, Kolë Qorri who played *sharkia* and *bugaria* and Haxhi Perolli, a singer.

There were many other members mentioned who followed the first trio of the Gjakova *aheng* based on the data taken from the field. We will mention, in this context, the names of many instrumentalists and singers who had distinguished and rare skills and talent such as: Jahja Xharra, Ramadan Gongga, Din Bakija, Dahim Patoku, Niman Dervishi, Ymer Tullumi and the *sharkia* master and the new leader of the formation named *Ymer Riza* [Doli 2010:26]

But what was the musical style of the *aheng* in the Gjakova City?

It should be noted that, in addition to the apparent amount of borrowed terminology, our traditional music experienced chromatics more as a tendency to develop and expand diatonics, native to a culture that sought to impose itself. The melodic expression of the *aheng* is monodic as a monodic music with accompaniment. The *aheng* in Gjakova city is accompanied by a formation of imported instruments. The first constituent instruments of the *aheng* of Gjakova city during the last century were: *shargia* (Albanian *Sharkija*), violin and *bugaria*. These were three basic instruments and their tuning has also dictated the order of songs and dances taking

into account maqams where they were used for performance. Afterwards, in the *aheng* of the Gjakova city other instruments were introduced such as: Knee harmonica, *tambour*, *brac*, *çamparet* etc.

The songs that characterized the Gjakova *aheng*, in musical terms, were melismatic which means the use of several notes within a single syllable. They are depicted with numerous glisandons (ornaments) which are effective and with rich melo-rhythmic ornaments. The melodies of the Gjakova *aheng* songs contained wide ambitus which, when it comes to tonal heights, often exceed the performing possibilities of ordinary singers. Thus, when it comes to specific concepts of melodic, vocal and instrumental improvisations, they are close not only to the civic musical tradition but also to professional musical creativity [Doli 2012:322]. For this and other reasons, taking into account the specific way of creation and interpretation, the form and general melo-rhythmic elements with which they are created, Gjakova *aheng* songs cannot be included in the same category with love songs. They are completely different and with many special and characteristic features of the music-oral art.

In general, from the numerous melodic forms of the *aheng* songs of the Gjakova city, it can be seen that their musical ensemble contains a series of conventions such as: tonal sequence, melopoetic motifs, musical accompaniment, as an integral part that is subject to the main vocal melody, etc. These elements are also a basic material for the creation of their musical form in general.

In general, Gjakova *aheng* songs usually have a strophic form.

At the beginning, as an integral element, we have an instrumental introduction after which the main part of the vocal melody continues with instrumental accompaniment as stanzas between the musical strophes. The developmental part in the musical aspect contains all kinds of vocal and instrumental ornaments, including various forms of improvisations, such as *gazelle* forms, etc. Their structures and general characteristics are almost standard. From the rhythmic aspect these pieces, that are a little faster with some instrumental musical parts, represent the connecting bridges between the strophes and the whole of the respective song.

Today, if we were to try to make a kind of classification of the *makams* that have been used in the songs and dances of the Gjakova *aheng* from a quantitative point of view, it turns out that:

- a) a considerable part of them have been interpreted in *Ushak makam*,
- b) another considerable part has been interpreted in the *Hijaz makam*,
- c) yet another considerable part has been interpreted in the *Segah* and *Nihavend makams*,
- d) other *makams* (whether simple, compound or mixed) are used less frequently.

Based on what was presented above concerning the practice of *makam*, we can state that:

- 1. Gjakova *aheng* songs and dances are based on the practice of *makame*.
- 2. But, we must also keep in mind that although the musical system that was implemented at the Gjakova *aheng* was that of *makam*, the songs and dances composed and sung in this system by Albanian authors were undoubtedly traditional local songs, stemming from passion, originality and local inspiration. The *aheng* music, based on the *makam* system, was a fundamental part of the traditional civic music of the Ottoman period in the Balkans and was closely linked to urban life and the former bazaars.

Even as regards rhythmic cycles, based on the results from the collection of songs and dances of the *aheng*, I found out that in Gjakova city, as regards rhythmic cycles, almost all types of rhythms are used: simple, compound and mixed.

There are also half-metric rhythms. Among the simple rhythms, two-unit ($2/8$, $2/4$), three-unit ($3/8$, $3/4$) are especially used; among the composite rhythm, those used, are four-units ($4/8$, $4/4$), six-units ($6/8$, $6/4$); among the mixed rhythms, those used, are five-units ($5/8$, $5/4$), seven-units ($7/8$, $7/4$), eight-units ($8/8$, $8/4$), nine-units ($9/8$, $9/4$), twelve-units ($12/8$, $12/4$), etc.

If we were to try to make a kind of rhythmic classification of songs and dances that constituted the Gjakova *aheng*, from a quantitative point of view, it turns out that:

- a) another considerable group of them is organized in a mixed rhythm of seven-units ($7/8$, $7/4$);
- b) another group of them is organized in simple two-unit rhythms ($2/8$, $2/4$);
- c) other rhythms, no matter if they are simple, compound or mixed, are less used.

Thus, in addition to simple two-unit rhythms ($2/8$, $2/4$), the mixed seven-unit rhythms ($7/8$, $7/4$), there is a dense use also nine-unit ($9/8$, $9/4$). Thus, rhythmically, it occurs more or less the same situation as it occurs within the Albanian civic songs.

The controversial terms used during the period of writing of this paper related to *aheng*, *makames*, rhythmic cycles, classification, oriental etymology, were used and continue to be used not only by traditional musicians but also by many musicologists and ethnomusicologists of our days. In order to avoid misunderstandings that may arise as a result of the use of oriental terms in this study I would like to clarify that our preferred terms are terms that come from the Turkish language [Koço 2019:192]. I did it not only to be more consistent and to maintain regularity during this study but also to apply the criteria, more or less, used by ethnomusicologists around the world.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to point out that it is worthwhile to present some basic points and based on them to suggest their justification and fruitful use when we study this phenomenon. According to the tradition of the *aheng* we meant a repertoire of Albanian civic song developed under the influence of Middle East music based on *makam*. This term should not be reduced only to its use in the Gjakova city and the specific codification used there. On the contrary, it includes the repertoire of some other Albanian cities such as Shkodra, Tirana, Elbasan, Durrës, Kavaja, Berat, Prizren, etc.

As a singing performance followed by instrumental accompaniment with mainly entertainment and aesthetic purposes, the *aheng* should be clearly distinguished from other parts of the civic repertoire, such as those of a ritualistic or ceremonial character. From this standpoint the *aheng* should also, despite the possible stylistic similarities, be clearly distinguished, from the religious repertoire which may still contain the traces of the latter.

Tracing through times, I also noticed influences and borrowings of different cultures, this due to the constant movements of people in those places. I claim that the cultivated oriental literature has influenced the folk art of this country, consequently it has also influenced many Albanian individuals who were in the orient for various reasons, work, emigration, or education. Returning to their homeland, they themselves have brought influences in the conceptual, textual, musical aspect, which have been superimposed on the existing folk art and have taken place when they are liked by the practising community. In this way, many influences can be explained in texts, melodies, musical instruments, etc.

Endnotes

1. Geographically, it is located in the southwestern part of Kosovo, about halfway between the cities of Peja and Prizren.

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Visar Munishi
(Pristina, Kosovo)

The bride-to-be blessings seeking

During the last moments of the bride-to-be's stay at her parent's house (in the night of henna ritual) and urged by constant evocative songs, she greets and seeks the *hallallakun* (blessings) from her mother, sisters, brothers, aunts, cousins, friends, etc. This farewell as an initiation act, is a type of communication, where the singers sing, while the bride-to-be would usually express her emotions by speaking or hugging tightly the attendees of the farewell party. This paper focuses on the farewell ritual for the bride-to-be by her family members, which is constantly and emotionally triggered by the songs of groups of girls. Girls would sing in groups, mostly in unison and accompanied by frame drums. The motivations of the bride-to-be seeking *hallall* (blessings) from her family members is also one of the topics of this paper. We will exemplify our paper with a few typical examples secured through our fieldwork research and other materials at our disposal.

Keywords: Kosovo; bride-to-be; blessing seeking; night of henna; initiation.

Context of the ritual

The wedding day in the Albanian tradition in Kosovo represents the last day the bride-to-be would stay in her parents' home or in her 'father's house' as it is usually called in a patriarchal mindset and "is the culmination of a series of family celebrations that has led those children toward adulthood" [Sugarman 1997:2]. During the last two or three days before the main wedding day, the bride-to-be would prepare for a social transformation, transiting from the status of a girl to a woman/wife. Therefore, the main event that marked this transition from maiden to the bride to be, was known as the night of *Kanagjeq*. The word *Kanagjeq* means "henna night" (henna in Albanian is *kana*). *Kana*/henna is a colour dye that was used as a very simple decoration or painting by the girl who would become a bride. The decoration started with painting the fingertips, hands and feet and the hair. This ritual signified a very important part of the wedding event. One of the most emotional moments for the bride-to-be, was when the bride was adorned with a veil and a red handkerchief covering her face. At that moment, the bride-to-be would start crying and weeping. This act is known as 'the weeping of the girl'. After putting on her veil, the girl would have to be convinced to start painting her hair and her fingers with henna.

Henna night was the most important episode in the life of an Albanian woman. It was an event that could hardly be erased from the mind and memory of the girl, because during this specific event, she was feeling more emotions of bitter touch and fewer moments of joy. "I remember everything, from the first moment that the girls started gathering in the room until the moment I entered in the bride's car", said F.M. aged 67 years. From the moment of establishing the relationship between the couple, which happens with an intervention from a traditional institutionalized matchmaking act called *msitni* and crowning it with a traditional marriage, high emotions were present during the last days of the bride-to-be in the 'father's house' (as a patriarchal mindset used to call her home). In that context, the steps towards an initiation were treated as an artistic form from the poetic and musical creativity of the Albanian society in Kosovo. The element of these creations is characterised by syncretism, and in terms of content, structures are distinguished by emotional notes as painful and nostalgic creations. This type of song elaborates sensitive motives, which are related to the bride's girlhood life, and the predisposition of the life she will have as a married woman. "The warmth of the parental

family atmosphere always opposes the hostility of life in the husband's home" [Gega Musa 2016:63].

From the empirical data that we collected and we possess, we learned that the time that bride-to-be "spent in her family's home, was not easy for her. All these feelings came as a result of patriarchal circumstances, which sometimes culminated with a marriage to a man whom she did not know or had never seen before. This sad atmosphere also came as a consequence of the general patriarchal social opinion that "the girl was born from the beginning for a foreign door",¹ so she would belong to another 'door'. In the context of the henna night or *kanagjeq* as we will use it from now on, it is assumed that the need for weeping and wailing has come from this psychological state. Therefore, we consider that the singing during this ritual, and creation of *kanagjeq* songs as a special type, gave a slightly relaxing character to this ritual.

The human structure of the ritual of *kanagjeq* was formed of a group of girls from the extended family circle of the bride-to be, mainly close cousins and relatives, but also other girls and women who lived in that village or were part of that geographical area. In this sense, the tradition was to invite girls who were known for singing and creating the necessary atmosphere required by the ritual, but also, there were occasions where the family invited 'professional' *def* (frame drum) players to perform in the ritual. Furthermore, the social circumstances before the 1990s, the patriarchal mindset and political problems at that time had made the Albanian women spend their lives close to their homes, without obligations for being part of outdoor duties such as harvesting or working in a market-bazaar. In addition, their presence in the community has made them ready to participate in rituals whenever they were asked and given the opportunity. Their participation was considered a "social obligation" [Sugarman 1997:35], so they had an "increased obligation to participate in the main moments of the ritual", not only that of *Kanagjeq*, but also the wedding in general.

Albanian ethnomusicologists and folklore scholars [Mustafa 1978; Gega Musa 2017; Tirta 2016] have mentioned that, until a few decades ago, in almost all parts of Kosovo, *kanagjeq* songs were neither sung outside the original context they were created for, nor accompanied dancing. So "in the context of development of the rite, the songs made their lives real, but out of this context; they did not have their full power, effect and function" [Mustafa 1993:146]. Furthermore, there were also cases when the use of the *def*² (frame drum) instrument as an accompaniment in *kanagjeq* songs has not been present in all the cases.³

Hallallaku – Brides Seeking Blessing and its Musical Aspects

Hallallaku in the context of *kanagjeq* means that the bride-to-be is seeking blessings [Murati 2019:334], bidding farewell, goodbye, and asking for forgiveness from her loved ones. *Hallallaku* was one part of several stages that were incorporated within the ritual of *Kanagjeq*. This act of the bride seeking blessing from her relatives is traditionally also known as *me e marrë n'gryk*, which means hugging goodbye.

During the entire ritual of *Kanagjeq*, we find a very close connection between ritual actions and the music. In this regard and context, they cooperate perfectly to maintain the emotional state that the ritual expresses and generates toward the bride-to-be and other guests and participants. The provocations of the group of singer, in "some sort of immediacy" [Jacob-Lortat 2011:24] through singing in unison, are incessant so that the bride-to-be becomes emotional and her last moments in her home become deeply rooted at the same time. As the moment of separation from home, the place she grew up, and particularly from her close family members approaches, she is asked to leave them the 'last will', so that they remember long after she marries to her husband in her new home.

Çka po i len babës për mall?

♩ = 96

Cka poj len e o ba - bës për ma ll e ooo...

Cka poj len e o ba - bës për ma - ll - e ooo...

5 FIN. D TONAL RANGE AND AMBITUS

Çka poj' len oj babes për mallë?⁴
 Po ja la o pesë gishta kanë e o.
 Çka poj' len oj nanes për mall e o?
 Po ja la e o pesë gishta kanë e o.
 Çka poj len o motres për malle e o?
 Po ja la e o pesë gishta kanë e o.
 Çka poj len o vllavit për mallë e o?
 Po ja la e o pesë gishta kanë e o,
 Çka poj len o halles për mallë e o?
 Po ja la o pesë gishta kanë e o.
 Pesë gishta kanë o meni pikë e o,
 O moj le t' kujtojnë o ç' jam çikë e o.
 Çka poj len vllaut për mall?
 Po ja la o pesë gishta kanë e o.
 Çka p'ju len oj motrav për mallë e.
 Po jau la o pesë gishta kanë.
 Çka p'ju len o dajve për mall e o?
 Po jau la o pesë gishta kanë e o.
 Çka p'ju len oj tezev' për mallë?
 Po jau la o pesë gishta kanë e o.
 Çka p'j len oj hallav' për mallë?
 Po jau la o pesë gishta kanë e o?
 Çka p'ju len o shoqev' për mallë?
 Po jau la o pesë gishta kanë e o.
 Ani kur t'tubohen le ti kajnë e o.
 Oj Fetije kujna ja len lug't?
 Ani k'ti Fatmirit me dy durtë e o!

What sign do you leave to your father to remember you?⁵
 I am leaving five⁶ henna-dyed finger signs to you
 What sign do you leave to your mother to remember you?
 I am leaving five henna-dyed finger signs to you
 What sign do you leave to your sister to remember you?
 I am leaving five henna-dyed finger signs to you
 What sign do you leave to your brother to remember you?
 I am leaving five henna-dyed finger signs to you
 What sign do you leave to your aunt to remember you?
 I am leaving five henna-dyed finger signs to you
 Five henna dyed fingers, with a dot in it,
 So, they will remember me as girl...
 What sign do you leave to your brother to remember you?
 I am leaving five henna-dyed finger signs to you
 What sign do you leave to your sister to remember you?
 I am leaving five henna-dyed finger signs to you
 What sign do you leave to your uncle to remember you?
 I am leaving five henna-dyed finger signs to you
 What sign do you leave to your aunts to remember you?
 I am leaving five henna-dyed finger signs to you
 What sign do you leave to your aunts to remember you?
 I am leaving five henna-dyed finger signs to you
 What sign do you leave to your aunts to remember you?
 I am leaving five henna-dyed finger signs to you
 So, when they get together, they will cry them.
 O, Fetije who do you leave the spoons?⁷
 Oh, Fatmiri (brother) with my two hands...

Figure 1. Song recorded by Xh. Reqica (author's grandmother) in the *Kanagjeq* of F. Munishi (author's mother), 1980.

While the verses are being sung by the group of girls, the bride-to-be does not stop crying. One of the girls offers her a white sheet on which she would place her red fingerprints covered by henna. In the memory of some old informants,⁸ years ago, the girl left her fingerprints on a white wall in one of the spaces inside the house. We find it as a connection between the body mark – fingerprints by stamping them as a visual figuration, and home as a place and sense of belonging. Moreover, bodymarks were also used as a memory for all the family members who loved one of their own.

Every call or invitation toward the bride-to-be that comes through music, receives a musical or ritual action response, either from the bride or from those present. In this context, the most heart breaking and saddest moments, not only for the bride-to-be, but also for all those present, are the moments when she had to ask for a blessing to those present, and especially to close family members. As Mymija states:

The most heart breaking moment is when the girl is dressed in the bride's clothes and cries out loud to leave the girl's farewell room by room, in the garden, by greeting all the members of the family and her relatives, hugging and crying loudly: oj, oj, oj... khu, khu, khu, khu... [Mymija 1962:293]

E moj kaj Fetije e shashtrisu

♩ = 96

E moj kaj Fe- ti- je e sha- tri-su ooo... E moj kaj Fe ti je e sha- tri-su ooo...

Tonal range and ambitus

E moj kaj Fetije e shashtrisu o... 2x

Oh, cry Fetije and go crazy o... 2x

E moj kaj Fetije e shashtrisu o ... 2x

Oh, cry Fetije and go crazy o... 2x

Ti me nanë tane hallashtisu o ... 2x

Seek blessing from your mother o... 2x

Poetic form and number of syllables:

Repeated single-verse VIII (2) + (4+4)

Form of melodic parts and cadences:

AA1

2 1

Figure 2. Song recorded by Xh. Reqica (author's grandmother) in the *Kanagjeq* of F. Munishi (author's mother), in the village of Rubofc, Lipjan region in Kosovo, 1980.

Despite the fact that the Albanian family in Kosovo had a patriarchal character and was well-organised in this form, and the sensitive and emotional side of life within the family hardly existed, during the ritual of *Kanagjeq*, this focus on emotions somehow changed this. The bride started seeking blessings first from those she felt most close to emotionally, and not necessarily respecting the customary order she used to respect. So, the most beloved person to the bride-to-be is her mother. All personal communications inside the family environment were realized in the mother – daughter relationship. So, based on our interviews and songs created for the moment of farewell that the bride to be gives to a mother, the song that urges the bride to seek blessing for her mother was considered dreadful and hard for her. Figure 2 presents a simple lyric with a melody and musical components.

Another song of the same character and context that we collected is from the village of Rogoçicë, Kamenica (east of Kosovo), when we have recorded an improvised *kanagjeq* by a group of young girls who were excellent singers, who imitated perfectly the bitterness of the bride-to-be (see Figure 3). In a one-part repeated melody as well as a repeated verse, they reminded her with whom she should seek a blessing (*hallashtiset*). Her farewell started from the mother as her most beloved person with the verses given in Figure 3.

Kaj Kumrije moter, kaj se shkove

♩ = 310

Kaj Kum - ri - oj mo - tër Kaj se shko oo

ve... Kaj Kum-ri oj mo - ter kaj se shko - ve.

Tonal range and Ambitus

Fin. C1

Kaj Kumrije oj motër kaj se shkove - 2x

Cry Kumrije sister, cry because you are going – 2x

Nanën tane oj motër se vajtove - 2x

You did not weep for your mother – 2x

Poetic form and number of syllables:

Repeated single verse: X (6+4)

Form of melodic parts and cadences:

AA1

1 1

Figure 3. Song collected by the author, Rogoçicë, Kamenica, east Kosovo.

In a recitative form, but mournful, the bride-to-be forms the most heartfelt words toward the most loved ones, which are, *loçko mori nanë* (dear, my dear mother). She asks for blessing

(*hallallak*), that reminds her that she is separating from the one she loved the most. The farewell verses were followed by the weeping phrase, *hu, hu*, for seven times (4 + 3: *hu, hu.hu, hu, hu, hu, hu*)⁹

Nanë, loçko mori nanë	Mother, my darling mother
A po ma ban hallall?	Are you blessing me?
Loçko mori nanë	Darling mother,
Nashta t'kam merzit	Maybe I annoyed you
Loçko mori nanë	Darling mother,
Nashta t'kam idhnue	Maybe I have disappointed you,
Loçko mori nanë	Darling mother,
Po ndahna prej t'mirav'	I am separating from good things
Loçko mori nanë	Darling mother,
Po ndahna prej hallav'	I am separating from my aunts
Loçko mori nanë	Darling mother,
Po ndahna prej shoqev'	I am separating from my friends
Loçko mori nanë	Darling mother,
O mos me harroni	O do not forget me,
Loçko mori nanë	Darling mother,
Hu, hu, hu, hu	Hu, hu, hu, hu
Hu, hu, hu...	hu, hu, hu...

In order that her weeping and pain is expressed in the most magnificent way and for her emotions to reach the climax required by the ritual and those present, the singers continue to remind the bride in the same poetic and musical form of her other family members and those she loves the most, that is her father, sister, brothers and all other family members.

Albanian women in Kosovo have also created closeness with the objects with which she spent her life, few and simple they may be. In this way, some parts of the girl's life in her family home remain unforgettable, and she needs to be reminded of different details from that stage of her life. The girl is also reminded of her clothes and the transition from her girlhood to the bridehood. The maiden's clothes were modest in quality, but their value was immense as a memory of a part of her life that will never come back.

Ku i le teshat e çiknisë?	Where did you leave your maiden's clothes?
Unë i lash n'tavan të shpisë,	I left them on the ceiling of the house,
ja lash motrës amanet,	I gave them to my sister
me m'i kqyrë ma mirë se vet!	To look after them better than myself...

Seeking *hallallak* does not stop only with relatives or with her clothes, but also with objects in the house in which the girl has spent part of her life. The request of the singers that the girl be greeted with the chimney of the house is very symbolic [Mustafa1978:162].

How powerful are the words sung about the chimney that was considered the central part of the house. The chimney is the connotation of the house/family (for example *Oxhaku i N. N.* which means, Chimney of N. N.), and it identifies the family and its social status. It is said that “the bride that comes from a chimney of a good house”, which means the house of a well-known and good family of that district, will be a good wife/bride. The chimney is the cult of warmth, the chimney identifies the family and its social status in a certain environment.

A ma ban hallal ore oxhak?	Are you giving me hallall, o chimney?
Shum e druninnn n' ty e kam gjegë, ore oxhak.	A lot of woods I've burned in you, o chimney.
A ma ban hallal, ore çerep?	Are you giving me hallall, o “çerep” (earthenware pan)?
Shum bukën n"ty e kam'pjekë ore çerep.	I baked a lot of bread in you,
A ma ban hallall, ori kaci?	Are you giving me hallall, o shovel?
Shumë t'kam munue ,ori kaci.	I tortured you a lot, o shovel.
A ma ban' hallall, ori maxhe?	Are you giving me hallall, o flour bin (kitchen environment)?
Shum e bukën e kam gatue, ori maxhe!	I cooked a lot of bread, o flour bin....

This part of the ritual of *kanagjeq*, blessing seeking or *hallallaku*, remained the most emotional state that the bride-to-be felt during the whole wedding. Music in this sense, was the most persuasive creative way to make these emotions achieve the expected reaction from the bride-to-be, family and other guests.

Conclusions

Through this relatively short paper about the ritual of separation of the Albanian bride-to-be from her family, we were able to learn a little part of the whole ritual of *Kanagjeq* in Kosovo. We managed to learn more about the musical aspect that actually contains one of the two¹¹ main elements of this ritual, the singing that raises the emotional reaction of the girl who will become a bride. The melody and songs of this ritual, despite the fact that they may be simple in essence, either in terms of instruments or melodic and rhythmic movements, have become an inseparable part of the entire cycle of wedding songs of Kosovo Albanians, and in their authentic context, were truly emotional as experienced by the audience, and played their role miraculously within the ritual, that of awakening the bride's emotions.

In the context of the time in which we live, this repertoire of the songs of this part of the *Kanagjeqi* ritual has no folklore circulation. The change in the spatial context of holding the ritual, i.e., the transition from closed family spaces to public spaces such as restaurants, has reduced the sensitivity towards these songs and the search for halal has faded to a great extent. More recently, even the geopolitical changes after the last war in Kosovo in 1999, have influenced the cultural globalism, slowly but surely, to penetrate the traditional Albanian culture in Kosovo.

Endnotes

1. 'Door' in traditional mindset means 'other home', 'other family' etc.
2. 'Def' is the only traditional musical instrument that Albanian women use.

3. Albanian ethnomusicologist, Rexhep Munishi (77), told us that he remembers the time when he observed singing in a *kanagjeq* ritual without a musical instrument accompaniment. It happened in the ethnographic region of Gollaku, eastern Kosovo.
4. All the following verses are repeated.
5. All the following verses are repeated.
6. There are cases when the number of fingers changes, sometimes five, sometimes one finger and sometimes even the entire palm of the hand.
7. ‘Spoons’ in this context are a sign of continuity of life in the brides-to-be family.
8. F. Munishi 67 years old, M. Reqica 62 years old.
9. In many places, the mourning phrase is mainly used in the word: Huj, huj, while here they use hu, hu, hu...
10. According to scholar M. Mustafa this song was written (collected) by Adem Kastrati from Skopje, the singer is a bride-to-be from Karaçeva of Kamenica.
11. The other element is weeping of the bride-to-be during the other parts of the ritual of *Kanagjeq*.

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Vesna Bajić Stojiljković
(Slovenia, Serbia)

Legacies of Empires on stage folk dance and music performances in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina

Until the beginning of the twentieth century, different parts of the territory of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina were under a strong impact from the Byzantium, Ottoman and Austrian-Hungarian Empires. In the mirror of contemporary stage folk dance and music art, whose roots can be traced back to the mid-nineteenth century, reflection of different Empires can be perceived also through different choreographic forms of the unique stage genre – Folk Dance Choreography. The topic of this paper is to examine which influences Serbian and Bosnian choreographers consciously emphasize and why these are important today for presenting traditional Serbian or Bosnian dance on the stage, considering the fact that they shared the same imperial experience. The results will be presented according to the analysis of dance-music parameters and choreographic principles used in their choreographies. The focus will also be put on considering similarities and differences between the Serbian and Bosnian approach to the way of choreographing.

Keywords: stage folk dance and music; folk dance choreography; Serbia; Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Until the beginning of the twentieth century, different parts of the territory of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina were under a strong impact of three Empires. The first was Byzantium in the Middle Ages, in which medieval Bosnia, the forerunner of today's Bosnia and Herzegovina, and medieval Raška, the forerunner of today's Serbia, were neighbouring states. From the 15th to the 20th century, parts of the territory of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina were under the Ottoman Empire, the number of years was different depending on the region; Vojvodina in northern Serbia, Vojvodina were for the shortest time (about 150 years), and some parts of southern Serbia for the longest time (about 5 centuries). From the second half of the 19th century until the beginning of 20th century the impact of Austrian-Hungarian Empire was significant in both regions, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Since I am researching the field of stage folk dance in ex-Yugoslavia, my question was concerning the extent of the difference between the imperial experiences in both regions, which are obvious in various forms of dance and music traditions, as well as other parts of tangible and intangible cultural heritage. In the mirror of stage folk dance and music art, reflection of different Empires can be traced back through the specifics of the creation of the dominant stage genre – Folk Dance Choreography (shortened to FDC) in the performances of professional, semi-professional and amateur folklore groups of the revival movement after the Second World War in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as in other parts of ex-Yugoslavia [Maners 2002:79–92; Bajić Stojiljković 2015:37–42].

Folk Dance Choreography is the art of composing, creating and uniting folk dances with music into a harmonious artistic whole. It is a unique phenomenon of artistic expression, in which movement and sound are united in unbreakable syncretic unity, through the cooperation of others, for dramaturgical realization also important elements such as costumes, dramatic dialogues, sung parts, scenography, etc. [Bajić Stojiljković 2011:59; 2014:406].

I was interested to find out which parameters and choreographic techniques choreographers from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina used to underline the impact of

different imperial experiences. Delving deeper into this subject, the methodology in this paper will go in the direction of observing, not only which parameters are seen in the entire choreographic piece, but to perceive their position in the structure of the choreographic composition. Drawing on previous experiences in the field of structural and formal analysis of dance and music of Folk Dance Choreography [Bajić Stojiljković 2019] in order to contribute to the allotted task, the methodology in this paper is based on the analysis of the FDC of well-known Serbian and Bosnian choreographers from the period after the Second World War and also well-known researchers of traditional dance and music. These are Olga Skovran, Branko Marković, and Desanka Đorđević from Serbia and Jelena Dopuđa and Vaso Popović from Bosnia and Herzegovina. As they were very prolific choreographers, their choreographies in which the influence of different Empires is most clearly shown are used for this paper.

The choreographies analysed are:

Example 1 – Olga Skovran: *Srpske igre iz Prizrena* [Serbian dances from Prizren]¹

Example 2 – Branko Marković: *Vranjanska svita* [Suite from Vranje]²

Example 3 – Jelena Dopuđa: *Sarajevo, divno mjesto* [Sarajevo, wonderful place]³

The structural elements of the FDCs, kinetics, space and time, are organized to the following three aspects: visual aspect, audible aspect and the movement.

Visual aspect

The visual aspect in Folk Dance Choreography is defined with scenography, requisites, costumes and space composition inside the entire choreographic structure. Also specific traditional instruments (for example, *zurle*, *tambura*, *tapan*, *daire*) are used to underline the visual aspect in cases when players are the part of the space composition. In designing the scenography, choreographers are mainly oriented towards presentation of some details from rural life, for example, a fence, a window, a part of a certain space in the house or room where social life takes place. Certain requisites are usually used to especially underline the Ottoman impact including a carpet, coffee, cups etc. (Figure 1).

While the scenography stays on the stage from the beginning to the end of the duration of the FDC, segments with requisites or highlighting certain instruments are usually put in the introduction or in the middle part of the structure of the FDC.



Figure 1. Requisites and the scenography showing the traditional instrument of a casserole (Example 3).

Audible aspect

Connected with vocal and instrumental music and special sound used in FDC, the audible aspect not only creates the music accompanying the dance, but the whole sound picture which can suggest the presence of different imperial influences.

Traditional instruments

Traditional instruments such as *kaval*, *zurne*, *tambure* are included in the classical orchestra or performed solo. Particularly interesting is the dish *casserole* used as an instrument to accompany female singing of *sevdalinka* (traditional Bosnian song) in the choreography of the Bosnian choreographer, Jelena Dopuđa named *Sarajevo, the wonderful place*. These are the Muslim dances from Sarajevo in the performance of Cultural-artistic society 'Baščaršija' from Sarajevo, created in the 1950s [Example3, see Figure 1]. To present the casserole using a song, as a distinctive feature of their tradition, the choreographer put this part in the middle of the choreographic composition, proceeded by a dance segment with vocal dialogue and followed by an equally intense dance part. The middle part shows the direct influence of the Ottoman Empire since the same instrument with vocal accompaniment is present in the tradition of many parts of the Balkans, while the first and the second part has nothing in common with the Ottoman Empire considering the audible aspect and the movement, except the visual aspect through the traditional costume dancers worn.

The example of the main female dancer entering with a *daire* in the choreography, *Suite from Vranje* by Branko Marković, is illustrative by emphasising the oriental sound and the rhythm 9/8 of the dance and dance-music named *Čoček* (Example 2, from the 5th minute) which is also put in the middle part of the FDC (Figure 2). This choreography is performed by the Academic cultural-artistic society 'Branko Krstić' from Belgrade.



Figure 2: Female dancer with the instrument *daire* (Example 2).

Traditional songs

Traditional songs used in choreographies are very influential and a powerful element that portrays many elements of the ethnic society and, indirectly, an indicator of influences from different Empires. Beside the melodic and harmonic line they follow the diction, pronunciation of words and present the role that songs play in a certain community. Bosnian choreographers often use songs named *sevdalinka* to underline the Bosnian elements and, indirectly, Ottoman impact. The Serbian choreographer uses songs with instrumental accompaniment, primarily to underline the audible aspect of the region or tradition or in the context with the thematization in the choreography (wedding, adornment of the bride, etc.) often put at the beginning of the choreographic composition (Examples 1 and 2).

Movement

The movement, as a product of a certain community, in the territory of Serbia or Bosnia and Herzegovina, can be associated with certain influences from the east and the west. Much has been written regarding the influences on the traditional music and dance in domestic ethnomusicology and ethnochoreology [for example, Golemović 2002, Vasić 2005]. This influence primarily refers to dances in the urban environment, since the city is a breeding ground of new cultures, so these accept influences from the East and/or the West more easily. Many elements of the rural environment are more susceptible to changes when they come to the city. In the cities of Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the southern parts of Serbia, the Ottoman influence is present in the tangible and intangible cultural heritage, as well as the influence of the older, Byzantium Empire which is seen in Serbian dances from Prizren (Example 1) in connection with religious dances, while the urban environment in Belgrade and the cities of northern Serbia received mainly influences from Western Europe. The movement

was nurtured accordingly to this. The urban dances presented on the stage are more reduced and more elegant, regardless of Eastern or Western European influence.

When it comes to the stage presentation of traditional village or urban dances this distinction is also seen. Within the framework of choreographic works, one can rarely read about any influence regarding the movement in the presentation of dances of village origin. While representing urban dance in the stage context, the connection with other cultures is obvious.

Of the above three examples, all three of them are old urban dances from Prizren (Kosovo and Metohija), Vranje (South Serbia) and Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina). Regarding movement, the only one that could be highlighted is the choreography *Suite from Vranje* by Branko Marković (Example 2). In it, the movements of female and male dancers are very carefully presented through the influence of the Roma dancers from the East. It should be born in mind that the author of the choreography applied the movement elements of the *character dance* and his approach to the creation of the folk dance choreography is the most original in that sense.

In the urban dances from Prizren and Sarajevo (Example 1, Example 3) through the movement the impact of Byzantium can be seen in the first and that of the Ottoman Empire can be seen less clearly in the second example. Dances are performed in accordance with the ethnochoreological region, with the step pattern of traditional dances as they were recorded at the beginning of the 20th Century (see Figure 3). On the other hand, while looking at choreographies of urban dances from old Belgrade, which are mainly connected with East European culture, movements and the structure of the choreography is portrayed very differently than village dances in Serbia. They are danced in pairs, with metrically congruent relation between music and dance, with the exact way of moving bodies at the stage which implies calm movement, without jumps and hops, although using step patterns recorded in this area many decades ago.



Figure 3: Dances from Prizren, KUD Kopaonik, Leposavić
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YfzgEvvB4Ss&t=12s>).

Development of the choreographic forms with the imperial experience

In an effort to present the entire experience of a given dance, its origin, and people who performed it, the choreographers resorted to different choreographic techniques and developed different choreographic forms. With the tendency to use many different details for all three aspects: visual, audible and movement, the most appropriate form was one connected to a certain narrative. Introducing special roles, requisites, songs, appropriate costume and instruments, choreographers started to develop thematic arrangements as the basis for the choreographic composition. It was not a new choreographic praxis, because it was present in ballet and contemporary dance, but for the period after the Second World War this was an important step in the development of choreographic forms in the context of stage folk dance which until then relied on medleys as a dominant choreographic genre in the performance of village groups. The genre with the introduction of a theme, i.e. dramatization [Bajić Stojiljković 2015:37], seems appropriate to present one historical period in its entirety.

In connection with contemporary dances in old Belgrade at the beginning of the 20th century, where folk dance was first used as the stage art in the choreographic pieces of Maga Magazinović, choreographies were almost always connected with the past and historical themes. Maga Magazinović, the first Serbian contemporary dancer and choreographer created a dance trilogy, i.e. three thematic choreographies, based on historical themes describing the Kosovo battle in the 14th century. She combined contemporary and traditional dance to present different emotional states during the struggle, with historical themes of war, suffering, and heroism at the turn from the Middle to the New Age. The trilogy was performed in Belgrade in 1926/27 [Magazinović 2000:391].⁴

Although there are not video recordings of Maga Magazinović's choreographies, in her descriptions in her autobiography she wrote about the process of creating her pieces where she focused mainly on the movement and music, and less on the visual aspect [Magazinović 2000]. Her approach is unique in contemporary Serbian stage art and it is not mainstream in presenting the dramatizations in the field of stage folk dance. The choreographers mentioned in this paper, whose work is connected with the period after the Second World War, when presenting traditional dances, costumes and other historical moments, rely basically on visual and audible aspects, but in the context of movement, use step patterns of the traditional dance from a certain ethnochoreological region with no references to influences from outside.

Conclusion

Looking at the choreographic principles and procedures applied in folk dance choreographies in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina it can be said that choreographers shape the space composition and the kinetics in order to point out some characteristics of the tradition and the ethnic region. Choreographers, and Serbian and Bosnian well-known researchers of traditional dance, very consciously underline the reflection of different Empires with certain dance-music parameters, as well as choreographic principles and procedures. The most important moments are put in the introduction or in the middle part of the structure of the choreography. However, the structure of the folk dance choreographies retain the rules of the general compositional principles represented in every dance composition. At that level a similarity can be seen between Serbian and Bosnian choreographies, despite the impact of different imperial experiences.

Folk Dance Choreographies essentially relate to many elements of the past, although with the constant tendency to improve their structure, form and performance. They raise the awareness of the historical importance and recognisability of various imperial experiences in modern times. In that sense, a mixture of cultures is always present in choreographies. They

are a synthesis of many elements of East and West, of the past and the present, and that is what makes the performing art in this area so rich and fruitful.

Due to all the past events, choreographers have great opportunities in choosing the thematic framework for their creations, to broaden the basic compositional structure and find a way to improve choreographic forms. Although their choreographies are still structurally quite simple, they have a possibility to use different choreographic principles and procedures to strengthen the elements and play with them in order to create a more complex form with the meaning that each era and each Empire carries with it.

Endnotes

1. See video: <https://youtu.be/0yFW32i7G0M>
2. See video: <https://youtu.be/S0iwjuz44IE>
3. See video: <https://youtu.be/U84EffOD518&t=823s>
4. Three parts of the trilogy are named as *Jelisavka*, *majka Obilića* [Jelisavka, Obilić's mother]; *Molitva kosovke devojke* [The prayer of a Kosovo girl] and *Smrt majke Jugovića* [The death of Jugović's mother].

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Okan Ceylan
(İzmir, Turkey)

The reflections of socio-economic conditions in the end of the 19th century on Western Anatolian music and dance: The example of *Kerimoğlu Zeybek*

Kerimoğlu Zeybek is related to the life story of Eyüp who lived in the last quarters of the 19th century. There is heroism, love, and rebellions in its themes. However, *Kerimoğlu* Folk Dance was firstly staged in 1985 with the contribution of Mehmet Ali Eren who was a history teacher of Muğla Industrial Vocational High School. Mehmet Ali Eren took as reference the dance performance of Ali Kara and Lütfi Nalbantoğlu. Mehmet Ali Eren tried to form a repertory, a standard and principles of the dance. Then this dance was staged in Muğla Turgut Reis High School with the support of the vice-principal Osman Şahin. *Kerimoğlu Zeybek* was staged in Folk Dance Competitions among schools in 1988. In the staging of *Kerimoğlu Zeybek* in schools, Muğla Public Education Center played an important role. The success in the Folk Dance Competitions among schools served the national cultural values and sustained local folk dance.

Keywords: social banditry; *Zeybeks*; agriculture; rural areas; Muğla; folk dance.

Introduction

Kerimoğlu Zeybek that was compiled by Mehmet Ali Eren and first performed by Muğla Vocational High School students in 1985 bears the stamps of both *zeybek* culture and the personal characteristics of Eyüp Efe in his daily social life. In the performing of this *zeybek*, Muğla Public Institution and Muğla Vocational High School made contributions as institutions. Similarly, the history teacher at this high school Mehmet Ali Eren compiled *Kerimoğlu Zeybek* based on the accounts of the informants Bekir Nalbantoğlu, Lütfi Nalbantoğlu, Ali Kara and Yörük Durmuş. Therefore, these people contributed to the recording of *Kerimoğlu Zeybek*. It was staged on national days, at festivals, and within tourism activities of hotels in Muğla.

