

# Musical Folklore of Rugova: Insights into Song, Dance, and Cultural Heritage in Kosovo's Highlanders

## Folclore Musical de Rugova: Perspectivas sobre Canção, Dança e Patrimônio Cultural dos Habitantes das Montanhas de Kosovo



**Arsim Kelmendi**

Department of Music, Haxhi Zeka University, Peja, Kosovo  
kelmendiarsim139@gmail.com  
<https://unhz.eu/faculty/prof-ass-arsim-kelmendi/>



**Hysen Nimani**

Department of Music, Haxhi Zeka University, Peja, Kosovo  
hysennimani3@hotmail.com  
<https://unhz.eu/faculty/prof-asoc-ma-hysen-nimani/>

**Abstract:** In light of globalization's impact on cultural homogenization, understanding the distinct musical heritage of ethnic groups like the Kosovo highlanders gains significance. This study aims to uncover the nuances of Kosovo highlanders' national musical creativity, focusing on aspects such as vocal, dance, theatrical, and gaming traditions. Employing analysis, comparison, and synthesis methods, this research scrutinized original song texts and choreographic recordings, delving into the multifaceted aspects of Rugova's oral traditional musical arts. The investigation unveiled the unique content and stylistic diversity across various folk art forms, including songwriting, choreography, theatrical performances, and traditional games. It identified key categories within each folklore branch, elucidating Rugova's vocal music features, such as monodic texture, pentatonic scale, and distinctive instrumentation. Additionally, attention was drawn to the specificity and functionality of traditional costumes, which offer comfort and protection in Rugova's challenging climate. The study presents Rugova's oral traditional creativity as an integrated system comprising multiple components, thus offering novel insights into Kosovo highlanders' cultural heritage. Its practical implications extend to fields like musicology, cultural studies, folk performance, and ethnography.

**Keywords:** cultural expressions. folkloric rituals. intergenerational transmission. ethnic traditions.

**Resumo:** À luz do impacto da globalização na homogeneização cultural, torna-se importante compreender o património musical distinto de grupos étnicos como os montanhesees do Kosovo. Este estudo tem como objetivo descobrir as nuances da criatividade musical nacional dos montanhesees do Kosovo, centrando-se em aspectos como as tradições vocais, de dança, teatrais e de jogo. Empregando métodos de análise, comparação e síntese, esta investigação examinou textos de canções originais e gravações coreográficas, aprofundando os aspectos multifacetados das artes musicais tradicionais orais de Rugova. A investigação revelou o conteúdo único e a diversidade estilística de várias formas de arte folclórica, incluindo a escrita de canções, a coreografia, as actuações teatrais e os jogos tradicionais. Identificou categorias-chave dentro de cada ramo do folclore, elucidando as características da música vocal de Rugova, tais como a textura monódica, a escala pentatónica e a instrumentação distintiva. Além disso, foi chamada a atenção para a especificidade e funcionalidade dos trajes tradicionais, que oferecem conforto e protecção no clima difícil de Rugova. O estudo apresenta a criatividade tradicional oral de Rugova como um sistema integrado que inclui múltiplos componentes, oferecendo assim novas perspectivas sobre o património cultural dos montanhesees do Kosovo. As suas implicações práticas estendem-se a domínios como a musicologia, os estudos culturais, a performance folclórica e a etnografia.

**Palavras-chave:** expressões culturais. rituais folclóricos. transmissão intergeracional. tradições étnicas.

Submetido em: 4 de setembro de 2023

Aceito em: 10 de abril de 2024

Publicado em: julho de 2024

## 1. Introduction

Studying the multifaceted folklore of Kosovo is relevant in the present era of globalization. Scholars are encouraged to cover the cultures of different ethnic groups in a deep and versatile way to preserve their heritage and promote it worldwide. Studying this topic helps to uncover the distinctiveness of the folk-art content of Rugova's inhabitants, as well as its local flavor, which includes oral traditions, particularly musical ones. This aids in preserving the brightness and diversity of the global panorama of national musical art and enables its transmission to future generations.