As is seen in the rise of other *zeybeks*, injustice, labour exploitation, lack of the rule of law and state authority, interwoven and complex socio-economic interests among peasants, major landowners, and local administrators can be seen. In other words, the story of *Kerimoğlu Zeybek* indicates both the socio-economic life conditions of Muğla, centre and periphery relations in the Ottoman Empire, the nationalization of folk dances, and the role of certain people and institutions in the development of *zeybek* folk dances in Muğla. In this context, this study aims to explain the rise of the *Kerimoğlu Zeybek* dance, analyse the role of people and organisations, and the functions of *Kerimoğlu Zeybeks*. Thus, this study focuses on *Kerimoğlu Zeybek* from three perspectives. First, the staging of *Kerimoğlu Zeybek* in 1985; second, the life experience of Kerimoğlu Eyüp Efe; and third, the influence of the socio-economic developments in the 19th century in the formation of *Zeybek* institutions.

The development process of folk dances in Turkey

Before dealing with the rise of *Kerimoğlu Zeybek* in Muğla, the compilation and performing mission of folk dances needs to be explained. Within the scope of nationalism and patriotism, some intellectuals and public institutions made contributions to the development of folk dances in the early republican period. First Selim Sırrı Tarcan, who went to Sweden for physical training education, studied folk dances in 1909. This is the indication of the replacement of old regime by new political orders in the ongoing process of the Republican regime [Öztürkmen 2001:140]. Tarcan tried to regulate the rules of dance steps in 1916.

Similarly, the political elites of the Republican regime regarded *zeybeks* as ballroom dancing. The first folk dance was staged by the students at the Teaching Institute in 1917. Secondly, after the proclamation of the Republic, the nationalization process of folk dances began with public houses in the 1930s. In this context, the first folklore groups were organized [Öztürkmen 2006:226–231]. By the same token, the educational mission of village institutes was preserving and keeping alive the folk dances in their regions from the 1940s.

In addition to these educational and cultural institutions, the Building and Loan Association, Turkish Commercial Bank, and *Milliyet* Newspaper took part in the regulation of folk dance competitions in the 1950s and the 1960s. Due to competitions, folk dances were performed in a fixed order. Based on the increasing urban population, the visibility of folk dances in cities began to increase in this period. In this sense it seems that performing folkdance served to revive local memories. They were performed during the activities of public houses and municipals. Also, folk dances were performed in music and physical education lectures at schools. Furthermore, folklore associations began in the 1960s and their number steadily increased in the 1970s [Öztürkmen 2006:232–254]. In the spread of folk dances across the country, the Ministry of Youth and Sports became influential through folk dance competitions from 1977. There was a demand for folk dances in students' shows, festivals, national holidays in big cities in the 1970s and the 1980s [Öztürkmen 2006:251]. Youth could find an opportunity to express their skill in the public sphere. By the same token, modern, national western, and graceful folk-dance repertoire started to be seen in the 1980s [Öztürkmen 2006:254–259]. Especially, synchrony, order, fineness, and pattern were four prominent characteristics in folk dances [Öztürkmen 2006:239–240; Karademir 2022].

While some of the folk dances have been sustained until today, some of them have been forgotten. This results from the role of dance educators, the adaptation of dancers, and the views of statesmen and journalists about these folk dances [Öztürkmen 2006:255]. The building of national and official culture from the 1930s led to the regulations of dance steps. This republican ideology was adopted and developed by civil societies, educational institutions, and some private companies from the 1950s onwards, and high schools and universities considered performing folk dances [Karademir 2022]. In this context, in the performing of *Kerimoğlu Zeybek*, Mehmet Ali Eren is an important dance educator [Altınsoy 2022; Yağcı 2022].

A short history of Muğla folkdances: *Kerimoğlu Zeybek*

The first *zeybeks* of Muğla were compiled and noted by Muzaffer Sarısözen and Halil Bedii Yönetken in the 1940s. Furthermore, Yönetken defined Muğla as a region of *zeybek*. Drum, shawm, pipe, and *rebab* were used in these *zeybek* songs [Yönetken 1942; Eren 2001:55–56]. The folk music of *Kerimoğlu* was compiled by Hamdi Özbay from local artists İbrahim Ethem Yağcı and Mustafa Karaosmanoğlu, and violinist Tahir Erdiñ in 1957 [Karademir 2012; Yağcı 2022]. Hamdi Özbay gave his *baglama* courses in the building of the Democrat Party in Muğla in 1955. This *zeybek* was played without lyrics. In the lyrics of *Kerimoğlu Zeybek*, some differences are seen. Since Kör Arap was a police officer from Milas, the singers of Milas consider that Kör Arap killed a robber. On the other hand, it is song for the benefit of Kerimoğlu Eyüp Efe [Yağcı 2022]. Furthermore, with the spread of *zeybek* folk music on public radio with Talip Özkan, *Kerimoğlu Zeybek* began to be popular [Karademir 2022]. There are two different *Kerimoğlu Zeybeks* in Muğla Region. The first is about the life of Ali (*Gök Kerimoğlu*-Blue Kerimoğlu). It is also called Fancy Kerimoğlu (*Kıvrak Kerimoğlu*), and it belongs to Bodrum. The other *Kerimoğlu Zeybek* discussed in this study focuses on the life story of Eyüp in Milas. Its melody is slower than the first one [Altınsoy 2022].

Hamdi Özbay was from Fethiye and he was a singer at İzmir Radio and gave lectures at İstanbul Municipal Conservatory during that time [Eren 2003:3; Altınsoy 2022; Özşahin 2010:46–47]. The folk songs of Muğla Region were recorded in 1959 by Muzaffer Sarısözen, Müzeyyen Senar, and Hamiyyet Duygulu at İstanbul Radio in company with the orchestra in which Zeki Duygulu, Niyazi Yanar, Mehmet Kocayolcu, and Ali Rıza Karnavuz played. The folk dance group and music choir went to Ankara to participate in the Muğla Ferayî Night Program on 8 April 1961. Muğla henna night was organised in 1967. The group was invited to Europe in 1971. However, they could not go abroad due to insufficient group funds and the group dispersed. Especially Lütî and Bekir Nalbantoğlu who were father and son tried to sustain the folkdance of Muğla. However, a dance instructor could not be found. Thus, folk dances began to be performed in the schools of Muğla [Eren 2001:51].

Kerimoğlu Zeybek had been performed differently by dancers in the weddings of Muğla. Furthermore, there had been distinct figures in various villages and districts of the Aegean Region. Women and men performed *Kerimoğlu Zeybek* separately until the 1950s. On the other hand, they performed together from the 1960s onwards. Due to folk dance competitions in the 1980s that were regulated by the Folk Dance Federation, Muğla Public Training Center encouraged high schools in Muğla to perform the folk dances of the region [Altınsoy 2022; Yağcı 2022]. Furthermore, in the organization of these *Zeybek* groups, an administrator of Muğla Public Training Center Sadık Okyay became influential in 1959 [Eren 2001:47–50]. The students who participated in the folk dance programs of Muğla Public Training Centre received a qualified instructor certificate. *Zeybek* groups were organized in the primary schools and high schools of Muğla. In addition to dance steps, a standardisation was seen in their clothes. For example, although boots have not been previously worn for the folk dances of Muğla, they were introduced [Yağcı 2022]. *Zeybek* culture was reinvented in terms of clothes, order, and orchestra.

In this context, Mehmet Ali Eren who was a history teacher at Muğla Vocational High School both analysed written sources and did field work. Eren published this information in the book *Zeybek Dance of Muğla Region*. Then, he organised a *zeybek* group. After their success in folk dances competitions in Turkey, the Muğla *Zeybek* groups went to Reccio Calabria city in Italy in 1995 and Barcelona city in Spain in 1997 to participate in festivals [Eren 2001:51–52].

The standardising and systemising of *Kerimoğlu Zeybek* was compiled by Mehmet Ali Eren in 1985. He was also from one of the notable families of Muğla. Mehmet Ali Eren took as reference the dance performance of Ali Kara, Yörük Durmuş, Bekir Nalbantoğlu and Lütî Nalbantoğlu in *Kerimoğlu Zeybek*. Therefore, *Kerimoğlu Zeybek* was performed in the saloon of Muğla Vocational High School for the first time in 1985. Similarly, it was staged in Muğla Turgut Reis High School with the support of the vice principal Osman Şahin. Although these *zeybeks* were performed orderly, they were performed spiritlessly and deprived of social emotions. *Kerimoğlu Zeybek* was staged in a Folk Dance Competition among schools in 1988. It reinforced the friendship and self-reliance of students, and the names of these schools were known throughout the country. In general, *Kerimoğlu Zeybek* was performed during the national days, the Independence Day of Muğla, festivals, and the tourism activities of hotels from the 1980s onwards. Since *zeybek* dance performance provided publicity for Muğla, the province and municipality obtained funds. They regarded these activities as a public service and opened folk dance courses [Altınsoy 2022; Yağcı 2022].

Similar to *Harmandalı Zeybek*, *Kerimoğlu Zeybek* was performed widely in Western Anatolia in Aydın, Muğla, Antalya, and Denizli [Karademir, 8 May 2022]. *Kerimoğlu Zeybek* was performed in socio-cultural perspectives during weddings and festivals [Çetin 2022:89].

Thus, it can be said that the *Kerimoğlu Zeybek* dance served not only the social, the political, and educational programs but also the entertainment and cultural representation of Muğla such as the tourism economy of the province. Thus, the revival of *Kerimoğlu Zeybek* performance on stage needs to be viewed from multi-dimensional perspectives. To understand the spirit of *Kerimoğlu Zeybek*, the socio-economic conditions in which Eyüp lived needs to be known.

The role of social conditions in the rise of Kerimoğlu Eyüp

In the story of *Kerimoğlu Zeybek*, there are political, social, and economic conditions such as unjust distribution of cultivated lands, inequality before the law, hierarchical social structure, loyalty to traditional values, labour exploitation, and socio-economic relationships based on self-interest in the end of the 19th century and the beginnings of the 20th century [Altınsoy 2008]. Under these economic conditions, the labour of peasants had been exploited both by big landowners through servitude in the fields of aghas and by the Regie of the Public Debt Administration through the taxation of tobacco. Since people did not want to sell their tobacco underpriced, they turned to contraband. Therefore, there were intensive conflicts between those selling through contraband and police forces of the Regie. Thus, there was trafficking between Muğla, Rhodes, and Kos (İstanköy) [Eren 2001:45; Altınsoy 2022]. The rise of unequal socio-economic relations and a heavy tax burden increased banditry in western Anatolia [Hamaloğlu 2021:465–466]. Therefore, the political and economic dynamics of the Ottoman Empire influenced the social life of people in Muğla.

In the periods when Kerimoğlu Eyüp lived, Osman Agha, Şerif Efendi, and Doctor Hüseyin Avni (Topaloğlu) were prominent lords in this feudal relation of production at the end of the 19th century. These big landowners not only had a considerable part of the lands of Milas but also employed the headmen of the villages as butlers. Many peasants had been working for very little in the fields of the aghas [Altınsoy 2008:2–3]. In addition to unequal land ownership, malaria spread from large swamp lands and lakes, frog invasions, and grasshopper infestation and caused both scarcity and deaths at that time. Furthermore, due to grasshopper infestation, the leaves of mulberry trees were infested and silkworms died. Famine, poverty, and scarcity were widespread [Altınsoy 2008:4–5]. Due to this natural catastrophe, some peasants accused the Greek population and some accused the youth who drank alcohol [Altınsoy 2008:5]. This indicates that superstitions, biases, and religious beliefs surrounded the daily social life of people.

The father of Eyüp was Hüseyin. He was a shepherd. He was called mad Hüseyin in Pisi (Yeşilyurt). The mother of Eyüp was Hatice. After the marriages of Hüseyin and Hatice in 1870, six children named Ayşe, Mehmet, Ali, Hüseyin, Gülsüm, Eyüp were born. Eyüp who was born in 1882, was the youngest brother. Since their father did not have any land, he worked as a sharecropper in the fields of big landholders. The fields that he inherited from Hacı Hasan who was the father of Hatice were not sufficient. For a while, instead of sharecropping, Hüseyin decided to buy goats. Shepherdism was the occupation of Koca Kerim who was the grandfather of Hüseyin [Altınsoy 2008:7]. Therefore, their living conditions reflect an ordinary Muslim Turkish family in the end of the 19th century.

After the death of Hüseyin, his wife Hatice was widowed and some of the children such as Mehmet and Ali got married. Then, Ali was mobilized due to the First World War. However, Ali was martyred and Ayşe died due to disease. There were six people in the house of the Kerimoğlu family, Hatice, Mehmet, Hüseyin, Eyüp, Gülsüm, the wife of Ali and seven grandchildren. Mehmet also died due to a stray bullet during the wedding of his friend. All of them lived in a one room flat. They had an ox, 15 goats, and 15 sheep. The brothers of Hatice including Kocabıyık Mustafa, Dişsiz Hasan, and Hacı Hasan helped the family of Kerimoğlu

in their agricultural production. To earn the family's keep, Hüseyin began to get involved in contraband [Altınsoy 2008:9–10].

Koca Yusuf Captain in Bodrum and Küçük İsmet in İstanköy (Kos) who were relatives of the Kerimoğlu family encouraged Hüseyin got involved in contraband. They were involved in tobacco and arms smuggling. Through getting involved in contraband, Hüseyin tried to acquire influence and earn money. In this process, he was imprisoned, and he made a circle of friends including the big landholders and notables of Muğla [Altınsoy 2008:11–12]. Hüseyin's dignity came from fear. Due to smuggling, he was in conflict with the police forces of the Public Debt Administration. However, this conflict increased his criminal activity and banditry more [Altınsoy 2008:16]. Other members of his family were concerned about the lifestyle of Hüseyin. Thus, to reassure them, Hüseyin brought some presents such as silk dress for his sister Gülsüm, henna for his mother, and argentry (silver plate) for his brother Eyüp [Altınsoy 2008:22].

On the other hand, Eyüp was a severe, stubborn, and ingenious person [Altınsoy 2008:22]. His psychological characteristics influenced his social life and struggle against the big landowners. For example, İzzet Agha, who was a headman, directed his shepherds to the cultivated corn fields of Eyüp. Therefore, Eyüp fought with the men of İzzet. Although Eyüp was right, his mother Hatice tried to solve this problem with İzzet by talking. As a matter of fact, İzzet was not only a headman of Pisi (Yerkesik) village but also butler to Doctor Hüseyin Avni (Topaloğlu) who was one of the prominent big landholders in Muğla [Altınsoy 2008:27–37]. Butlership brought him social prestige and capital [Eren 2001:45]. Furthermore Hatice, who had lost some of her children, tried to protect her remaining children in their traditional lives. In contrast to this, İzzet ordered his men to graze their cattle in the field of Eyüp [Altınsoy 2008:27–37].

Thereupon, Eyüp decided to wait in his corn fields at night. When he arrived at the fields, the scenery was spectacular. There were sandalwood trees (Greek strawberry tree) in Karadağ (Black Mountain) near Pisi. Local people made use of the leaves of this tree to feed their animals. The scenery of the expansive Pisi Plain, Karadağ, with the sandalwood trees charmed Eyüp in the moonlight. The shepherds of İzzet took their cattle again to Eyüp's fields. Then Eyüp fought them and killed two cattle. Then, with the intervention of Hüseyin who was the elder brother of Eyüp and their uncles, the two families came into agreement. Hüseyin paid the price of the cattle. In this reconciliation process, the role of respected men and traditional values played a central role in their behaviour [Altınsoy 2008:37–38].

Although İzzet did not have a grudge against Eyüp, he attacked him through other people. In the wedding of their neighbours, the *zeybek* dance of Eyüp was interrupted by Koca Mehmet who was one of the closest friends of Hüseyin. Since he was a friend of his elder brother, Eyüp did not react at first. However, Koca Mehmet went to İzzet and sat down beside him. Then, Eyüp fired a shot and wounded İzzet in an attempt to murder him. After this event, Eyüp escaped from the wedding. However, he was caught by Koca İsmail in Değirmen Stream and attacked by İzzet's relatives. Then, the relatives of Eyüp and his mother saved him. Furthermore, since İzzet was both the butler of Dr. Hüseyin Avni (Topaloğlu) who was a big landowner and headman of Pisi, the police initiated a military operation to arrest Eyüp. Although he escaped from the police, he could have been killed by the men of İzzet [Karademir 2012; Altınsoy 2008:41–48].

In the spring months of 1901, Eyüp took to the hills and remained there for six months [Eren 2001:22] hiding in the caves and precipices of Karadağ and Karıncalı Mountain. While he was in the mountain, he ate meat given to him by Yörüks, *tarhana* soup, *bulgur*, white beans, pickle, and molasses [Altınsoy 2008:55–65]. Yörüks as a nomadic Turkic tribe were opponents

to the Ottoman Empire that encouraged them to settle for taxation purposes [Aydın and Güray 2012:54]. In this process, he was surrounded by a group of soldiers in Marçal Mountain. He got rid of them by wounding a soldier who was called Lazoğlu. Lazoğlu was the closest friend of Milaslı İsmail sergeant (Kör Arap). However, he died from the loss of blood. Thus, Kör Arap swore to arrest Eyüp. In this story, Eyüp revolted against both agha who exploited the labour of peasants and local administrators that oversaw this unequal order. Therefore, Eyüp was at the receiving end of both local mediators and the state. On the other hand, his revolt against the unfair order was appreciated by the peasants. The peasants who formed the masses were unorganized. For example, most of the young admired Eyüp, but they did not know how to communicate with him [Altınsoy 2008:55–57]. Due to the responsibility of his family members, elders could not be social bandits. Therefore, the myth of Kerimoğlu Eyüp was widespread among young men [Hobsbawm 1995:23]. Since Eyüp was a defender of their rights, he was associated with superhuman characteristics and mythologized [Altınsoy 2008:137]. However, he thought that peasants behaved with their best interest rather than their principles. Therefore, they might have changed sides [Altınsoy 2008:137].

The field officer in Muğla was a friend of Hüseyin. Hüseyin bribed the soldiers with 30 fine gold pieces. Furthermore, Hüseyin supported the activities of Eyüp and recruited new *zeybeks*. However, there were problems with food, accommodation, and security. Both to provoke soldiers and to prevent the support of the peasants, İzzet bribed everybody. Therefore, there are interwoven social, bureaucratic, and economic conflicts of interest in the story of Kerimoğlu Eyüp [Altınsoy 2008:67–71; 155]. The revolt of Kerimoğlu Eyüp challenges both the exploitation of labour by the big landholders and the unfair taxation of the state. Therefore, there was a collaboration between aghas and soldiers in this process [Altınsoy 2008:110–111]. Based on their interest, apart from İzzet, many notables and aghas abstained from giving their men to Kör Arap to arrest Eyüp. However, they all were annoyed about the appreciation of the myth of Kerimoğlu Eyüp.

Kerimoğlu Eyüp fell in love with Sarı Sultan at a wedding in Meke. To impress her, Eyüp wrestled and performed *zeybek* [Altınsoy 2008:93–95]. Kör Arap pressed İbiş İbrahim, who was the grandfather of Sarı Sultan, to denounce Eyüp [Altınsoy 2008:139]. To save Eyüp's life, Hüseyin disseminated news about the fact that his brother had left Karadağ. However, Eyüp had often visited Sarı Sultan in Çakallar Village. Thus, Kör Arap also found three young men whose fathers had died to stand guard outside the house of Sarı Sultan so they could denounce Eyüp [Altınsoy 2008:176]. Rather than these young men, the grandfather of Sarı Sultan informed Kör Arap that Eyüp, Hüseyin, and Koca Mehmet were in his house. In the meanwhile, Sarı Sultan who was unaware of anything had been sent to her aunt by her grandfather on the pretext that her aunt was ill. Kör Arap shot Eyüp down a peephole [Altınsoy 2008:180–197]. The corpse of Kerimoğlu Eyüp Efe was buried near the house of Sarı Sultan in Çakallar in 1901. After the massacre of Eyüp, his lover Sultan sung some poems for his death.

After the death of Eyüp, the subsistence of the Kerimoğlu Family was maintained by Hüseyin. Since their mother was growing old, he decided to marry. As he had undertaken contraband between Muğla and Kos, many Greek friends came from Kos (İstanköy) to the wedding of Hüseyin. Due to imperial culture, men and women performed their dance in separate areas. Young men drank too much alcohol during the wedding although the elders of Pisi did not agree with this tradition. This is a kind of conflict of generations. Furthermore, the visiting Greeks reflected the multi-cultural dimension of the Ottoman imperial culture [Altınsoy 2008:220–230].

After the marriage of Hüseyin to Cemile, he had a responsibility to provide for his family. Şerif Efendi, who was one of the big landholders in the Pisi Plain, proposed that Hüseyin should be his butler. Furthermore, Doctor Hüseyin Avni (Topaloğlu) who was another big landholder demanded a peace between Hüseyin and İzzet. Şerif Efendi had great power over the peasants of Pisi. After Hüseyin and his friend Çolak Mustafa became butlers of Şerif Efendi, both the social prestige of them and aghas increased. This reflects the strategy of aghas to maintain their socio-economic interests. In other words, the reconciliation between two groups resulted from reciprocal interests [Altınsoy 2008:230–239]. Being Şerif Efendi's butler indicates that Hüseyin is a noble robber [Hobsbawm, 1995:27–28]. Furthermore, due to lack of sufficient capital, Hüseyin was involved in smuggling. Thus, it was considered as illegality rather than committing ordinary crime. Due to his justice, he was a very respected man [Hobsbawm 1995:34]. A successful bandit is both a defender of the rights of peasants and part of the capitalist system managed by lords. Therefore, Hüseyin was a typical example of this category.

Hüseyin had sufficient capital since he had previously accumulated some gold while smuggling, and he had regular income from being Şerif Efendi's butler. However, the yield of wheat and tobacco in Pisi Plain were low due to drought. Thus, in 1914 many peasants were on the brink of scarcity and poverty. Apart from mullahs, aghas, and notables, large masses of people were in difficult circumstances. Under these socio-economic conditions, the Ottoman Empire declared mobilisation and entered the First World War (1914–1918). The families whose children were enlisted in the army wondered how they would cultivate their fields [Altınsoy 2008:242–243]. Most of the young men in Muğla went to the Çanakkale Front. During this time of war, there were some conflicts between Turkish Revolutionaries (*Kuva-i Milliye*) and Greek bands. With the encouragement of religious men, both swashbucklers (efe) and aghas supported the ten years of the Turkish National Struggle [Altınsoy 2008:246–256]. After the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, the Greek population migrated to Greece within the scope of supplemental agreement for population exchange of the Lausanne Peace Treaty of 1923 [Altınsoy 2008:283–285]. As Eyüp had been killed by Kör Arap, Hüseyin was killed by the groom of İzzet. As is seen, they were competitors of mediators and interest groups rather than the state [Hobsbawm 1995:34]. The life conditions of Eyüp reflected a lifestyle of a *zeybek* in western Anatolia. Therefore, to understand all of these events, a theoretical dimension of *zeybek* history needed to be analysed.

Zeybeks: From social banditry to national heroism

Zeybek is a subject of social history rather than an official history. The title of *zeybek* is given to one person by a society. In literature, Mahmut Ragıp Gazimihal is the first author who deals with *zeybek* in the early Republican period [Özbilgin 2003:23–27]. However, there are different views about the origin of *zeybek*. For example, Hüseyin Hilmi Bayındır thinks that the history of *zeybeks* dates from 3000 BC and they were seamen rather than mountain men [Bayındır 1964:16–17; Sevinç 1994:10]. Namely, *zeybek* is regarded as a mariner society in the Aegean Region [Çetin 2022:89; Gençoğlu 2019:95–96]. On the other hand, Charles Texier wrote that *zeybeks* who come from the Ottomans, were not only soldiers but also merchants in the 19th century [Texier 2002:103; Sevinç 1994:10]. Furthermore, while some intellectuals claim that *zeybeks* have continued their existence since antiquity, some believe that they arose in conjunction with the Jelali Revolts in Anatolia against the Ottoman Empire in the 16th and the 17th centuries. However, similar socio-economic lifestyles, traditional rules, and cultural values among Turkic tribes such as Oghuz, Kipczak, and Turkmens make it difficult to determine any precise information about the rise of *zeybek* [Çetin 2022:89; Gençoğlu 2019:95–96].

In their historical past, it seems that *zeybeks* were social bandits rather than robbers who commit ordinary crimes. Social banditry emerged in the process of passing from a traditional agrarian society to an agrarian capitalist system in which there was labour exploitation, social hierarchies, economic inequality, and lack of the rule of law. However, very few numbers of the bandits experienced this socio-economic transformation process in the long history of banditry [Hobsbawm 1995:119–120]. As a social group, the bandits in mountainous areas were young shepherds, landless peasants, and older soldiers. These men have strict social ties with their societies. This differentiates social and noble bandits from robbers [Hobsbawm 1995:27–34; 62].

Zeybeks lived in the mountainous areas of Western Anatolia from the 18th century to the first quarter of the 20th century. Furthermore, although bandits are supposed to be a topic of history from below, a literature about *zeybeks* in the 18th century can be found in manuscripts, agendas, land registry books, Muslim legal registries, and travel notes. The rise of the *zeybek* institution is closely related to the social, economic, administrative, and legal structures of the Ottoman Empire. In this context, fertile lands, socio-economic interests of conflict, heavy tax burdens, the collapse of *timar* system and the weakening of state authority due to long period of wars, the invention of firearms, lack of the rule of law, and the political and economic influence of the integration of the Ottoman Empire to world capitalism led to the rise of banditry [Hobsbawm 1995:119–120; Yetkin 1996:54–55; Öztürk 2006:11–45]. Similarly, Braudel points out that scarcity and wars triggered the rise of banditry [Braudel 1989:156; Hobsbawm 1995:16]. By the same token, the collapse of *timar* system resulted from the long periods of wars with the Habsburg Empire and Safavids and the weakening of state authority in rural areas, so as a social banditry, *zeybeks* arose to prevent injustice of lords (*ayans*) and the labour exploitation of peasants. In social perspectives, *zeybek* resulted from the unequal socio-economic relations among local peasants, mediators, and local administrators.

However, the position of *zeybeks* before the Ottoman Empire and local mediators was very complex. These men were conscripted in war time and commissioned. For example, a *zeybek* battalion fought against Bulgarian soldiers in the Crimean War [Baykara 1992:60–63; Gençoğlu 2019:98–100; Öztürk 2006:11–39]. The Ottoman Empire could not have solved the dynamics that created *zeybeks*. It indicates that if the State could not deal with banditries, it recognized their existence [Öztürk 2006:11–39]. Furthermore, the notables (*ayans*) in rural areas made use of the military power of bandits to balance the socio-economic potentials of their competitor *ayans*. The conflicts between centre and periphery can be seen in the rise of *zeybeks* [Öztürk 2006:50]. However, this recognition resulted from the weakening of the Ottoman political authority in the rural areas. In cases of lack of state authority, these men tried to secure justice among peasants. Therefore, *zeybeks* fought for the rights and justice of people. Although the Ottoman Empire regarded *zeybeks* as rebels, disorderly, and outlaws, they were considered as respected folk heroes. Therefore, Hobsbawm called them social bandits. While social banditry was associated with a type of *efe*, robbers were called *çalı kakıcı*. For their organisation and accommodation, *zeybeks* needed the socio-economic support of peasants [Yetkin 1996:12; Hobsbawm 1997:12; Öztürk 2006:42–52].

In addition to western Anatolia, social banditry had been seen in different parts of the world such as Asia, Australia, and America. Moreover, while these social bandits were regarded as criminals by feudalism and state authority, they were heroes in the eyes of peasants [Hobsbawm 1995:12–14]. Therefore, they were brave men who demanded the justice of their people. They struggled against injustices in their lives. While they had been against mediators such as big landholders and usurers in the Ottoman Empire, they fought against the imperialist invasion of the Entente Powers in the Turkish Independence War [Çetin 2022:88]. However,

zeybeks did not have any systematic political ideology or beliefs in a specific religious sect in their lives [Meriç 2017:213].

Due to their sense of justice in the second half of the 19th century, military activities, and the anti-imperialist characteristics of *zeybek* in the Turkish Independence War, the function of the *zeybek* institution was reconsidered in the process of the building of national culture in the early Republican period. In this context, *zeybek* has been a subject of folk dances, music, theatre, and literature [Gençoğlu 2019:100; Çetin 2022:91]. Similarly, *zeybek* dances have a function to pass down cultural values to the next generations, reinforce national unity, and increase patriotism [Çetin 2022:94]. Furthermore, it seems that *zeybek* was a social statue in the 19th century transformed into a folkloric value after the foundation of the Republican regime. *Zeybek* dance was used to explain the social values in this period [Özbilgin 2003:16]. *Zeybek* dance is one of the intangible cultural heritages of Turkish Society. It has taken place in western Anatolia. The subject of this dance is love, death, heroism, and social events [Çetin 2022:88]. Besides, heroism, resistance, and rebellion against injustice are the three characteristics of *zeybeks* [Aydın and Güray 2012:54]. *Zeybeks* performed their folk dances that reflected mountainous life in their spare time [Sevinç 1994:48].

Studies on the musical and folkloric aspects of *zeybek* have been made since the end of the 19th century [Hobsbawm 1995:14; Öztürk 2006:14–16]. The Turkish Independence War was a breaking point in the transformation of the perception of *zeybeks* from social banditry to national heroes [Öztürk 2006:14–31]. There is a hierarchical system in the *zeybek* institution. The commanders of national forces were called *efe*, other commanders under the commands of *efe* were called *zeybek*, and the civilian warriors of *zeybeks* were called *kızan* [Albayrak 1998:80; Öztürk 2006:61]. By the same token, with the proclamation of the Republican regime, the socio-economic dynamics that caused the rise of *zeybeks* disappeared. In the process of building a national culture in the early republican era, *zeybek* was characterized as a national and folkloric value. *Zeybek* means heroism, trueness, and honesty. Nowadays *zeybeks* are regarded as having folkloric and touristic value [Sevinç 1994: 6; Öztürk 2006:14–31; 80]. In the 1930s and 1940s, during the process of establishing a national music, the harmonization of Turkish cultural values and Western musical techniques were seen [Gökalp 1997:127–128; Öztürkmen 2006:133–134; Öztürk 2006:66–67]. Folk music compilations were carried out within the frame of the Eastern Europe School based on the ideology of nationalism, the preservation of traditional music, the emphasis on the dominant ethnic identity, and the use of folk music in education system [Titon 1996:91; Öztürk 2006:68].

Conclusion

This study indicates the stages of *Kerimoğlu Zeybek*, the life story of Eyüp Efe and the role of *zeybeks* in the historical process. In the compilation of *Kerimoğlu Zeybek*, Mehmet Ali Eren, Bekir Nalbantoğlu, and Lütfi Nalbantoğlu became influential. Although it was performed extemporarily in the wedding in Muğla, with the reference of the Nalbantoğlus, Eren brought new orders, patterns, and figures to this *zeybek*. In addition to Muğla Public Center and Muğla Vocational High School, Muğla Governeship and Muğla Municipality contributed to these *zeybek* groups within the revival of national cultural values and publicity of the provinces. In addition to these public institutions, within the scope of coastal tourism, hotels always considered the performance of *zeybek* dances as a part of the advertisement of the region. Therefore, the performance of *Kerimoğlu Zeybek* served both the public and the private sector.

While *zeybeks* were regarded as social bandits in the Ottoman period, they turned into national heroes in the early Republican period. Therefore, *zeybek* dances and folk music was used in the building of the national music during this time. Furthermore, *zeybek* dances were

performed within the folk dance activities and the revival of rural memories in the 1950s and the 1960s when urbanization increased. However, *zeybek* dances served both for the revival of Republican ideology and the publicity of Muğla Province with the scope of tourism activities. The changing functions of *Kerimoğlu Zeybek* in the 20th century is related to social, cultural and economic policy of Turkey.

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László Felföldi
(Budapest, Szeged; Hungary)

Moving cultural kaleidoscope: Impact of different empires on dance and music traditions of Banat in historical perspective

This paper offers a short report on research and methodology of long-term joint research on the multi-faceted dance and music panorama of Banat, the northern region of Southeastern Europe in the middle of the 20th century. The region can be characterised by a rich, hybrid and complex cultural diversity (of Hungarian, Serbian, Romanian, German, Gypsy, Slovakian, Ukrainian, Croatian inhabitants). This multi-coloured image (differences and similarities) came into being historically due to the socio-cultural changes brought about by the rules of the various empires, and countries. Each of the empires and countries exercising longer-shorter authority over this region, had impacts on the cultural memory of the region through their cultural policies during their hegemony substantiating and nation building processes. That is why this region represents a very instructive and promising research field from the point of view of the theory and methodology of European dance ethnography.

Keywords: Banat Region; dance traditions; empires; comparative-historical perspective; transcultural processes.

Theme, research questions

This paper deals with the transcultural processes in dance and musical practice of the Banat region located in the northern part of the south-eastern area of Europe. It served for a long time as a military conflict zone on the border of Central and Southeastern Europe. Its ethnic diversity, its logically designed settlement network, ethnic spatial structure, militarily designed administrative system, developed industry (east) and agriculture (west) made Banat a special region for all the three countries (Serbia, Romani and Hungary) sharing its territory since 1918. In the historical literature, at the beginning of the 20th century, it was characterized “Europe in miniature” [Szentkláray 1879; Bodor 1914].¹ Banat deserves this characterization in every respect right, because in addition to the four major elements of its population (Romanian, Serbian, German, Hungarian) it is inhabited by several other ethnic minorities (Bulgarian, Slovak, Croatian, Krashovani, Czech, Ukrainian (Ruthenian), Jewish, Gipsy, French, Vlach, Turkish), who arrived here (and left Banat) in several waves throughout history.² On the basis of the existing voluminous historical and ethnographic source material, we had the right to presume that co-existence of so many ethnic communities and the cultural impact of so many different empires resulted in a very diverse dance and musical culture there. Our main research question was and is: How this “kinetic cultural kaleidoscope”³ of Banat Region came into being and how its elements coexist today? We supposed that we would find here various kinds of cultural processes of acculturation, like assimilation, devolution, addition, revitalization etc. In this paper we paid special attention to transcultural processes and the possible impact of the empires exercising authority over this area throughout its history.

Process of the research, methodology and research material

The academic work in question is a long-term, joint research project focusing on the traditional dance of Banat Region (see Figure 1). This was preceded by my own research in the 1980s in the villages along the Maros river among Serbians, Romanians, Hungarians and Gypsies. My work was based mainly on field work, but a review of the archival documents and the literary sources was also of great benefit. Later we widened the scope of the research to the

Slovakians, Croatians and the above listed ethnic communities in other sub-regions of Banat. The results of my research were published in several articles and one book in Serbian, English and in Hungarian languages.⁴ Systematic research based on the preliminary information began in the 2000s lasting from 2000 until 2012. The comprehensive research plan was prepared by András Gombos and László Felföldi, at that time researchers of the Institute for Musicology in Budapest. During the research period it was sponsored occasionally by some ongoing research projects implemented by several partners (Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Szeged University, Cluj University, Timisoara University, Cultural Centre of Timiș County, Music Conservatory of Kikinda, Hungarian Folklore Centre of Vojvodina in Subotica, Foundation of the Szeged Folk Ensemble). Members of the dance and music research staff were recruited from university students instructed by dance researchers and experts on dance revival.

The data collection was implemented mainly by extensive fieldwork in twenty single- and mixed-ethnic villages. The data collectors made audio and video recordings and used various interview techniques and observation methods. This was accompanied by a review of the extensive historical, ethnographic, and demographic literature. As a result of the first round of collection, approximately 50 hours of video recording and 150 photos were taken, and nearly 10 publications were published in study volumes and conference proceedings.

The latest period of the research started in 2020 in the Banat villages around Szeged with the support of the local governments and the Department of Ethnography and Cultural Anthropology of the University of Szeged in the theoretical framework of heritage studies.



Figure 1. Map of the modern Banat Region during the period of 1920 and 2002. Coordinates: 45.7000°N 20.9000°E, area total: 28,526 km, population total approximately 1700,000. Author: Andrei_Nacu, public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

Key-concepts of the research: ‘empire’ and ‘transculturalism’

According to one of the most common conceptions, empire is: “a major political unit having a territory of great extent or a number of territories or peoples under a single sovereign authority especially: one having an emperor as chief of state” [Merriam-Webster 2022]. In our case this involves the Roman Empire, Austrian Empire, Austro-Hungarian Empire, British

Empire, Ottoman Empire etc. There are several other definitions of this kind of political unit in political science, sociology, history etc. emphasizing the size of the population, status of the component countries, the size of the area, the centralization of power and decision-making processes. The authors of these definitions focus on security policy, demographic and economic characteristics, but they often neglect the cultural aspect. They either do not pay attention to it or do not realize that each of the aspects listed has a cultural dimension.⁵ Our research puts cultural dimensions (first of all dance and music) in the focus.

And how to conceptualise transcultural processes, a particular kind of change in a certain socio-cultural context?

In cultural studies, transcultural is described as “extending through all human cultures” or “involving, encompassing, or combining elements of more than one culture”. Study of transcultural processes means the analysis of existing and developing regional, national, and hybrid cultures, their self-conceptions, interactions, and effects on societies, politics, economics, and the environment – especially in the context of globalization. “The aim is to achieve a better understanding of the origins of cultures along with transcultural processes of communication and knowledge-sharing in politics, diplomacy, economics, research, education, art, ecology, and development cooperation” [Lachenicht 2022]. This concept turned out to be very useful in our Banat research in order to explore how the present day image of the dance and music tradition in Banat Region came into being and how its elements coexist today.

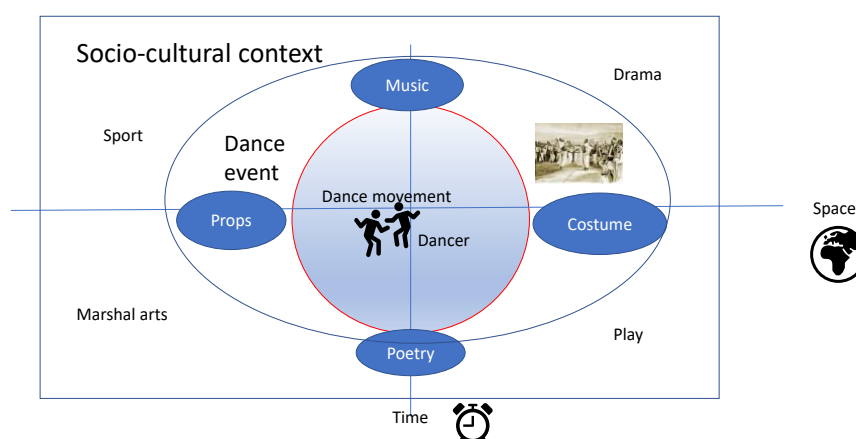


Figure 2. The complex model of dance in the research in question (made by the author).

Although, the concept of dance seemed to be evident for everybody among the participants of the research, after getting acquainted deeper with the results of western dance anthropology, we had to redefine what we understand under the term ‘dance’ in our research [Kaeppler 1978]. Since that time, we consider dance as a complex socio-cultural phenomenon appearing in the narrow context of the *dance event* and the wider socio-cultural context of a community (see Figure 2). It is an expressive tool, an effective means of social communication, which is applicable for expressing symbolic meanings, and is used to represent various value systems and the mentalities for the members of a community. It is one of the structured, meaningful movement systems executed by the human body as product of the collective and individual creativity. Dance is one of the human movement systems, which may be accompanied by music, poetic text and may be associated with other movement systems like play, drama, martial art, or sport.

Empires on the territory of Banat and the possible approaches of their impact on Banat's dance and music culture

In our hypothesis, we presumed, that each of the empires (Hungarian, Austro-Hungarian, Byzantium, Ottoman) and countries (Serbia, Romania, Hungary) exercising authority over this region, had direct impacts on the cultural memory of the region through their cultural-economic policies, in the course of their hegemony substantiating and nation building processes. But the further back in history we go, the fewer and more unreliable evidences we find about dance culture or about traditional events including dance and music.⁶ The first data in Banat that can be evaluated appeared in the historical and ethnographical research from the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries when Banat was part of the Austro-Hungarian empire.⁷ The massive central imperial and private settlements by landlords, through which mainly native Germans and a smaller number of Slovaks, Ruthenians, and Hungarians settled in the Banat significantly defined the ethnic image of the Banat. The natural immigration of Hungarians, Romanians and Serbs also contributed to this. This circumstance explains many things in the creation of today's dance life in Banat. But many questions remain open regarding how it is changing. This requires a detailed analysis of the data collected on recent folklore and a regular comparative historical study. The first comparative research which was a kind of geographical-historical approach in an ethnological framework was made by Richard Wolfram, the Austrian dance researcher in Banat using the south-eastern European region as area of comparison [Wolfram 1962; Wolfram 1966]. His work can be evaluated as an important step in the European comparative dance ethnology which served as example for the further-development of the comparative research in Europe.⁸ Regional monographies by ethnomusicologists and folk dance researchers contributed much to the knowledge being accumulated about the traditional dance and music of Banat. Among them, Béla Bartók, Andrei Bucşan, the Jankovic sisters, György Martin and Raina Katzarova-Kukudova were most significant.⁹ In the summaries about the dance cultures of their country (or nation) they paid more or less attention to the dance culture of Banat.

Survey of traditional dances in the European geographical borders and in the framework of the European culture-history

In the 1960s Hungarian dance folklorists, György Martin and Ernő Pesovár tried to further-develop Richard Wolfram's method of the regional comparative research in a wider geographic framework and a longer historical period of time (see Figure3).¹⁰ According to their conception the current geographical spread of the main dance genres in today's Europe reflects well the changes in the history of mentality in European cultural history and the impact of historical dance fashions. The dominant genres are defined according to the structure of local dance repertory and the way of the dance creation.

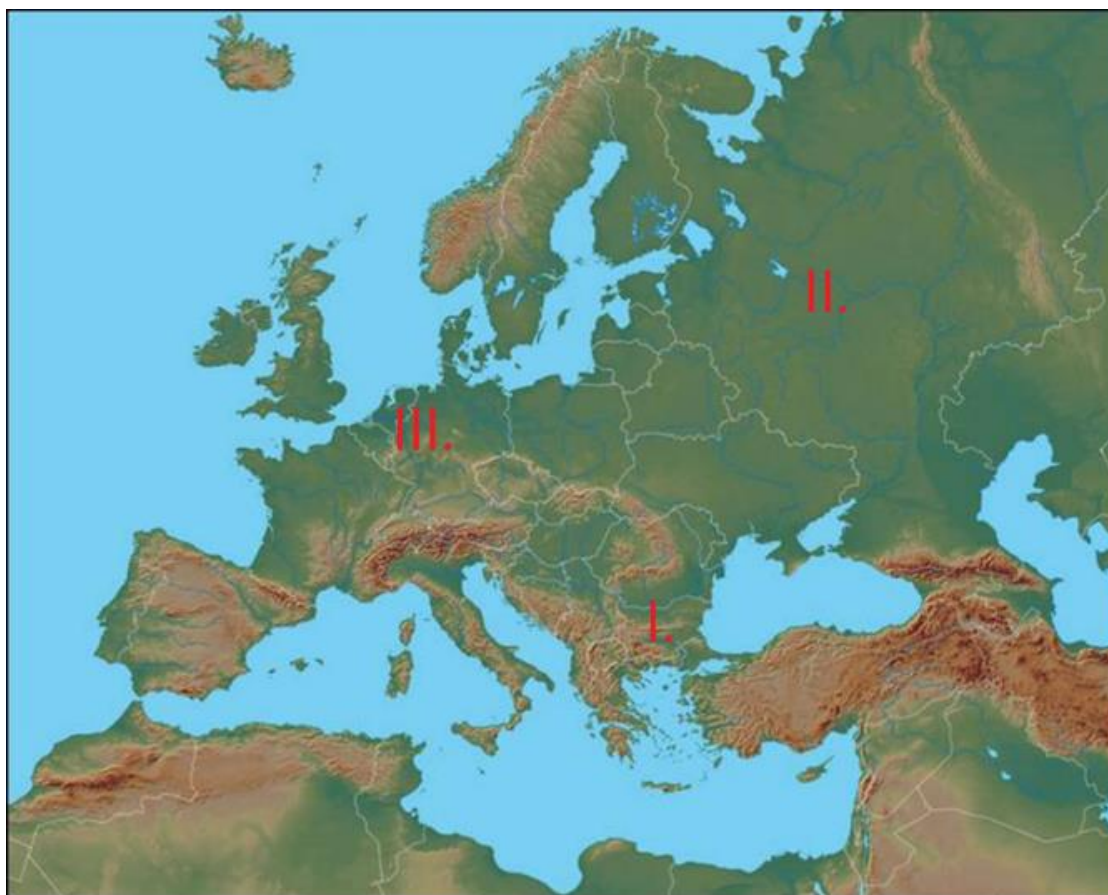


Figure 3. Bird's eye view of the main dance genres and dance regions in Europe according to the way of dance creation and the structure of the dance repertoire designed by György Martin and Ernő Pesovár (figure by the author).

A comparison made on the basis of the recent source material and historical evidence enabled them to determine three regions in Europe: Southeastern Europe, Eastern Europe, Western (Northern) Europe.¹¹

I. Southeastern Europe

Characteristic features of the dance traditions in this region are: Dominance of the chain and round dances. Dancers create their dances in a collective way. Free improvisation is possible, but limited. Articulation and isolation of the small territorial units of traditional culture. Low level of social communication among small territorial units, which hinders the unification of dance culture and adaptation of new elements.

II. Eastern Europe

This region can be characterized by the dominance of the solo men's and couple dances, an individual way of dancing and free improvisation. Male and female movement material are not identical. Higher level of unification of the regional cultures and more frequent cultural adaptation due to the more intensive social communication.

III. Western Europe

The predominance of the collective couple dances focusing on floor pattern (quadrilles, contra dances, and 19th-century fashion dances); a highly regulated way of dancing; almost entire lack of individual improvisation, minimal gender segregation in movements. Intensive

unification of the dance cultures assisted by developed social communication, involvement of professionals and use of written media.¹²

After the construction of the bird's eye view of the today's traditional dances, Martin and Pesovár defined the most dominant dance genres and they tried to find correlations between these and the dances in the historical dance documents. This way, it turned out that in the Middle Ages dominance of the chain and round dances was characteristic for almost the whole of Europe. The situation is the same in the case of free, improvisational couple dances, which spread in the early modern period from the renaissance lord's courts of Provence and Burgundy to the east, causing a 'drastic' change in European dance culture. Only the Balkan conquest of the Turkish Empire and the banning of the Orthodox Church in Southeastern Europe stood in the way. This so called 'renaissance dance style' has been dominant among the Eastern-European peoples until now.¹³ This influential and powerful dance fashion was followed by the wave of the 'baroque regulated couple dances' (quadrilles and contra dances) during the 17th and 18th centuries. It covered the whole of Europe, its effect can be felt even in Southeastern Europe, but it remained dominant only in the West. Based on this, Martin and Pesovár drew the conclusion that regional differences in present European traditional dance cultures actually reflect the changes brought about by historical dance fashions. Southeastern Europe "faithfully preserved the impersonal, collective nature of medieval dance forms". Peoples of Eastern Europe "inherited the dance conditions that developed at the crossroads of the Middle Ages and the New Age", Western societies, on the other hand, went on their "straight line development", giving impetus to the dance life of the rest of Europe [Martin 1967:123]. As György Martin claims:

It seems that in different parts of Europe, peasant dance life has followed a special path, retaining the typical dance forms of different fashion eras, at different rates due to unequal historical and social development. The dance genres characteristic of each era has defined the dance life of the peasantry of Europe almost to the present day, with a phase shift. The development of national dance cultures, aspiration of the formulation of the national dance character in the 18th–19th centuries, was already based on these [...] fashion differences [Martin 1975:90].

This comprehensive conception about the dance tradition of Europe was tested by the Hungarian folk dance researchers and it became fundamental for their later works, but it needs further tests to prove its reliability and validity.¹⁴ In the research in question in Banat it may be 'productive' to use it, but we have to consider the specific circumstances that determined/determine the character of the Banat dance tradition.

Summary

Banat Region represents a very instructive and promising research field from the point of view of the theory and methodology for the European dance ethnography and dance anthropology. The accumulated corpus of sources and literature about its dance tradition collected since the beginning of the 20th century is not insignificant. But its analysis and interpretation are hindered by some negative conditions.

1. First the collected material is based on the scientific conceptions of the first half of the 20th century in the field of ethnology and folklore theory. It is not entirely free from evolutionism, national biases. From some writings the scientific methodology is missing.

2. Research is segregated in national centres, consequently the research material is archived in different places, and is published in different languages.
3. The most serious shortcomings are the small amount of dance documentation suitable for analysis and comparison from a formal-functional and musical point of view and the lack of systematic methodology for enforcing social aspects.

The aim of the new project around the 2000s was to fill the gaps in previous research in the field of Banat applicable for comparative research. The new research had a kind of multicultural character by taking into consideration not only one separate ethnic group, but each of them living in the region and in the single settlements. Researchers tried to pay attention to the intercultural connections, if it was possible. From a conceptual point of view, this phase of the project was dominated by the comparative historical-geographic approach based on the effect of the different countries and empires. Researchers came across the problem, that the Banat region as a whole never had the status of an integrated, independent political unit. It had a permanent population living here continuously only from the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries. Inhabitants came from the territory of the whole of Europe from different empires and countries. Settlers from Germany and Austria brought the Western quadrilles and contra dances of that time to Banat; Serbians escaping from the Turkish invasion, enriched the repertory of dances by Balkan chain and round dances.¹⁵ Presumably the Hungarians and Romanians settling or immigrating to the Banat maintained a free solo and couple dance style.¹⁶ Consequently, by the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries dance traditions of Banat represented all the three main dance genres of Europe. Notwithstanding they developed a kind of local identity in dance during the 200 years of co-existence, for example *Banatsko kolo*.

In the new phase of the research, after 2020, we planned to validate transcultural processes, which were induced by the ethnic diversity, the multicultural situation and the intercultural connections. The aim is to achieve a better understanding of the formation of dance cultures along with transcultural processes of communication and knowledge-sharing, in the scope of empires and in the context of globalization.

Endnotes

1. Another metaphoric name of the region is “A European melting pot” [Neumann 2019].
2. Ethnic composition of the region in 2007: Romanians 945,000, Germans 12300, Hungarians 65,000, Serbians 25,300, others 92,400 from total 1,140,000 [Crețan; Turnock; Woudstra 2008].
3. This literary phrase is the author’s biased evaluation.
4. Felföldi research publications [1983a; 1983b; 1984a; 1984b; 1984c; 1991; 1997; 2002; 2003].
5. Other definitions, for example Doyle [1986].
6. List of the empires from the supposed creation of the area as an administrative unit: Byzantine Empire (5–15 centuries), Hungarian Empire around 1000–1552, Ottoman Empire (Principality of Transylvania) 1552–1718 (Temesvár Vilajet), Austrian Empire 1718–1779–1867 (Banate of Temeschwar), Austro-Hungarian Empire 1867–1920, in 1918 territory of Banat was divided into 3 parts between Romania, Serbia and Hungary.
7. For instance: Kollárov [1912] and Streitmann [1911].
8. His achievement was also evaluated by Gertrude Prokosch Kurath [1960].
9. Bartók [1934; 1935; 1967–1975], Bucșan [1971], Janković [1949], Katzarova-Kukudova [1958], Martin [1970].
10. György Martin and Ernő Pesovár publications to further develop Richard Wolfram’s method [Martin 1975; 1978; 1979; Pesovár 1967; 1973].
11. My contribution to the concept is the identification of the Sub-Arctic territories of Northern Europe, where ‘dance’ appears not independently, but as a constituent element in the ritual complexes.
12. Martin and Pesovár omitted the later dance fashions from the analysis (see 19th century couple dances, and 20th century new popular dances) because from Eastern European perspective they do not qualify as traditional dances.

13. In Scandinavia and the western Mediterranean countries, these free couple dance are popular until now, but they are not dominant elements of the local dance repertory.

14. See for instance Martin [1979] and Pesovár [2003].

15. The painting titled *Dancing South Slavic border guards* in the Budapest Military History Museum (HTM 76329) may depict the dance of the Serbian border guards from Banat between 1760 and 1770. Its painter is unknown.

16. Description of the execution of György Dózsa in Timișoara from 1514, can be evaluated as valuable historical data on dance in Banat, in which the participants of the dance were the “Hungarian”, “rác” and “Oláh” Hajdú soldiers of the time [Pesovár 1972:30]. Data testifies to the common and joint (Hungarian, Serbian, Romanian) practice of Hajdútánc.

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Athena Katsanevaki
(Thessaloniki, Greece)

The *Vallahades*: The Greek-speaking Muslims of Western Macedonia (Greece-Asia Minor Turkey). Connotations in their vocal repertory.

The name *Vallaades* or *Vallahades* refers to the Greek-speaking Muslims of the area of Western Macedonia in Greece who moved into Asia Minor in 1924, after the expulsion of the Christian populations of Asia Minor and the exchange of the Christian and Muslim populations. The data presented are based on personal fieldwork among three different areas of Greek speakers in Western Macedonia: in Northern Pindus (Grevena, Voion-Anaselitsa), in Southern Pindus (mountainous villages of the area of Agrafa), and in Eastern Macedonia (among the Sarakatsani who moved there from Bulgaria). Certain ritual melodic types were compared with the data provided by the family archive of a local *Vallaades* family which today resides in Asia Minor. Results provided by this comparison fill the picture of the area and provide information about the probable points of departure and the movements of certain groups of the *Vallaades* in the Greek mainland as well as their early Islamization during the Ottoman Era.

Keywords: *Vallaades*; Sarakatsani; songs; Greece; Pindus.

Definition-the research background-fieldwork

Vallaades or *Vallahades* is a local name attributed by the local Western Macedonian Christian Greek speakers to the ethnic group of the local Muslim Greek-speaking population in the same area. The word *Vallaades* or *Vallahades* derives from the word *Vallâhi* which in Turkish means an oath to Allah that *Vallahades* used very often [Yilmaz 2017:14].¹

The musical culture of these ethnic groups is almost unknown. As in the case of the Greek speaking Christian population of the area, the musical culture of these groups of the *Vallaades* lacks a systematic documentation and the result is that we have very little and scarce information about their musical culture (if any).

My own research, presented here, is not based on my personal fieldwork in the case of the *Vallaades*. It was motivated by the interest of the local association of the Western Macedonian Greek Speakers of the area of *Anaselitsa* who initiated an exchange of visits and communication with the local *Vallaades* who were exchanged in 1924 with the Greek Christian population that until then, resided in Asia Minor. The Local Association of the *Voion-Anaselitsa* area (The Voiaki Estia) being aware of my ongoing fieldwork in the wider area asked me to listen to the *Vallaades* songs in the data of a *Vallaades* family archive offered to them. In fact, this was my second encounter regarding this musical culture. My first encounter, (apart from some oral stories coming from the village of my ancestry) was during my fieldwork in the village of *Messologos* when a Christian Greek speaking local woman sung to me a *Vallaades* song which was usually sung when the bride leaves her family.

So, what will be presented here is the results of the evaluation of the data offered to me which I managed to supplement with more information and documentation of the words of the texts of the songs in the Greek language.

The family archive

There were twenty four songs in Greek language offered to the association and later to me, by Aycan Yilmaz. Seventeen of them were sung by a younger woman in comparison with

the other six songs which were sung by an elder woman recorded on a tape. The latter recording, taking into consideration the quality of the tape, is older. There is also a male voice.

Having communication with the owner of the tapes and member of the family, we identified the first voice as Adile Soylou who was born in Turkey in 1931.

Unfortunately, it was impossible to identify the names of the older woman and the male voice. They cannot remember who sung these songs. What is certain by listening to the acoustic context of the recording is that it was recorded in Turkey and that the people attending the process of the recording were Turkish speakers, thus confirming that it happened among members of the communities of the *Vallaades* in Turkey. This was important for the overall evaluation and the comparative work that these songs motivated me to undertake, as a later concern.

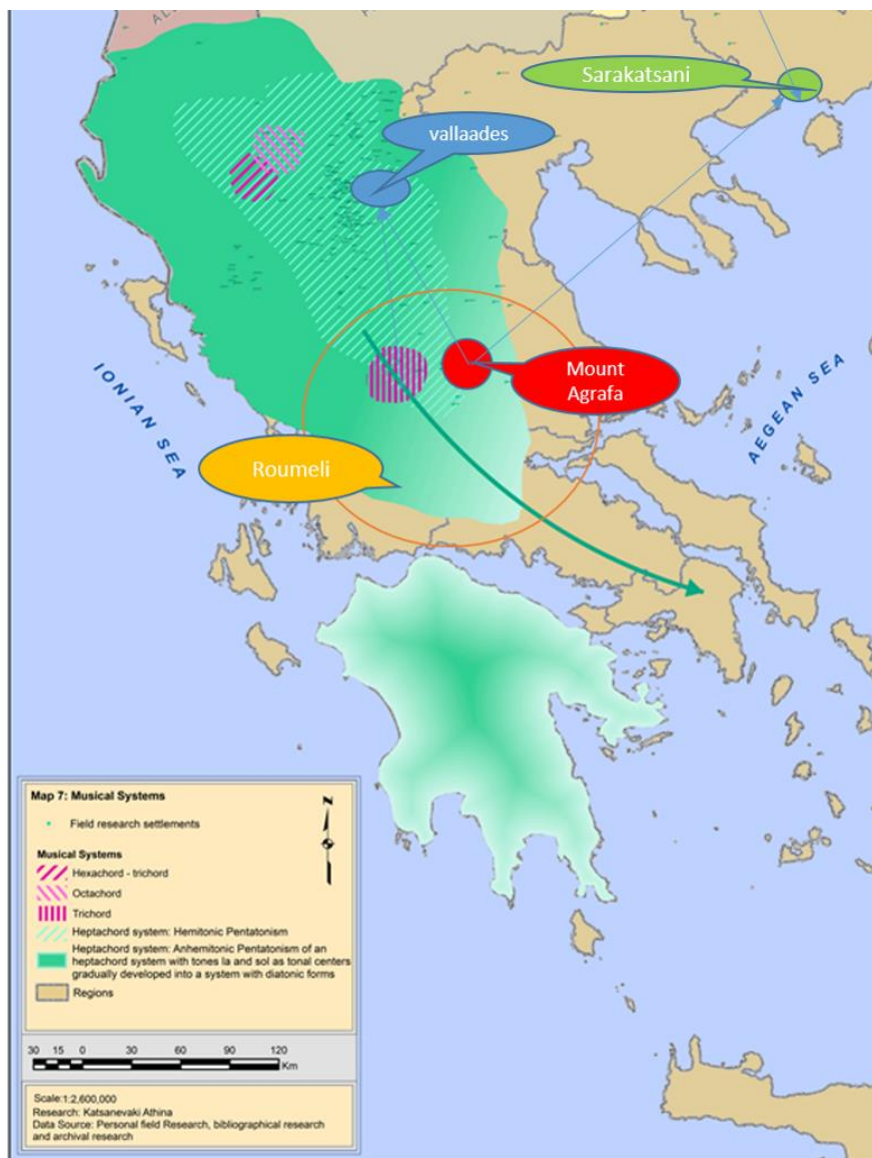


Figure 1. Map of the fieldwork locations and the areas of the three ethnic groups.

Austrian Academy of Sciences – project: Vanishing languages-cultural heritage

It is important and a happy coincidence that Adile was video-recorded by the researchers Kahl Thede and Andreea Pascaru of the Austrian Academy of Sciences² in the framework of the project *Vanishing languages and cultural heritage*.

These video recordings also include a part of the repertory included in the family archive offered to us by Ayzan (Aycan) Yilmaz (the member of the family). This part of the repertory was video recorded again by Kahl Thede and Andreea Pascaru in Turkey offering new recordings available for comparative work.

Results originating in three fieldwork areas – locations and archival research

This group, which was documented in these ways, belongs to a group that traces its origins in the village of *Kriftsi* (old name – new name *Kivotos*) of the Greek-speaking area of *Grevena* in Western Macedonia in Greece.³

Having conducted fieldwork in the vast part of Western Macedonia but also in Southern *Pindus* and Thessaly as well as among two groups of *Sarakatsani* (in different locations), it was possible to identify certain melodies of the *Vallaades* songs with similar melodies coming from these different areas of Greece and different ethnic groups.

On the map (see Figure 1), where the varieties of the musical system of the wider area are presented, one can find the different fieldwork locations and the respective movements of the groups suggested by the musical form of the songs.

The first important and striking similarity which raises questions, but equally offers solutions about the points of departure of these groups of the *Vallaades*, is one of the songs sung by Adile (not included at this time in the data uploaded by the Austrian Academy), that was included in the first CD offered to the Association of the *Voiaki Estia* and later to me.

It is a ritual wedding song for the bride, a functionality that is clear in the words of the text which nonetheless, (as it becomes clear later) coincides with the functionality of the melodic type of this same song.

The text of the *Vallaades* wedding song:

The 1st song, identified with the wedding songs for the groom in the area of *Agrafa*.

The Greek text,

Ευκήσχε με μανίτσα μου να βάλω το ικνίτσα μου
Ευκή να χεις παιδάκι μου τρανή κυρά να γέ-νε-νεις
Τρανή κυρά γε-νε-νείς τρανόν Αγάν να πά-να-ρεις
Τα Κάστρα να ορίσεις φλουριά να δερμονήσεις

English translation,

Oh! Mother make a wish for me! So that to put on the henna
I wish you my child to become an honoured lady
To become an honoured lady and to get married to a glorified Aga
To conquer all castles and to have many florins.

The melodic type of this song, as it is apparent in the comparative table (see Figure 2), is identical with the melodic types of a certain genre of ritual wedding songs of the area of Southern *Pindus* (on the Mount *Agrafa*). Apart from the melodic type which is the same, even the words of the songs follow similar patterns, while (in the case of the *Vallaades* song) they

are varied in order to match to the farewell of the bride instead of the washing of the groom (which is the social functionality in the case of the songs of *Agrafa*).

These two songs-melodic types are also compared and identified with one more case study which is the repertory of the *Sarakatsani* who resided in the area of Eastern Macedonia in Greece and in Southern Bulgaria (for their summer pastures). It is noteworthy to clarify that these three different ethnic groups have no communication with each other and that there are several oral stories among many groups of *Sarakatsani* that parts of them trace their origin in the southern *Pindus* Mountains (where the area of *Agrafa* also belongs) and in *Roumeli*, in general [Chazimihali 1957] (see the comparative chart in Figure 2).

But while the first part of the performance is identified with the ritual songs of southern *Pindus*, Adile the singer continues her performance with a second melody which is a variation (in a *zurna* style) of a ritual melody which I have recorded in the villages of *Voion-Anaselitsa* in pure Christian Greek-speaking villages but also in villages where there existed two *mahallades* (neighbourhoods) one Christian and one of the *Vallaades* (now populated by the *Pontic* Christian Greek-Speakers who came from Asia Minor). This is the song *Pou' ste seis dikoi mou kai poli seria mou* (for reasons of comparison see the 4th verse of the *Vallaades* version below: *Πού' στε σεῖς δικοί μου κι πολὺ σεργιά μου*).

The second ritual wedding song can be identified with a Western Macedonian Greek-speaking song from *Anaselitsa* village of *Asproula*:

The Greek text,

Κόμα απόψε αντάμα κι ως ταχιά ταχιά το γιόμα
Κατσετε κεί στον τόπο μ' πάρτε και το χλιάρι μ
Πιέτε και τον τσορβά μου
Πού' στε σεῖς δικοί μου κι πολὺ σεργιά μου
Έλατε κοντά μου πιάστε τα μαλλιά μου
Να μην τα πάρει ξένος και με κάνει μάγια
Μάγια στο κορμί μου και κακοπορέσω
Πο τα πεθερ' κά μου
Γιατί νενι μ κρούγουν τα' άργανα στα αλώνι
Για τε' σένα τσούπω μ' ήρθαν να σε πάρουν
Τα άλογο στρωμένο κόρη αρματωμένη
Τρέμει ι γ' ήλιος τρέμει πώς να βασιλέψει
Τρέμει κι η κόρη τρέμει πώς να καλβακέψει.
Πάτα στο ταγάρι ρίξε απάν' την σέλα.

English translation,

This day and until the afternoon we will stay together.
Stay then close to my place and take my spoon
Drink water from my leather bag
Where are you? My family?
Come closer to me and take my hair
So that the stranger can't take them nor make a magic to them
and to my body because of jealousy
this will cause to me to be treated badly by my parents in law
Why my Nene the instruments are playing on the Threshing floor?
For you my girl they came to take you away
The horse is ready and you the bride you are beautifully dressed
The sun is trembling, the sun hesitates how to set

The girl is trembling how is she to get on the horse
 Step on the bag and jump on the saddle
 (Audio examples 3.1, 3.2.)

Though I have documented the ritual repertory of numerous villages (in most of the villages of the *Voion Anaselitsa* and in many villages of the area of *Grevena* and Northern *Pindus*) I never came across this (the first) specific melodic type. It thus becomes obvious that this melodic type does not belong to the wider area of the Northern *Pindus* Mountains and that it was transferred there due to a population movement which can be attributed at least to the group of the *Vallaades* of the village of *Kriftsi*.

Movements of Greek-speakers around the wider mountainous area and the surroundings of the Pindus Mountains

Around the area of *Anaselitsa* there is some more information that there was a restricted but definite transfer of population from *Agrafa* to Western Macedonia and to be precise close to the area of *Kozani* and *Siniatsiko*. A group of lament melodies I recorded in the village of *Mikrokastro* [Katsanevaki 2019: audio ex.10]⁴ close to the town of *Siatista* belongs to the pentatonic system of the Southern *Pindus* mountains and not of the Northern *Pindus* where the rest of the villages and repertory belongs.

Nonetheless, as mentioned above during the performance this *Vallaades*' wedding song continues with a second wedding song for the leaving of the bride. This second melody can be traced in the local wedding melodies of the area of *Voion-Anaselitsa*. It is identified with a song I recorded in the village of *Asproula* and is a local variation of a pentatonic anhemitonic melody that is found in all the area of *Voion* and *Grevena*. I similarly documented its Vlach version, in the villages of the *Aoos* Valley (see for the same song - a bilingual Greek-Vlach but mainly Vlach version in Katsanevaki [2017:128–130 mus.ex.17] from the village of *Pades*). So, this second melody though performed by Adile in a *zurna* instrumental manner belongs clearly to the pure pentatonic repertory of the northern *Pindus* Mountains. It is then very probable that the *Vallaades* groups were Greek-speakers who moved from the Southern *Pindus* and who joined local Greek-speakers of the area of *Grevena* and *Voion-Anaselitsa*.

Apart from the musical data we have additional historical witness that in the town of *Kozani* there was a *mahalas* (neighbourhood) which even today is called *Agrafiotika*. This information confirms a population movement from the Southern *Pindus* Mountains to the area around *Kozani* and *Grevena* probably at an earlier time.

The process of Islamization

It is not possible to be definite when and where exactly the Islamization of the *Vallaades* happened. It is probable that they converted before they left the area of *Agrafa* or that they converted after they had resided in Western Macedonia. What is certain is that at least the group of *Kriftsi* had, in part, its point of departure in *Agrafa* and that they kept part of their Greek speaking ritual repertory in their wedding songs. This must have happened at an early time that is not possible to define precisely. We actually have information about population movements from *Agrafa* to Macedonia and to the Northern Balkans during the 16th century and from *Agrafa* to Asia Minor in the 18th century [Antoniou 2017]. This information also coincides with the information that the first era of massive conversion in the area of Western Macedonia was the 16th century “which reached a peak in the third quarter of the century” [Kotzageorgis 2015:143]. This era is also connected with the era of the Sultan Suleiman I, a name that is heard in the songs of the *Vallaades* of *Kriftsi*.

Additionally, this finding equally offers new insights about the origin of the group of the *Sarakatsans* in the area of *Agrafa* and about the claims existing in their oral traditions that many groups of them trace their origins in the area of *Agrafa* or its surroundings (*Aitoloakarnania*, *Roumeli* in general, *Evrytania*, *Tsoumerka*) in the southern *Pindus* Mountains [see in Chazimihali 1957:οη-πς]. It also confirms that groups (such as the *Sarakatsani*), who settled for many years, probably centuries, in areas remoted from the *Pindus* mountains essentially trace their origins again in the area of southern *Pindus* and they have kept their singing style and melodic types for many centuries outside their environs.

The lament for the fall of Constantinopolis and a *Kleftic* song

There is another, second recording, by the older woman which gives additional confirmation to this assessment:

This is a lament for the Fall of Constantinople (now Istanbul) (audio example 2.1) which is sung on a melodic type identified with a famous *kleftic* (rebel) song *Tou Kitsou I mana* (The mother of *Kitsos*) (audio example 2.2).

In the area of Western Macedonia this song is widely known. It is found also on the island of Lesbos documented in Byzantine notation by the educated and literate musician Nikolaos Fardis, of the island of Samothraki, during the 19th century [see Dragoumis 1991:54–55].

Nikolaos Fardis notated in Byzantine notation a sample of traditional song melodies (about 100 Greek song melodies, in three different periods of time in Smyrna (now Izmir) 1874–1879, in Corsica 1885–1887 and in Samothraki 1888–1901) many of them originate from the island of Lesbos and the Aegean, many from other areas of Greece that were sung in the *tavernas* and the local shops of Smyrna and others sung by the Greeks of Corsica. The song for the *Kleftis* ‘Kitsos’ as attested by Markos Dragoumis, does not belong to the local repertory of Lesbos. The melody of this *kleftic* song *Tou Kitsou I mana* is not a traditional melody of Western Macedonia either. It is a lament-song about a *Kleftis* (a rebel called Kitsos) whose mother laments his arrest by the Ottomans and the loss of his weapons (*armata*). It is considered to originate from the area of *Roumeli* which is equally an area of the Southern *Pindus* mountains (the lower part of it).⁵

When it comes to the parallel of this melody which I located in the local repertory of the *Vallaades* in its older version sung by the older of the ladies, one might conclude that the words and text of the song correspond to a lament-song text about the Fall of Constantinopolis. Furthermore, it is not just the lament for the Fall of Constantinopolis that belongs to the melodic type of the *Kleftic* song of *Roumeli*. Many songs sung by the older *Vallaades* woman belong to melodic types that, although pentatonic in structure, are not present in the musical system of Northern *Pindus* but they match the musical system of the southern *Pindus* mountains. Two of them, in terms of text and words, are historical *Paraloges* (narrative songs) which as texts echo a long-standing Greek-speaking oral tradition in the area of Western Greece but they follow different patterns from those I found in the area of the Northern *Pindus* where the local *Vallaades* resided before 1924. When it comes to the lament for the Fall of Constantinopolis and its parallel of the lament-song *Tou Kitsou I mana* (The mother of *Kitsos*) we should add that as both texts are lament-songs it seems that both of them belong to a similar social functionality of the lament-songs, which allows for a certain speculation that this melodic type must have been a characteristic melody that matched with the texts of the lament songs of the southern *Pindus* mountains in all probability in *Roumeli* or possibly in *Aitoloakarnania*.

I am not able to confirm this with a similar definite statement as in the case of *Agrafa* Mountain (though it looks plausible) until extended fieldwork in a large number of local communities in this area of *Roumeli* is undertaken.

The identical structure of the two lament-songs is presented in Figure 2 comparative chart 2.

Some considerations about the historical context of the *Vallaades* ethnic group.

It is considered that the reasons for the Islamization of part of the Greek-speaking population were mainly for survival and economic reasons, due to their efforts to avoid the taxes of the Ottoman Empire [Tsotsos 2011:368–373]. But though it is generally accepted that the massive Islamization took place in the 17th century [see Tsotsos 2011:368–373] it seems that a first massive conversion took place in the 16th century [Kotzageorgis 2015:143]. These conversions coincide with the information about population movements from *Agrafa* to Macedonia [Antoniou 2017].

In any case during the 17th century there were also good reasons for this increase that involved a wave of conversions. It is very probable that one reason might be the retaliations for the great revolutionary movement of Western Greece led by the Bishop of Trikala Dionysios, the philosopher in 1611 who was arrested and executed. Though this historical data is not usually presented⁶ as a possible reason, Lambridis a local historian, an anthropologist-geographer of the 19th century [see Lambridis 1887:18,36–37] states, that the terror which was spread around in the provinces due to the horrific executions, caused many of the Greek-speaking Christian population to convert to Islam in order to avoid the consequences that followed the uprising. It is probable that some of the movements were also obligatory or just movements equally motivated by the consequences of the uprising.

Apart from other reasons which may be speculated or attested in the sources, it is definite that the Islamization of the groups of the *Vallahades* followed the general process of Islamizations which was equally followed by other ethnic groups in the Ottoman Empire such as the Vlach (Latin-speakers) of Western Macedonia (see the map of Koukoudis [2000:61]), Central Macedonia [Kahl 2006], and by a part of the Slavic speaking local Macedonians in Western Macedonia in Greece [Emberikos, 2008:56–57].⁷

A *zurna* singing style

There is also a last case of a singing style and melodic types which I located in the repertory of the *Vallaades*, which reveals one more dimension of these connotations.

Among the songs in the family archive sung by Adile there are a number of songs which present a special vocal style close to a *zurna* playing and for this reason closer to the style of the area of central Macedonia and eastern Macedonia in Greece. A characteristic example is the song *Anathema pios to 'lege* (Curse on those who say that...) (see also the video-recording of the project *Vanishing Languages*²) which as a text is a lament, and as a melodic type it follows the melodic type of an anhemitonic pentatonic ritual wedding song for the groom sung by the women of the Christian Greek-speaking villages: *Louzetai t'archodopoulo* (The noble young man is bathing). But in this case the old pentatonic anhemitonic melody has been applied to an instrumental style that can be an influence from other areas or of the *zurna* style creating attractions to the stable tones of the musical scale (Audio examples 4.1, 4.2) in a *zurna* tuning. Though this song is played by the local Rom clarinet players, in this case, the tuning is not altered by the clarinet players and this is why I attributed this tuning to the acoustic influence of the instrument of the *zurna* and its specific intervallic peculiarities.

This might reveal either that there were some more points of departure in other areas such as central Macedonia and among local populations who were moved by the Ottomans together with the *Yürüks* [see also in Kotzageorgis 2015:152] in order to fill the gaps caused in the local population and to provide agricultural labour. This policy was common in the Ottoman Empire,

which usually followed the conquering of areas and uprisings. We know a similar case for Cappadocia [Koufou 2011:8–9, quoting Adam-Papalexiou 1999:64] and for the case of the colonisation of Eastern Rhodope in Kotzageorgis [2015:151].

Another probability for this *zurna* style in the local *Vallaades* repertory is a probable influence on them by the local *Tekkes* which we know existed in certain locations such as for example the one close to the village of Dragasia. Kotzageorgis [Kotzageorgis 2015:153] refers to two *Bektashi Tekkes* in the area of Voion.⁸

Another probability would be an influence related to the performances of certain Rom instrumentalists of the area, in the late 19th and the beginning of the 20th century (though as I stated above, I consider this less plausible) or later in Turkey after the year 1924.

Conclusions

The musical repertory of a *Vallaades* family archive, the texts and the melodic types compared with the data from extensive fieldwork in three different areas of Greece confirm the above results and justify the small pockets of a southern Pindus repertory and pentatonic style in the middle of a northern Pindus area; a northern Pindus repertory and a northern Pindus pentatonic musical system which nonetheless comes into contact with the musical style of the local western Macedonian Greek-speaking population. It also confirms the persistence of the local traditions despite the difficult circumstances of survival and the functionality of the musical ritual vocal repertories as a vehicle of historical memory in the oral traditions that keep the past in memory and the identities despite the later deviations that result in differences in language or religion, while at the same time justifying these ‘deviations’ of these traditions in order to adapt to new circumstances (while keeping the memory of their oral tradition and historical and cultural past).

Vallaades Comparative Chart

System 1: Kastania

V: Ευ - κή - σεζ - με μα - νί - ί - τσα - μου
 S: Ευ - κή - (νη) σε - με πα - τέ - (νε)ρα - μου
 A: να ζεις - (νη) σεις χρό - (νο) - νους ε - (νε) - κα - τό και

System 2: Kastania

V: να - βά - α - λω το - ι - κνί - τσα - μου
 S: στα πρό - - - τα - κοσ - κι - νί - ι - δια
 A: ζα - (να) - μη - να δια - κό - σια

System 3: Valaades and Dragoumis transcription

V: το τι χομπέ - ε - χα - μπέ - ρι στη θρα - γκιά χα - μπέ - ρνη - σα στο Φρά - γκο στα θρά - γκο
 Dragoumis transcription: του Κί - τσου η μά - να - κά - θο - νταν στην ά - κρη - στο πο - τά - μι

System 4: Valaades and Dragoumis transcription

V: Την Πόλ' ματ' πή - ρεν η Τουρ - κιά
 Dragoumis transcription: με το πο - τά - μι μάλ - λω - νε

Figure 2. Comparative Tables (V=Vallaades audio example 1.1, S=Sarakatsan audio example 1.2, A=Agrafa mountain melody audio examples 1.3.1 and 1.3.2).

List of Audio Examples

1.1. “Ευκέσχε με μανίτσα μου” (Eykesche mou manitsa mou). A *Vallaades* Ritual wedding song for the leaving of the bride. Singer: Adile Soylou (Ayzan Yilmaz Family Archive). Link to [SoundCloud](#)



1.2. “Ευχίσου μου πατέρα μου” (Eykisou mou patera mou). A *Sarakatsan* ritual wedding song for the leaving of the bride. Field recording by Athena Katsanevaki in the village of *Chrisochori* in the region of *Kavala* on the 5th of May 2016 (Eastern Macedonia- Greece). Singer: Evaggelia Mingou, 95 years old. Link to [SoundCloud](#)



1.3.1. “Ευκήσε με μανούλα μου” (Eykise me manoula mou). A ritual wedding song for the leaving of the bride. Field recording by Athena Katsanevaki in the village of *Kastania* in the area of *Agrafa* (Southern *Pindus* Mountains) on the 12th of July 1996. The second musical strophe. Singer: a woman from the village of *Kastania* who didn’t wish to reveal and document her name, approximately 70 years old. Link to [SoundCloud](#)



1.3.2. The same song (1.3.1.) from the beginning of the field recording with the first musical strophe included. Link to [SoundCloud](#)



2.1. “Θρήνος για την Πόλη” (Thrinós gia tin Poli - Lament for the Fall of Costandinopolis). A *Vallaades* Lament-Historical song. Singer: unknown (Ayzan Yilmaz Family Archive). Link to [SoundCloud](#)






2.2. “Του Κίτσου η μάνα” (Tou Kitsou I mana - The mother of Kitsos). Field recording by Athena Katsanevaki in the village of *Messologos* in the *Voion* region (West Macedonia in Greece) in 1990. Singer: Pinelopi Karaolani, 72 years old. Link to [SoundCloud](#)



3.1. “Κόμα απόψε αντάμα-που’στε σεις δικοί μου” (Koma apopse adama-pou’ste seis dikoi mou - This day and till the afternoon we will stay together. Where are you? My Family?). A *Vallahades* wedding ritual song Singer: Adile Soylou (Ayzan Yilmaz Family Archive). Link to [SoundCloud](#)



<p>3.2. “Τ’αργυρό μου χτένι” (T’argyro mou chteni - My silver comb). A ritual wedding song for the dressing of the bride from the village of <i>Asproula</i> in the <i>Voion</i> region. Field recording by Athena Katsanevaki in the village of <i>Asproula</i> in the <i>Voion</i> region (West Macedonia in Greece) in 1990. Singer: Aristotelis Mylonas, almost 60 years old. Link to SoundCloud</p>	
<p>4.1. “Ανάθεμα ποίος τ’λέγε τα αδέρφια δεν πονιούνται” (Anathema poios to’lege ta aderfia den poniontai - Curse on those who say that the siblings don’t love each other). A <i>Vallaades</i> lament song. (the text of a wellknown funeral lament of the Greek-speaking area of <i>Voion-Grevena</i>, (West Macedonia in Greece) sung on a tune-melody of a ritual wedding song of the same area. Singer: Adile Soylou (Ayzan Yilmaz Family Archive). Link to SoundCloud</p>	
<p>4.2. “Τριαντάφυλλο της Βενετιάς” (Triadafyllo tis Venetias - Oh! Rose from Venice). A wedding ritual song of the Christian Greek-speakers of the area of <i>Grevena</i>. The same tune with audio example 4.1. Field recording by Athena Katsanevaki in the village of <i>Kalloni</i> in the <i>Grevena</i> region (West Macedonia in Greece) on the 23th of July 1993. Singer: Theodosia Zachou, 67 years old. Link to SoundCloud</p>	

Endnotes

1. For general bibliography about the *Vallaades* see also Yilmaz [2017:15–16]. Tsetlaka [2011] wrote a doctoral thesis that referred to the group of *Vallaades* see also in Kostas Papathanasiou [2022]. Some important works in reference to the historical past of this group is the work of Kalinderis [1977], the later works of Glavinas Ioannis [2008] and Phokion Kotzageorgis [2015], also the online article of Lekakis [2021].
2. Namely Prof. Kahl Thede and his collaborator Andreea Pascaru. See <https://www.oeaw.ac.at/vlach/collections/greek-varieties/macedonian-greek/video-collection/folk-songs>
3. The historical context and the narratives together with many information regarding the folklore and everyday life of the *Vallaades* of *Kriftsi* is described and documented in the work of Ayzan Yilmaz (the owner of the Archive). Additionally, there are narrations of his family members (the older generation) referring to the process of the exchange and their experiences [Yilmaz 2017].
4. I conducted this fieldwork in the village of Mikrocastro and in the villages Pelekanos, Sisani, Blatsi, and Namata, partly in collaboration with the Ethnochoreologist Christine Glauser due to the proximity of the areas of interest and of our research fields [Katsanevaki 2019: audio example 10 on Soundcloud].
5. See in Dragoumis [1991:54–55] for the transcription of Nikolaos Fardis and the respective variations of the song most of them coming from the areas around the Southern Pindus mountains. Lambros Efthymiou has also documented this song in two different locations of the area of Tzoumerka (Southern Pindus) namely in the villages of Kapsala and Kataraktis [Efthymiou 2018:207–210, examples 119a and b].
6. Despite references to other circumstances that encouraged or led to forced religious conversion to Islam, Papaioannou quoting Kalinderis, Vakalopoulos and other earlier historians refer to the uprising of 1611 as a crucial reason for the exodus of many Christian Greeks to the area of Anaselitsa and similarly as a reason for probable Islamizations [Papaioannou 1976:79–80].
7. Leonidas Embeirikos in this work presented an example of the local Slav-speaking polyphony of Western Macedonia for the first time in Greece. This example came from the research of Süreyya Aytas in Turkey, in Sinasos, Cappadokia among Slav-speaking Muslims from the village of Agios Antonios (Zerviani) in Western Macedonia in Greece who moved to Asia Minor after the exchange of population.
8. See in Feldman [1992] for references to the music of the *Tekkes* of the *Bektashi Tarikat* in the Ottoman time and the respective bibliography.