Avdyli and Veli (2022) devoted their study to the folk vocal genre of Albania, where the exploits of its warriors are sung ("Song dedicated to the Battle of Chanakkale"). Stamova (2022) emphasises the collisions of the political struggle of the Albanian population of Yugoslavia and, in particular, Kosovo, for the independence of the ethnos in various aspects: linguistic and cultural; territorial and economic. The historical path of this nation testifies to its realisation of the value of spiritual and material sources of progress and prosperity of every nation on Earth. Vula (2022) studied the concept of intercultural interethnic dialogue (UK, USA, and Albania) in the context of globalisation. On the example of comprehension of the problem of artistic translation of texts from Albanian into English, the scientist reveals the importance of preserving and transmitting the unique qualities of the creative heritage of Albania in the context of foreign artistic traditions that are gaining global significance. Bizhga (2020) highlights the fact of spreading folklore sources in all spheres of modern art of Albanians: music; choreography; acting. The scientist emphasises its ancient origin, uniqueness, versatility, and botany.

In their study, Ismaili and Krasniqi (2022) discussed the main features and characteristics of highland songs or songs of the mountaineers, which are folkloric creations unique to the Balkan Albanian people, mostly practiced in the Northern folkloric zones. The authors explain that these songs have a specific way of singing

that differs from other types of traditional Albanian folk songs, and their poetic structure is shortened, with reduced verses and a lack of pronunciation and comprehension of the poetic text in many cases. The article argues that the artistic value and perception of these songs are related to and conditioned by their performers, through the skills they use to convey their message to the community. In turn, Dushi (2019) aims to provide an overview of folkloristic orientations and impacts related to the social and political status of Albanians in Kosovo. The living conditions of Albanians in some Balkan countries have affected the approaches, orientations, and schools through which Albanian folklore studies have evolved. Albanian folklore studies in Kosovo differed from those in Albania during the period under communism.

The purpose of the study is to explore and document the rich cultural heritage of the Kosovo Highlanders, particularly focusing on the folk songs, dance art, games, and traditional costumes of the Rugova region.

## 2. Song and musical folk art of the Kosovo Highlanders

The folklore of Rugova (the region in Kosovo, located northwest of its fourth largest city, Peja) was found to be unique, vivid, inimitable, and characterized by the presence of a whole range of branches. The samples of folk art of the indigenous population of Rugova, in the process of its historical, spiritual, political, and cultural journey, are divided into several volume groups, each of which includes many varieties of genre direction, which has in its context a leading importance (Figure 1).

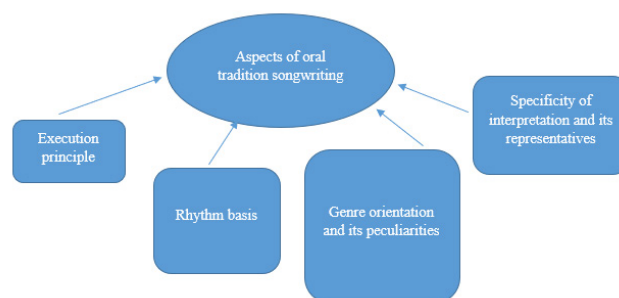
Figure 1 - Directions of Rugova Folk Art



Source: compiled by the authors

One of the extensive branches of the musical art of the oral tradition in Rugova is represented by songs. Figure 2 provides a list of the aspects of this branch of folklore that are of key importance for the formation and functioning of this branch of folklore in everyday life and, more broadly, in the national culture.

Figure 2 - The spectrum of key categories of Rugova song folklore



Source: compiled by the authors.

The peculiarity of the performance of Kosovo songs in the context of oral tradition is monody, as a principle of transmission of the main musical material, characteristic of many ethnic cultures around the world. There is also an ensemble variety of vocal creativity. In this case, the singer is accompanied by one of the instruments that have become widespread in the region in question. These are localised varieties of stringed instruments (lute, *çiftelia* (Figure 3)) as well as wind instruments (*kavalli* (Figure 4)).

Figure 3 - String and plucked instrument (*çiftelia*) of the Rugova folk instrumentalists



Source: Avdyli and Kryeziu (2019).