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Aleksandra Kuzman
(Skopje, North Macedonia)

Alla Turca and Alla Franga – Macedonian chalgia music, a sound between empires

The proposed paper will elaborate the origin and the analysis of the specific Macedonian *chalgia* playing styles called *alla turca* and *alla franga* featured in the Macedonian *chalgia* music. The analysis of these terms, according to the recordings of *chalgia* music and interviews with *chalgia* musicians archived at the Institute of folklore “Marko Cepenkov” in Skopje, as well as from personally conducted field work among the present *chalgia* musicians, will reveal that *alla turca* and *alla franga* are not related only to the performing styles, but also to a specific *chalgia* repertoire, music scales and specific tuning of some of the *chalgia* instruments.

Macedonian *chalgia* music shares common or at least similar music features with Ottoman classical and Western European music and was influenced by different cultures, but the creation of the Macedonian *chalgia* music and the *alla turca* and the *alla franga* styles created a sound between empires.

Keywords: Macedonia; urban places; *chalgia* music; *alla turca*; *alla franga*.

Located in the area between Eastern and Western cultures, the territory of Macedonia, through historical periods, fell under the rule of various empires and thus, was influenced by different cultures and civilizations. Before the Ottoman empire, i.e., before the Ottomans came into the Macedonian territory in the 15th century, Macedonia was under the rule of the Byzantine empire, thus, the Macedonian people nurtured the Byzantine music and culture. The Ottomans stayed until the 19th century, and it is absolutely logical that they imposed their own culture and music on the already fertile Byzantine musical soil. In the late 19th century, the period when the Ottoman rule was in the process of weakening and certain Western European aspirations begun to be felt in many aspects of everyday living, there appeared a necessity for making the difference between something that was in the Turkish style (called *alla turca*, *alaturka*), and something which was in the European style (called *alla franga*, *alafranga*).¹ So, although these concepts existed in the cultural context and way of everyday living of the Macedonian people mainly in the 19th and the first half of the 20th century, this paper concerns the terms *alla turca* and *alla franga*, that are present as concepts in musical culture, nurtured in Macedonian urban cities, in the period of the Macedonian revival, when the old-traditional way of living met the newly modernized concepts of life.

The encounter of the two different worlds, the Orient and the West, influenced the shaping of the difference between the Turkish (more traditional) and the European (modernized) style in many aspects. In his paper *In the time of Alaturka*, John Morgan O’Connell gave a description of the concepts *alla turca* and *alla franga* that were present in the 19th century in Turkey, where he says:

The symbiotic relationship between *alaturka* and *alafranga* was not only deployed in the classification of dress codes (Eastern vs. Western), eating habits (native & foreign), personal hygiene (*hamam* vs. bathroom), and temporal conceptions (Islamic vs. Christian); rather, it was also used to describe difference in Turkish musical discourse. *Alaturka* and *alafranga* were employed to define and distinguish between a wide range of entertainment practices involving music, including dance styles, theatrical events, nightclub programs, and wrestling matches. In musical contexts, the terms were used to categorize

music performers, music styles, music instruments, music ensembles, and music departments [O’Connell 2005:180–181].

He further says:

Alaturka is a multivalent term signifying Eastern difference. Literally meaning “in a Turkish manner,” *alaturka* is the Turkish spelling of an Italian term (*alla turca*) that was originally employed by Europeans to express a Christian ambivalence towards Islamic culture. During the 1850s, “*alaturka*” was appropriated by the Turks to mark linguistically a cultural distinction between Ottoman values and European sensibilities. In particular, an influential group of political reformers employed the term to express a contemporary antipathy towards Eastern taste (called “*alaturka*”) and to advocate instead their preference for Western style (called “*alafranga*”). Accordingly, *alaturka* was defined by default. Different from *alafranga*, *alaturka* existed as a heterodox expression of Turkishness. [...] As a sonic articulation of Eastern alterity, it persists today as an unspoken vestige in musical practice [O’Connell 2005:178].

Although he describes the concepts present among the Turkish culture and music, those concepts were also present in Macedonian culture and way of living, both in terms of food, clothes and clothing, mutual ways of addressing between citizens, architecture etc., and the most important for this paper, in the old-urban music called Macedonian *chalgia*. The local music elements in the Macedonian *chalgia*, is where the influences of the Eastern (oriental) and Western (European) music elements meet, thus shaping the original authentic sound, a sound between East and West, a sound between empires, recognizable only for the music culture nurtured in the Macedonian urban centres. In fact, the *chalgia* music is an amalgamation of multiple musical elements derived from different musical cultures (domestic, eastern and western). In the period when the Western European influences were emphasized, the intertwined local and Eastern musical elements slowly become domestic, and the Western European elements took over as the newly introduced musical features. Describing the old-urban song, Dragoslav Ortakov says that this kind of song appears in the period when the two different music systems – domestic and Western European, make their historical encounter, and that the old-urban song appeared as a result of the increased need for cultural development of the urban population, appropriate to its new living and economic conditions created in the cities [Ortakov 1982:39].²

The entire cultural and urban musical life at that time, precisely speaking, in the period of the Macedonian revival, was shaped by the various musical ensembles that nurtured the urban songs and dances. The most active ensembles were: the *chalgia* ensembles, as the oldest, then the mandolin orchestras, *tambura* orchestras, brass bands, and later, stylized orchestras consisting of tempered musical instruments. Through these orchestras, Borivoje Djimrevski (an ethnomusicologist who thoroughly researched Macedonian urban music culture), perceives the musical influences. He considers that the existence of brass bands and *tambura* orchestras, including the music they nurtured, introduced European influences; mandolin orchestras have expanded the Mediterranean sound; he mentions the Byzantine-Greek influence that came from the south; and, also, he mentions the East-Oriental sound that was most perceivable via *chalgia* music in the Macedonian urban cities [Djimrevski 2005:385]. So, in terms of the sound, the difference between the musical expression and musical interpretation of the songs and dances performed by these orchestras can clearly be felt.

The *chalgia* ensembles (locally called *chalgiski tajfi*) were the ones who nurtured the Macedonian *chalgia* as a crucial part of the old-urban musical tradition and were open to

accepting the diverse musical aesthetic values of the emerging music cultures. Regarding their origin, Sonia Seeman says that features of these ensembles (*tajfi*), and their repertoire and performance style, indicate that these were derived from the Ottoman classical music. Also, in their musical performance and interpretation, each of the performers has his own musical expression and introduces specifics characteristic of his local musical culture [Seeman 1990:1]. She further explains that “there is some debate as to whether *čalgija* (*chalgia*) represents a historical association with Ottoman classical music, or Ottoman-derived light classical music”. Seeman sees a striking resemblance between the Macedonian *chalgia* repertoire and the repertoire present in Turkish urban nightclubs, and concludes that there is an Ottoman-based urban tradition found throughout the Balkans. Still, in each area, there is a high degree of local musical elements incorporated in this genre [Seeman 1990:36]. Djimrevski has also noticed similarities between Macedonian *chalgia* and Turkish folk songs sung in Turkish nightclubs by Turkish ensembles. He observes that they used the same instruments as Macedonian ensembles, but performed different styles of music – the one was the oriental sound in the Turkish way and the other was the oriental sound in the Macedonian way [Djimrevski 1985:60]. Another explanation that he gives is that the *chalgia* tradition was influenced by the old Islamic music culture, which existed for centuries in Macedonian everyday practice, transforming and acquiring its specific musical dialect and expression. These transformations were expressed through the fact that part of the *chalgia* repertoire was created on Macedonian soil and mostly by our *chalgia* masters. However, this refers to the *alla turca* music style, which was nurtured in this region until the Balkan War, i.e. until 1912. He then says that “in the period between the two world wars in Macedonia, there were external influences of modern music currents” [Djimrevski 1985:28–38], referring to the modern works of that time that reflected the influence of Western Europe in this country, known as *alla franga*.

According to this, as well as in the archival materials containing audio recordings related to the Macedonian *chalgia*, available at the Institute of Folklore “Marko Cepenkov” – Skopje (referred to later in this paper as IFMC), one can conclude that in the playing of the well-known *chalgia* masters of that time, as well as in their understanding of musical influences, the terms *alla turca* and *alla franga* were present as different musical concepts. *Alla turca* refers to the *chalgia* specific playing/performing style where one can notice the influence of the Eastern oriental musical culture, while *alla franga* refers to the *chalgia* playing/performing style with the influence of Western European music. The analysis indicated that, besides being related to the *chalgia* playing/performing style, these terms were also related to the musical instruments used in the *chalgia* ensembles, the ways of tuning some of the *chalgia* instruments, the musical scales and the *chalgia* repertoire.

The process of shaping the *chalgia* sound expression was undoubtedly influenced by the musical instruments that were borrowed from other musical cultures. Those instruments were accepted by the *chalgia* masters and nurtured as part of their own musical culture. Besides the percussion instruments, such as the tambourine, *def* and *tarabuka*, the musical instruments which were present in the *chalgia* ensembles, are: Western European instruments such as the violin (locally called *kjemane*) and the clarinet (locally called *g'rneta*), and the specific string instruments such as *qanun*, *oud* and *lute* whose origin can be found in the Persian-Arabic traditional musical culture. Determining the basic characteristics of a musical style, according to Fritz Bose, requires deeper attention concerning instrumental music because some features of sound depend on the way the instruments are made, and they cannot be characteristic of the musical style alone. Also, if we take into account that musical instruments are easily transferred from one environment to another, from one cultural sphere to another, one cannot strictly determine that they belong to, and are characteristic of, the musical culture of one nation [Bose 1975:50–51]. So, due to the movement of instruments in different cultural backgrounds, it is

not possible to strictly define certain musical elements as specifics of a musical style nurtured in the new environment where they are introduced. Still, in the case of Macedonian *chalgia* music, although some of the instruments are borrowed and accepted, they did contribute to certain specifics of the *chalgia* sonority. Also, there was a sufficient quality time frame in which a specific *chalgia* expression was formed, characteristic only for this region.

Some *chalgia* musicians adjusted the tuning of their violins to get closer to the *alla turca* way of playing.³ According to Alexandar Linin, the European classical way of tuning, called *alla franga* tuning, is the well-known tuning in perfect fifths. From highest to lowest, the pitches are: e2, a1, d1, g. The tuning used by some of the Macedonian *chalgia* masters was called *alla turca* tuning, where the highest string (which is e2) is tuned a major second lower (which is d2) than the European tuning. Linin explains that by lowering the first string for two semitones, a softer sound is obtained. If we take into account the fact that the *chalgia* melodies have an oriental sonority, lowering the highest string is more in line with the *alla turca* playing style [Linin 1986:60–61].

Regarding the music itself, other specifics where one can feel the influence of the old Islamic music culture in *alla turca* playing, are according to Djimrevski: the rich melismatic passages, the unison as a main characteristic of the *chalgia* sound⁴ (but as noted by the author of this paper, it is questionable if this characteristic is an influence, or a characteristic of the local Macedonian music culture), the occasional voice vibrations, as well as the application of a variety of *makams*, including the infrequent use of quarter and three-quarter tones [Djimrevski 1985:38]. Then he mentions: the calm flow of the melodies and their rhythm, the rich instrumental parts between the stanzas, the presence of improvised parts (such as *mane* and *taksim*, note by the author of this paper), as well as the presence of melodic ornaments [Djimrevski 2005:219]. Also, the subtle glissando can be added to this description, as an occasional specific ornament of the melody.

Since the common feature of the *chalgia* instruments is that they are untempered instruments, there is a technical possibility to play microtones, which are smaller discrepancies from the tone and semitone. These microtones were present in *chalgia* music (mostly in *makams*), as a natural sound phenomenon of the *alla turca* playing style.

What is important to note is that, although *makams* are tonal systems with precisely defined musical rules, the Macedonian *chalgia* musicians had their own understanding of the *makams* and they played them according to their vision of the scales' sonority. According to Djimrevski, the *chalgia* musician most often feels the *makam* as a sonic model, based on which he creates and, in many cases, improvises the melody. He further says that the creative individuality of the instrumentalist, most often seen in the way he uses the alternated, transitional tones in the *makam*, contributes to the complete stylistic-aesthetic physiognomy in oriental music [Djimrevski 1984:192]. The *makams*, mentioned on the magnetic tapes from the Archive of IFMC are: *rast* (AIF m. t. 3263), *uşşak* (AIF m. t. 3263, 2150, 2405), *hicaz* (AIF m. t. 3263, 2149, 2150, 2405), *kürdili hicazkar* (AIF m. t. 3263, 2150), *hicazkar* (AIF m. t. 2150), *muhayyer* (AIF m. t. 3263), *nihavend* (AIF m. t. 3263, 2149, 2150, 2405), *saba* (AIF m. t. 2149, 2150, 2405), *kürdi* (AIF m. t. 2149), *nevâ* (AIF m. t. 2150), *bestenigar* (AIF m. t. 2150), *çargâh* (AIF m. t. 2150), *suz-nak* (AIF m. t. 2150), *acem-aşîran* (AIF m. t. 2150), *hüseynî* (AIF m. t. 2405). These are the Turkish names of the *makams*, but the Macedonian *chalgia* musicians gave local names to some of those scales, slightly modified from the Turkish and Arabic names. For example, a *makam* called *nihavend* (Turkish) or *nahavand* (Arabic) is found on the magnetic tapes with the name *naavent* or *nihavent*; *kürdili hicazkar* (Turkish) or *hijazkar kurd* (Arabic) is *kjurdihidjaskar* (local name); *acem-aşîran* (Turkish) or *'ajam 'ushayran* (Arabic) is *adjimashiran* (local name) etc.

The *makams* were mostly present in the *chalgia* repertoire which included Turkish instrumental musical forms, such as: *taksim*, *peşrev*, *şarki*, *saz semâ'î*, *longa* etc. These musical forms were mainly played at Turkish weddings in Macedonian cities, and their origin is from the Ottoman classical music, but the Macedonian *chalgia* musicians adapted them for their musical climate. According to Eljam Macheto⁵, unlike the Macedonian weddings, where the festivities began with *chalgia* wedding marches, the Turkish weddings began with these instrumental forms, including a vocal-instrumental performance with Turkish songs called *şarki*. According to the *chalgia* musicians recorded on magnetic tapes, at Turkish weddings, the newlyweds wake up in the morning around 4–5 o'clock, with such a combination of musical forms called *fasıl*⁶ played by the *chalgia* performers, i.e., *fasıl* in *makam sebai* or *sabah* (meaning morning), and the *şarki* (song) called *Ja se balsun*. During the performance of this song, people did not dance, they were only listening.⁷

All segments from this multi-part cycle called *fasıl*, were played in one *makam*, and this means that if the *taksim* was in *hicaz makam*, all other forms (*peşrev*, *şarki*, *saz semâ'î*) from the *fasıl* were in the same *hicaz makam*. According to Alo Tonchov⁸, the most common order in which Turkish musical forms were played was:

taksim → peşrev → şarki (song) → mane (improvisation, but not always) → saz semâ'î⁹

Although microtones were most common in Turkish instrumental pieces mostly played at Turkish weddings in the Macedonian cities, they did also affect the rest of the repertoire. In that context, a division could be made to the *chalgia* repertoire of that time:

- Macedonian *chalgia* songs/dances, including instrumental *chalgia* wedding marches, in which the oriental influence was partially felt;
- Musical forms such as: *taksim*, *saz semâ'î*, *peşrev*, *şarki*, etc., related to the Ottoman classical music where the *makams* with microtones are fully present and which, according to the Macedonian *chalgia* masters belong to the *alla turca* playing style;
- Musical forms such as: quadrille, Krakowiak, polka, mazurka, waltz, etc., originating from Western music and, according to the Macedonian *chalgia* masters belong to the *alla franga* playing style.¹⁰

Western European musical infiltrations called *alla franga*, including the musical forms in the *chalgia* repertoire mentioned above, gradually appeared in the old-urban musical culture mainly in the Macedonian revival period (around 1850). In fact, this was the period when the revival movements intensified in Macedonian cities and when certain crafts developed, that led to trade relations with the then-large European urban centres such as: Trieste, Leipzig, Vienna, Constantinople (Istanbul), Thessaloniki, etc. This way, the urban population was constantly in touch with the culture present in those large urban centres. By crossing the borders of the homeland and culture, the then-limited world-view of the Macedonian people began to change, and the beginnings of the new European culture were felt in many segments of the urban dwellers' daily life. So, there was a gradual and spontaneous acceptance and transfer of the foreign culture, aesthetics, and way of life in the native Macedonian urban environment. As it was mentioned before, in addition to the changes in people's daily way of life, their behavior, their clothes and mutual interaction, there were also changes in music, architecture, etc. Regarding the architecture, Nikifor Smilevski says that in the first decades of the 19th century, when the young Macedonian bourgeoisie class was created, first in the villages and then in the cities, those newly wealthy merchants began to build beautiful houses based on the Turkish model of construction and, some of them, build their houses under the influence of Western

European aesthetics [Smilevski 2014:44]. Also, people reflected the current fashion from the big European cities in the domestic environment and began to reject the old way of dressing. Spontaneously, the new fashion, called *alla franga*, dominated over the *alla turca*. All these changes were depicted in many of the *chalgia* songs. Through those songs one can feel the sophistication in living, behaviour, and addressing each other. That sophistication and the openness to new experiences, the new notions of the urban living were most visible in the wealthiest layer of urban people (merchants and craftsmen).¹¹ As O'Connell says, the same case as with the Ottoman elite: "*Alla franga* became synonymous with the progressive aspirations of a new Ottoman elite, a bureaucratic elite that was eager to adopt European cultural practices for the revitalization of Ottoman political rule and for the improvement of the Ottoman social life" [O'Connell 2005:185].

Regarding the music, the expressive specifics of *alla franga* playing style mainly were present in the *chalgia* repertoire, enriched with urban dances that originated from the Western European music culture (quadrille, Krakowiak, polka, mazurka, etc.), but also, in some songs that include waltz rhythm created in the spirit of Western European music, such as the example of the Ohrid's song *Golema ridja ti chinam*, known as *Pesna za Despina*.¹² Nevertheless, they were performed in a *chalgia* musical interpretation and expression, preserving the basic musical principles of the *chalgia* sonority. On one of the magnetic tapes from the IFMC archive fund, there is a recording of the composition *Dajana* performed by the ensemble of the *chalgia* violinist Alo Tonchov. It is played in *chalgian* manner, which indicates that the Macedonian *chalgia* masters (it is not known how often) played songs of another music genre, but with a *chalgian* expression. Through this example also one can see the influence of Western European music.

In the tape records containing *chalgia* recordings from the Ohrid's *chalgia* ensembles, the insertion of intervals such as thirds and sixths (rarely fourths and fifths) can be heard, which also can be perceived as a Western European influence. It should be emphasized that, although the insertion of those intervals was a common practice in Ohrid's *chalgia*, it is not a case of creating a fully harmonized melody. These intervals appear only occasionally as incomplete chord sounds, having the function of decorating, i.e., ornamenting the end of a particular musical phrase. Such an example is the traditional instrumental piece *Oro za svekrvata – Chamcheto*, in the performance of the Ohrid's *chalgia* ensemble of Sadilo.¹³ Inserting those intervals at the end of the musical phrase, as Djimrevski says, was a result of a good technical mastery of the instrument and the result of Sadilo's openness and acceptance of the modern musical currents that came from Western Europe [Djimrevski 1985:25].

In the later period of existence of the old-urban *chalgia* musical tradition, Western European influence is perceived also in the process of insertion of tempered instruments (accordion, guitar, keyboard, etc.), in the core of the *chalgia* ensemble. The infiltration of the tempered instruments often results in the harmonization of the melodic lines, and thus, to a certain extent, the abandonment of the monophonic nature of the *chalgia* music. An example of this statement is the previously mentioned song *Pesna za Despina*, but in the performance of 'Ohridski trubaduri' (a musical ensemble formed after Sadilo's ensemble, whom, at the beginning of their existence nurtured the specific *chalgia* instruments, while in the later period started to use tempered instruments which, as mentioned, is not typical for the authentic *chalgia* sound).

The analysis made, based on the audio materials listed above, shows that the players have modified eastern/western elements by their own understanding of the musical style. The conclusion would be that those are not strictly or purely eastern/western characteristics, but they are similar to some elements of Ottoman classical and Western European music. So, it

might be more appropriate to say that those are ‘eastern/western influences’, rather than ‘eastern/western characteristics’.

In fact, if we try to make a distinction between accepted Eastern oriental and Western European influence, it can be said that:

- a) Eastern oriental influence can be seen in: usage of musical instruments from the Persian-Arabic music culture in the core of the *chalgia* ensemble, usage of certain *makams* (*rast*, *kurd*, *hicaz*, etc.), performing the particular musical forms derived from Turkish classical music (*peşrev*, *şarki*, *saz semâ’î*, *longa*, etc.), as well as usage of some oriental ornaments;
- b) Western European influence is perceived in: the insertion of thirds and sixths, usage of 3/4 waltz rhythm, presence of the certain Western European dances (polka, mazurka, waltz, etc.), insertion of tempered instruments (accordion, guitar, keyboards, etc.), which results in the harmonization of the *chalgia* melodic lines, and thus, disrupting the monophonic nature of the *chalgia* music.

According to Fritz Bose, many characteristics of a musical style arise from the sonic ideal that reigns in a region over a period of time, and those sonic ideals depend on the contemporary fashion and current taste of the people. Current taste and fashion are variable categories, and there may be several different ones at the same time [Bose 1975:50]. So, if we refer to this claim, the Eastern oriental and Western European musical influences in the Macedonian *chalgia*, i.e., *alla turca* and *alla franga*, as intertwined styles of music, can be seen as a sonic ideals (modern and popular in the 19th and early 20th century), ‘grafted’ on the local musical characteristics of their musical soil. These sonic ideals were crucial for obtaining the authentic *chalgia* musical expression and sonority, specific and characteristic only for the Macedonian urban music, mostly present and nurtured in the Macedonian revival period, which unites musical specifics from the Orient, the West, and the local music tradition.

Of course, it was logical to feel the influences in the performing/playing style and mixing of different musical elements. There are no such strict frames and boundaries in music that can defend the song or dance so strongly from external musical influences. People in this area were indeed open to accepting others’ aesthetic musical values, accepting everything beautiful in music, nurturing it as their own, while not having any prejudices about where those aesthetic musical values came from. However, they did not allow the authentic traditional music culture to be completely disrupted in this process, but enriched and reshaped into a new specific sonic form, creating a sound between empires. The acceptance of the influences from different music cultures can be defined as an expression of people’s openness to a broader musical-aesthetic spectrum. Above all, it can be perceived as the ability to recognize quality musical-aesthetic values and combine them while creating a specific music repertoire and expression, recognizable mostly for the Macedonia urban places. According to Borivoje Djimrevski, all influences accepted are interpreted as a cultural achievement, because the Macedonian musicians showed a special musical gift to accept the external influences and transformed them, according to their traditional criteria, and then upgrade them, incorporating their authenticity and expression [Djimrevski 2005:6].

Endnotes

1. *Alaturka* and *alafranga* are the Turkish terms, but in this paper the European terms *alla turca* and *alla franga* will be used.
2. With a change of the ruler, of course, comes the partial or complete imposition of the culture they bring with them on certain aspects of the already existing culture. The ethnomusicologist Fritz Bose describes the process of changes that took place in the music in China, during the change of dynasties (through war or revolution), which can be seen analogously in the case of Macedonia and Ottoman rule. He says that the winner is always right,

which means his standards are always the most correct, his laws wiser, and his philosophy better. Most often, the one who rules imposes his culture. This can be seen in several aspects including in music. If it was a ruling class of foreign origin, as was often the case during the 7000 years of Chinese history, the reforms in music were even stronger. The new rulers not only imposed new standards, musical scales, and rules but also imposed their own songs and instruments, finding their way into Chinese art music and merging with the national Chinese musical style [Bose 1975:68].

3. According to the data from the magnetic tapes which are in the possession of the IFMC archive, the *chalgia* violin masters who adapted their violins into the *alla turca* tune, were: Alo Tonchov (1910–1987, Veles), who was one of the most famous *chalgia* masters in the city of Veles (AIF m. t. 2149 [Dimitrovski 1972]); Eljam Macheto (born in 1934 in Veles), who came from a musical family and, besides the violin, he also played on *oud* and *djumbush* (AIF m. t. 3265); Redjep Said (?–1947, Skopje) who was one of the most famous *chalgia* masters who played *chalgia* in the urban restaurants (*kafeani*) in the city of Skopje (AIF m. t. 2815 [Djimrevski 1983]). Alo Tonchov said that a master of *alla turca* playing was the oldest *chalgia* musician in the city of Veles – Arso Kjemanedjijata (AIF m. t. 2150 [Dimitrovski 1974]).

4. In terms of the *chalgia* sound, the main feature is the monophony. Accordingly, the classical western harmonization of the melodic phrases is not typical for the Macedonian authentic *chalgia*. The difference between the old-urban music which was nurtured by the mandolin, *tambura* orchestras and brass bands, compared to the music nurtured by the *chalgia* ensembles, is that it is not authentic for the *chalgia* melodic line to be harmonized. If we try to see the vertical line of the *chalgia* music, we can notice three different functional elements: 1. The main melody; 2. The accompaniment melody which does not have a typical structure; and 3. The pulsating rhythm. For more about these functional elements see: Fritz Bose [1975:61].

5. Eljam Macheto (violinist) in his discussion with Borivoje Djimrevski and Sonia Seeman, recorded on 9 June 1987, in Veles [Djimrevski and Seeman 1987].

6. The main specificity of the *fasil* cycle, which originates from Ottoman classical music, is the musical performance i.e., the songs are sequenced one after the other (without breaks), separated by instrumental improvisations, and in the whole performance, everyone sings and plays simultaneously [Eken-Küçükaksoy 2016:34]. With simultaneous singing/playing, this type of performance is similar to the simultaneous singing/playing of all the musicians in the *chalgia* ensemble. See also: Sonia Tamar Seeman [2012:300].

7. Eljam Macheto (violinist) in his discussion with Borivoje Djimrevski and Sonia Seeman, recorded on 9 June 1987, in Veles [Djimrevski and Seeman 1987]; the same is confirmed by: Refik Ibraimov (violinist) in his discussion with Borivoje Djimrevski, recorded on 17 November 1976, in Bitola [Djimrevski 1976].

8. Alo Tonchov (violinist) in his discussion with Dushko Dimitrovski, recorded on 14 June 1974, in Veles [Dimitrovski 1974]; and the same interlocutor in his discussion with Borivoje Djimrevski, recorded on 07 May 1977, in Veles [Djimrevski 1977].

9. “A *fasil*’s sequence in Turkish classical music is as follows: *taksim* (an instrumental improvisation); *peşrev* (usually of four parts, with long rhythmic patterns); *kar* (the first piece sung after the *peşrev*); first *beste* (a vocal composition consisting of four verses each followed by the same melodic passage); second *beste* (another vocal composition consisting of four verses followed by the same melodic passage); *ağır semai* (a rhythmic pattern of 10 beats); *yürük semai* (a rhythmic pattern of six beats and form of vocal music sung just before the instrumental piece at the end of the *fasil*); and *saz semaisi* (the final instrumental form in four movements).” See at the link: <https://rb.gv/83dz7> (accessed 2022 September 9).

10. The presence of *alla turca* and *alla franga* playing styles, i.e., the Eastern oriental and Western European styles of music present in Macedonian *chalgia*, is also confirmed by: Refik Ibraimov (violinist) in his discussion with Borivoje Djimrevski, recorded on 17 November 1976, in Bitola [Djimrevski 1976].

11. As an example of the Europeanization of the civil class, Tatarovska referenced to the song *Stavre mi se ozhena* (a very popular song in Ohrid and Debar [Tatarovska 2001:79], in which: “Kupi, Stavre, kapela/ kapela od modata”, the wife asks her husband Stavre to buy her a modern hat in the verses), where one can perceive the penetration of the influence of the Western European fashion.

12. The example is available at the link: <https://youtu.be/EIQSLX13INM> (accessed 2022 September 9).

13. Klime Sadilo was the well-known *chalgia* violin master from Ohrid, and the younger ensemble *Ohridski trubaduri* (led by Stojan Zlatanovski), inherited the practice of inserting the occasional intervals at the end of the musical phrase of the *chalgia* song/dance. The audio examples where those intervals were present, are: *Marsh za po nevesta*, *Patinada*, *Oro za svekrvata – Chamcheto* and *Ela Dimko, kalesh more Dimko* (all from the magnetic tape No. 197 [Pajtondjiev 1957]); *Vrteno svadbarsko oro* and *Svadbena marsh za sedenje koga pochnuva svadbata* (AIF m. t. 2704 [Djimrevski 1979]); *Dejgidi Kato Kotseva* and *Golema ridja ti chinam* (AIF m. t. 447 [Pajtondjiev 1952]), etc. Similar ornamentation of the melodies at the end of the melodic phrase, were also used in the city of Krushevo, by the violinist Ahileja Nikolovski-Nacha (AIF m. t. 537 [Andreski 1967a] and 538 [Andreski 1967b]).

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Archontia Makri Doulgeri
(Thessaloniki, Greece)

Dancing new meanings through old fires – the *Anastenaria* of Ayia Eleni, Greece

The *Anastenaria* is a public religious ritual practised in Ayia Eleni, Serres, Greece. It is rooted in the religious, cultural heritage of the Greek-speaking, Christian Orthodox refugees from Kosti, Eastern Rumelia, who were forced to resettle in Greece in the early 20th century. This ritual practice is very rich in bodily activities with devotional dancing and firewalking being the most prominent among them. This paper examines notions of creativity, cultural expression and embodiment within this ritual, as experienced in the field. I discuss the place of devotional dancing and firewalking in the ritual and their role in the continuity and the revitalisation of this dynamic cultural practice.

Keywords: *Anastenaria*; ritual; Greece; embodiment; religion.

In this paper, I will be looking at how notions of creativity, cultural expression and embodiment, inherent in ritual and vernacular religion, shape the practice of a religious ritual tradition in contemporary reality. The *Anastenaria*, is rooted in the religious and cultural heritage of the displaced Greek-speaking, Orthodox Christian population of Kosti village, in Eastern Rumelia. It is the dedicative practice of firewalking, which was celebrated by both Greek and Bulgarian Christian communities at Kosti and the adjacent villages in Strandzha mountain. Firewalking was part of a variety of ritual processes taking place during various Saints' days celebrations within the annual religious cycle. However, the capacity to firewalk is connected to the reciprocal relationship between the ritualists and Constantine the Great and his mother, Helen. In this sense, the *Anastenaria* is considered by many scholars as a type of vernacular worship grounded in the faith of the two Saints [Mihail-Dede 1983; Mpoliaki 2011].

One of the new centres¹ of the faith of *Kostilides* (Greeks of Kosti) is Ayia Eleni, located in the middle of the Strymonas river valley in Serres, Greece. Ayia Eleni has been my ethnographic field site since 2018. The *Anastenaria* takes place in Ayia Eleni twice a year, in January and May, and last for three to four days. In each event, the participants walk in processions with the holy icons around the village, share communal dinners, gather in the spaces for worship, dance and some of them firewalk. The majority of these ritual processes are accompanied by music; traditional tunes played on *daouli* and *lyra*.² The *Anastenaria* ritual is not bounded anymore. Firewalking is not hereditary and the community is comprised of people, young and old, men and women coming from all walks of life and various places in Greece. Their participation compensates for the shrinking population of the descendants of Kostilides who live in the village. It is important to distinguish between the ritualist and the firewalker. To the *Anastenarian* world view, *anastenaris*, *-isa* (*anastenarisa* is used for a female) is anyone who adheres to the ritual event, actively participates in it or supports its implementation in any way. Thus, a ritualist may or may not be a firewalker. According to the community, each one carries out their own duty. In public discourse, the *Anastenaria* is often essentialized into the activity of firewalking, while it is something much more than that according to its practitioners.

Indeed, my immersion in the field revealed a whole new world; a very complete and distinct belief system, rather than a mere re-enactment of a traditional performance representing the cultural identity of an ethnic group. I will analyse how this belief system is expressed through the abundant cultural bodily activities. I will argue that among them, the devotional

Anastenarikos dance and firewalking are the core of the ritual practice and will discuss their role in the continuity and revitalisation of this tradition.

Cultural Expression as Veneration

According to Grimes, a balanced coexistence of various “modes of ritual sensibility” [Grimes 2010] is an important feature of ritual. A variety of physical and cultural activities found in the solemnity-festivity, work-play, liturgy-celebration continuum involves the ritualists in all of their senses. In a similar vein, the procession of the holy icons in the *Anastenaria*, is an example of an essential ritual task in which veneration and cultural, creative expression coexist and reinforce each other. The icons should enter all the houses of the village. Usually it takes two afternoons to cover the whole village. The musicians precede the procession and while walking, they play a particular tune. They are followed by five allotted men. The first and last of them hold candlesticks and heirlooms, such as votive red kerchiefs. The middle ones hold the two holy icons of Saint Constantine and Helen and another votive object. They are followed by the rest of the community members as well as the visitors. Each house is entered by the five allotted men while the musicians and the rest of the congregants stay in the yard. Some visits may serve as longer breaks for the ‘Saints’ workers’ to rest. The main ritual actors and the congregants are welcomed by the house lords and are treated with coffee, sweets, *mezedes* (appetisers) and *tsipouro*. During the break, the musicians play and sing secular traditional tunes from the Kosti region. People are dancing or singing along to the tunes. While walking to the next destination people may occasionally dance round dances on the crossroads. It is evident that there is no dichotomy between work and play, neither between sacred and secular. The congregants follow the procession thus ‘work for the Saint’ while they socialize with each other, sing, dance and share food. Music can be both liturgical (while walking on the procession) or recreational (during the breaks at the houses).



Figure 1. The carriers of the holy icons entering a house during the procession (photograph by Archontia Makri Doulgeri).

The *Anastenarikos* dance - being in the *Anastenarian* world through the body

Within the embodiment conceptual framework, I borrow from Csordas’ notion of “somatic mode of attention” which addresses attention as bodily, multisensory engagement

[Csordas 1993]. Such is the engagement that I observed in the *Anastenarikos* dance during fieldwork. This is the devotional dance of the ritualists, danced during the evening gatherings at the *konaki* (shrine). It is important to distinguish this ritual dance from the round, social dances that may take place during other ritual processes (e.g. procession of the holy icons). During these gatherings, several repetitions of the *Anastenarikos* dance culminate in firewalking.

The *lyra* players play a slow melody which calls the *anastenarides*, *-ises* (plural of *anastenaris*, *-isa*) to commence the dance. The tune is called *Pa se Prasino Livadi* (In a Green Meadow)³ and is the first of the three songs that will be played in a row, subsequently. This song triplet, which belongs to the music tradition of *Kostilides*, is played exclusively in the *Anastenaria* ritual and accompanies each dance repetition or *ordini*, danced by the *anastenarides*. The *Pa se Prasino Livadi* tune is an arrhythmic ‘song of the table’; slow tunes with lyrics, which are sung over a table and are not intended for dance [Danforth 1989:106]. Thus, it is played only by the *lyra* players. One of the two *lyra* players starts singing the verses of the tune. The story narrated in the original song is quite long. However, the number of the verses that will be sung each time varies. The musicians improvise according to the responsiveness of the dancers and other factors. Other congregants, especially elderly men, join the musician in singing. While listening to the tune, one by one, the *anastenarides* become gradually affected – ‘caught by the Saint’ (as they say in the community). This is evident through their escalating bodily and vocal reactions. They stand up and start gesturing and moving as if they are trying to soothe themselves from a painful condition; twisting the upper torso from side to side, exhaling intensely, twisting their upper torso from side to side, sighing out, shouting out or clapping their hands. One by one, they make their way to the centre of the room and start walking, by following the melody. After a few minutes, the *daouli* sound is incorporated, in a 4/4 rhythm, and the second song fades in. One behind the other, they progress forward and occasionally take a few steps back in a way that they create the shape of a cross on the floor. Even though their stepping is coordinated with the 4/4 rhythm, they keep their individuality in movement, especially of the upper body. The facial expressions vary as well; some seem to be distressed, while others are whispering the lyrics in a calm mood. The musicians continue with the third song, the drumming becomes louder and the dance is intensified. Once in a while, one of them approaches the corner where the icons of the Saints are kept, and will pick up one of them or a votive to dance with. Two of them will dance holding a holy icon; dancing with the Saints. After twenty minutes in total, the tempo slows down and the melody fades out. The exhausted dancers try to catch their breath, they drink water that is offered to them. One can see some of them hugging each other and smiling.

This ethnographic description reveals the ethos of the *Anastenarian* belief system which values humility, patience and acceptance.



Figure 2. The *Anastenarikos* dance (photo by Archontia Makri Doulgeri).

Becoming an *anastenaris* – attending to and learning through the body

Everyone is a potential firewalker, but the faculty to dance and firewalk is not definite. The reciprocity with the Saint is negotiated in the moment and cannot be rushed or taken for granted. One can be ‘caught by the Saint’ since the very first verses of the song, or may not dance at all. When interviewed, most of the *Anastenarides*, *-ises* find it difficult to put their experience in words. Anna Pappa, a 30-year-old *Anastenarisa*, describes:

...I receive a kind of energy which is not encountered in daily life. During the first two or three *paniyiria*⁴, my whole body was shaking. My body could not assimilate this kind of energy. Now, I don’t tremble anymore. I am used to it...
[Anna Pappa 2018]

It seems to be an internal sensation, even a physical manifestation, that prompts an urge to dance. The onset of the dance lies within the body itself and is translated as the reciprocal relationship with the Saint. The dancers are attending “to” their bodies and to the manifested bodily sensations “with” their bodies [Csordas 1993:139].

Moreover, when I asked the same informant about the effect of dance on the bodily sensations described above, she replied:

I could explain it as a means to channel this energy; to assimilate it to my body. In this way, I learned how to manipulate it. [Anna Pappa 2018]

Hence, dance is a means of handling these unprecedented sensations. Even more insightful are the following comments by the leader of the community:

There is no initiation process. The relationship between the *anastenaris* and the Saint is experiential and develops over time. The *anastenaris* learns how to coexist with the Saint” [...] “...each of them gradually becomes better in dance and finally gets control and coordinates with the team. [Tasos Reklos 2018]

Most of these statements imply that the process of becoming an *anastenaris*, -isa involves a somatic mode of learning. One learns how to be an *anastenaris*, -isa through the body. Assessment or self-assessment is not rare within the discourse of the ritualists. However, this ‘better in dance’ is not determined by a better execution of specific steps, but rather in terms of concentration and calmness.

A collective positive assessment in the moment, defines a successful consummation of the ritual process. Surprisingly, most of the times there were unanimous feelings of satisfaction or disappointment expressed in the attitude and faces of the ritualists, following dancing and firewalking. It seems that these shared feelings were the result of a “collective embodied synchronization” [Schüler:100]. On the whole, the collective felt experience of the moving body is the ground of evaluation of the overall ritual outcome.

Conclusion

It is clear that within the *Anastenarian* belief system, the notion of being in the world through the body prevails. The moving body is the quintessence of the ritual; the locus of perception, learning and evaluation of both individual and collective experience, as well as the overall outcome of the ritual event. I posit that this experience of heightened bodily implication counterbalances the disembodiment, oversecularisation and rationalisation that dominate the contemporary reality and daily life and have denied certain potentialities to human beings. I believe that the world of the *Anastenaria* proposes a once known, but currently forgotten human mode in which cultural expression through singing, dancing and music playing are inextricably linked to life and play a functional role in it. Through the bodily and experiential dimensions, the ritualists are engaged in all of their senses and sensibilities. In this highly sensorial arena, collective self-reflection is fostered and new meanings are forged by and for the community. The improvised collective dance experience gives freedom to the participants to practise spirituality and adhere to the belief system through their own subjective understanding that is grounded in the body. Hence, this age-old tradition still remains a lived and dynamic cultural, religious practice.

Endnotes

1. In the wake of the fall of the Ottoman Empire and the nation-building process in the Balkan Peninsula (early 20th century), following several expatriation phases, the Greeks of Kosti - *Kostilides* - were forced to resettle in the newly founded Greek state. The communities in the new settlements (built predominantly in the province of Macedonia), had to wait a long time before they could practice the *Anastenaria* in public (1942) [Mpoliaki 2011; Sfetas 2009]. The *Anastenaria* is also practiced in other villages where *Kostilides* resettled. These are Mavrolefki in Drama, Meliki in Imathia, Lagadas in Thessaloniki and Kerkini in Serres.
2. *Daouli* (also known as *davul* in other countries) is the double-headed cylindrical drum. It is suspended and played with two beaters. Thracian *lyra* belongs in the family of *lyras*, bowed string instruments played vertically. It has a pear-shaped body with a short neck and the sound is generated by three strings [Anogeianakis 1991].
3. The song belongs to the category of *akritika* folk songs in which the content of the lyrics is predominantly heroic and patriotic. Their creation dates back to the era of the Byzantine Empire when the Emperors used to recruit young warrior farmers (Akrites) to safeguard the Empire’s frontiers and they were transmitted orally [Mpoliaki 2011; Danforth 1989].
4. The word *paniyiria* is the plural of *paniyiri* which means festival. In this case it is used to denote the event.

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Amal Msakni
(Tunis, Tunisia)

The role of music and dance in the transmission of religious beliefs in Anatolia and in the perpetuity of rituals: The example of the Alevi-Bektashi

During the expansion of the Ottoman Empire, a movement of cultural influence overwhelmed the Balkan countries. Sound and gesture practice contributed to the transmission of several religious beliefs. Thus, a musical, poetic and choreographic corpus, and rituals and ceremonies were born. In Turkey, they talk about the *Djem* ceremony of the Alevi-Bektashi which translates the philosophical doctrines of the tradition through the song and the mystical dance *Semah*. More than a spiritual dance, the *Semah* translates the theosophy of letters into a gesture. In this paper, I introduce another point of view that interprets differently the secrets of this mystical dance.

Keywords: Alevi Bektashi; Anatolia; *Semah*; sacred dance and music; ritual.

Transmission of the sacred

Since the dawn of time, the sacred has occupied a considerable place in our daily life, our lifestyle, and our personal development. This concept which is not limited only to the religious context, and which presents itself under several features and forms does not concern the human being himself; but rather the Man and his relationship with all that surrounds him: objects, animals, plants, seasons, cosmos and others because everything is ‘sacred’.

The sacred practice is considered as a “vital source” according to Roger Caillois [2008]. Human beings often face existence through a metaphysical world where rite, ritual, myth and the sacred reign. Thereby, the conception of the sacred had evolved to become a religious belief, a movement, or an order. Subsequently, religious belief is shared and spread in a social space and through certain elements: the visual, the gesture and the sound. Nevertheless, this communication of the religious is most often accomplished through artistic practices such as music and dance which are really the main components of the ritual. Moreover, certain beliefs have appropriated music and the arts as a tool for their foundations.

Obviously, the relationship between the creation and dissemination of religion is not new. Nevertheless, the process of transmission of religious beliefs evolved over time. These dogmas are spread through several ways of communication; revelations, orality, ritual practices and currently media including the initial object of our subject which is the role of sound and music in the transmission and practice of a religious belief. The fact of transmitting beliefs, rites or practices makes it possible to perpetuate the values and the cultural institution from one generation to another in order to be able to identify and perpetuate one’s ethnic belonging.

Ritual practice and art expression

The ritual fact manifests itself in several areas and ranges between the two sacred/profane spheres. The ritual is an individual and collective social activity in which values and symbols have no limits. We can consider that the ritualization was born from a circular movement linking the cosmos, the body and the thought. The cosmos therefore represents the entire spatio-temporal system, and the body is the instrument through which the gestures are carried out which materialize all the symbolic ideologies triggered by the thought. In addition to the symbolic function of the ritual, the social function remains preponderant because it is through

the collective practice of worship that the structure of the ritual evolves, is transmitted, and occupies part of the identity and cultural heritage.

Moreover, just like the notion of ‘sacred’, the ritual fact or the ritualization of an act does not lack subjectivity. Based on the emotional, the intellectual and the collective, the ritual makes it possible to translate thoughts, moral principles, theological doctrines, social relationships and symbolic expression. The sacred ritual thus refers to a sacred time, periodically repeated or renewed, belonging to a sacred framework. It is therefore about ceremonies and religious practices including all the rites of initiation, conversion and passage. Indeed, ritual activity is carried out through cognitive (expressions, doctrines, beliefs, dogmas) and bodily (gestures, movements, singing, artistic practices, etc.) elements. As Cuisenier mentions:

In every ritual, there is a gesture, a use of the voice that one modulates or that one represses, moods that one stimulates or that one controls, blood that flows to the face or that leaves the body empty. [Cuisenier 2006:8]

In which circumstances can religious belief inspire the ‘artistic’ practice of the ritual?

How can the sacred be perceived through the gesture and the dance of the ritual?

Is the ritual inspired by art or is art inspired by ritual? These points arise as preliminary questions to the fundamental problematic of our subject.

It is in this context that the *Cem (Djem)*, cult of the Alevi Bektashi order fits in the ceremonial or even as a ritual ceremony because it takes place on particular days of the year to commemorate a saint or an event and to celebrate certain religious holidays. The *Cem* ceremony, that is based on the *Semah* cult (chant and dance), also takes place on a weekly or monthly basis to teach and preserve the rites and dogmas of this Alevi culture in order to perpetuate the tradition and allow the followers to have a certain religious routine and ritual practice. It is thus a collective practice that brings together very specific rites and rituals.

Moreover, the oral tradition and the ritualization of certain artistic and sacred practices have contributed to the richness of the cultural heritage of the Anatolian region. Thus, our study will focus on the music of the Alevi-Bektashi in Turkey, which also belongs to the Sufi tradition.

Alevi-Bektashi as a case study

The expansion of the Ottoman Empire extended to several regions covering the Mediterranean regions of Asia and Africa as well as Balkan Europe, the Danube, and the shores of the Black Sea to the Crimea. Certain religious beliefs have been transmitted from Anatolia to the Balkan countries through poetic and vocal oral tradition. It is therefore appropriate to cite the example of Hadji Bektash Veli, the eponymous founder of the Alevi-Bektashi tradition, whose mission was to propagate the doctrines and dogmas of Islam in the Anatolian region. Thanks to hymns and gestures, the master has succeeded in attracting many followers to him, hence the birth of a rite called *Semah*.

Music and dance have always been an element or even a tool allowing researchers (ethnologists, anthropologists, sociologists, theologians) to study the culture of people, a society, or an ethnic group, just like religion, which represents a large part of the cultural heritage. These artistic expressions reflect the religious beliefs of a society and even facilitate communication between masters and their followers or the transmission of religious thought. Since music was largely present in religious practice during religious festivals, funeral rites,

hymns and spiritual songs, canticles, and incarnations, it therefore played an essential role either in relation to the divine or in relation to believers. But beyond political or cultural borders, these rituals were well developed over time and dissimilar from one religion to another. Therefore, Alevi-Bektashi culture is known by a rich musical corpus and choreographic heritage.

Who are the Alevi-Bektashis?

A community that represents today 20% of the Turkish population. It is a kind of syncretism that brings together certain dogmas of Christianity, Shamanism and Sunni, Shiite, and Sufi Islam. According to a study commissioned in 2008 by the MGK (National Security Council) and carried out by universities, there are 10 million Alevi, including 9 million in Turkey and 1 million in Europe. The Alevi-Bektashi do not practice their rites in mosques. Unlike other Sufi brotherhoods, they have their own places of worship called *Cemevi*. In these *Cem (Djem)* houses, the community organizes the main *Cem (Djem)* ceremony, funeral ceremonies and other religious festivals.

Terminology

I use the term Alevi-Bektashi because my fieldwork is based in the *Cemevi (Djem)* house) of Karacaahmet (in Istanbul) where the majority of Alevi are from Bektashi origin. As Irene Mélikoff said: “Bektashism is a syncretism and a gnosis [...] Alevism is only a form of Bektashism” [Mélikoff 1998].

Indeed, Alevism refers to Bektashism. It represents the popular form of Bektashism, this doctrine which brings together on the one hand the Bektashi, the dervishes coming directly from the Bektashi order (which later became an urban order) and on the other hand, the Alevi who settled in the Anatolian countryside. Moreover, according to another research, Bektashism is determined as a Sufi brotherhood while Alevism represents the tribal religion [Zarcone 2010:138].

It seems that the history of the Bektashi began from the 13th century or even before, but it was only in the post-Ottoman period (1912–1967) that similar groups began to appear. The Balkans and the countries of South-East Europe (Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Yugoslavia, Romania and few other countries) for example have known eleven Muslim mystical orders: The Bektashi, the Halvetis, the Kadiris, the Melamis, the Mevlevi, the Nakshbandis, the Rifa'is, the Sa'dis, the Sinamis, the Shazilis and the Tidjanis.

The story of HBV and its transmission mission

The eponymous founder of this Sufi order is known as Hadji Bektash Veli. He was born in Nichapour in Iran and died in Anatolia. He was also a religious leader descended from the group of whirling dervishes and it is said that he was even a disciple of the Sufi master Djelal din i Rumi. Tradition says that this Sufi man played an important role in the transmission of Sufi thought and Islam in the world from Anatolia through music.

This Sufi man came from the village currently called Kara Oyuk located in the city of Nevsehir in Cappadocia. His tomb and his temple were transformed into a museum on August 16, 1964 funded by the city. This building is visited by a considerable number of tourists each year.

The legend told by the Alevi-Bektashi community says that Hadji Bektash Veli wanted to attract people to him so he could convey his religious message. According to him, music is the best tool to transmit a speech. Instead of presenting his belief through a sacred book, he

merged all the rules and dogmas of the religion in the form of a sacred song accompanied by *saz* / *bağlama*. This is how people started listening to this music and travelling with it. During these groupings a sacred mystical dance was born, that is the *Semah*.

I have already mentioned the importance of music in the *Cem* (*Djem*) ceremonial ritual. In fact, it is not only the sung music but also the instrumental playing performed on an instrument called *saz* or *bağlama*. Besides being an instrument, the *bağlama* is the symbol of Alevi belief, it summarises all the philosophy doctrine and is also called “a stringed Coran (*telli Kuran*)”. The ritual is carried out through cognitive elements (expression, doctrines, beliefs, dogmas) and physical elements (such as gestures, movements, song, artistic practices). When the artistic expression, whether it is music or dance, is repeated according to a cycle and a very precise spatio-temporal framework, it becomes a ritual practice, the ritual thus becomes ceremonial, respecting certain structures and rules. Thereby this is what facilitates the transmission of religious belief and makes it possible to develop its practice.

The notion of the sacred begins with a simple religious belief, which is expressed through a repetitive sound or gesture, transforming into a ritual practice that develops into a ceremonial act. Hence the birth of a whole musical and choreographic repertoire.

***Cem* (*Djem*) ceremony: The main rite of the Alevi Bektashi belief**

Poetry and music:

To be able to classify Alevi-Bektashi music, it should be noted that there are almost two genres of poetry: *Değiş* and *Nefes*, which are also distinguished by musical forms.

The *Değiş*: It means the saying/what was said and exactly what was written by the ‘Ulu Ozan’ (the poets who transmitted the Alevi Bektashi beliefs to people through their music). These *Değiş* are considered the most important means of communication in the Alevi-Bektashi culture because they were transmitted and learned by word of mouth.

The *Nefes*: *Nefes* means inhalation, breath, or breath. The *Nefes* are written by anyone (Dede, poet, believers etc.) It is a form of music and poetry which describes current life according to Alevi philosophy, that has a free theme, even a somewhat instructive aspect, and which refers to Alevism. It is the most common of literary genres.

In the history of Alevism, poetry was created and developed by sacrificing lives. This literature tends to express the conception of the world and constitutes a tool of expression making it possible to implicitly transmit the Alevi philosophy and dogmas.

Dance/gestures: the *Semah*

The *Semah* is an indispensable element in Alevi philosophy. It is one of the main rituals of the 12 services of *Cem* (*Djem*). The etymology of the word has several interpretations.

It can evoke both Arabic roots ‘sema’ سماء, which means the sky (to fly as an action), or ‘sama’ to hear, or even ‘al semeh’ السماح which means (forgiveness).

This phenomenon includes the expression of creation and existence in the Alevi faith. The *Semahçı* (*Semah* dancer) goes through the stages of encounter, walking and flying like a divine journey towards the unity of man, nature, and the universe. The independence of the individual in the *Semah* is the key word. Between the *Semah* dancers, there is no touching hands, nor physical contact during the performance. Depending on the musical sequence, the hands are moved in time or slowly. It is a long-lasting body workout.

Music education, audience and practice are often rooted in the development of the person. Some parents send their children to the *Cemevi* just to watch, to listen, or to take *Semah* or

bağlama lessons. Through this form of spiritual dance, the follower reproduces the movements of the Cosmos and realises his prayer to the rhythm of the *bağlama* and through the melodic modulations of the hymns without any social distinction. According to the spiritual master Rumi: “Tüm evren semah döner” (The whole universe turns in Semah).

A well-ordered system of dogmas and rules where music and dance are in harmony with all the elements

In addition to the power of the ear and the eye, sound and gesture, music and dance, several other factors have contributed to the transmission of this tradition and especially to its perpetuity today in a modern urban environment where many traditional cultures and practices have disappeared.

- The *Cem (Djem)* houses still offer introductory *Semah* courses, *bağlama* and chant lessons.
- The 12 servants of the *Cem (Djem)* ceremony are fixed beforehand and the tasks are distributed before the day of the ritual.
- Well-ordered steps in the ceremony.
- Sacred numbers and their relationship with gestures, dance and music:
 - 3: The Allah-Mohamed-Ali Trinity.
 - 5: The five pillars of belief: Tevhid-Nübüvvet-Imameti-Adalet-Mebde ve Meâd (monotheism, prophecy, imamate, justice).
 - 7: The seven represents the Ehlibeyt (from Arabic أهل البيت) who are the people of the house of the prophet Mohamed.
 - 12: The descendants of the 12 Imams from Imam Ali which is also a belief among Twelver Shias.
 - 14: The 14 ‘Mâsûm-u Pâk’ or ‘the 14 pure innocents’ which designate the sons of the Ehlibeyt and the Twelve imams who were martyred at a young age.
 - 17: The 17 ‘Kemerbest’ (from the word *kemer*=belt) who are the Saints attached to Imam Ali and his fighting friends.
 - 40: Those who participated in the first *Semah* with Imam Ali.
- The symbolism of sound and gesture.
- A rich corpus of esoteric poetry.
- A heritage of visual art illustrating the whole philosophy based above all on calligraphy.

The *Semah* dance, more than a gesture

Several researches have been carried out about the *Semah* practice, but there are many points of view, readings and interpretations. We cannot limit this sacred practice to a specific musical or choreographic form because it has infinite richness and variation. However, our goal here is not to present a historical review or an ethnographic analysis of this cult, but we try to propose a new reading and aesthetic interpretation of the *Semah* in order to establish a correlation between artistic practice and the sacred.

The choreographic and musical structure of *Semah* varies from region to region and has many forms, but the structure generally remains the same. During my research work in Karaca Ahmet Cem evi, the *Kirat Semahı* was the most popular in the weekly *Cem (Djem)* ceremonies on Sunday. This mystical dance is composed of 4 elements:

- *Ağırlama*: It is the fact of ‘heavening’ the game. This part is considered as an introduction allowing the dancers the spiritual connection with the divine.
- *Yürüme*: It is walking. This part is presented in the form of a walk structured by a certain number of steps. Believers adapt to the rhythm of the *saz*.
- *Çarkala*: It is turning. During this part the dancers often enter a state of trance.
- *Nefesler*: This part allows the return to consciousness and the enunciation of the end of the ceremony through sung hymns called *Nefes*.

In the *Semah of Kirat*, the place in which the Dede and the Mürşit are seated symbolizes the sun and the dancers also symbolize the planets that revolve around the sun. *Semah* dancers perform metaphorical figures. They protect each other, watch each other, show their solidarity and share the beauty of their circular movements.

The arms open for protection, the right shoulder rising towards the face as well as the left shoulder and the body turning clockwise, this is the direction of the *Semah* in which the wheel turns. Nevertheless, the lyrics can be modified as well as the musical interpretation because there are several versions of poetry, but the structure of *Semah* remains the same.

For this community the music is not only a component of *Cem (Djem)* through which they dance the *Semah*. Rather, it is a vital necessity and a miracle that helps cure patients of the evil eye or ailment and project inner peace in the souls of its followers.

When gesture and dance translate the dogmas of a religion: The example of *Semah*

Symbolism is essentially derived from the perception of information and then its interpretation, giving free rein to the imagination and creativity of the observer. It is through symbolism that the ritual translates images and emotions and that it can express itself in the form of images, sounds and gestures. The meticulous gestures of the *Semah* sum up the whole philosophical doctrine.

There are also symbolic roles and rites antecedent to each *Semah*, like the rite of the broom which must be held by a servant by forming light circular movements while reciting some invocations. The servant who holds the broom must also lift his broom making the shape of the Arabic letter ‘waw’ واو which returns to the ‘Sufi double waw’. Regarding the subject of the Arabic letter ‘waw’ واو or the Sufi ‘double waw’, we had to ask several Dede and search through several books to find an explanation for this phenomenon. Currently, this subject has practically no references, but the interviews we have had with different Dede during three years of research into this subject, have allowed us to learn and discover several secrets.

After a few months of research on this subject, we discovered ‘the mysticism of the letters’ or ‘the Hurufite theosophy’. In Bektashism and Sufism in general, this phenomenon is also called *Hurûfî neşesi* (the science of letters). Among the Persians and the Ottomans there was an alphabetic calculation which gives each letter its numerical value (see Figure 1). It is also known as *Ebcad hesabı*, *hesab-ı cümel* (abjad calculus, phrases calculation) or the art of abbreviation. Abjad is the case of using each of the Arabic letters with a numerical value to indicate the date of an event or situation in Arabic, Persian and Turkish literature. It is mostly used in the classical poetry. The mystique of letters (Hurufism) which appeared in northern Iran in the 14th century, considers also that the Arabic letters and their numbers are the

constituents of the macrocosm and the microcosm. As a result, the Alevi-Bektachis believe in sacred numbers (3, 4, 7, 12, 40) which are also introduced in the order of the ceremony, in architecture, in convents and especially in artistic productions. [Zarcone, 2009:65]

Thus, the numerical value of the letter ‘waw’ واو is 6. In other words, it is said that the greetings, worship, and prayers made here were made for the purpose of God. When two ‘waw’ واو are side by side, the numerical values are 66. That is why in the old scripture, when they wrote the word God, they used the following equation:

$$\text{Elif } 1, \text{ Lâm } 30 + \text{Lâm } 30 + \text{He } 5 = 66$$

Table of Sequential & Gematrical Values of the Arabic Alphabet														
Sequential Value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Arabic Letters	ا	ب	ج	د	ه	و	ز	ح	ط	ي	ك	ل	م	ن
English	A	B	G	D	H	W	Z	HH	TT	Y	K	L	M	N
Gematrical Value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	20	30	40	50
Sequential Value	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Arabic Letters	س	ع	ف	ص	ق	ر	ش	ت	ث	خ	ذ	ض	ظ	غ
English	S	'A	F	SS	Q	R	Sh	T	Th	Kh	Dh	DD	ZZ	Gh
Gematrical Value	60	70	80	90	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800	900	1000

Figure 3. Abjad the numerical values [Ahmed 2013]

Moreover, if we observe the movements of certain kinds of *Semah*, we will see that in certain steps the two arms also turn, forming two ‘waw’ letters. That is not all, the posture adopted in front of the Dede resides in the fact of putting the right hand on the left shoulder and vice versa, which corresponds exactly to the shape of the ‘double waw’ that we can find as well on the calligraphy (see Figure 2). The structure of the letter may not be clearly visible through the gestures of the dancers, but it is formed in different dimensions, inverted or inclined. We tried to conjure it up below in Figure 3.



Figure 4. The Sufi ‘double waw’ letter [©Traditional Turkish Arts].



Figure 5. *Djem* ceremony, Istanbul, 2019. ©Amal Msakni.

The sacred, just like art, leaves free rein to the imagination and creativity. It is through symbolism that a gesture or a sound can acquire a very specific status or character. Thus, the ritual inspires several readings and interpretations.

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Mehmet Öcal Özbilgin
(İzmir, Turkey)

Cultural policies of the traditional dance heritage of Southeastern Europe after the Ottoman Empire period

This study focuses on the influence of the Ottoman-era power in the integration and separation of traditional dance heritages of modern nation societies in Southeastern Europe. According to Foucault, power is productive, and especially it produces information. Foucault argues that the formation of a field of knowledge is linked to power relations, there does not exist knowledge that does not require power relations. The societies that migrated to Anatolia and the Balkans during and after the Ottoman Empire had socio-cultural and socio-political interactions with local societies. In the traditional dance repertoire of Southeastern European societies, the (inter)cultural effects of the administrative/diplomatic strategies of the 20th century are crucial.

Keywords: Ottoman Empire; cultural policies.

Development of dance-related culture policies

Demographic elements such as exile, migration, religious conversion, employment of foreign experts and so on which emerged between the Ottoman Empire and the European states due to political and economic reasons have accelerated cultural interaction. For example, the migration of Jews from Spain to the Ottoman lands in 1492 led to the transfer of technology to the Ottoman Empire in fields such as textile and weapon production.

The influence of the Ottoman state on European art can be classified under two topics. Firstly, the work produced by the fear and response to the Ottoman Empire's progress in Europe and its superior authority; and secondly, those produced with a positive view of the tolerant structure of multicultural, multi-religious structures, that were trying to understand the Ottoman hegemony.¹

In this study, I will address the development of the content and formation of post-Ottoman culture policies in post-Ottoman Turkey and Southeastern Europe based on the following four periods with the focus on the context of dancing:

1. 'Nation State' construction period (1920–1950) – First World War: 28th July 1914 – 11th November 1918.
2. Political division and polarisation period (1950–1980) – Second World War 1st September 1939 – 2nd September 1945.
3. Pluralist democracy period (1980–2000).
4. Globalisation and post-modern period (2000 onwards).

1. 'Nation state' construction period (1920–1950)

The first half of the 20th century is a time when the First and Second World Wars caused great changes around the world. During this period, folk dances were seen as an important tool for establishing the cultural identity of the 'citizens' that states wanted to unite under their national identity. Therefore, during this period, the activities of folk dances were institutionalised by the state. To create a new nation's identity, each state longed for its own national dance. However, in southeastern Europe, there was a problem in uniting a common

cultural past in order to create a dance in an even more cultured structure after the Ottomans departed.

In the Balkans

In order to talk about a collective identity within the concept of a nation, it is not enough to create a common past and future. The elements that make up the collective identity must also be essential elements of the current social lifestyle. Culture policies in Southeastern Europe that tried to conceal ethnic elements through the modern mind-set of the 20th century tried to standardise traditional dance through modern and universal principles. In the ideology of creating national dance, classical ballet's universally qualified aesthetic values have been accepted. In traditional dance performance, upright standing bodies, resisting gravity, with dynamic and athletic movements were emphasised by the artistic authorities. This aesthetic understanding, introduced by the Moiseyev State Folk Dance Ensemble, has been widely recognized in southeastern European countries. Political authorities have supported the reconstruction of traditional dance in this direction and have led to the opening of similar state folk dance ensembles. Ganioglu states:

The presence of folk dances in ballet works broke new ground in the staging of Russian folk dances and was the beginning of a revolutionary change. Russian Igor Moiseyev, who left deep marks on folk dances, sought new lines in the art field of the Soviet Union Russia after the 1917 revolution which paved the way for the "Moiseyev School of Folk Dances" to be opened within the Moscow Choreographic Academy in 1938 [Ganioglu 2017:347].

However, the Balkan people saw the staging of folk dance ensembles as a superior artistic performance. They resisted this transformation by preserving their local dances in their original form because of their multicultural and rooted social structures. In this process, significant differences developed between the dances produced in the traditional setting and the institutionalised folk dance activities influenced by socio-political purposes.

In Turkey

Cultural policies in the Turkish Republic, which was founded in 1923, were based on Western modernisation and Turkish nationalism and so ignored the Ottoman culture, which was thought to be preventing the development of Turkish culture. Öndin states that instead of a culture that Ziya Gökalp calls lifeless mothers, such as Ottoman music, baroque and rococo architecture; there is a sense of a public culture (Turkish folk speech, folk prosody, folk music, folk moral), that is the product of society, not individuals [Öndin 2003]. With the establishment of the Republic, it was seen that national dance policies reflecting the standardisation of the understanding of the nation state were implemented. In 1909, Rıza Tevfik wrote an article called *Memalik-i Osmaniyye'de Raks ve Muhtelif Tarzları* through which he introduced folk dances from the Balkans and the Aegean and Black Sea regions [Öztürkmen 2007]. Although being supported by the state's top authorities, *Tarcan Zeybeği* designed by Selim Sırrı Tarcan, was not embraced by the public and so did not become a national dance.

2. Period of political division and polarisation (1950–1980)

After the Second World War (1st September 1939–2nd September 1945), political structures within the world's political order tried to develop partnerships among all states. A more moderate nationalism was maintained, with the impact of an increase in humanist views. On the other hand, due to polarisation, alienating walls have been built between countries that adopted different political views. In this complex structure, the existence of cultural policies

became necessary. The concept of ‘cultural policy’ was first introduced by René Maheu in the 1960s during UNESCO meetings. Cultural policies focus on four key principles:

1. Cultural pluralism to be put forward against cultural standardisation
2. Regulation of equal access to culture
3. The necessity of “human”-oriented policies instead of the “nation”
4. The need to open the development process of cultural policies to the participation of different segments [cited by İnce, Öncü and Ada 2011].

In the Balkans

Traditional dance tourism became popular in this period, with the beginning of the fashion for Balkan dances and music which has become widespread in the world. Traditional Balkan dances and music have become a symbol of equality, freedom and principles of fraternity around the world. This has led to a homogeneous appearance in traditional dance staging. Moiseyev’s ideas for the performance of traditional dance has become a genre. In the dance performances set up by state folk dance ensembles, the high energy, synchronisation and standard way of acting began to affect local dance performances.

Due to political polarisation during the cold war between socialist countries and Western countries the use of traditional dances has become an alienating element. In the Balkan peninsula, the Ottoman legacy was dissolved under the new socialist order. The ruling powers did not emphasise the common past with the Ottoman Empire so as to create a new cultural memory. On the contrary, resistance to the Ottoman hegemony from the past was encouraged and partnerships created against the Ottomans became important.

In Turkey

In Turkey, which adopted the multi-party political order after 1950, the disparate elements that emerged under polarising identities have led to social divisions.² The state is still an effective force and has no tolerance for cultural differences. Ethnic, religious or cultural diversity and differences are seen as cultural mosaics. The state argues that under Turkish identity, it can only survive if it adapts in a way that does not lead to social conflicts. The idea of ‘unity in many’ is intended to be included in society’s memory by taking advantage of the diversity of traditional dancing. The official ideologies that explored the unifying power of folk dances therefore intended that the traditional dances of different local societies are visible in the public sphere at folk dance festivals. All traditional dances that reflect different cultures have been described as ‘national dances’. Thanks to the teams invited from Balkan countries, the preservation of cultural ties with the land lost by the Ottomans retains a distinct importance.

It is an accepted idea that the richness of dance diversity comes from the Ottoman cultural heritage. Since the time of the rise of tourism, folk dances have been seen as an important means of promotion for almost all tourism activities. For Western societies, Turkey is a continuation of the Ottomans. To meet this expectation, the Turkish nights prepared for foreign tourists emphasises the Ottoman heritage. ‘The concubine who belly dances in front of the Ottoman Pasha’ is the most prominent thematic scene of this period.

3. Pluralist democracy period (1980–2000)

During the period after the Cold War when Eastern and Western Europe started to become closer, the Southeastern European countries have conducted pluralist democratic policies. Political pluralism which values the diversity of social, institutional and ideological practices, is an intellectual initiative that tries to understand how social preferences are

determined and transformed into public policies under the behavioural interactions of various social groups [Cerny 2006; Sezenler and Sadrazam 2020]. In countries where pluralist democratic policies are implemented, music and dance are also used for the purpose of power and propaganda. They also serve as a reconciliation mechanism for preserving national identities of sovereign forces or for exposing populist policies [Loutzaki 2001:127]. Attention is drawn to the ‘problematic’ relationship between tradition and modernity in the context of culture. According to Gadamer and Ricoeur [cited by Piercey 2004], tradition is no longer a relic in modern society; it is seen as something rebuilt, something reproduced.³

In the Balkans

In Southeastern Europe, the post-war nationalist views based on ethnic identity have deepened. On the other hand, after the process of redefining political borders, each country has taken care to treat the multicultural structures equally within their borders. Countries seeking to be part of the European Union have developed official policies against ethnic discrimination. Since ethnic diversity was important during this time, it can be said that dances, which have traces of the Ottoman-era cultural interactions, are more visible. For example, some of the dances in the choreography of the Vranje region dances of the National Ensemble of Folk Dances and Songs of Serbia *Kolo* are also danced in Turkey. This choreography, which is a mirror in terms of movement resemblance and aesthetics, is defined by Serbs as ethnic dances of Vranje Roma, and is seen by Turks as ‘ethnicised Ottoman heritage’ in Serbia.

In Turkey

With the start of the military administration in Turkey in 1980, the ‘Turkish-Islamic synthesis’ was adopted in cultural policies. Policies that emphasise national and moral values were produced by using the integrative function of the Ottoman period. *Köçekçe*, arranged by Oya Aruoba, and *Çiftetelli*, included in the repertoire by Duygu Aykal in 1983, are the period’s leading choreographies [Kurt 2013]. The choreography of the State Folk Dance Ensemble, called *Köçekçe*-s created with the *Çiftetelli* dances, is a work that emulates the Ottoman-era women’s entertainment in palaces. The State Folk Dance Ensemble wanted to protect the Ottoman heritage in the context of the reconstruction of cultural identity within a rich dance diversity. In addition, it is seen that an effort has been made to transform the belly dance, which is very common within traditional culture, in accordance with the conservative morality of the period.

4. Globalisation and post-modern period (2000 onwards)

At the end of the 20th century, the rapid change in communication, information and informatics, due to scientific, technological and economic development, has eliminated the importance of borders among nations. This process has made the world smaller and smaller, and it has put the concept of globalisation into the focus of discussions [Akdemir 2004]. Within this cultural context, deep differences between the concepts of universality and locality have disappeared.

In the Balkans

In societies that quickly became globalised in the 21st century, many reasons such as migration, growth of mass media, urbanisation, and so on have further accelerated the cultural transformation of traditional dancing. These changes and interactions make the phenomenon of globalisation, involving the compression of time and space, more pronounced in the world. The rapid reproduction of communication networks such as the Internet has made the visibility and accessibility of traditional dances easier. The easily gained dance knowledge from other

societies leads to the articulation of local cultures. In this case, it is possible to talk about dance's function as a socially integrative factor that connects people and societies. For example, Turkish television series have become very popular in Balkan countries in recent years. The number of people who want to learn Turkish has increased and also interest in Turkish music and Turkish folk dances has increased. Thus, belly dance and *çiftetelli*, danced as Ottoman heritage in the Balkans, are evolving by being influenced by contemporary Turkish music and dance culture.

In Turkey

Because of its effective power, dance can be used to plan, protect or change a social system in line with a group's ideology and its socio-political interest.⁴ With the AK Party (AKP) government coming to power in 2002, Neo-Ottomanist and Turkish-Islamic views became the most important values in cultural policies. Belly dance shifted from the public sphere to the private sphere. On the other hand, especially the *Sema* (dervish) dance left the private sphere of worship and became visible in the public sphere in places such as shopping centres, traditional entertainments etc. In other dance types, traditional dances have been supported as artistic activities that best suit conservative policies. However, in some environments, women and men dancing together have been criticised.

With the increase of tourism between Turkey and the Balkans in the 2000s, Balkan migrants who had settled in Turkey re-established their relationship with the lands they came from through cultural trips that reminded them of their Southeastern European cultural identities. Their traditional ceremonies show that Southeastern European dances are danced with words in Turkish and Slavic languages. For example, in recent years, the *Damat halayı* (Groom *halay*) dance has become very common. It was originally a piece of music named *Hayde Veliçe* which comes from Tikveš, North Macedonia. The dance, which was previously seen in the dances of Balkan migrants in İzmir, has spread and now is widely recognised throughout Turkey since this album was published in Turkish [Ünlü 2014]. Today, it is danced as the last dance in almost every dance entertainment in all of Turkey.

Conclusion

Addressing dance in a socio-cultural context also requires solving value systems formed by hegemonic relations. While discussing the Southeastern European dances in a transnational context, it is necessary to examine the unifying side of the dance as well as the marginalising side of the cultural policies. Acceptance or exclusion through dance is important for identifying cultural identities. According to data obtained from the field research, *Bir Arada Yaşarız* in Turkey, which encapsulated 62 in-depth interviews with 2132 people and 12 focus group meetings held between 16 June and 31 July 2021, Turkish society included a wide range of cultural, political and class differences. In addition to the differences in society, individuals carry 'diversity' and 'complexity' within themselves. While people are associated with different cultures, classes, professions, education and geography, plural intersections emerge.

The *Çanakkale Oyunu* that has been seen in Turkey since the Ottoman Empire, is an example of this situation: Akdoğan states that the *Çanakkale* melody is an anthem about the Gallipoli campaign during the First World War, composed by Kevser Hanım [Akdoğan 1991]. This melody has become a national post-Republic symbol for the Turks. The migrants from Thessaloniki-Serres in Greece, who settled in Gazimir in İzmir, perform their dances, which they brought from Southeastern Europe, accompanied by the *Çanakkale* melody on the Republic Day of Turkey on October 29, as a political demonstration against Southeastern European society.

Since the 2000s in Turkey, national culture has been set up with a Turkish-Islamic thesis in connection with the Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, the neo-liberal economy has benefited from these cultural policies. The cultural industry market has transformed the relationship of life and traditional dance with policies based on economic interests. In this way, nationalism and multiculturalism in cultural processes have been interconnected with the concepts of global consumption and technology. There has been a difference in meaning between actions and rhetoric. Today, local dance traditions continue, while the products of the entertainment market's consumerism have led to major transformations in traditional applications. The official 'Neo-Ottoman' policies are supported by the liberal economy. Urbanised consumption societies are rebuilding traditional dance environments through Ottoman heritage.

Traditional dance has a versatile reality within social, cultural and political structures. The symbols carried by dance have meanings and values associated with the group that produced it as a socio-cultural phenomenon. That is why it is the bearer of history. Dancing can act as an identity tag, bringing people together and allowing them to identify themselves under partnerships. The nation states which emerged after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, created their own cultural identity through cultural policies they developed based on historical data of Ottoman heritage. They used the data of Ottoman heritage as a reference to distinguish themselves or establish partnerships.

Endnotes

1. Among the works that glorified the Turks are Rameau's first work named *Le turc généreux* [The Generous Turk] in his opera staged in 1735 and the work named *Le bon turc* [The Good Turk] in Carolet's ballet.
2. Adnan Menderes founded the Democratic Party in 1946 with three friends and took the power from the People's Republican Party [Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi] on 22 May 1950. According to Kantarcıoğlu, in the program of the first Menderes government it is stated: "Regardless of how far it has gone financially, it is in the nature of a society whose national morals are not based on unshakable principles and whose spirit does not include spiritual values to be dragged into bad currents in the day's complex world conditions. The spread of science and technical knowledge in a country, that does not take into account this purpose in the training and decency system and that is not able to provide its youth with its national character and mothers with spiritual and human values, is not a guarantee of living as a free individual nation [Kantarcıoğlu 1998].
3. For further information see: Piercey [2004] and Ricoeur [2004].
4. For further information see: Giurchescu [1994].

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Arzu Öztürkmen
(İstanbul, Turkey)

Deconstructing ‘Ottoman cultural heritage’: The legacy of dance practices

Ottoman cultural heritage is a complex domain with a wide range of nation-states that followed it during and after its decay. This study is an attempt to approach the Ottoman legacy from the perspectives of global history and the history of emotions. Based on personal memory of academic research and ICTM meetings, it pursues two lines of inquiry: (1) The transnational impact which examines how the circulation and influences between different regional contexts bring cultural affinities as well as distinctions; (2) The emotional impact of imperial hegemony, as cultural and political memory regarding the Ottoman times.

Keywords: Ottoman cultural heritage; dance; history; emotions; memory.

Changing the research paradigm in Ottoman-Turkish studies

Since the 1980s, many scholars of social sciences in Turkey, participated in a paradigm change, which explores the Ottoman-Turkish legacy not just as an exclusive experience of Turkish-speaking Muslim-Ottomans, but acknowledging the multiple linguistic, cultural, and religious communities of the Ottoman society [İnalçık 1978; Balta 2010; Aksan 2014; Kechriotis 2013; Kırılı 2014; Topal and Wigen 2019]. By ‘Turkish’, one now understands ‘from Turkey’, a society with diverse cultural communities bearing memories of cohabitation but also conflicts, war, migration, and displacement. The term ‘Turkish’ may also refer to a social and cultural domain produced ‘during the making of modern Turkey’.¹ What makes Turkish society (and all the other neighbouring nation states) intriguing today has been this palimpsest of historical-geographical traces and memories, transmitted through Republican generations and undergoing a continual change.