Figure 4 - Traditional wind musical instrument of the inhabitants of Kosovo (Rugova) - kavall



*Source: Avdyli and Kryeziu (2019).*

The *çiftelia* (*chiftelia*) has two strings (one of them performing the function of melodic transmission, the other – the accompanying background) and is characterised by a matte, slightly muffled sound, which becomes more resonant when the necessary playing techniques are used to achieve such an effect. The *lahuta*, a string and bowed instrument that is a prototype of the single-string violin, is also highly revered among the inhabitants of Rugova. Craftsmen who make it often decorate the body of the *lahuta* with carvings in the form of figures of mythological characters from ancient times. The *kavall* (a type of flute with a chromatic, twelve-step structure within an octave) also gives a special flavour to the sound of folk instrumental and vocal-instrumental music of the Rugova region. This instrumentation, representing several local variants of string and wind families adopted in different countries, is characterised by its timbre uniqueness and uniqueness, which emphasises the uniqueness and originality of the folklore of the Kosovo highlanders (inhabitants of Rugova). Thus, *çiftelia* is related to the string and plucked *saz* popular in Transcaucasia (Azerbaijan) and the *tanbur* in Central Asia (Uzbekistan; Afghanistan). The harmonic basis of

the folk songs of Rugova is pentatonic (no semitone sound order), with both major and minor inclinations. One of the characteristic features of the intonational structure of vocal samples from this region of Kosovo is the presence of some elements of the microtonal (intervals, less than a semitone) system. It is most often found in those turns of melody where melismas and glissandos are used.

The Kosovo Rugova Highlanders have a rich tradition of vocal creativity, with epic songs being one of the most prominent genres, numbering over fifty. These include titles such as "*Meta i balit Zog Asllani*" (Zog Asllani's goal) and "*Kush po del për qaf t'qakorrit*" (Who is going out for the kid's neck?). Additionally, women's lyrical songs, including lullabies and love songs, as well as labour songs tied to activities like hay harvesting, and ritual songs related to meal preparation, are widely known. Examples of these compositions sung by women's voices include "*Në der të t'banit kush po kjan*" (At the door of the house, who is here?), "*Këngë për Skenderbeun*" (Song for Skanderbeg), "*Boll e mirë si po mbledh sane*" (Good job, how are you doing?), and "*Na u pre dhiana u pre capit*" (Our goat was cut, our head was cut). The folklore of Rugova features both male and female voices, expressing feelings towards each other and engaging in love games, often reflecting a deep affection for Kosovo's native nature. The specificity of the performance of Rugova folk songs conveys the temperament, the character of ethnic mentality formed by climatic conditions, and historical and political events. It is captured in the stylistic varieties of interpretation of the vocal text.

The present study analysed several songs of the Kosovo Highlanders. One of them is called "*N'Fush' t'Kosov's u mledh' telalli*" (In the Field of Kosovo gathered Shout) (Figure 5). Its melody has a narrative character. In its structure, it resembles improvisation, where no specific metre and size are prescribed.

Figure 5 - "N'Fush' t'Kosov's u mledh' telalli"  
(In the Field of Kosovo gathered Shout)

The image shows a musical score for the song "N'Fush' t'Kosov's u mledh' telalli". The score is written on a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a time signature of 7/8. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 73. The lyrics are written below the notes. The score consists of several lines of music, with some lines marked with "15 sec. (3 sec.)" indicating a specific duration. The lyrics are: (o) O n'fushë t'ko-so-yes u mledh o te lallí o jag-se-ve-te tho-o-to-u oj se-na-a-me-e-po-ba-aj no-u e jo-se-ve-te-tho-

Source: Elsie (2019)

The rhythmic feature of the song is a figure of two durations: sixteenth and eighth with a dot. It is also characterised by an abundance of fills and ascending glissando (usually in the volume of a pure quarta). The harmonic basis of the song is the playing of the alternating major and minor tones of the same name (the main tone falls on the note "fa" of the first octave, passing the functions of support for some time to the tones "do" of the second octave and "sol" of the first octave). These components of musical expression and structure reflect the idea of the piece: a stern, courageous beginning, and unshakeable faith in victory. The first verse of the song contains the words: Oh, the messengers have



gathered on the field of Kosova. Oh, they are waiting for me to come to tell them, "Oh, we are doing a great thing". "Oh, I am on my way to them to say", "Oh, we are doing a great deed". The content of the second verse is more compact and more concise. Here the concept of the song is concretised: Oh, the messengers have gathered on the field of Kosova. They speak among themselves of victory (this phrase is heard twice). The exclamation "Oh" ("Oh") is a characteristic feature of the style of songs and dances of the Kosovars, symbolising the call, and attention to what will be said (or conveyed through movements) next.

Another song, "*Ç'jan' k'to gjám qi po i bjen era?*" (What are these echoes coming along with the wind) is an imitation of the echo in the highlands of Kosovo (Figure 6).