I was part of this paradigm change under the roof of Boğaziçi University first as a student (1983–1988), then as a professor (since 1994). As an academic institution, Boğaziçi gave us a unique training, where we were able to set up a broad vision studying the complexities of our own history, while developing a critical approach to the euro-centric and orientalist discourses of the academia. The 1980s was also an epoch for the emergence of studies on nationalism. Reading the freshly published literature by Anderson [1983], Gellner [1983], Smith [1983] and Hobsbawm [1990] during the 1990s onwards, we began to deconstruct the national historiographies written on politics and culture. As a folklorist working in a History Department with acclaimed historians of Asia, Europe and the Ottoman world, I had the opportunity to observe the change of academic discourses on imperial and national cultural domains. This era also coincided with the waves of digital reform, revealing easier access to archives and other sources, thus offering new perspectives. Lately, the field of ‘global history’ offers a useful approach to explore the segregated domains of post-imperial structuring. As both Dominic Sachsenmaier and Sebastian Conrad remind us, with a global history approach, one can explore different local cases through the lens of connectivities as much as cross-fertilization [Conrad 2016; Sachsenmaier 2018].

In the case of post-Ottoman regions, many modern countries were founded, and all have produced their own national grand narratives and representational cultural forms. This trend, which began with the First World War, continued in a more consolidated way during the Cold War (1950s–1990s). Although neighbouring countries had a shared cultural memory of the same region, the state centred education and cultural policies favoured nationalized narratives. When I first met the ICTM circle of ethnologists, folklorists and anthropologists in 1992, I

quickly realised that I found my counterparts in neighbouring academic circles. Our generation of dance and music researchers have been raised within such nationalized discourses, while finding themselves in a realm of a rapidly changing world order with the digital reform (hence the rapid circulation of cultural forms, performances and academic knowledge) and the neoliberal policies after the Cold War.

A historical approach to research on ‘National Dances’ in the Balkans and the Middle East: The role of ICTM

My first ICTM meeting was a symposium of the Ethnochoreology Study Group in Napflion in 1992. One of the themes was *Dance and its Socio-Political Aspects*. Later the *Bulletin of the ICTM* called attention to how this particular meeting was important given the challenge of overcoming national discourses. Colin Quigley’s report stated:

Two concerns repeatedly raised in discussions of papers addressing the first theme of the 1992 conference, Dance in its Socio-Political Aspects, emerged as a general concern at this time: the ideological manipulation of dance forms, particularly for nationalist agendas; and ethical questions raised by a recognition of the politically situated roles of researchers themselves [Quigley 1992].

As a graduate student who was writing her dissertation on folklore and nationalism [Öztürkmen 1993], I was very much attracted to join the conference. But early 1990s was a politically strained era for Greece and Turkey. Nevertheless, I focussed all my budget and overcame my anxiety to travel to Napflion, where I was congratulated by Adrienne Kaeppler for having made my way to the best place for dance research. I had found myself exposed to different academic discursive realms, including American-European, Western-East European, and Nordic-Mediterranean dichotomies. I quickly bonded with scholars coming from the Balkans, mainly Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Albania, but also from Armenia. This and the following meetings of the ICTM Ethnochoreology Study Group have been a great site of teaching for a deeper understanding of the paradigm change in Ottoman studies. It was a time when academic knowledge was not so easily accessed. Scholars came with piles of papers and video tapes. Video cameras were very expensive, so in order to learn about other ethnographies, one needed to carefully listen, watch and memorize, while engaging in theoretical and methodological debates rooted in different academic traditions. This is how I first heard about the Lyceum Club of Greece, Martin György of Hungary, the rituals of Căluș in Romania, Vartan Mamikonyan rituals in Armenia or masked performances in Albania in the early 1990s.² The series of meetings under the roof of ICTM Study groups and sub-study groups soon became a site of training for many of us trained in limited national perspectives. In those days, we were amazed to observe the similarities in costume, music and movements. The folk dances performed as *Van oyunları* in Turkey had the same costumes, movements and musical instruments with Armenian dances. Our Black Sea *Horon* almost the same as Greek Pontic dances. Meanwhile we were trying to develop a common theoretical framework to study the structural meaning of these dances, an approach which also transcended the national paradigms.

The best contribution of the scholarship emerging from ICTM meetings (Ethnochoreology and now at the Study Group on Music and Dance in Southeastern Europe) has been to discover the diversity of research and researchers in our surrounding regions and the encounter of multiple academic discourses that had been built about them.³ The visual data which came as a surprise in the ICTM meetings of the 1990s, became soon the content of theses and dissertations written for the following generation of researchers.⁴

Situating dance studies within the modern perceptions of Ottoman cultural memory

The Ottoman Empire expanded over three continents, yet failed in its pace of modernization. Looking from the perspective of global history, each territorial loss was connected to other imperial projects which differed in their modernization processes. In her seminal work on modernization, historian Carol Gluck underscores the diversity of the modernization experiences:

[...] Modernity is not a trope, theory, project, or destination, or if it sometimes seems to be all these things, it is never these things alone. It is instead a condition, historically produced over three centuries around the globe in processes of change that have not ended yet. Modernity is not optional in history, in that societies could not simply “choose” another regime of historicity for themselves, for such is the tyranny of modern times. Nor is modernity dispensable in history-writing, especially for those who work on the recent past in what some still call “the rest of the world,” which many now would emend to “the world,” period [Gluck 2011:676–687].

Researching dance as an important and symbolic cultural form of early 20th century in the post-Ottoman geography requires a new understanding than the national – and often nationalist – paradigm. Dance cultures had a central place in the modernization experience in both urban and folk practices; and nation-building processes adopted these dance practices, assigning them new meanings. This study tries to elaborate the challenges of how to approach these dance experiences as both a historical-cultural memory and as contemporary academic research.

Dance in the Ottoman world has long been discussed as part of the courtly practices, particularly during the imperial festivals [And 1976, 1982; Faroqhi and Öztürkmen 2014; Erdoğan-İşkorkutan 2021]. There has also been some interest in European performances in Ottoman cities during the 19th century [And 1958, 1989; Aracı 2010; Deleon 1988]. Dance as a modern form of art came into the agenda of Ottoman intellectuals mainly during the Young Turk era. Rıza Tevfik and Selim Sırrı Tarcan, both skilled in gymnastics, had a common interest in folk dance. In 1900, Rıza Tevfik wrote a pioneering article called *Dance and its Various Forms in Ottoman Countries* (Memalik-i Osmaniye’de Raks ve Muhtelif Tarzları), which gave a genre-based overview of regional dances from the Balkans, the Aegean, and the Black Sea region. It drew attention to regional dances as expressive forms of particular cultures and described and compared them with European dance genres. The same year, Selim Sırrı Tarcan was sent by the Young Turk Government to Sweden to specialise in the field of physical training. There, he was impressed by the way Swedish folklorists had “disciplined” and “refined” folk dances to form a repertory of national dances, “excluding some, restoring others, and rechoreographing” what had been selected [Tarcan 1992:182]. In 1916, he decided to ‘refine’ *zeybek* dances, an Aegean dance genre he had observed while serving as an inspector during the Young Turk era. With the performance of his new choreography *Tarcan Zeybeği* (Tarcan Zeybek), he gained public acclaim from Atatürk in 1925, which gave him access to a respectable career during the Republican period. It is also important to remember that for Young Turks like Tarcan and Rıza Tevfik, the study of the human body accompanied their interest in the study of folk dance. They both approached the notion of body and physical training as an expression of ‘health’ and ‘strength’ in the building of a ‘healthy nation’.

While Young Turks were developing interest in dance and movement, other similar activities were taking place in the newly emerging nation states. As national dance institutions were being built during the first half of the 20th century, national dance histories were also

being written as separate traditions. In Greece and Egypt, dance histories were linked to their ancient civilizations. In others folk dances were gentrified, while ballet was subsidized by nation-states.

Dance has also been a symbolic cultural form since the turn of the 20th century, particularly during modernization processes. With the establishment of the Olympic Games at the turn of the 20th century dance became a cultural form recontextualized within the rising interest in physical education and bodylore in many post-Ottoman countries. As the leading genres of the dance concerts at the turn of the 20th century, ballet and modern dance had developed different styles in Europe and America, and had been influential among the emerging nation states in the Balkans and the Middle East as a symbolic cultural form. Meanwhile gentrified traditional dances have also offered a vibrant cultural repertoire to represent new nation-states. These genres have long been analysed on their own in relation to modernity but have not yet been situated in the same landscape of dance in the societies where they simultaneously prevailed. One can also state that negotiations between traditional-local content and universal forms produced similar approaches to dance and physical education in the neighbouring countries like Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, Egypt and Iran. While studies primarily focussed on the genres of ballet, modern and folk dance, one should also remember that the landscape of ‘movement systems’ had been much broader than dance practices both in the Balkans and the Middle East at the turn of the 20th century. One could finally add how the socialist countries came forward with a different style of gentrified traditional dances, the state sponsored folk dance ensembles. Anthony Shay who explored these dances in great detail is opposed to the general critique of these ensembles as offering ‘unauthentic performances’. He calls attention to the innovative choreographies with dynamic floor patterns, performed by excellent dancers [Shay 1999, 2002].

Ballet, modern dance and folk dances have been part of modernization discursivities and performativities in the post-Ottoman world, where the memory of the Ottoman period is often approached as the ‘Turkish yoke’.⁵ Nevertheless, this cultural memory is also part of the daily sound of our music, the taste of our food, the commonalities of our idioms, body language and sense of humour. As representative forms, dance has long been in the service of national agendas. It is now time to revise our scholarship with an eye on transnational connections.

Endnotes

1. The concept of ‘Turkish folk dances’ is a case in point, where many regional folk dance traditions (also shared by other ethnic communities) grew during the Republican history into a different movement system, which one now calls ‘Turkish folk dances’ [see Öztürkmen 2002:128–146; 2007:56–58, 60–61]. One can observe a similar trend in the making of ‘Turkish folk music’ as well [see Öztürkmen 2015].
2. This learning process continued in the 2022 ICTM Study Group on Music and Dance in Southeastern Europe meeting in Istanbul, with the panel on canonic figures such as Wauter Swets, France Marolt and Bayar Şahin.
3. *Dance structures* [see Kaeppler and Dunin 2007], for example, is an outcome of a ten-year-old debate on how to analyse the form and meaning of dance.
4. Although I know that similar theses and dissertations have been written in neighbouring countries, let me cite a few written in Turkey: Dehmen [2003], Kurt [2012] and Açıkdenez [2009].
5. See Gordon [1844], Kołodziejczyk [2006], Tsanov [2017] and Sholak [2013].

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Zdravko Ranisavljević
(Belgrade, Serbia)

Reflections of the Ottoman Influence on the dance heritage in Serbia: The case of the dance tradition in Novi Pazar

To this day the influence of the Ottoman Empire in Serbia is most evident in south-western Serbia, in the Raška region (so-called Sandžak). The City of Novi Pazar is the region's administrative seat, with a recognizable urban culture. Today the city's population is predominantly Muslim. In addition to the Muslim influence, the specific hybrid cultural idiom in Novi Pazar was shaped by the settlement of Serbian people from Montenegro, Herzegovina and central Serbia during the first half of the 20th century and the considerable presence of the Jewish population until World War II. In the form of a dance ethnography, the paper presents the results of field research conducted in Novi Pazar, with special emphasis on aspects of interculturality in the segment of dance heritage that can today be considered ideal-typical in the presentations of traditional dances of this city and its environs.

Keywords: Novi Pazar; Raška region; Ottoman Empire; dance heritage; interculturality.

Novi Pazar is a major urban hub in the so-called Sandžak area, formerly *Stari Ras*, the cradle of Serbian medieval culture. The entire area used to be a single cultural-geographical entity, whereas today it belongs to three different countries: Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The geographic location of Novi Pazar is defined by the mountain massifs of Golija and Rogozna, the Pešter-Sjenica plateau and the River Raška, which runs through the city.

Novi Pazar was founded in the 15th century. The city's foundations were laid by Isa-Beg Ishaković, who had "a complex of buildings constructed" (a mosque, a caravanserai, a hammam and fifty-six shops) near the town of Ras [Kahrović-Jerebićanin 2014:17]. The city grew as an artisanal and mercantile centre, which it has largely remained to this day. Ever since it was founded, numerous architectural patrons constructed schools, places of worship, hammams and other buildings, important for the development of cultural and religious life. In 1468–1469, Novi Pazar was granted the status of *şehir* (city), i.e. a chief urban settlement in the Ottoman Empire [Kahrović-Jerebićanin 2014:19]. Interestingly, in 1485 Pazar became the centre of the Novi Pazar *kadiluk* (a local administrative subdivision), comprising five Muslim and four Christian *mahalle* (sub-village settlements), and one Ragusan colony [Kahrović-Jerebićanin 2014:19]. Already in this period, Novi Pazar distinguished itself as a markedly artisanal city so that in the 16th century it boasted a large number of artisans: cooks, *boza* makers, *burek* makers, blacksmiths, stonemasons, masseurs, bootmakers, *kebab* makers, farriers, music-makers, saddlers, tanners, hammam attendants, soap boilers, confectioners, slipper makers, etc. [Kahrović-Jerebićanin 2014:22].

The Turkish domination of Novi Pazar lasted a long time, until the First Serbian Uprising, when many Serbs moved away, while a large number of Montenegrins and Herzegovinians came to settle in the city. Large migrations also occurred following the Congress of Berlin in 1878. Namely, the Muslim population left the city, which was then settled by people from Montenegro, Herzegovina, Bosnia and central Serbia, and a number of Circassians [Kahrović-Jerebićanin 2014:25]. After the Balkan Wars, Serbs liberated Novi Pazar from the Turkish rule in 1912 [Kahrović-Jerebićanin 2014:26]. With World War I came Austro-Hungarian rule, replaced by the Kingdom of Yugoslavia after the war. Interestingly, all those years Novi Pazar was home to a large number of Jews, who were exiled by the Germans after World War II

[Kahrović-Jerebičanin 2014:27]. During this period, Novi Pazar was settled by people from Pešter, Golija, Bihor, Rogozna and the valley of the River Lim.

Field research

Unfortunately, there is no continuity of research into the urban dance and music idiom in Novi Pazar. Valuable music material from this area was published in a book by Miodrag A. Vasiljevi and contains 400 folk melodies from Sandžak [Vasiljević 1953]. These include examples of vocal practice from Novi Pazar, recorded by the Serbian and Bosniak population during recent research activities, conducted from 2011 to date. Therefore, the historical perspective can be reconstructed based on the numerous accounts of informants.

Miodrag Vasiljevi remains one of the most important collectors of music material on the entire territory of Sandžak, as well as Novi Pazar. He organised the first research trips to this area in 1934 and 1935. However, the material collected was destroyed in a fire during World War II, so that he was forced to carry out new research in 1947. Interestingly, his wife, who took part in the collection of songs in patriarchal environments, facilitated his interaction with Muslim women. From the entire body of collected material, Vasiljevi published 500 melodies from all over Sandžak, performed by both Muslims and Serbs.

After Vasiljevi's research activities came a decades-long discontinuity in the collection and examination of traditional music language. Sporadic research was conducted by Dimitrije Golemovi, and Olivera Vasi, in the early 1980s, but the results were not documented. In 1996 Slaviša Đukić, associate of the former *Centar za proučavanje narodnih igara Srbije* (Centre for the Study of Folk Dances of Serbia), carried out field research in the wider area surrounding Raška and Novi Pazar, and in Novi Pazar proper. The material collected was presented at the Centre's seminar dedicated to folk songs and dances [Đukić 1996]. The latest research conducted in Novi Pazar by the *Centar za istraživanje i očuvanje tradicionalnih igara Srbije* (Centre for Research on and Preservation of Traditional Dances of Serbia) aimed to extend the knowledge about the genesis of the dance repertoire and its shaping in the second half of the 20th century, and to complete the knowledge about the urban music tradition. Since 2011 there has been ongoing research into urban cultural heritage, aimed at reconstructing the diachronic dimension of traditional urban dance and music heritage. While the results of the research will certainly be documented in the form of different written and audio publications, they will be presented in the handbook for the Seminar on Traditional Dances and Songs in reduced form to suit the needs of the seminar [Ranisavljević 2014].

The dance repertoire of Novi Pazar, which is today considered autochthonous by the city's population, was shaped in the second half of the 20th century by the activities of distinguished individuals, first and foremost Ibiš Kujević (1947–2021) and Nazim Ademović (1948–), and the city's cultural-artistic societies. Namely, as Dean of the Workers' University in Novi Pazar, Nazim Ademović initiated the formation of the Cultural-Artistic Society 'Mladost' in 1979 and appointed Ibiš Kujević (a well-known researcher of the dance tradition in Sandžak in the second half of the 20th century) artistic director of the Society [Ademović 2013]. In addition, it should be mentioned that Ademović based his knowledge of the dances of Novi Pazar primarily on information provided by a certain Sejdo Bozadžija, who also worked as a dance 'instructor' in another, older, cultural-artistic society called Textile Plant 'Raška' (1955–1993).

Ibiš Kujević's undeniable contribution to the popularisation of Pazar and so-called Sandžak dances all across Serbia is in fact the result of his long-standing collaboration with Nazim Ademović. Through the activity of the Cultural-Artistic Society 'Mladost' (today's Cultural-Artistic Society 'Senko Rašljanin'), Kujević and Ademović put a great deal of their

field research, knowledge and experience into practice. Under the auspices of this cultural-artistic society, the dance practice of Novi Pazar was popularised in both the city and the region, remaining to this day etched in the memory of Sandžak's inhabitants as the tradition of this city. According to Nazim Ademović, specific so-called Turkish/old dances (as they are referred to by older inhabitants of Novi Pazar) are today mostly performed by educated dancers – former and active members of cultural-artistic societies [Ademović 2013]. Interestingly, these and similar dances are alive in the current practice of the nearby villages, where they are widely performed. The dance practice in the city proper – the one which is mostly performed – is predominantly based on several uniform dance patterns, popular across Serbia: *lako kolo* (three-measure step pattern, performed to vocal-instrumental accompaniment), *rijetko* (*retko*) *kolo* (typical of most of central Serbia) and *kolo* (*kolo u tri* in fast tempo, widely popular in Serbia and among Serbs in the region and the diaspora), along with the ever-present *čoček*.

The dance gatherings in Novi Pazar which traditionally include dancing are weddings and circumcisions, a practice that has been preserved to this day. Particularly popular occasions for dancing in the city's environs are the so-called *teferiuc* (fairs) or *gayret* (Turkish: providing impetus), which are organised in the open air. According to Nazim Ademović, typically urban Pazar dances are dances performed to vocal-instrumental accompaniment, predominantly based on a three-measure or four-measure basic step pattern (*lako kolo*) but there are also *a la turka* (*jedno/dvoje/troje*), *krupna a la turka*, *sitna a la turka*, *skeja* (*jedno/dvoje*), *trojka* – *tursko*, *gusinjsko kolo*, *čoček*, *rijetko kolo* and *kolo* (*kolo u tri* in fast tempo).

The songs to which dances are performed nowadays mostly have contemporary orchestral accompaniment, whereas in the past they were mostly accompanied by the *def* (tambourine) [Ademović 2013]. According to Nazim Ademović, dancing to the accompaniment of song and the *def* continued to be typically associated with women in most of the second half of the 20th century, and it was mostly practised at so-called bachelorette parties or when women dyed their hair with henna [Ademović 2013]. It is well known that at the time this practice was present across southwest Serbia among Bosniak, but also Serbian Orthodox, population. The men mostly danced to songs accompanied by the accordion, which became popular in this area in the period between the two world wars. Dancing was less commonly accompanied by tambura players and smaller mixed traditional ensembles (*ut* /oud/ or *đumbiš* /cümbüş/, *daire* /tambourine/ and *tarabuka* /goblet drum/, etc.). [Ademović 2013]. Dances performed to songs are typically characterised by several similar movement patterns, which are based on the *lako kolo* type or the four-measure symmetrical model of the basic step pattern (two measures to the right – two measures to the left), with pronounced movements of the arms (especially when pairs of dancers separate from the round-shaped formation).

The *a la turka* (*jedno/dvoje/troje*) dance, as a so-called Turkish/old dance, is not very present in the current urban dance practice, or, more precisely, it is typically performed only by educated dancers. According to Nazim Ademović, the *a la turka jedno/dvoje/troje* dance is a dance suitable for “outdancing”, which is why in the first half of the 20th century it was performed separately in the male and female communities, in twos – two men or two women [Ademović 2013]. Men performed it at so-called bachelor parties and women at bachelorette parties. The terms *jedno* (Turkish: *bir* – one), *dvoje* (Turkish: *iki* – two) and *troje* (Turkish: *üç* – three) refer to different elements that are added to the basic step pattern, such as stomps, triple-steps, hops, etc.

Performing *a la turka*, as well as other so-called Turkish/old dances, in the urban environment involves a few skilled dancers dancing separately in the centre of the circle, which is formed by an open mixed and round-shaped formation. These individuals perform a specific dance to appropriate music accompaniment, while the other dancers, in the ‘outer’ formation,

commonly perform a uniform pattern – the widely known pattern of *lako kolo*. Dancing is usually initiated by two men by requesting a music number, after which they link together and start dancing. The linking of the dancers in the centre of the circle is very specific – they hold hands tightly, with their fingers interlocked and arms bent at the elbows at 90 degrees (positioned in front of the torso). The formations also happen spontaneously, in keeping with the performing abilities of the participants joining the dance. The linking in the ‘outer’ group is more flexible and mostly involves the dancers – regardless of whether they are men and women or only women – holding hands with arms low next to the body. The men in the ‘outer’ formation are linked in the same way as the dancers in the centre of the circle. The linking of dancers by holding each other by the shoulders is also present in the current dance practice of Novi Pazar. It is characteristic only of men and is featured in dances performed to vocal-instrumental accompaniment. In addition to the above-mentioned forms of linking, dancers are also linked by joining hands at shoulder height, but, according to Nazim Ademović, this type of linking is not particularly popular in Novi Pazar, nor was it frequently used in the past.

Besides *a la turka jedno/dvoje/troje*, there are also *krupna* (slow) and *sitna* (fast) *a la turka*. *Sitna a la turka* is a continuation of *krupna*, with a gradual quickening of tempo, making the performance of these two dances particularly eye-catching and, therefore, popular. The total duration of these numbers often exceeds 10 minutes. At the lead dancer’s initiative, *krupna a la turka* can be performed again after *sitna a la turka*.

Skeja is also a so-called Turkish/old dance and, according to field data, it is immanently connected with rural environments in Sandžak. The difference between the rural and the urban *skeja* is manifested in the direction of movement – in villages it is danced from left to right and in the city, from right to left. The key difference between *skeja* and other dances of the *a la turka* type lies in the melody accompanying the dance.

The dance *trojka* or *tursko* is performed in a similar manner and, according to Nazim Ademović, it is autochthonous to the area of Prizren and Peć, inhabited by Bosniaks who came from Montenegro. In the past this dance was characterised by men and women ‘outdancing’ each other. Ademović last saw this dance being performed in 1974, just after having returned to Pazar from his studies in Subotica. It is precisely thanks to Ademović and Kujević that this dance has been preserved to date as part of the choreographic practice and has thus remained present in the memory of the inhabitants of Novi Pazar and its environs.

Gusinjsko kolo arrived in Pazar from the area around Gusinje and Plav, as the spiritual patrimony of settlers from this region. This dance remains popular at weddings because of its cheerful character, which is a result of the specific symbolic use of a rifle during its performance. The rifle, as a prop, symbolises the patriarchal environment and the domination of the man as ‘head’ of the household, who uses the rifle to ‘defend’ his family and his home during the dancing. After the solo dancing with the rifle, the dancer singles out one of the female dancers, brings her to the centre of the circle and goes on to dance with her – in a pair. People from Gusinje call this dance *a la turka*, while the inhabitants of Pazar consider it to be a dance typical of Gusinje because of its described symbolism, which reveals the peculiarity of Gusinje mentality.

Čoček in Serbia is primarily a part of the brass orchestras’ repertoire in southeastern Serbia (Vranje region). In this region, *Čoček* is dominantly performed by the Roma people, using very specific trumpet melodies in 4/4 rhythm and a slow tempo [Zakić and Lajić-Mihajlović 2013]. *Čoček* in Novi Pazar is performed with different melodies that are usually played on the keyboard and with the characteristic Latin American rhythm, so-called Rumba. According to data provided by Nazim Ademović, *čoček* was present in the dance practice of Novi Pazar as early as the first half of the 20th century [Ademović 2013]. At the time, it was predominantly

performed by girls at so-called bachelorette parties (as part of the wedding ritual). In the second half of the 20th century, this dance was gradually adopted by men, who have continued to perform it in pairs with women to this day. This dance is an indispensable part of the current wedding dance repertoire and is performed at the height of the festivities – typically after *kolo* (*kolo* in three in fast tempo). The kinetic pattern of *čoček* in participatory practice in Novi Pazar implies a symmetrical basic step pattern (2+2) and a (let us say) ‘dual’ formation: 1) a pair formation of a man and a woman and 2) a round-chain dance formation that circles around the separated pair. *Čoček* generally involves using a handkerchief as a prop during the performance. The man and the woman are usually linked by holding each other by one hand while flourishing a handkerchief in the other hand at head height.

Rijetko kolo was one of the most popular dances in Novi Pazar in the second half of the 20th century and it is still performed today. As a rule, the dance is accompanied by one of Radojka Živković’s well-known *kolo* melodies. Based on the name of the dance, the step pattern (*kolo u tri* type) and the music accompaniment, it is clear that *rijetko kolo* originates directly from the territory of central Serbia. The peculiarity of *rijetko kolo* is manifested in the performing style, which extremely vividly reflects the Bosniak dance sensibility. This dance is performed at festivities by highly skilled dancers, while everyone else waits for *kolo* (*kolo u tri* in fast tempo), which typically follows *rijetko kolo*.

Kolo, as an element of the intangible cultural heritage of Serbia, which was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of intangible cultural heritage in 2017, is performed in Novi Pazar in the same way as in other parts of Serbia. *Kolo* is a representative of the most widespread dance genre in Serbia’s dance practice, the so-called *Kolo in three*. This dance genre, which includes about 200 versions of individual dances such as *moravac*, *Žikino kolo* or *kukunješ*, was first recorded on territory of Central Serbia [Milićević 1886]. Its spread throughout Serbia and the region is linked to nation building processes in which the restoration of the Serbian state started in the first decades of the 19th century [Vasić 2002; Rakočević 2002; Ranisavljević 2022]. Due to the specific ideological circumstances in the second half of the 20th century (Communism), over time the *Kolo in three* genre became reduced to a one single dance – *kolo*, in which the fundamental characteristics of the genre are sublimated and which continues to be practised to this day. Owing to its enormous popularity, in 2016 *kolo* was nominated for and, a year later, inscribed on UNESCO’s Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Sharing this dance among all ethnic communities in Serbia was the basic potential of the *kolo* nomination. By nominating the *kolo* dance for UNESCO’s Representative List of the ICH Serbia as a State seeks to represent this dance as the dance of all Serbian citizens (also Bosniaks from Novi Pazar). In that regard, boundaries between ethnic communities are erased and one dance, which is interpreted in Ethnochoreology as an element that has acquired its meaning among the Serbs, becomes a symbol of Serbia.

Conclusion

The stylistic characteristics of the dance tradition of Novi Pazar fit the familiar ethnochoreological narratives about the ‘soft’ dancing of the Bosniaks. The flexible, often stooping, position of the body, along with dancing on the front part of the foot, can be considered an immanent performing characteristic of the population of Novi Pazar. The dominance of male dancing is reflected in the more complex step patterns and a rougher dance expression, but also in the elements of improvisation, such as crouching, kneeling on one or both knees and bending the body backwards, all the way to the ground, in most of the so-called Turkish/old dances.

The ideal type of dance heritage in Novi Pazar was established in the practice of its stage presentation in the form of choreography. Cultural-artistic societies, as communities of practitioners, in Novi Pazar jointly contribute to the preservation of dance heritage through the form of representation. In accordance with the theoretical interpretations of Nahachewsky this form can be classified into a group of preservations [Nahachewsky 2012:192]. These short choreographies are created by various local authors, for local usage, let us say.

In other words, the ideal type of Bosniak traditional dance heritage has been formed and has its continuity within institutions. The referencing to ‘Turkish’ is a consequence of the need for religious and ethnic differentiation of the Muslim community in Novi Pazar. This differentiation is explicitly realized in the form of: the names of dances (*a la turka*), specific performing kinetic manners (‘soft dancing’) and elements of folk costumes (*dimije*, *fesovi*).

At the same time, in participatory practice there are elements that imply the essential interculturality of Bosniak identity in Novi Pazar – that are *a la turka* and *čoček* dances, they identify with Turkey as an imaginary ‘home state’, while practicing of *rijetko kolo* and *kolo* shows the immanent sharing of tradition with Serbs and other ethnic communities in Serbia.

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Rumiana Margaritova
(Sofia, Bulgaria)

Ottoman and post-Ottoman musical heritage in socialist clothes: The institutionalization of Turkish music in the Bulgarian radio in the second half of the 20th century

The history of the Turkish people as a subordinate population on Bulgarian lands began in 1878, when Bulgaria gained autonomy from the Ottoman Empire. For more than 140 years their political and social status, quality of life, and maintenance of ethnic, religious, and cultural identity have been to a great extent a question of inconsistent state policies. As for music traditions, they have been subject to neglect or respect, promotion or prohibition by the authorities, especially in socialist Bulgaria (1944–1989). For most of these years, the development of Turkish music was institutionally supported, the most representative institution being the Bulgarian State Radio. Turkish music was recorded for, and produced by it. The paper aims to make a review of that collection in terms of its history, agents, and genres, on the basis of administrative documents, the electronic catalogue of the Bulgarian National Radio sound archive, as well as interviews with participants in the production process and with related figures.

Keywords: Turkish music; socialist Bulgaria; Radio.

‘Bulgarian-Ottoman heritage’ – or the traces of material and nonmaterial culture which appeared or developed on Bulgarian lands in the Ottoman times, is a complex question, which has usually been avoided or denied by a large part of Bulgarian politicians and ordinary people, since one of the pillars of the Bulgarian national identity is the distancing from the Ottoman past.¹ That approach emerged in the second half of the 19th century, during the Bulgarian National Revival, but it is still influential, despite the multiple artifacts in contemporary Bulgaria (as in any other Balkan country) relating to vocabulary, cuisine, architecture, etc. [Lory 2015:397–418]. Even in Bulgarian traditional music, perceived as an emanation of the Bulgarian spirit, there are scales, intonations, repertoire, and instruments, etc. which are considered to have been adopted in Ottoman times² [Dzhudzhev 1961:104–106; Hristov 1970a:32–34; Hristov 1970b:111–116; Hristov 1970c; Katzarova 1973; Kaufman 1999:234–239]. The issue is well covered in Bulgarian musicological literature, though with varying intensity and nuancing over time, depending on the current political situation, public needs, and the specific scientific interests of the researchers. But what usually stays in the shadow (due to the same, aforesaid factors) is one of the most direct and unbroken manifestations of Ottoman heritage in Bulgaria – the music traditions of its Turkish community.

Its history as a subordinate population on these lands started in 1878, when Bulgaria gained autonomy from the Ottoman Empire. So, for more than 140 years its political and social status, quality of life, and maintenance of ethnic, religious, and cultural identity has been to a great extent a question of state politics. Driven by inner and foreign policy factors, as well as by different visions for the development of Bulgarian society, the changing governments have performed divergent ‘minority’ politics.³ Unanimously defined by the researchers as inconsistent, these politics have affected political representation, incorporation in economic and social life, the maintenance and manifestation of ethnic and religious traditions, etc. of the largest ethnic minority in the country – the Turks. Concerning music traditions, in particular they have been subject to neglect or respect, promotion or prohibition by the authorities. All these kinds of attitudes stand out in relief in the years 1944–1989, commonly described as ‘socialist’ or ‘communist’ Bulgaria. The development of Turkish music during that

controversial historical period was institutionally supported, the most representative institution being the Bulgarian State Radio. Turkish music recorded for, and produced by it, is the subject of this paper. It aims to make a review of that collection in terms of its history, agents, and genres, touching first on the more general issue of the institutionally driven development of Turkish music in socialist Bulgaria. The basic sources for this study have been some administrative documents concerning the Bulgarian Radio activities kept in the Central State Archives in Sofia; the electronic catalogue of the Bulgarian National Radio⁴ sound archive, as well as interviews with participants in the production process and with related figures.

Institutional development of Turkish music in socialist Bulgaria: An overview

There are several labels typically attributed to culture in socialist Bulgaria: state support and control, intertwining with ideology, secularity, institutionalization, massification (and the related flourishing of amateur art), encouragement of progress through education and competition, modernization, etc. In fact, all these terms refer to dynamic processes ‘mandated’ from on high and run by a wide range of agents from political, administrative, educational, and cultural institutions, as well as by ordinary people. This activity also affected the development of Turkish music in Bulgaria for most of the socialist period, intending to design it under certain aesthetical criteria and socio-political regulations.

The most fruitful years were the 1950s and 1960s – the decades when state politics were directed towards respecting ethnic minority rights and stimulation of ethnic culture manifestations, in an attempt to build a socially and ideologically homogeneous community of devoted followers of the socialist ideas, enjoying a good standard of living and higher educational and cultural level [Yalamov 2002:312–313]. To engage as many Bulgarian Turks as possible in culture-making, plenty of amateur Turkish vocal and instrumental groups were established in towns and villages, at culture houses [*читалища/chitalishta*], schools, industrial units, etc. The State made efforts to procure material, educational and organizational support by providing musical instruments and costumes, rehearsal rooms, repertoire, qualified help for raising the performers’ artistic level, opportunities for public recitals, participation in regional and national festivals,⁵ etc. The folk choirs from the villages of Sevar/Ceferler, Bisertzi/Nastradin (Razgrad region), and Shiroka Polyana/Alan Mahle (the Haskovo/Hasköy region),⁶ as well as the *Tambura* orchestra from Kardzhali, are among those Turkish ensembles which set high standards.

Besides amateur art, the so-called ‘Turkish State Variety Theatres’ (established in three big Bulgarian cities in regions with a dense Turkish population⁷) offered professional opportunities to distinguished musicians and artists. Theatre troupes’ performances – either on tour or on-site – attracted both Turkish and Bulgarian audiences by combining songs, dances, and stage plays. Favourite singers and musicians from the three theatres were Kadriye Lâtifova, Ulviye Ahmedova, Ibrahim Destanov, Ahmed Cumaliev, Osman Azizov, Ahmed Üsüfov, etc. [Yalamov 2002:319].

The repertoire of the amateur and professional performers followed the requirements of the time: local ‘authentic’ songs and instrumental pieces, newly-composed songs with folk intonations on ‘contemporary’ topics (praising the homeland, the Communist party and its leaders, the new and better socialist life, etc.), as well as Bulgarian, Soviet, and Russian songs (from the beginning of the 1960s onward). The repertoire was adapted for stage performance which affected the pieces’ structure and duration as well as their presentability and attractiveness (for example, an instrumental accompaniment was added to almost all the songs). However, the performing style still kept tight connections with the traditional one.

Selections of Turkish amateur and professional music performances were recorded for the State Radio (a powerful propaganda institution in socialist Bulgaria) and constituted a great part of its Turkish music collection.

The Turkish music collection in the Bulgarian National Radio – basic facts about its history, personality, and genres

The Radio department responsible for the production of Turkish music was the so-called ‘Turkish section’. It was founded in 1945, re-organized as a head department under the name ‘Broadcasts for the Turkish population in Bulgaria’ in 1958, closed for political reasons in 1984, and re-established ten years later, after the change of the political system in Bulgaria to democracy. The broadcasts of the Turkish section served as an alternative to Radio Ankara and Radio Istanbul, providing propaganda and counter-propaganda [Central State Archives 1974:10–18]. Music was regarded as a basic means for livening up the broadcasts, for attracting the audience and distracting it from the Turkish, ‘hostile’ broadcasts, as well as for cultivating its tastes [Central State Archives 1959:116; Central State Archives 1965a:10]. In other words, music in the Turkish broadcasts on the Radio served as an ideological, political, educational and cultural tool.

As with Turkish amateur art, the 1960s were the most productive decade for the Turkish section – the Radio catalogue lists hundreds of records per year. The recorded performers were amateur and professional musicians, such as Hasan Rodoplu, Osman Aziz, Ahmed Üsüfov, Cemil Şabanov, Ulviye Ahmedova, Adem Bayraktarov, Emel Tabakova, Vasfiye Şabanova, Ayfer Sadıkova, Behçet Mustafaov, Kadriye Lâtifova, Yıldız Ibrahimova, Hafize Bayramova, the instrumental band ‘Üç ses, üç saz’, and many, many others.⁸

The music production process in the Radio was driven by three experienced and highly educated composers and conductors of Bulgarian and Turkish origin – Dimitar Dinev (1923–1987), Turgut Şinikarov (1936–2021), and Boyan Nankov (1927–?). The Bulgarians Dimitar Dinev and Boyan Nankov are famous chiefly for their activities as conductors in the Radio Folk Songs Ensemble (one of the most prominent in socialist times) and for making arrangements of many Bulgarian traditional songs and instrumental music. Dimitar Dinev is also credited with founding the ‘Gotze Delchev’ Ensemble in 1945.⁹ Turgut Şinikarov was among those talented Turks to receive state-supported formal music education, as a purposeful political means for creating the Turkish intelligentsia of the 1950s and 1960s.

The three producers were appointed to select the music for the broadcasts, search for performers and repertoire, make instrumental arrangements of the pieces, and organize the recording process. The leading figure was Dimitar Dinev. He was of Bulgarian origin but was raised in the multicultural environment of Istanbul. At the age of 14, he moved to Bulgaria, where he received education from several institutions, covering his broad interests in theology, law, and music. Offering consultations to amateur Turkish ensembles throughout Bulgaria was among his various professional activities. “He knew our Turkish songs better than us. He showed us the proper way of singing, making the intonation curves so well as if he had been a singer on the Turkish radio!” – a woman who used to sing in the Ensemble from the village of Sevar/Ceferler shared her impressions later in an interview [Margaritova 2022]. Fluent in Turkish and with solid musical education and experience, Dimitar Dinev was a prime mover of the music production activity in the Turkish section. Actually, both a prime mover and a visionary: he had a large-scale (but unfortunately, unfulfilled) idea of establishing a representative Turkish ensemble at the Radio with a staff of well-trained Turkish musicians, who would use traditional ‘ethnic’ instruments and perform a broad repertoire of various musical genres.¹⁰ He imagined how this high-quality ensemble would influence all the amateur

Turkish choirs and instrumental groups in Bulgaria and thus raise the overall level of Turkish music-making in the country.

Mentioning ‘broad repertoire’, some light should be shed on this issue.

As the purpose of music for the Turkish broadcasts was to attract, educate, and entertain audiences, genre diversity was crucial for its fulfilment. But dissatisfaction with the status quo appears in administrative documents from different years: the repertoire was assessed as narrow, and the genres – as not adequately covered. An examination of the Radio sound archives catalogue shows that there were three basic music genres maintained in Turkish music production – local Turkish traditional music, newly-composed songs with folk intonations on ‘contemporary’ topics, and popular (*estradni*) songs.

Most of the Turkish collection consists of traditional Rumeli songs and instrumental pieces. That genre was preferred by the audience, consisting mostly of rural populations, who recognized it as part of their own traditions. But how was this heritage interpreted? In other words, how were they ‘dressed up’ for the purposes of the Radio?

The lyrics and melodies of the recorded songs stick to the ‘authentic’ ones, but the structure and arrangements follow patterns similar to those applied to the Radio-produced Bulgarian traditional music. The structures are built of stanzas and refrains, enriched with introductions and interludes, in which phrases from the vocal melody or new material are implemented. The obligatory instrumental accompaniment is performed by a small ensemble of traditional instruments, including *saz*, *oud*, *darbuka*, clarinet, etc., which double the vocal melody. Solo singer performances prevail and monodic singing, typical of Turkish traditional music as a whole, characterizes the smaller number of duos and trios. Performers were both amateur and professional Turkish musicians from all over Bulgaria, who were recorded at festivals, on special trips by the Radio producers, or in the Radio studio, where they were accompanied by a small instrumental ensemble consisting of professional Bulgarian musicians.¹¹

Another segment of the Turkish music collection in the Radio archives consists of the above-mentioned newly-composed songs, or the so-called ‘songs on contemporary topics’ with lyrics transferring ideological messages: dedicated to the homeland (Bulgaria), the new socialist life, the Party and so on. Excerpts from the song *Yeni hayat, güzel hayat* [Song for the new life], performed by Musa Şabanov and recorded in 1976, could illustrate that genre:¹²

<i>Yeni hayat, güzel hayat,</i>	<i>New life, good life,</i>
<i>Kavuştuk kaydık güzele.</i>	<i>We met and sailed off into the bright future.</i>
<i>Hayran olduk,</i>	<i>I am filled with admiration for you,</i>
<i>Güzel vatan</i>	<i>Beautiful motherland!</i>
...	...
<i>Barış olsun, barış olsun!</i>	<i>Let there be peace, let there be peace!</i>
<i>Gönüllere seviş dolsun,</i>	<i>Let the hearts be filled with love and joy,</i>
<i>Ak günlerin ışığında,</i>	<i>Under the light of bright days,</i>
<i>Zaferlerle yarış olsun!</i>	<i>Let there be a succession of victories!</i>

<i>Yeni hayat, güzel hayat,</i>	<i>New life, good life,</i>
<i>Biz yarattık seni hayat,</i>	<i>We have created you, new life,</i>
<i>Geceler gündüze döndü,</i>	<i>The nights have turned into days,</i>
<i>Bahte yanlık bize kanaat!</i>	<i>Our happiness proves it!</i>
...	...
<i>Yürdümün dağları düzü,</i>	<i>The mountains of my motherland line up,</i>
<i>Sende güldü, yeni hayat...</i>	<i>The new life is rejoicing inside you...</i>

Such propaganda songs were obligatory for the repertoire of all the professional and amateur ensembles in Bulgaria at that time. The Turkish groups could not make an exception, nor did the music producers in the Radio. Songs written by Bulgarian and Turkish composers, like Boyan Ikonov, Nikolay Kaufman, Turgut Şinikarov, etc. and by poets, like Hassan Karahüseyinov, Sabahattin Bayramov, Lâtif Aliev, etc., found their place in the Turkish music Radio collection.

Discussing that genre, a question concerning the power relations in socialist culture arises as to whether the imperativeness was equivalent to pressure. Various perspectives of agents in the process could give a more nuanced answer, but as there is no such inquiry, I would present the only opinion available to me. Turgut Şinikarov, the author of the song cited, admitted that it had been their sincere belief in the Communist Party and the successes of the period that had inspired them [Margaritova 2018].

For an easy perception and implementation of the ideological messages, these songs were composed in a Turkish folk style – the most familiar one for the Radio audiences. So, their ethnically-coloured intonations and instrumental accompaniment still bore a mark of the traditional, provisionally referred to as Ottoman, musical heritage. A total shift from it occurs in the segment of popular songs [*есмрадну нечу/estradni pesni*] – another iconic music genre, which flourished in the socialist years [Statelova 2019] and was respectively appropriated, represented, and promoted by the State Radio. The Turkish *estradni pesni* possess the features of the respective Bulgarian ones: characteristic and expressive melodies, rich arrangements and orchestrations using modern instruments and lyrics on various topics. The unified forms and sounds are not surprising, as the music of the Turkish songs was written chiefly by prominent Bulgarian composers and arrangers: Moris Aladzhev, Toncho Russev, Mitko Shterev, Angel Zabersky, Villy Kazasyan, Svetozar Russinov, Nayden Andreev, etc. Famous Bulgarian and Turkish lyricists or poets contributed to the song lyrics: Osman Azizov, Fahri Erdinç, Lâtif Aliev, Blaga Dimitrova, Dimitar Tochev, Georgi Hristov, etc. The performers were also of Turkish and Bulgarian origin: Mustafa Chaushev, Nurten Kasimova, Vedar Bayramov, Yıldız Enverova, Danail Nikolov, Magda Vesova, Margarita Hranova, Angel Todorov, Nadya Tzoncheva, etc.

In many songs, the lyrics are sung successively in Turkish and in Bulgarian, for example in *Kelebek* [*Пеперуда/Butterfly*] – a song recorded in 1971, written by the poet Damyan Damyanov, translated by Osman Azizov, with music composed by Toncho Russev. It was performed by Mustafa Chaushev, accompanied by the Bulgarian Radio and Television's Popular Music Orchestra, conducted by Villy Kazasyan.

A look at the Radio catalogue indicates that the number of such bilingual songs increased at the beginning of the 1970s. There were also well-known Bulgarian traditional songs with a

montage of recited translations in Turkish, for example, the famous *Polegnala e Tudora* [*Полегнала е Тудора*/Tudora is Dozing], arranged for polyphonic choir by the composer and conductor Filip Koutev, with a Turkish recitation performed by Feziha Muhareмова. This ‘Bulgarian line’ – in language, but also in intonations, was purposeful: it was part of a process which marked the change of the minority politics in Bulgaria towards the gradual assimilation of the Turks [Central State Archives 1974:10–18; Central State Archives 1975:2–36]. The peak of these policies was reached in the middle of the 1980s, during the so-called ‘revival process’. In an attempt to build a ‘unified socialist Bulgarian nation’ the authorities proclaimed the idea that the Turks in Bulgaria had Bulgarian origins. On these grounds, they tried to erase all their ethnic and religious markers: their Islamic names were forcibly changed to Bulgarian and Slavic ones; their Turkish religious rituals and festivals were prohibited or secularized; the usage of the Turkish language in public and the performance of Turkish music were also limited [Büchschütz 2000:146–151]. In December 1984, the Turkish section of the Radio was closed, disrupting the massive platform for Turkish music. There was a ban on the Ottoman musical heritage and also a ban on the post-Ottoman musical heritage, regardless of its ‘socialist’ clothes.

The ‘revival process’ lasted for four years and ended with the change of the political system in Bulgaria to democracy. The ethnic and religious rights were restored and there was an official recognition of the ‘revival process’ as a historic mistake.

What happened with the Turkish section? After its closure, Turgut Şinikarov was transferred to another section, with his name changed to Tervel Shinikarov. Until the end of his life, he could not accept the rejection of his hard and faithful work. Dimitar Dinev died before the democratic changes, but his feelings would have been the same: colleagues and friends of his testify how he tried to save the Radio tapes of the Turkish section by storing them in the Institute of Musicology,¹³ for fear that they would be destroyed by the authorities. It was the Bulgarian ethnomusicologist and composer Nikolay Kaufman who helped him. This act and the Turkish music collection itself are examples of the Turkish-Bulgarian cooperation in the sphere of music, which occurred in socialist Bulgaria because of and despite politics.

Conclusion

Turkish music was recorded for and produced by the State Radio in socialist Bulgaria, contributors being singers, instrumentalists, lyricists, composers, arrangers, and conductors of Turkish, but also of Bulgarian origin. Due to their activities, the Bulgarian National Radio now possesses a representative collection of Turkish music from Bulgaria as it sounded in socialist times, i.e., a representative Ottoman and post-Ottoman musical heritage in socialist clothes.

The radio production of Turkish music could be labelled with the etiquettes ‘state control’, ‘ideology’, ‘secularity’, ‘modernization’, etc., which conformed to certain prescribed ideas. These words, however, reflect the top-down relations between the authorities and lower-level culture agents. Adding the other, bottom-up perspective, the picture becomes much more detailed and vivid, as personal qualities, creativity, and musical expertise regardless of ethnicity have the real power to give ideas direction, interpretation, content, and meaning.

Endnotes

1. According to the Bulgarian historiography, the period of Ottoman Bulgaria begins in 1396, the year of the conquest of the Vidin kingdom (one of the formations in the Second Bulgarian kingdom) by the Ottoman Empire, and ends in 1878, the date of the signing of the San-Stefano Treaty between the Russian and the Ottoman empires at the conclusion of the Russo-Turkish war of 1877–1878. There are also well-supported hypotheses about earlier pre-Ottoman settlements of Turkic people in North-Eastern Bulgarian lands [Zhelyazkova 1998:381].

2. With regard to Bulgarian art music, the musicologist Penka Dragoeva views the Oriental influences in the works of Bulgarian professional composers from the first half of the 20th century as a projection of Western (and not Eastern) musical approaches, but re-thought through their specific Balkan sensitivity and aural experience shaped by their close contact with Oriental music [Dragoeva 2008:9–10].
3. The Turkish community was accorded the status of “a national minority” by the Bulgarian Constitution adopted in 1947; however, the term was dropped in the next Constitution dated 1971 [Yalamov 2002:290, 379].
4. The Bulgarian State Radio was the only institution of that kind in socialist Bulgaria [see Angelova 2022]. It has been called ‘Bulgarian National Radio’ since 1992. For this reason, the first term is used in the paper referring to the institution as it functioned in socialist times, and the second one – for its contemporary successor.
5. Sound recordings from the festival *Ludogorie* in 1966 were made by Petar Lyondev and are now available in the Sound Archive of the Institute of Art Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. They have been commented on by Ivanka Vlaeva [Vlaeva 2008:37–38].
6. The settlement names are given both with their Bulgarian (official) and Turkish variants.
7. The first Turkish State Estrada theater was established in 1952 in Kolarovgrad (Shumen), but later moved to Russe. The second one was founded the same year in Kardzhali and later moved to Momchilgrad and Haskovo. The third one was established in Razgrad, in 1953.
8. Some of the musicians, such as Hasan Rodoplu, Yıldız Ibrahimova, Hafize Bayramova, etc. emigrated to Turkey and made a good career there.
9. The ensemble was initially founded by Bulgarian refugees from the regions of Aegean and Vardar Macedonia and its repertoire consisted of traditional songs and dances from their birth places.
10. That idea is disclosed in several administrative documents [Central State Archives 1964:7–8; Central State Archives 1965a:9–12; Central State Archives 1965b:17–18; Central State Archives 1966:64–65].
11. Memories of Stoyan Gigov touching on his work as an accompanist to the Turkish singers are included in Ventsislav Dimov’s book on media music in socialist Bulgaria [Dimov 2019:243–244].
12. I express my gratitude to Nevena Gramatikova, who transcribed the Turkish lyrics from a song recording, and to Mihail Lukanov, who translated them into English.
13. The Institute of Art Studies is the successor of the Institute of Musicology.

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Selena Rakočević and Anastasija Živković
(Belgrade, Serbia)

***Robot kolo* as one of the forms of contemporary *čoček* in dance practice of Southeastern Serbia**

The centuries-old presence of the Ottomans in the Balkans influenced continuous transformation of autochthonous cultural practices intensely contributing to their immanent hybridity. This process continues despite reshaping of ethnically and nationally specific cultural traditions and the redrawing of state borders after the end of the Ottoman Empire in this peninsula in 1912. Among various cultural elements in which Ottoman legacy can be recognized is a traditional musical and dance genre *čoček*, which was brought to the Balkans by the Turks and accepted primarily by Roma. *Čoček* is still performed in many areas of the Balkans in its various forms, one of which is *robot kolo*. Based on the analysis of video clips of *robot kolo* we analyse and discuss structural-formal and performing features of kinetics and music of this linked chain dance in 4/4 rhythm in contemporary dance practice of Serbs and Roma.

Keywords: *čoček*; *robot kolo*; Serbs; Roma.

Introduction

Having suffered the redrawing of many borders, migrations and foreign influences, the Balkan Peninsula is characterized by a multicultural mixture of countless layers of various ethnic and religious traditions [Goldsworthy 2003; Bechev 2006; Njaradi 2013]. The historical processes of the centuries-old Ottoman rule had an essential role in forming heterogeneous creation that is based on intertwining of autochthonous and oriental heritage, emphasized by many scholars [for example Todorova 2006; Pettan 2007]. The best example for this is the fact that the traditional music of many Balkan countries is based on the tonal system of *makam* [Aksoy 2006:35]. Similar influences and permeations appear in traditional dance, which we can particularly observe in the dance genre known as *čoček*.

This broad and heterogeneous dance genre was included in many historical and ethnochoreological resources connected with Roma, famous for their musical and dance talent [Silverman 2006:39]. Even though the Serbian ethnologist Tihomir Đorđević claimed that *čoček* disappeared from Roma dance practice at the beginning of the 20th century [Đorđević 1910:9–10], it is accepted that Roma adopted and presented *čoček* to the other ethnic communities living in the Balkans. However, the presence of *čoček* among ethnicities and nationalities other than Roma is something that was not the subject of ethnochoreological research. A possible reason for that is the prevailing thought in ethnically and nationally oriented scholarship that *čoček* is an exclusively oriental heritage.

Robot kolo is one of the forms of *čoček* that has been present in the participatory dance practice of Southern Serbia among Roma and Serbs for the last 35 years. Based on the standpoint that dance is an inseparable, syncretic unity of dance movements (kinetics) and dance music [Rakočević 2009:332], this paper examines both characteristics of the movement patterns and the melody of *robot kolo* signified by dancers and musicians, both Serbs and Roma, as *čoček*.

Derived from the analysis of video clips of various performances of *robot kolo* available on YouTube and those made by the authors in different dance contexts during the last few years, but also numerous interviews with the performers, we analyse and discuss structural-formal and performance features of kinetics and music of this linked chain dance in 4/4 meter

in the contemporary dance practice of Serbs and Roma in Southern Serbia. Ethnographic insight into dance events when this dance is performed are also included. Although *čoček* is primarily a solo dance, considering the fact that in contemporary dance practice it can be performed in different formations and rhythms [Dunin 1973: 194; Silverman 2006:47], we argue that *čoček* should be conceptualized as a comprehensive dance genre which continuously reshapes cultural practice of Serbia and the Balkans.

Ethnography and context of performing *robot kolo*

Robot kolo was composed in 1984 by Roma musician Saša Mutić from Niš, the biggest city in southeastern Serbia. Saša introduced this melody to the narrower Roma audience in Niš and its surroundings, while he was playing in the Four Hearts Band (Serbian: Četiri srca band). Several years later, in 1986 when he became a member of the Cheerful Roma Orchestra (Serbian: Veseli Romi Orchestra) *robot kolo* was recorded. In the following years, the Cheerful Roma Orchestra influenced the spread of the melody among the people, both Roma and Serbs, in southern and southeastern Serbia.

In her paper about the censorship in former Yugoslavia, Ana Hofman stated that during the 1960s a massive expansion of popular music production started, coupled with its spread via local radio stations, which is confirmed in Zdravko Ranisavljević's research [Hofman 2013:286; Ranisavljević 2022:272]. Popular music was then an important economic factor and the phonograph record industry played an essential role in that process [Hofman 2013:287]. The biggest record labels that all published *robot kolo* were Serbian 'PGP Radio Television Belgrade', 'Diskos' and 'Beograd disk', 'Jugoton' from Croatia, and 'Diskoton' from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As a part of the massive production of newly composed folk music the individual musical genre, the so-called *kolo music*, evolved as a large scale production [Ranisavljević 2022:272]. The leading instrument in this genre was accordion, which appeared in Serbia after the Second World War and prevailed in participatory dance practice in the second half of the 20th century. Within the accelerated technical development of musical instruments electric keyboard appeared in the 1980s and even though it is still being used, it never suppressed the acoustic accordion. An electric keyboard had a specific, organ-like timbre from the time of its appearance. Saša Mutić claims that he got this instrument for his 18th birthday (in 1984) and that he was the first one in Serbia to play it [Mutić 2021].¹

The recognizable name of this dance – *robot* – came from the people who participated in dance events where Saša Mutić was performing with his first band 'Four hearts', even before it was officially published by 'Diskos' [Mutić 2021]. The distinct timbre of the instrument was unusual for that time, and that is the main reason why participants verbalized the melody with that expression [Mutić 2021].

The majority of informants claim that we can track the popularity of this melody and movement pattern since its occurrence until now, (2022). *Robot kolo* is nowadays an irreplaceable part of wedding celebrations and also many other dance events with the function of entertainment in the Serbian and Roma community in southern Serbia. It originally developed in Niš but soon after it spread to other municipalities including Vranje, Leskovac, Vladičin Han, Blace, Zvečan (Kosovo and Metohija), and Čačak (Western Serbia). A considerable number of YouTube videos testify this, along with our personal perennial observation.

Musical characteristics

In the current performing practice the musicians define *robot kolo* as *čoček* because of its musical characteristics, such as rhythm that was performed on bongos and drum, specific oriental tone in the main melody played on electric keyboard, and the unique timbre of this instrument.

The original melody was performed by bongos, drum, keyboard, bass guitar, and clarinet although nowadays instrumentation can be much simpler. The harmony is constructed of two basic chords – F major and G minor, but unlike the instrumentation, the chords progression can be extremely elaborated in practice.² Speaking about the rhythm, many informants (mostly without a formal education in music) named it as “slow rumba”, but the accordion player, solfeggio professor and active musician Ivan Stevanović from Niš referred to it as a “*sa sa* rhythm”, or more precisely “*ubrzani vranjanski čoček*” [accelerated *čoček* from the city of Vranje] which trained musicians usually call “begin”³ [Stevanović 2021] (see Figure 1a). Many other formally educated musicians with long experience in playing this music during all kind of social gatherings agreed with this statement. The final conclusion that we came to through the analysis is somewhere in between. Since these rhythmic progressions are not well known in the scholarly circles and academic publications, we will explain them below.

The basic meter of *robot kolo* is 4/4. Having analysed the original melody that was recorded in 1986, we came to the conclusion that the instruments that are part of the rhythmic section (bass guitar, drum, bongos) use different metrorhythmic figures and their combinations. The drum performs the above mentioned ‘begin’, bongos complements this rhythm, while the bass guitar performs ‘slow rumba’. There are many possible combinations of rumba rhythm and some of them are offered below with first as the most common in the original melody of *robot kolo* (see Figure 1b).

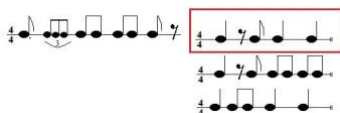


Figure 1. Performed rhythms in *robot kolo* – a) begin; b) rumba.

Speaking about the possible rhythms in *čoček*, Carol Silverman pointed out that these can appear as 2/4, 4/4, 7/8 and 9/8 with their possible variants [Silverman 2006:47]. She even enclosed a list of typical metro rhythmical combinations, but ‘begin’ and variants of ‘rumba’ are not among them [Silverman 2006:48].

The ambitus of the original *robot kolo* melody goes from tone G in small octave to F in two-line octave. It consists of four different thematic materials (marked as ‘A’, ‘B’, ‘C’ and ‘D’) that appear in that exact order.

The melody is divided in two sections with the same structure. Before the commencement of the first material, an eight-measure introduction is played. After that, parts ‘A’ and ‘B’ appear with the same number of measures while materials marked as ‘C’ and ‘D’ last for four measures and repeat one after another. After finishing playing all of the materials, the improvisation part sets in with the electric keyboard still being the most prominent instrument. In the second section of the melody, improvisation appears once again, but with the clarinet as leading instrument.

Čoček in ethnochoreological research

A lack of extensive literature about *čoček* and the inconsistency of the data obtained from previous ethnochoreological field research influenced the different, and in many cases, incomplete definition of *čoček* in ethnochoreology. Sisters Ljubica and Danica Janković, pioneers of the discipline in Serbia, marked its presence in the dance practice of Roma in the Gostivar area in North Macedonia, which is something they wrote about in the third book of *Narodne igre*, but unfortunately they neither described nor notated its movement pattern [see Janković and Janković 1939:136]. Speaking about *čoček* in Serbian dance tradition, the documentation about the dance called *čoček avasi* with 4/8 and 5/8 meters was published in the first book of *Narodne igre* [Janković and Janković 1934:126].

The Janković sisters did not document the melody except the notion that it can be found in the musical piece *Tašana – four pieces from the life of Vranje* [Janković and Janković 1934: 126] written by a traditionally aligned Serbian composer of national-romantic orientation, Stanislav Binički [Vesić 2018:218]. The piece was composed with the purpose of accompanying the dramatic work, *Tašana*, that was written in 1910 by Borisav Stanković, who was originally from Vranje. In Serbian folkloristics Stanković is mostly known for his descriptions of everyday life, customs and culture of this city in Southern Serbia from the period that covers the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. It is not yet known exactly when Binički composed the music, but the piece had its premiere in the National theatre in Belgrade in 1927.⁴

The whole piece includes eight songs that represent different situations and characters from the drama. Most of them contain singing with the accompaniment of the orchestra that usually consists of first and second violin, viola, clarinet in B, piano and tambourine, but there is also a melody (under ordinal number two) that is played by traditional instruments such as *tapan* (drum) and *zurla*.

The instrumental *čoček avasi* melody brings the constant changing of the meter – 4/8 and 5/8, written in B flat major. The instruments such as second violin and viola mostly provide the chordal accompaniment, while the leading melody is performed by piano, first violin and clarinet. The characteristic of the leading melody is its constant rotation between B flat major and minor, and also the many chromatic tones it includes. Taking into account the social context in which the composition was written, the tonal harmony with the cadence on the first B flat major chord is completely expected.⁵ It is obvious that the melody originates from the musical practice of the municipalities in Southern Serbia, but the composer adapted it to the norms of classical harmony and tempered instruments.

Speaking about the movement pattern, the Janković sisters' written notation is the same as the dance performed to the melody of *pembe* with some differences [Janković and Janković 1934: 126]. The movement pattern of *pembe* contains three measures, while *čoček avasi* includes six because every measure is performed twice. The first two measures involve standing in place on the right leg with the left leg preparing to perform a gesture. The third and fourth measures include a transition to steps moving to the right in the dance space, a transition counter clock-wise with legs moving one after another, which continues in the fifth and sixth measures.

Sixty years after the sister Janković's research, ethnochoreologist and ethnologist Olivera Vasić left some scanty information about *čoček* in Serbia, pointing out that *čoček* dances are of Turkish origin, as the word is, and she noticed that the movements of this dance are being performed mostly with belly [Vasić 1997:437].

While *čoček* was in the past a part of urban traditions of the Balkan towns and taverns, in the second half of the 20th century it became the foundation of the participatory dance practice not only among Roma, but also other ethnic groups in the wide territory of South Serbia as well as nowadays North Macedonia.

The most recent proof of this statement is the paper by ethnochoreologist Filip Petkovski about three dances that are part of North Macedonia's contemporary participatory repertoire, such as *čačak*, *čučuk* and *čoček* [Petkovski 2016]. The author noticed that *čoček* is the most accepted among them and that it also represents the modern inspiration of Turkish folklore [Petkovski 2016:130]. *Čoček* seems to be the inspiration for creating new kinetic and musical forms that can be evident in the opus of Esmā Redžepova, Goran Bregović and Ferus Mustafov [Petkovski 2016:130].

The greatest contribution in researching *čoček* among Roma in North Macedonia has been made by anthropologist, Carol Silverman. As we already discussed, Silverman gave an elaborated list of possible rhythms that can be found in *čoček* [Silverman 2006:48]. In the paper that was published in 2007 she stated that *čoček*, as “the most characteristic Roma dance”, can be performed in a solo formation, or a linked chain of dancers, but it can also represent a musical genre [Silverman 2006: 47]. Silverman continues to explain that *čoček* in solo formation can be performed by other nations in the Balkans during many social gatherings, but that *čoček* in the formation of linked chained performers is not performed by other nations except Roma, Macedonians and Albanians in North Macedonia [Silverman 2006:53].⁶

The biggest contribution in researching *čoček* as a dance genre is made by ethnochoreologist, Elsie Ivancich Dunin in a paper about the “cloning” of *čoček* in nowadays North Macedonia that was published in 2008. Ivancich Dunin claims that *čoček* among Roma refers to a dance performed in a solo formation, while in other ethnic groups this term can be used to define a “musical style” or “linked chain dance” [Ivancich Dunin, 2008:213].

After the research conducted on *robot kolo* in the dance practice of Southern Serbia that was in line with research of Carol Silverman [Silverman, 2006:47], we would like to argue that the term ‘čoček’ should be defined broadly, but at the same time with precise determination of the paradigmatic dance genre which includes both kinetic and musical features, and, at the same time, an independent musical genre, which is mostly for listening. That is why we propose that the term can imply:

I. Dance genre with the metrical basis 2/4, 4/4, 7/8, and 9/8 with:

- Dances performed in solo formation that can potentially consist of hip, upper body, head and arm movements,
- Linked chain dances within full or half-circular formation that can potentially consist of hip, upper body, head and arm movements.

II. A musical genre⁷ that is being recognized through the specifics of:

- Melody, harmony that is being adapted according to peculiarities of a particular geographic area and musical heritage, metro-rhythmic patterns and their transformations within 2/4, 4/4, 7/8 and 9/8 meters.

However, in the perception of those who perform it, whether they dance it or play it, *čoček* is a synonym for a dance – both music and movements. This was confirmed by the leader of the Cheerful Roma Orchestra, Mile Petrović, who emphasized that “these two [music and movements] in *čoček* go altogether” [Petrović 2021].

***Robot kolo* performed by Serbs**

According to the informants, Serbs have been performing *robot kolo* from the moment of its appearance. Observing available YouTube videos from the late 1980s and analysing the places where they were taken, we came to the conclusion that *robot kolo* has been performed (and presumably still is) in many cities not only in Southern Serbia, but even in Western Serbia. As it was mentioned earlier, the context is always some kind of social gathering such as wedding celebrations, birthday parties, or similar events.

Although both male and female participants can be seen, irrespective of their age or physical abilities, the videos showed that women take part in dancing *robot kolo* more often than men. They dance in the linked chain of dancers holding their hands at shoulder height. Their hands can move to the music rhythm or stay static, while their elbows are bent. Taking into account that mostly women perform this dance, the Labannotations presented are based on the representative performances of selected female dancers from the YouTube videos.⁸

The movement pattern performed by Serbs consists of three measures with minor space transition (see Figure 2a). The semi-circle formation (Serbian: *otvoreno kolo*) moves counter clock-wise starting with the left leg, that is led by a female leader. Her left hand is joined with the hand of the dancer next to her, while her right hand is raised up swaying softly to the rhythm of her body movements. As a notable stylistic characteristic we draw attention to the gestures in the second and third measure that are an integral part of the movement pattern.

The manifestation of the pattern implies two measures that aim to move counter clock-wise and the third that moves in the opposite direction, while all of them are based on the same motif. According to the kinetic-formal analysis of the traditional dances by Zdravko Ranisavljević this kinetic pattern can be numerically described as “2,1” [Ranisavljević 2022], while according to the analysis by Robert Liebman as “011” [Liebman 1995]. This three-measured movement pattern is typical not only for the territory of Serbia and the Balkans, but also for many other countries from Scandinavia to the Near East and in ethnochoreology it is known by the name *branle simple* [Martin 1973:105; Giurchescu and Bloland 1995:270–271]. During their fieldwork in 1930s and late 1940s, the Janković sisters recognized the presence of this pattern in many localities in Serbia and North Macedonia, so they defined it as *lako kolo* [Janković and Janković 1949:47], which is the term used in contemporary Serbian ethnochoreology to signify this dance type.⁹

Knowing that the musical phrase lasts for four measures and the dance phrase lasts for three measures, it is obvious that the musical and kinetic components of the dance do not match. For that reason it is possible to start a dance at any point in a melody. It is of high importance to emphasize the double pulsation in the knees that synchronise with the music, and also the matching of the kinetic and musical pulsation – every unit counted matches the exact step.

The movement pattern described for *robot kolo* is most common on the territory of Niš and other cities in Southern Serbia. However, having researched the videos of *robot kolo* on YouTube we came to the video where the Serbian community from Kosovo and Metohija performs it, but with significant differences.

The movement pattern was performed in a semi-circular formation where the first dancer in a row is female (see Figure 2b). Even though this movement pattern consists of three measures like the one analysed before, there are some differences in kinetics, dance style and space transition.

The steps are smaller, but unlike the performance from eastern areas described first, this one is characterized by a wider space transition. The dance style is complemented by the

reduced hip movements and contained body motions in a manner of vertical pulsation, as well as less emphasized gestures that also appear in the second and third measure.

According to the kinetic-formal analysis of Zdravko Ranisavljević [2022] and Robert Leibman [1992] the movement pattern of *robot kolo* used by Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija can be described numerically as “2,1” or “011” which is basically the same as the previous dance from eastern areas. Comparing the two patterns we can state that they are equivalent in terms of step manifestation in space and in terms of correspondence of the counted units in music and kinetics. The difference is conditioned by the very beginning of these two movement patterns where in the first case the left leg is the one that starts it, and in the second it is the right.

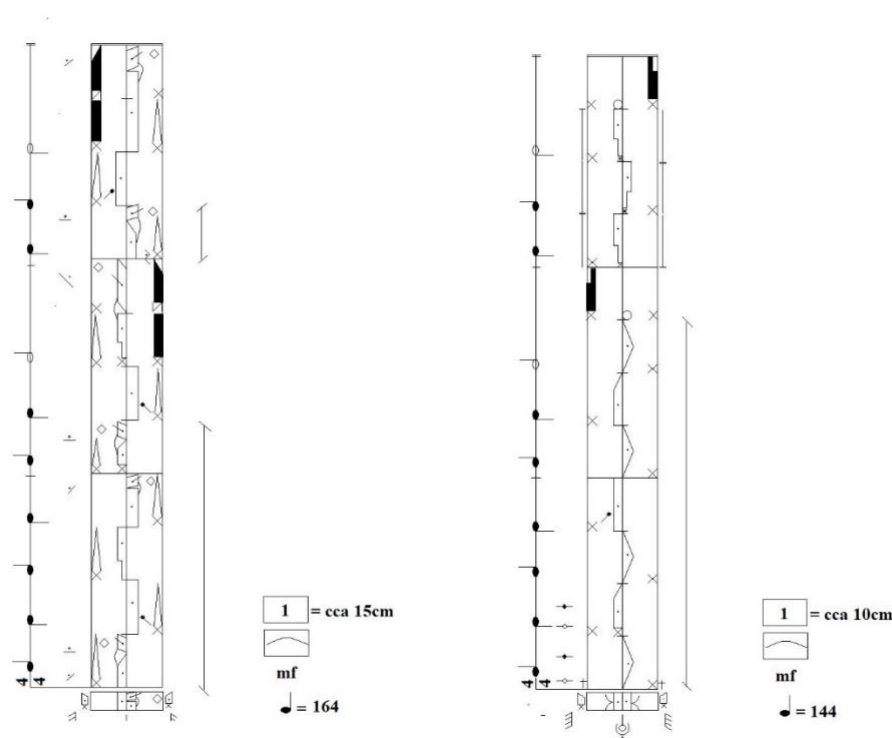


Figure 2. a) The most common *robot kolo* movement pattern performed by Serbs from Niš, b) The *robot kolo* movement pattern performed by Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija.

***Robot kolo* performed by Roma**

Besides perennial investigation of Roma dance practice in the Republic of North Macedonia conducted by Elsie Ivancich Dunin and, partly, Carol Silverman, other sources about dance practice are usually considered as insufficient and sporadic. That is why considering the broader perspective about Roma dance practice is impossible. After a conversation about Roma dance repertoire in Southern Serbia crucial information came from Iva Barčić, a formally educated Roma musician from Niš. He stated that Roma have two dance “choreographies”¹⁰ that they perform during any kind of social gathering [Barčić 2021]. One of them is being danced to any melody in 4/4 meter, and the other to a melody in 7/8 or 9/8 [Barčić 2021]. He emphasized that all of these are possible rhythms of *čoček* [Barčić 2021].

Since this research was mostly conducted in 2021 during the world pandemic, Roma dancing in the context of large social gatherings was impossible to record. That is why the conclusion of the Roma dance style will be judged based on the demonstration of Roma girls

from Aleksinac (Southeastern Serbia) and Marina Mutić, the wife of the composer. This comparison showed that they performed the same kinetic pattern. The movement pattern often attributed by performers as ‘classic’ is something that can be performed not only to the *robot kolo* melody, but also to many other instrumental and vocally instrumental melodies. There are also many YouTube videos in which Roma perform this pattern. Since its applicability for any melody, the videos with music other than *robot kolo* are in the majority, which inhibited us from finding an adequate contemporary example for comparison.

However, during our research we came to an official music video of Cheerful Roma Orchestra for the *robot kolo* melody which is unfortunately no longer available on YouTube. As Saša Mutić claims, the video was used as a commercial for the purpose of promoting *robot kolo* and it was filmed in Niš in 1987 after the melody was already published [Mutić 2021]. In this video Roma girls are dancing in solo formations with emphasized hips, chest and hands movements. Four of them are standing in the line while one girl is positioned in the centre of the circle, being the most prominent. This style of dancing *čoček* is something many scholars postulated when speaking about the dance practice of Roma [Silverman 2007; Ivancich Dunin 2008].

The kinetic pattern demonstrated by girls from Aleksinac and Marina Mutić consists of three measures that are performed in the semi-circular formation with hands raised at shoulder height, elbows bent (see Figure 3). Unlike Serbs, the domination of females in dance practice is typical for Roma, while males are usually musicians. The role of a female dancer is even more emphasised considering the fact that she can invariably enter the centre of the formation and continue her solo dance with emphasized hips, hands and chest movements [Osmanović 2021].

The round chain formation moves counter clock-wise with small narrowing of the circle in the first measure that is influenced by entering the centre of the formation. After the initial movement, the motion prevails backwards and then to the right. According to Zdravko Ranisavljević’s analysis this kinetic pattern can numerically be expressed as “1,1+1”, while according to Leibman’s it is “101”. The use of these analyses showed the difference between movement pattern of *robot kolo* performed dominantly by Serbs and the one danced by Roma.

Unlike complete matching between the rhythmical pulsation of kinetic and musical component of the dance performed mostly by Serbs, the prominence of Roma dancing in this regard is in mismatch. The units of pulsation in one measure is something that does not match with the exact step, so the impression of a viewer is that the legs are inevitably being ‘late’ for the accent in musical measure. This is the key difference in distinguishing Roma dance.

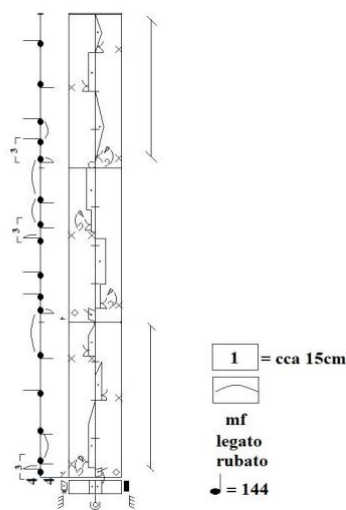


Figure 3. The *robot kolo* movement pattern performed by Roma.

According to Elsie Ivancich Dunin, and taking into account the variety of Turkish influences that are incorporated in Roma culture, it is surprising that the hip movements in their dance are absent, while hand gestures are emphasized. However, hip movements are possible if the dancer enters the circle and freely continues her solo dance. Taking into account everything that was mentioned before, including data about the crucial relationship between kinetics and music and lack of hip movements in round chain dancing, we find significant Iva Barčić's comment when speaking about the difference between Serbian and Roma dancing *robot kolo*. He said that "Roma dance is somehow dignified" [Barčić 2021].

Roma informants were also familiar with the movement pattern performed mostly by Serbs which confirms the observation about cultural influences. They learnt it during many social gatherings in which there was presumably a majority of Serbs.

Some final thoughts

The coexistence of many ethnicities in the Balkans influenced the making of a mutual culture that is neither completely autochthonous, nor absolutely oriental [Aksoy 2006:32]. Speaking about the territory of Serbia, Turkish influences were preserved mostly in its southern and southeastern parts, so their rejection was slow and never a completely successful process.

In the Ottoman period Roma were considered to be the best entertainers so they were the most flexible in accepting Turkish culture and traditions. We have found proof for that in *čoček* that is certainly one of legacies of oriental musical and dance genres. *Robot kolo* is one of the contemporary dances still very present in the participatory dance practice of Serbia that indicates its *čoček* origin by its musical and movement characteristics. The main melody with specific timbre, simple harmony and rhythm in 4/4 meter corresponds with typical characteristics of the genre.

The movement patterns analysed in both communities belong to the one called *branle simple* or *lako kolo* which proved the applicability of this movement pattern in contemporary dance practice by both Serbs and Roma.

Research and analysis of possible ethnical differences in dance style between Serbs and Roma were only indicated in this paper. It is necessary to continue not only fieldwork, but also ethnochoreological analysis for further conclusions. The differences mentioned above participate in producing the feeling of distinctiveness of ethnical identities of both Serbs and

Roma through movement patterns and the style of performing them. All of this affects the conscience of dancing being attributed as ‘Serbian’ or ‘Roma’ and every dance event is an opportunity in which these differences perpetuate.

The research of *čoček*, and its particular form *robot kolo*, as a dance and musical genre that is a product of oriental influences exposed new questions and gave the impulse for continuing the research of intercultural contacts in the Balkans. *Robot kolo* endorsed the vitality of *čoček* as a musical and dance genre, but also the spreading of its borders further. On the other hand, the vitality of the *branle simple* movement pattern that can be tracked through centuries is also underlined in this paper. For all of these reasons, *robot kolo* is worthy of further research and dialogues between scholars which is the only way through which we can understand musical and kinetic legacy of the world dance heritage.

Endnotes

1. Besides him, electric keyboard was also being played at that time by some other musicians. For example Svanibor Pettan wrote about the Roma musician, Nehat Gaši, from Kosovo and Metohija [Pettan 2010:27].
2. For example, Saša Mutić states that keyboard players nowadays use B major chord which is not appropriate for him, because it is not included in the original melody [Mutić 2021].
3. The data is taken from the official web page of the Serbian national theatre in Novi Sad (North Serbia).
4. Roma people invented the term ‘begin’ for this rhythmic pattern, but our informants did not know its precise origin or meaning, however we are sure there is no connection with the verb ‘to begin’ in English language.
5. Due to the lack of educational institutions which, among other reasons, was caused by the fact that Serbia gained independence only in the late 19th century, many young composers, including Binički, studied abroad, in cities such as Munich and Rome. There they learnt the rules of the classical Western European harmony and the way of musical thinking that they applied to the traditional folk melodies.
6. “The line version of *čoček* known among Roma in Macedonia is found among Macedonians and Albanians from Macedonia but not among the other Balkan groups” [Silverman 2006:53].
7. Speaking about the differences in musical characteristics of the *čoček* among Roma people in Serbia and in North Macedonia, Mile Petrović stated that *čoček* melodies in North Macedonia are composed in Turkish style where the rhythm is “complicated”, and harmony is “simple”, while harmony in *čoček* melodies among Roma in Serbia is “complicated” which represents the influence of Bulgarian music that they have listened to [Petrović 2021].
8. The first Labanotation is from the video that was filmed in Blace, a city in Southeastern Serbia, while in the second video the exact location is not known. Taking into account the costumes of the performers and the occasion, we can presume that the video was filmed somewhere in Kosovo and Metohija.
9. Olivera Vasić used the term *balkanka* for this pattern [Vasić 2005: 57], which is accepted in the early articles of Seleno Rakočević [2002]. This was later abandoned.
10. The movement pattern is what the informant had in mind.

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Appendix 1: Biographies of contributors

Abdullah AKAT

Prof. Dr., ethnomusicologist, and faculty member at Istanbul University State Conservatory, Department of Musicology, Ethnomusicology Program (2019 to date). Since 2021 he is the Chair of the ICTMD Study Group on Music and Dance in the Turkic World, and the Editor-in-Chief of the Musicologist journal since 2017. His fieldworks, publications, research projects and presentations are related to music archiving, the Turkey-Black Sea, Balkan, Crimean, and Caucasian music cultures.

Vesna BAJIĆ STOJILJKOVIĆ

PhD in ethnomusicology and ethnochoreology, Faculty of Music University of Arts Belgrade. Professor at the Belgrade Dance Institute, Serbia and Academy of Dance, Slovenia. Artistic director of the Academic Cultural-Artistic Society Kolo, Koper. Co-author of two monographs about folk dance choreographers and author of monograph *Stage folk dance and music* (Institute of Musicology SASA, 2019).

Sevi BAYRAKTAR

Professor of Dance, Music, and Performance in Global Contexts at the University of Music and Dance Cologne, Germany. She holds a Ph.D. in Culture and Performance from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). As a dancer, educator and scholar, she specializes in politics of heritagization, dance and diaspora, and dissenting movements. Her current book project, “Dissenting through Dance”, suggests an ethnographic history of folk dance and protests in Turkey.

Joško ČAleta

PhD, research assistant at the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research in Zagreb. The themes of research are mostly focused on the vocal musical traditions – sacred and secular – of the Dalmatian Coastal, Islands and Hinterland regions.