Figure 6 - "*Ç'jan' k'to gjám qi po i bjen era?*"  
(What are these echoes coming along with the wind)

The figure displays a musical score for the song "Ç'jan' k'to gjám qi po i bjen era?". It consists of four staves of music, each with a tempo marking and a duration annotation. The lyrics are written below the notes.

- Staff 1: Tempo  $\text{♩} = 66$ . Duration: 14 sec. (4 sec.). Lyrics: (0) — 0 — 0 çjan' o — kto gjám' e — ej
- Staff 2: Tempo  $\text{♩} = 60$ . Duration: 7 sec. (3 sec.). Lyrics: o — po jo bjen e — ra — ah
- Staff 3: Duration: 10 sec. (3,3 sec.). Lyrics: (0) 0 — kuff' o — oh
- Staff 4: Duration: 12 sec. (4 sec.). Lyrics: e po ho ba — ha ajn — o — oh

Source: Elsie (2019)

The development of the melody's thematic material is centred around one of its highest tones (D-flat of the second octave). In the beginning, there is a rapid ascent to it utilizing a glissando from the "G-flat" sound of the first octave. After conquering it as the apex, a repetition of the same tone is given, after which it receives its apex through a descending move of a semitone followed by a return to the mainstay ("D-flat"). The first line ends with a mirror-image repetition of the motif that opened the song: a decisive glissading descent from "D-flat" to "G-flat". The intonation of the next line is a "stay at the peak of the source (the above-mentioned D-flat of the second octave), its "two-sided operation" (using the tones of E-flat and C), and the subsequent return (using glissando technique) to the G-flat of the first octave. The third line (echoing the material of the first but presenting a more compact compressed version of it) conveys an imitation of an echo. The B-flat sound of the first octave acts here as a short-term support for the melody. It appears even more frequently in the fourth line, and its concluding tone is the G note of the first octave. The final line of both the first and second couplets is enriched with a more extended melodic formula (a descending progression followed by a leap) in the volume of a minor tertia ("B-flat" - "D-flat"), mordents, and a rapid descending movement to the new supporting tone "G" of the first octave (the end of the second couplet). The harmony basis of the song is notable for the fact that elements of the Lydian harmony (G-flat major with an elevated fourth step in the first, second and, partly, third lines) and the natural minor harmony with the tonics B-flat (the second half of the third line) and G (the second half of the fourth and fifth lines) are presented here in an inseparable synthesis. This creates a complex system of inclinations in the volume of the sexta ("G-flat" - "E-flat"), in the centre of which one can also feel the special colour of the sound of the diminished quinta (tritone): "G-flat - Re-flat".

Even more complex is the harmony and intonation structure of the song "*O po fjalo për tel ih*" (Telegram words) (Figure 7).

Figure 7 - "O po fjalo për tel ih" (Telegram words)

(o) O po fjalo për tel ih

e ja po thuj je Gja ko ve es o u

(o) e aj tha çou e de el

e ja po thuj je e e Gja ko u

e o e tha çou jo ou e de e el ou.

1. ndoshka këchfu

Fin. o.

Source: Elsie (2019)

Here you play a game of alternating sustains that are a semitone apart (the "A" and "A-flat" sounds of the first octave). Throughout the first line of the song, they alternate continuously. The "A" tone is more stable: its duration is longer, and it opens and ends the first line. Then there is a descending progression with the introduction of new time supports ("G" in the second and fourth lines; "F-sharp" in the third line; "F" in the final turn of the song). Thus, the contours of the F-minor tonality complicated by chromatic steps (F-diez; A-becar; B-becar) are outlined here.

The similarity of the harmony and intonation structure of this song with the sound orders adopted in the oral professional music of Transcaucasia (Azerbaijan) can be observed. Thus, the lower tetrachord of F-minor (F; G; A-flat; B-flat) coincides in its structure and, accordingly, in the character of sound and semantic orientation with the tetrachord that forms the basis of the Azerbaijani Shur harmony. This harmony personifies a decisive manly beginning. In general, by its structure, this song is an improvisation of the vocalist, who emphasises its tones by making them sound longer, as well as with the help of short melodic figures that sing them.

### 3. Dance Art of the Kosovo Highlanders

Folk dances of Rugova include as well as songs of this region of Kosovo, different variants of the performing composition. The most popular are collective choreographic compositions, where female and male groups of dancers perform together, as well as alternately. The subjects of the performance may differ in their orientation, genre, and style. Thus, the epic-heroic dance "*Dance of Rugova*" ("the dance with the sword"; "the war for the girl") is characterised by the originality and freshness of its rhythmic basis (Figure 8).

Figure 8 - "Dance of Rugova"



Source: Krasniqi (2017).

Its framework consists of episodes according to which male soloists perform one by one (imitating a battle between

themselves with sabres, swords or firearms), and then the whole cast of performers joins them, and its leading characters are eventually reconciled (there is a choreographic version according to which the final episode is performed by a boy and a girl). The group of dancers, following the soloists, repeats the contours of their movements (the hands of each man are fixed on the shoulders of his neighbours on both sides) and forms an unbreakable chain. The plastic drawing (periodically) depicts the men in a half-bent position (the women, meanwhile, keep their torsos straight), symbolising the movement of the local population of Rugova across the difficult terrain with great care. One of the large-scale dances of Kosovo presents first the couples (man and woman), then, sequentially, the male group, the solo episode of an elderly man (sage, tribal elder), the female group and the collective (in pairs, later in groups) final episode is also very popular among Albanians. The scarf plays an important role as one of the attributes of the national dance costume and an element of choreography. It is used by both women and men. Women cover their heads with light-coloured headscarves.

The children's performance of the folk dance "Rugova" exemplifies the national choreographic art of Rugova with its emphasis on mobility, lightness, feminine gracefulness, and fluidity of movements. The dance incorporates plastic figures, particularly highlighting the use of a shawl as a significant element. Despite their young age, the dancers skilfully execute a wide range of plastic elements, reflecting a professional level of performance.

#### 4. Games of Kosovo highlanders. National costumes

Traditional Rugova games have a centuries-old history. Their content is characterised by a variety of techniques for performing certain exercises. Obligatory for the games of Kosovo are movement on a rope with the help of hands and feet; tug of war; throwing a ball; throwing stones; original style of wrestling adopted by men of this region of Kosovo. The games that are very

popular among today's youth are of two types: open-air activities and indoor activities (held in winter). The second type includes the games among which the games have gained fame: "*loja e kapuqave*" ("The game of hoods"). They demonstrate the agility, endurance, courage, and resourcefulness of the indigenous inhabitants of Rugova, whose natural and climatic conditions and landscape are characterised by their complexity.

Ethnic costumes of the Rugova population are also characterised by peculiarity. Women's clothes are light-coloured dresses, usually white. They are accompanied by a dark (black) coloured waistcoat (*kracë*) and an apron decorated with ornaments of overlays of bright colours, as well as a long necklace and a small (black) decorative bag (*pështjellaku*) with a belt (*shoka*). A narrow skirt (*pështjells apo pshtjeci*), blouse and waistcoat are common among young girls. Men's costume consists of light-coloured woollen trousers tapering towards the shins (*tirq*); a shirt and waistcoat of similar colours with a few black lines forming a peculiar pattern; a large white armband and a scarf covering the neck from the cold and strong winds typical of this region of the Balkans.

Thus, with the help of this study, it was revealed that the folklore of the highlanders, in particular, the inhabitants of one of the regions of Kosovo (Rugova), as well as settlements in the Albanian Alps and Montenegro, is characterised by uniqueness and uniqueness due to the intonation structure of its song and dance melodies, the originality of the content and plastic contours of choreography, as well as games developed in the culture of the ethnos (Krasniqi, 2017; Doszhan, 2023). One of the origins of the folk art of Kosovo is the heroic epic (*Kreshnik*), reflected in the literary, musical, theatrical play and ritual and ceremonial directions of national folklore. It absorbed, and also, passed on to subsequent generations the unique qualities of the worldview of the highlanders, their character (courage and strength of spirit), everyday traditions, and a special flavor of art (literature, poetry, music, arts, and crafts).

At the same time, the creativity of the indigenous inhabitants of Rugova, along with heroics, celebrates the joy of life, and the richness of its manifestations in nature and in everything that surrounds a person from birth. This is reflected in the songs, dances, and game shows that celebrate the love for the native land, for loved ones and loved ones, as well as in the entertaining creative and sporting events organised in winter in the homes of the hospitable mountain people of Kosova. The time free from agricultural work creates favourable conditions for organising and holding large family festivals and competitions for agility, endurance, and resourcefulness among young people, where songs about the heroism of Rugova warriors, about love, as well as collective dances and popular games, are performed. To preserve the original and unique folklore heritage of one of the unique regions of Kosovo, the folklore ensemble "Rugova" was established in 1947. For more than seventy-five years, it has been transmitting to the world (in competitions, festivals, as well as shows) the samples of the spiritual and artistic culture of the Kosovo highlanders. Its repertoire is aimed at preserving the authenticity of the folk art of Kosovo's autochthonous ethnic group, and, at the same time, it is open to updating the technological artistic sphere of its broadcasts during the performance of the artists. Here, with the use of modern stage engineering and technical equipment, dialogue with the audience become more important.