Okan CEYLAN

Associate Professor of Modern Turkish History in Ege University, Turkey. He holds a Ph.D in History of Turkish Republic from Atatürk Institute at Boğaziçi University. He specializes in the economic history, agricultural history, cultural history, and modern Turkish history.

Krenar DOLI

Born in Gjakova (Kosova). PhD (2021) Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University, Institute of Social Sciences (Turkish Folklore program), MSc (2014) Center for Albanological Studies, Institute of Cultural Anthropology and Art Study, Ethnology-Folklore department. BA (2007), Academy of Arts, Faculty of Music, Branch of Musicology in Tirana. Works at The Institute of Albanology in Prishtina, Department of Folklore, Section of Ethnomusicology. He deals with different musical practices of the Balkan area, with music and with multilateral connections in the artistic and socio-cultural spheres.

Arbnora DUSHI

Research advisor at the Folklore Department, Institute of Albanology in Prishtina, Kosovo. Her research focus is on the application of modern folkloristic theories and methods on researching and studying Albanian folklore. She is member of SIEF, InASEA, ISFNR and Kalevala Society in Helsinki. Since 2018 she holds the position of second vice-president at Kommission für Volksdichtung.

László FELFÖLDI

Dr. Habil. PhD Ethnochoreologist, titular university professor of the Szeged University, Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology; former scientific vice-director of the Institute for Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences; co-founder of Choreomundus, joint international MA on dance anthropology. Main topics: performer centered dance research, dance as cultural heritage.

Gonca GIRGIN

Born in Istanbul, 1978. She has a master's degree in Ethnomusicology and a PhD in Musicology. In the field of historical musicology, she published his work titled *Writing Music* (2006). Her second book *9/8 Romani Dance: Culture, Identity, Reconstruction* was published in 2015. She has conducted workshops for Romani Dance abroad, and participated in many concerts as a kanun performer and singer. She continues her work as an activist and researcher on urbanization, cultural identities and political uses of social classes and body politics. She is a faculty member at the Musicology Department of ITU State Conservatory of Turkish Music.

Nick GREEN

MA dance, Member of ICTMD Study Group on ethnochoreology and ICTMD Study Group on Music and Dance in Southeastern Europe since 2008. Currently an independent researcher investigating Romanian social

dance practices within the southeastern European context. Interested in traditional dance as a community behaviour in the present, and dance analysis an understanding of local ways of moving.

Daniela IVANOVA-NYBERG

Ph.D., is an artistic director at the Bulgarian Cultural and Heritage Center of Seattle. The author of various books and articles, she is the coordinator for the Glagolnitsata Society for Poetry and Literature and the Sub-Study Group on Dance and Diaspora at the ICTMD Study Group on Ethnochoreology.

Gül KAPLAN EKEMEN

PhD degree from Ege University, Faculty of Communication, Department of Journalism with thesis titled “Digitalized Dances: Articulated Bodies, Performances and Spaces”. Master’s degree in 2017 with thesis titled “History of Belly Dance in Turkey”. Bachelor’s degrees from Dokuz Eylül University, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Department of Business Administration and Ege University State Turkish Music Conservatory, Turkish Folk Dance Department. Has been working as a research assistant at Sakarya University State Conservatory Turkish Folk Dance Department since 2012.

Athena KATSANEVAKI

PhD in Historical Ethnomusicology (1998), studied Violin, Music Theory, and Byzantine music, and has presented papers at international and World conferences. She is a member of the MOISA Society (Ancient Greek and Roman music) and of ICTMD (Ethnomusicology). She lectures at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

Natalia KOUTSOUGERA

Anthropologist and director working at the intersection of anthropology of dance, visual anthropology, gender, youth, popular, hip hop studies. Her postdoctoral research revolves around hip hop, urban dance scenes and street femininities. She has produced two ethnographic films in Greece “Born to Break” (2011), “The Girls are here” (2015).

İdris Ersan KÜÇÜK

Born in Trabzon 1984. PhD from Ege University Conservatory with thesis on the “dance history of Georgians living in Anatolia” where he works as an Assistant Professor. In 2002 won 1st place in the audition of Turkish Folk Dances department at Ege University. Started playing Kemeçe during his undergraduate studies. Has been involved as a dancer, musician and researcher in many organizations both in Turkey and abroad. He published his master thesis on “Giresun folk dances” as a book in 2014.

Dilyana KURDOVA

Independent researcher and a dance teacher. She is the CEO of the Phoenix Perpeticum Foundation for preservation of traditional folklore and the international coordinator of the Plovdiv Folk Seminar at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, Plovdiv. Her research focuses on 1) Bulgarian traditional dances 2) music and dance under the prism of Anthroposophy.

Aleksandra KUZMAN

PhD in cultural studies at the Institute of Macedonian literature, Skopje; Research Associate/Researcher of instrumental music and folk instruments at the Institute of folklore “Marko Cepenkov”, Skopje; a violinist and a member of “String forces” and “Chalgia sound system” bands. Main research interest focuses on the old-urban tradition chalgia.

Archontia MAKRI DOULGERI

Dance educator, performer and ethnochoreologist (MA in Ethnochoreology, IWAMD, University of Limerick). Her main research interests are ritual practices, raqs sharqi (oriental dance) and MENA region dances, and community dance practices. She has conducted fieldwork in Northern Greece and within the international raqs sharqi community.

Rumiana MARGARITOVA

PhD in Ethnomusicology from the Institute of Art Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, where she works as an assistant professor. MA degree in Musicology from the National Academy of Music “Prof. Pancho Vladigerov”, Sofia. Her research interests include Turkish music from Bulgaria, Alevi-Bektashi ritual music, and traditional music archives.

Liz MELLISH

PhD University College London (UCL) (2014). Secretary ICTMD Study Group on Music and Dance in Southeastern Europe and member of ICTMD study group on ethnochoreology since 2008. Currently an independent researcher investigating social dance, cultural events and choreographic practices in the Banat region of Romania, dance in Romanian customs, and dance connections between the Balkans and the UK.

Amal MSAKNI

Cultural studies PhD researcher at the University Paris1 Panthéon-Sorbonne. She received a bachelor's degree in Music & Musicology and a master's degree in Cultural sciences from the Higher Institute of Music in Tunis. She is a music teacher, musician and an art therapy & sound healing practitioner. She is interested in ethnic sound practices and visual arts.

Visar MUNISHI

Ethnomusicologist in the Institute of Albanology of Pristina. Munishi is a PhD candidate at Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, Sofia. He has extensively researched about handcrafting of traditional musical instruments in Kosovo and wedding ritual and songs.

Iva NIEMČIĆ

PhD, a director of the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research in Zagreb, Croatia. Her field of interest is dance: methodology and development of ethnochoreology, performance studies, dance events in the past and in the present, dance ethnology, role and function of dance in the context of gender aspects, phenomenon of intangible cultural heritage.

Mehmet Öcal ÖZBILGIN

Professor, (PhD), head of Ege University State Turkish Music Conservatory Turkish Folk Dance Department. in İzmir, Turkey Artistic Director of State Conservatory Ekin Traditional Dance Ensemble (GO) and Ege Culture Association (NGO). Chair of ICTMD Study Group on Music and Dance in Southeastern Europe and member of Ethnochoreology Study Group. BAs in Engineering, Philosophy, and Sociology, Since 1991 taught courses on types, genres, history and staging of traditional dances in Turkey. Publications and research presentations treat structural analysis of Anatolian traditional dances and changes in socio-cultural context. Published three books on Ethnochoreology. Editorial board and referees of journals of music and dance studies in Turkey.

Elif ÖZEN

Research assistant and pursuing doctoral studies at İstanbul Technical University, Musicology Department on the realm of Karagöz plays, conducting comprehensive field studies within the domain of traditional performance arts. MA thesis was on the intricacies of song form within the realm of Turkish classical music. Her academic pursuits primarily revolve around the examination of cultural heritage, the intricate nuances of Turkish makam music, and the multifaceted facets of traditional theatre genres.

Arzu ÖZTÜRKMEN

Trained in folklore studies, Arzu Öztürkmen is professor of folklore, performance and oral history at Boğaziçi University in Istanbul. Her research covers the cultural history of Turkey, the Ottoman World and the Eastern Mediterranean. She served in the boards of IOHA and SIEF, and currently chairs the National Committee of ICTMD-Turkey.

Dóra PÁL-KOVÁCS

Ph.D., ethnographer, dance anthropologist, professional advisor of the Directorate of Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Hungarian Open Air Museum. She defended her PhD thesis in 2019 at the Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, entitled Gender Roles in the Dance Tradition of Magyarózd.

Zdravko RANISAVLJEVIĆ

PhD, Assistant Professor at the Department of Ethnomusicology of the Faculty of Music in Belgrade employed in the field of Ethnochoreology. He is a member of ICTMD Study Group on Ethnochoreology and Study Group on Music and Dance in Southeastern Europe. His field of interests are: formal kinetic analysis, dance and music relations, Ethnochoreology as a discipline, Intangible Cultural Heritage, National identity.

Sanja RANKOVIĆ

Associate professor of traditional singing at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade. She has published four books and a large number of papers in national and international publications. She is interested in the field of applied ethnomusicology, as well as to the issues of vocal practices.

Paul-Alexander REMEŞ

Research Assistant in the field of ethnology, specialization ethnochoreology, Folklore Archive of the Romanian Academy, Cluj-Napoca branch, PhD student at Doctoral School "Sigismund Toduță", Cluj-Napoca; MA in Musical Performance Arts (Choreography). Choreographer and artistic coordinator of the "Mugurelul" Student Folk Ensemble of Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca. Interested in the process of transfer of village dances to the stage, music and dance connections; dance notation, Laban kinetography and other notating languages; methods of preserving dance and new technologies that can serve the promotion of the phenomena of traditional dance.

Muzaffer SÜMBÜL

Faculty member at Çukurova University, Faculty of Communication. He works on the city, culture, media, digitalization, ethnography and local dances. He has done many field researches related to his fields of study and has written papers and articles.

Bubulinë SYLA

PhD Student in Ethnomusicology at University of Vienna and in Ethnology at University of Lucerne. She is affiliated as a scientific researcher at the Institute of Albanology in Pristina. Alongside she has presented in various international conferences in Turkey, Iceland, Ghana, Brno, Albania and Kosovo.

Ayano TAMAKI

Ethnomusicology master's student in Royal Holloway, University of London and Tokyo University of the Arts. The current research topic is about the relationship between socio-political background and music culture in Bulgaria, especially focusing on the education of folk music.

Gamze TANRIVERMİŞ

Asst. Prof. (PhD), director, actress and academician at Performing Arts Department of Trabzon University State Conservatory. She mainly works on contemporary performance and documentary filmmaking on culture and identity with special focus on gender, migration, ethnicity.

Ivanka VLAEVA.

Professor, PhD, South-West University "Neofit Rilski", Blagoevgrad; Associate Member of the Institute of Art Studies – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia, Teaches courses with a historical, theoretical and ethnomusicological focus. Publications and research presentations treat traditions and contemporary transformations of music in Bulgaria and Asia, archives and World Music.

Mirjana ZAKIĆ

Professor at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade. Since 2018 she has been the head of the Department of Ethnomusicology. She has published four books and a large number of papers in national and international publications. She is especially interested in ritual, instrumental music, and musical semiotics

Anastasija ŽIVKOVIĆ

Master student at the Department for Ethnomusicology in the Faculty of Music in Belgrade (Serbia) with thesis about stage folk dance in Serbia. Her research interests include traditional dance heritage and its contemporary use in participatory and presentational dance practice.

Appendix 2 : Abstracts for presenters who did not submit papers

Gökçe Asena ALTINBAY

Gender inequality in the organization of Turkish folk dances

The main axis of this paper is to examine the gender inequality in Turkish folk dance organizations by reviewing the gender inequality over the female gender in the world. The materials have been put at the centre of the barriers to accessing rights and freedoms, using the idea of an external model in social equality.

The correctness of the perception that gender inequality began to be seen with the existence of humanity was questioned, and the journey of this perception with the changing social life styles was examined. Following the rise of the feminist voice in Western societies with the rise of industrialization, the changes in social life with the Early Republican period were reflected in Turkish folk dance organizations in certain ways. It has been discussed how the practices (such as positive discrimination) aimed to be developed against gender discrimination with a liberal feminist perspective find a place in professional or semi-professional folk dance education institutions. In addition, an integrated table with institution and event data is presented, emphasizing the differences in appearance and application. From this point of view, this paper can be considered as a dialectical suggestion, a method of reasoning that tries to examine the reality and contradictions of gender injustice in the organization of folk dances in Turkey and to seek ways to overcome these contradictions.

Alma BEJTULLAHU

The appropriation of the traditional concept of the Sworn Virgin in present-time Kosovo music

The paper examines the appropriation of the concept of a gender-bending tradition in popular music styles in Kosovo. The starting point of the paper is the traditional social concept of *sworn virgins* - an old custom that regulates the transformation of the gender/sexuality when women assume the social role of men, a custom that can be observed among several ethnicities in the Balkans. Here I will briefly outline the concept and its origin, as well as mention some historical women figures that can be categorised within this archetype. Following this, the focus of the paper will shift to transformation of women's sexuality, narrated as a traditional value of a "woman, behaving socially like a man", in the popular culture of Albanians in Kosovo. In the paper I will analyse how the transmission from historic context to popular culture and music took place in several turns of Kosovo's recent history. I will also examine how these turning points coincide with appearance of various public discourses in Kosovo society, such as ethnic tensions, war, political affiliations, but also freedom of choice and gender equality. Further, this paper will also unfold circumstances of the appropriation of this concept among women musicians in Kosovo during the last 20-30 years, including not only the singers of (commercialised) folk style, but also popular music and contemporary singer-songwriters. Besides that, I will examine the fluidity of the concept of *sworn virgins* during the various appropriation processes as well as its representations in the society at large. To prove the point, I will use several musical examples, starting from 1990 to 1999 and 2002, as well as present time music, performed by well-established Kosovar singers.

Vivien Szőnyi BONDEA

To be woman as dance-forming factor in the Moldavian dance culture

The social structure of the Moldavian settlements and the social systems formed in places where dancing happens strongly define the possibilities of participation in, and the forms and stylistic features of, dancing even today. Segmentation of the communities based on gender, and the relations and connections between statuses manifest in dance forms, practices related to proxemics, individual construction of dancing, and behaviour during dancing. Through dance research a social structure comes to the surface in Moldavia that is held together by social norms and regulations deriving from differences between genders; and we can observe the interactive functioning of a social structure in the settlements that fits into the micro context, and depending on how strict the social control is in this system, fulfils a function that controls the body. Accordingly, dancing is a socially determined collective activity in Moldavia, and instead of a unidirectional mode of action, dancing implies an interrelation in which dance culture also exerts significant effect on the social structure of the communities. This presentation examines the dance learning opportunities of girls and women, their participation rates in each dance event, and the etiquette of their behaviour in the present dance culture of a Moldavian community. Through the case study of a single North-Eastern Romanian village, Magyarfalu (Arini) populated by a Roman Catholic, Hungarian ethnic group, it seeks answers to the question of how dance as a sociocultural practice constructs (and strengthens) women's gender roles in the life of the local community and how their innovative efforts to create dance can be linked to the transformation of the local economy and society.

Bengi ÇAKMAK

Becoming and vibrating: From becoming-woman to the nomadic subjects in musical creativity

This presentation aims to elaborate on the potential of sounds and vibrations within the context of Deleuzian-Guattarian understanding of becoming and Braidotti's nomadic subject. This philosophical position and conceptual route emphasize the non-hegemonic, dynamic, fluid, transgressing, and transformative potential of creativity. The Deleuzian-Guattarian perspective of "the privilege of the ear" will be further argued, extending the discussion to the process of creativity and the process of becoming a vibrant nomadic subject throughout the former. In other words, I propose that sound, and thus music, has a very special and crucial place in terms of the capacity of an artistic creation that is transformative and encompassing. Finally, I argue that the awareness of such a capacity would open grounds of not getting lost in the era of crises, flourishing the ways for co-existing. This presentation aims to contribute to the theme 'gender' from the posthumanist and new materialist viewpoints, especially by tackling the concept of "becoming-woman" and "the nomad".

Joško ČALET

Klapa singing concept of a 'new normal' and technological strategies during pandemic times

Like many other musical forms in which the group (social) factor is of great importance, *klapa* singing underwent major changes during the pandemic time. The music genre that in the previous period experienced a "transition" from recreational amateur music activity from the socialist period to market-capitalist professional music work activity in post-socialist Croatia in this period shares the world destiny of freelance artists who have effectively lost their already meagre income.

In addition to different (virtual) communications by which they maintained their insecure status, the singers themselves turned to exploring their backgrounds. In creating new repertoires, they were served with more accessible information from digital databases, emphasizing new technologies as an important, almost unavoidable element in learning and creating new repertoires.

The most complete publicly available database of total (domestic and licensed) Croatian record productions is being created within the project "Record Industry in Croatia from 1927 to the End of the 1950s", and is available within the Digital Repository of the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research. Relying on archival material, periodicals at the time and sales catalogues, funds of gramophone records on 78 rpm in institutions (archives, libraries and museums) and in private collectors, reissues of recordings, online available contemporary material, listed database and / or other sources, today's *klapa* singers can more easily get an impression of musical tastes, repertoires and prominent singers whose musical activity preceded the movement of organized *klapa* singing.

Dilek CANTEKIN ELYAĞUTU and Kerem Cenk YILMAZ

Rethinking transactional distance theory in dance education in the post-digital age

Transactional distance is one of the basic theories of distance education. Developed by Michael Graham Moore, this theory was based on the concept of transaction used first by John Dewey. In this theory, comprised of two basic dimensions distance (structure and dialog) and autonomy, the factor affecting learning is stated to be a communicative distance apart from a physical gap. So, what does the communicative distance mean in the post-digital era and does it hinder learning?

As the Covid-19 pandemic started to spread across the world, conservative music and dance education had also to transition to remote education as in every area of education. Effective inclusion of digital media tools in teaching and learning along with the transition to remote education is an ordinary process, which means an extraordinary communication between teacher and learner emerges. Especially, this new situation, was experienced as a negative situation in traditional dance education, that was caused by a shortage of materials over time.

Students who are our target group are individuals born after the 1990s who are already called "digital natives" who were born into digital life. The teachers are generations named as digital immigrants who were born before the 1990s. This situation leads to a paradox in the post-digital era. Can learning behaviours of the generation called digital natives in the post-digital era be explained by transactional distance theory? For whom does communicative distance cause problems? Does the content of the digital environment we create make sense within this theory, or should we rethink the theory?

In the current study, we aim to criticize the functionality of the theory during these days when we go beyond the digital era as we try to explain our experience that we have gained as a result of distance education that we have been maintaining for approximately one and a half year via the transactional distance concept. In south eastern Europe, Turkey is a region that still preserves its traditional environment and methods in the transfer

of traditional dance practices. Being in one-to-one communication, touching, sharing in the performance environment are important factors for the teaching of Turkish Folk Dances. In this context, another aim of this study is to discuss the effect of distance education on traditional dance culture in Turkey.

The conceptual framework of the study is comprised of the concepts of distance education, transactional distance theory, digitalism/post-digitalism, digital native and digital immigrant. The document survey will be applied to as the method.

Marija DUMNIĆ VILOTIJEVIĆ

Interpretation and invention of urban folk songs from Vranje: Past of (national) intangible cultural heritage

The policy of UNESCO intangible cultural heritage safeguarding is oriented toward sustainability of particular elements in the future, but this presentation will examine what is the role of one music element's past in this process. On the example of Serbia's national ICH element *vranjska gradska pesma* (urban songs from Vranje, no. 26), here will be discussed two aspects which modelled its history and which contributed to its today's representativity — oral tradition and sound recording. As the case study will serve ethnomusicological recordings of Vranje folk music from the 1970s, held by the Institute of Musicology SASA. The origin of these lyrical urban songs from south-eastern Serbia can be traced from the second half of the 19th century, and they have specific melodies, ornamentation and singing articulation. Their main distinction is poetical dedication to particular persons, places and events which were interesting to singer-songwriters. Special attention will be devoted to Ottoman traces in these songs. With the analysis of prominent interpreters' documentary recordings, here will be questioned how this particular genre was constructed before ICH platform and how these recordings may be used in ICH safeguarding. The aim of this paper is to raise a discussion about the importance of audio-visual historical heritage (including its digitization and publication), in the process of ICH safeguarding, and to contribute to contemporary urgent ethnomusicology.

Lisa GILMAN

“We are all people”: Music, identity, and cultural survival in the lives of displaced peoples

The proposed presentation, “We are all People”: Music, Identity, and Cultural Survival in the Lives of Displaced Peoples” contributes to the theme of Legacies of Empires on Dance and Music in South Eastern Europe. In as much as Southeastern Europe is a palimpsest of multiculturalism” produced through layers of empirical rule in the past, contemporary power structures continue to forcibly control people and cultures, thus impacting not only sound but also the social nature of musical experience across the region. Contemporary conflicts—rooted in the historical layers of empires of the past combined with the same human desire to control and dominate peoples, land, and resources—are forcing thousands of people from their homes into precarious journeys and unknown futures. As displaced peoples move through time and space, music (along with other cultural forms) becomes a critical means of survival. This working paper is part of a larger global project examining music and entrepreneurial initiatives by migrants. The goal of the project is to provide a positive narrative that counters the stereotype of refugees as vulnerable victims or dangerous pariahs that drain resources in the communities to which they flee in addition to contributing to scholarship on music and identity, trauma, and cultural conservation. By researching musical initiatives of displaced peoples in Turkey, Malawi, France, Pakistan, and the United States, the project offers an opportunity to highlight the humanness of displacement and the important role that music plays in maintaining a sense of self, sustaining cultural identity, forging bridges with people in new locations, and finding mechanism for financial well-being. While the project is global, this presentation will focus on preliminary research with Syrian musicians in Turkey.

Bahar GJUKA

Performing trauma in privileged spaces: Empowering Turkish women's voices of the past

Most Turkish folk pieces portray femininity through storytelling conventions of beauty, heroism, and motherhood. However, there are other lesser-known folk pieces about sensitive matters, such as women's hardships, and child marriage, which are now receiving more attention. This paper will examine the twentieth-century Turkish folk song “Ağ Elime Mor Kınalar Yaktılar” [They put red hennas on my hand] that explores the subject of child marriage. As a contemporary Turkish female composer working in the privileged spaces of academia, I give voice to underprivileged composers of the past, who are also survivors of childhood trauma.

My paper will analyse a project that took place in 2019 with a group of North American musicians at University of Calgary. The process of music making involved cross-cultural exploration, communication, rehearsals and performances of “Ağ Elime Mor Kınalar Yaktılar.” In my paper, I will examine the historical context of the piece and the creative process that enabled the ensemble to engage with the music, and the difficult

content that it conveys. To enable research methodologies within my creative work, I used Stévan and Lacasse's "research-creation" approach. I will share my position as a research-creator/composer, within this framework and present recorded video and sound data of the rehearsals as source material. I will also examine the reception of this song in the multi-cultural contexts of the university and the outside community in Calgary (Alberta, Canada), based on the public's reactions to live concerts and to published music videos of our ensemble.

Bernard KLEIKAMP

The life of ethnomusicologist Wouter Swets (1930–2016)

The Dutch ethnomusicologist Wouter Swets (1930–2016) started doing fieldwork in the Balkans and Turkey in the 1950s. He assumed that the traditional musics of these areas had suffered from Westernization and had been passed on in corrupted versions. Swets aimed to restore the "original" music with "ethnomusicologically sound" arrangements, based on what Swets considered clear and hard musicological evidence.

He subsequently used the results of his fieldwork in his ensemble Calgija, that existed from 1969 till 1995. Wouter Swets was an iconoclast and had no patience with the post-Ottoman revisionism. He simply told people what the music told him.

As proprietor of Pan Records, I started to work with Swets in the early 1990s, although we had already met much earlier in the late 1970s at Calgija concerts. Eventually Pan Records produced 3 CDs with Swets' ensembles, the last one posthumously in 2020. Moreover, Pan Records acquired the rights to Calgija's LP from 1978 on the Stoof label, after the bankruptcy of Stoof's parent company Munich Records.

In my presentation I will describe Swets' life and work, and show one or two Calgija videos. I will also play an audio piece and indicate the arrangement that Swets made.

Swets was a formidable, influential, and controversial figure, who put his mark on both ethnomusicology and world music. His musical legacy is continued in the ensemble Calgija 2 that consists of musicians with whom Swets worked for decades.

Marko KÖLBL

Critiquing heteronormativity in ethnographic research on music and dance in Southeastern Europe

This paper presents a heteronormativity-critical approach to the study of gender and sexuality within music and dance expressions in Southeastern European musical cultures, illustrated by examples from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Common patterns in ethnomusicological and ethnochoreological discourses on music and dance in the Balkans depart from a binary understanding of gender as well as expectations towards a heteronormative sexual behaviour, ideally performed within the restraints of marriage. These expectations' symbolic representation in music and dance practices often stays unquestioned – supporting and deploying hegemonic norms of gender and sexuality. Accordingly, stereotypical presumptions in ethnographic research often mirror the persistent weight of shared understandings of gender and sexuality within traditional musical cultures.

Making references to both – my own field research experiences and published ethnographic work relating to Croatia as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina – I show, how a queer-theoretical perspective that radically critiques heteronormative presumptions allows for a more nuanced analysis of gender and sexuality in music and dance. Drawing on theoretical impulses from the intersection of queer theory and ethnography, I suggest that scrutinizing heteronormativity enables us to dismantle cultural constructions of a gender binary and compulsive heterosexuality and the way they music or dance expressions establish and maintain them.

This paper suggests theoretical and methodological impulses for the broader field of research on music and dance in Southeastern Europe. It is based on own fieldwork and selected examples of other ethnographic work and links theoretical discussions from the fields of gender studies and queer theory to ethnomusicological practice.

Mojca KOVAČIČ and Ana HOFMAN

"Classy Trubači": Economies of othering, corporate listening and Balkan brass bands in Slovenia

As part of the process of nation-building in the last century, Slovenia has negotiated between different imperial and cultural discourses within which it has tried to build its political national consciousness. Thus, it defended Slavic legacy against Germanic legacy during the Austro-Hungarian monarchy or Alpine and European legacy against Balkan (and Oriental) legacy in the post-independence period of Slovenia. The processes of negotiating these overlapping legacies have taken place intensively in the realm of sound and music. This paper focuses on the so-called Slovenian Balkan brass bands (*Slovenski trubači*), which flourished on the music scene

after 2000. In musical style, repertoire and performance, they mainly refer to Roma brass ensembles from Serbia, but in the last 20 years they have developed into a distinct scene with unique performance practices. In our examination, we address the particular modalities of performing and listening to the brass music in the corporate setting. We concentrate on the bands that offer regular gigs for the companies and attract potential clients through their ability to tailor repertoire, performance tactics, and interaction with audience to the client's demands. While our analysis concerns the values, affects, behaviours, and aspirations associated with Balkan brass music, we focus on the assumed "wildness" of the Balkans (van der Port 1999; MacMillan 2019) as an important marketing niche to attract potential clients. This allows us to discuss how the racialization of the Balkan Other cannot be thought without an engagement with the issues of political economy and broader socio-political conditions. In this way, we aim to complement the existent discussions of the processes of commodification and appropriation of Balkan brass music by the Global North yet to shift a view from the conceptual framework of ethno-racial difference toward the shared experience of global capitalism.

Belma OĞUL

Entangled cultural memories in Southeastern Europe

Throughout history, the mobility of the population and the change of the political borders result in entangled cultures of the people which are based on the cultural memories reconstructed by the present based on the past. The affects and emotions are as significant as the material and verbal objects for this construction. Therefore, what is recalled would differ according to the present emotions which are complicated since they are changeable in consonance with the recent situation and public opinion. Unrelated events, objects, places and the dates may be considered as relational with each other.

By employing Karen Barad's theory of agential realism arguing that the universe comprises phenomena, which are the ontological inseparability of intra-acting agencies and when we translate Barad into our field, dances do not precede their interaction, rather, dances emerge through particular intra-actions. Thus, we can define dance as movements of the entangled agencies in an intra-active becoming. This paper deals with the *kolo* called *Čačak* performed by the Bosniak people living in Turkey who immigrated from the former Yugoslavia. The emotionally manipulated memories of Bosniak people after their immigration brought about the *Čačak* as one of their indicative dances which derives from the entangled dance culture of the former Yugoslavia.

Ivona OPETCHESKA TATARCHEVSKA

The "TraditionNew" – ethnosummit as a new cultural pattern (Pro-and-Contra analysis)

At the height of the global awakening from the Covid-19 pandemic, the issue of the sustainability of art in the time of the pandemia and other crises was raised in the field of culture, which did not exclude folk music and dance. This paper will discuss about the sustainability of the professional folk dance scene in Serbia, Macedonia and Croatia through the example of the regional initiative TraditionNew/TradicijaNova, as a five years old interdisciplinary, new cultural pattern/model of cooperation established on the initiative of the State Ensemble of Folk Songs and Dances of Serbia "Kolo".

The folk dance scene in each of the three countries in the last 7 decades has shown that it is one of the main threads of cultural development not only of the socialist society in which these three countries were developed as federal units, but also one of the special factors for personal and professional development of the many talented individuals involved. The case study that has been the subject of observation in which I am involved as a conference participant, but also as a program co-chair for the last three years, showed that it is an original platform in Southeastern Europe which has freedom to open a lot of frozen questions connected to the scene, to provoke creatively, to try to offer solutions and finally to anticipate the transition of the professional dance scene with all of its specifics (physical contact, number of performers on stage, vocal music included, intense range of certain musical instruments used in choreography, etc.) into the next "new normal".

Therefore, the challenge was to make an ethical distance for auto reflexive analysis of the "TraditionNew" with all its advantages and disadvantages. The pandemic has a devastating effect on the folklore scene and after the first shock, the three state ensembles each in its own way deal with KOVID health measures in their countries, trying to continue working in a new virtual or combined form. Was it the right way or only a temporary solution in which the modern digital technology is called for help, it remains to be seen through this analytical paper.

Christos PAPAKOSTAS

'Under one roof'. Music and dance communities in Youtube

It is a commonly held assumption that the new technologies in particular have changed dramatically human society, culture and communication. New phenomena appear and the new reality is a challenge on many levels.

The mass expansion of the Internet, since the early 1990s, has brought new circumstances at the economic, social and cultural level, as well as new forms of behaviour and expression. YouTube was founded in 2005 by three young employees working on the commercial webpage of the PayPal company. Its innovation lies in the fact that a user, through a relatively simple procedure, can upload a short-length video and share it with other users. A first conclusion that emerges from the above is that YouTube users are an assemblage of people with peculiar traits. In the opinion of Rheingold (1993), the absence of physical presence does not cancel YouTube's function as a field of constituting virtual (or potential, according to others) communities. This interactive and dynamic process between its community of users gives YouTube a sense of participatoriness and collectiveness. A very large number of videos whose subject is music, but also dance, circulate, are produced and are reproduced on YouTube. It is not fortuitous that these videos are the most popular and the most widely diffused. Thus, through music and dance we have the opportunity of investigating issues concerning the relations between individuals and social groups, as well as the creative practices developed in the framework of YouTube. The primary aim of the present research is to contribute to the study of the central subject of the present volume, namely the relation between folk cultures in Greece and Turkey. For this reason, we examine the new phenomenon that appears through the transmission, broadcasting, commentary and production on YouTube of amateur videos whose basic subject is folk performing arts (music and dance). And furthermore, through the complex procedures identified in the framework of YouTube:

- a. what are the new dimensions taken on by Greek and Turkish music and dance?
- b. and, in a more general framework, what are the representations that are projected for the Greek and the Turkish folk culture, and what are the relations between them?

Jakša PRIMORAC

***Latinokratia* in traditional chant: Examples of Istria and Syros**

The main purpose of this presentation is to draw attention to the importance of the centuries-long influence of Italy, and sporadically France, on music of the East Adriatic, Ionian and Aegean regions. To illustrate this phenomenon, I will discuss two examples of traditional liturgical singing.

The first example regards the traditional chant of Istrian Croats. During the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period, Croats and Italians in Istria practiced different traditions of Catholic liturgical singing. Croatian *glagolitic* chant was performed in Church Slavonic and Croatian, while Italian *patriarchino* chant was performed in Latin. In the 18th and 19th centuries *glagolitic* tradition disappeared, and Croats started singing in Latin, similarly to Italians. This practice was going on until the 1960s, but it remained almost unknown to researchers who have focused mostly on Istrian *glagolitic* tradition. The rich heritage of the Latin singing of Istrian Croats was not recorded (in notes or sound), and due to a number of reasons it died out.

The second example refers to the chant of Orthodox Greeks on the island of Syros, as well as on some other neighbouring Cyclades islands in the Aegean Sea, which is identical to the Orthodox chant on the Ionian Islands. A strong influence of the centuries-long Italian (and partially French) music culture is present in both archipelagos. Orthodox chant is homophonic. Its melodic structure is based on (north) Italian traditional music of the 18th and 19th centuries. In the Orthodox cathedral in Ermoupoli, the singing is accompanied by electric organ, which is according to Orthodox canons considered a sacrilege. A large community of Catholics of Greek ethnicity have lived in the near-by town of Ano Syros for centuries. In many aspects, their church singing resembles the singing of their Orthodox neighbours. This is a rather unique example of religious tolerance in Greece.

Serkan ŞENER

Play them all!: Networking, institutionalization, and competition among Turkish string ensembles

This paper focuses on the performer profile of Turkish string ensembles, which were dominated by Romani musician families, and their experiences in the music industry. Ethnographic research and narratives from the field are the primary source for my investigation, as well as publications of other researchers on this topic.

Historically, the first string ensemble was formed in late 1960s with the birth of an alternative popular music genre, which was pejoratively called *arabesk* music. A strings section became the trademark of its sound, especially in the 1980s. Performers of string ensembles expanded their stylistic boundaries in order to adapt to the changing musical scene in the recording studio during the 1990s. They also started to give service to neighbouring music industries after 2000's, especially in the Arab world. Economic consequences of developments in the recording and listening formats impacted their social organization and triggered an institutionalization process, which led to breakups from the original group. On the other hand, young generation musicians established new ensembles to compete with their elders in the network of Romani families. Kempa, Gündem, and İstanbul

Strings are reputable string ensembles in the marketplace; but other ones in various sizes and formations, also have a substantial share and role in the business. Today, the string ensemble plays a vital role in the Turkish music scene by serving in almost every musical genre and shaping audience taste. In order to maintain their presence in a constantly changing social environment, string ensemble performers have been capable of developing new strategies, which I will elaborate in my presentation.

Carol SILVERMAN

Politics, activism, and Romani music: Interpreting trends in Serbia, North Macedonia and Bulgaria

Several digital music projects have recently emerged that address political issues facing Balkan Roma such as prejudice, unemployment, police brutality, evictions, and gender discrimination. I explore digital activism-- what forms these projects have taken, who produces them, why and how, and what affect they have. In short, what are the challenges in merging activism and Romani music?

Although Roma are revered for their musical talent, they are often deemed outsiders to the nation/state. While music might seem like an inclusive sphere, it too is riddled with exclusions. Activism thus merits a deeper analysis than merely “protest songs.” Activism may emerge in texts and images as well as declaring identity in non-stereotypical ways, managing your own career, or changing unequal structures of music production.

One trend is NGOs sponsoring music projects. For example, the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture produced videos with the same text in Serbia, North Macedonia and Bulgaria as part of its Proud Roma project. Featuring local musicians, these clips feature protests against violence plus pride in education. They were designed to encourage Roma to declare their ethnicity in the upcoming census.

A second trend is the emergence of new genres such as rap. The Serbian/British NGO GRUBB (Gypsy Roma Urban Balkan Beats) has sponsored rap workshops for several years, and in 2020 female group Pretty Loud won public attention. With their striking clips depicting oppression of Romani women by both Romani men and non-Romani society, Pretty Loud strive for female empowerment through education and independence. This points to a third trend toward exposing gender inequality in the family, community, and music-making. I compare these NGO top-down projects to grassroots projects that originate with musicians, using examples from Azis and Neno Iliev in Bulgaria and Sutka Roma Rap in North Macedonia.

Urša ŠIVIC

France Marolt and his tendencies of cultural decolonization

Slovenian ethnomusicology was institutionalized in 1934, when France Marolt (1891–1951), founded the Institute of Ethnomusicology in Ljubljana, Slovenia (at that time part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians). Marolt became the inventor of research methods and discourses motivated by an idea of cultural decolonialism which was the reaction to the long-lasting legacy of the Austrian(-Hungarian) Empire and national(istic) tendencies beginning in the 19th Century. In his research on traditional music (also dance, language, clothing, customs), Marolt pursued the idea of refining Austrian (the so-called German) and other national influences, thus laying foundations for new national / regional borders that largely mark even contemporary ethnomusicological discourses and limit the capacity for transcultural / transnational understanding of cultural phenomena. The presentation will analyse Marolt’s nomenclature and his key ideological premises and critically evaluate them through perspectives of then broader political and cultural space.

Velika STOJKOVA SERAFIMOVSKA

Female gender and sexuality in predominantly all-male traditional music ensembles

Both “gender” and “sexuality” in music are part of the contemporary popular societal topics which mark the bodies and the lived experiences of groups and individuals in ways that provide unequal access to cultural, physical, and psychic resources, including but not limited to behavioral norms, education, careers, finances, and political power. The proposed paper will elaborate the position of a female musician in all-male music ensembles facing different challenges and stereotypes in following her life wish – to play music.

Through the story of Bajsa Arifovska, a female Macedonian Roma musician, and her path from her rural origin of troubled family to a Macedonian well recognized musician of traditional folk instruments, the paper will reveal different context and position which a female Roma musician faces and overcomes. During this process and struggle, the issue of gender and sexuality was often challenged not by the male musicians, but more by Bajsa herself. Her journey as a Roma women musician follows different stereotypes, prejudice, conflicts and discriminations that she is still overcoming, while music was and still is her only salvation and escape.

The paper will elaborate Baysa's path and sacrifice, but also her story that became a model for many other female and Roma folk musicians on the Macedonian folk scene. Her role as a teacher of traditional instruments, as well as her role in encouraging young Roma musicians (female and male) in overcoming the traditional stereotypes of a female Zurla or Tapan player has been marked in the Macedonian society, but only as a Roma musician. The issue of gender and sexuality is still a taboo. Today Bajsa is a member of the Macedonian National Ensemble of Folk Dances and Songs Tanec, a composer and an activist for female Roma rights.

Baia ZHUZHUNADZE

Bayar Shahin's archive of traditional music of Georgians living in Turkey

Traditional music of Georgians living in Turkey is an interesting subject of research from the point of intercultural interactions. This singing tradition reflects the cultural memory of the Georgian Diaspora in Turkey.

One of richest and unique archives representing this singing tradition is the Bayar Shahin's archive. Shahin (born in 1965) is a well-known singer, songwriter and collector of Georgian traditional music in Turkey. His archive includes up to 450 audio and 300 video samples of musical and oral folklore of the 1970s-2020s. Most of the material was recorded by Shahin during his intensive fieldwork between 2000 and 2018s. Also records from the 1970s and 1990s have been collected by him from various personal archives.

The geography of the records covers the following districts inhabited by Georgians: Artvin, Ordu, Rize, Sinop, Sakarya, Kocaeli, İnegöl, and İstanbul. These recordings are an important and unique source for the study of the issue of polyphonic singing tradition among Georgians living in Turkey.

Unfortunately, most of the performers from these recordings are no longer alive. The cultural memory of these singers has preserved polyphonic musical thinking and older layers of Georgian traditional repertoire. There are songs or versions of the songs which cannot be found any more in Georgia.

As for the rituals presented in Shahin's archive. From the richness of traditional music and dance repertory "Marioba Şenliği" is the most important feast, which is currently celebrated in the second half of August in Bazgiret and Boğazköy villages. The etymology of the word "Marioba" is connected with a great Christian feast in Georgian called Marioba/Mariamoba – the day of the ascension of the Virgin Mary which is celebrated on August 28 (new calendar). Georgians in Turkey are practicing Islam. "Marioba Şenliği" reflects the transformation of a former Christian religious ritual into folk feasting.

As Bayar Shahin's archive has never been researched, this paper is the first attempt to address this issue.