In the ethnographic exploration of Rugova's artistic and musical practices, a rich tapestry of cultural expressions emerges, deeply rooted in the region's historical, social, and geographical contexts. Within this milieu, traditional music serves as a cornerstone, intertwining with ceremonial rituals, daily life, and communal identity. Instruments like the lahuta, çifteli, and fyell resonate through the valleys, their melodies echoing narratives of love, heroism, and pastoral life. These musical traditions, spanning epic songs to shepherd melodies, embody a living repository of cultural memory and expression. Dance also holds a prominent place in Rugova's artistic landscape. From the rhythmic steps

of the Çam dance to the graceful movements of the Hasan Aga dance, these performances animate communal gatherings, weddings, and religious festivals. Embedded within these choreographies are echoes of historical narratives, social dynamics, and collective aspirations, symbolically embodied through synchronized movements and gestures.

Visual arts further enrich Rugova's cultural tapestry, manifesting in intricate embroidery, weaving, and decorative crafts. Rug-making, in particular, stands as a testament to the region's artistic prowess, with vibrant textiles adorned in geometric patterns and symbolic motifs. Through these tangible artifacts, Rugova's artisans convey narratives of heritage, identity, and belonging, weaving together threads of tradition and innovation. Ceremonial practices punctuate the rhythm of life in Rugova, infusing artistic and musical elements into rites of passage, seasonal celebrations, and communal gatherings. Weddings, in particular, unfold as elaborate spectacles, where music, dance, and ritual converge to mark the union of families and communities.

Meanwhile, religious festivals resonate with chants, hymns, and processions, forging bonds of faith and solidarity among the inhabitants of Rugova. Oral traditions form yet another vital strand in Rugova's cultural fabric, serving as custodians of collective memory and wisdom. Through folktales, legends, and historical narratives, elders transmit knowledge across generations, anchoring Rugova's identity in stories of resilience, adaptation, and continuity. These oral narratives inspire and inform artistic expressions, infusing music, dance, and visual arts with layers of meaning and significance.

Rugova's artistic-musical practices constitute a dynamic and multifaceted expression of cultural heritage and identity. Across music, dance, visual arts, ceremonial rituals, and oral traditions, the region's inhabitants reaffirm their connection to the land, their ancestors, and each other, forging a continuum of creativity and belonging that resonates through time and space.



## 5. A comprehensive examination of musical folklore in the context of Kosovo highlanders

The problem of studying key areas of oral traditional culture and, in particular, the musical folklore of the Kosovo highlanders has been addressed by scholars from different countries and periods. They have highlighted certain facets of the topic under consideration. Much attention was drawn to issues related to such components as the history of the ethnos; political events that directly affected its fate; the state of the population; the tendencies of preserving the unique national culture; and the aspirations for independence of the nation. Thus, Kashahu and Dhima (2013) devoted their scientific work to the aspects of embodiment of folklore sources in the literary creativity of Albania of different historical epochs. According to experts, the most striking examples of the implementation of folk traditions are the epic style "*Cikli i Kreshnikeve*" ("Cycle about valiant bogatyr's"); the ballad "*Kënga e Halil Garrisë*" ("Song of Halil Garria"), as well as lyrical poems and elegies of the poet Palai Bernardin. They became the spiritual and artistic foundation of examples of Rugova musical folklore (particularly songs).

Bregasi (2021) explores the impact of the ever-changing social and economic conditions of life on the process of preserving the cultural and linguistic identity of Albanians, in particular the Kosovo Highlanders. The migration patterns of certain groups of the Albanian population to other European countries (Italy) over the centuries are analysed. Special attention is also paid to the samples of Albanian folklore (starting from children's games and ending with deep concepts, idioms), which have found a second life in new geographical and political conditions. The same author in another study reveals the importance of the national language of Albania as a fundamental factor of the ethnic identity of its people, along with folklore (song, dance, literary, poetic, and theatrical heritage). The need to preserve the traditions of a unique culture in the context of the society of other states where immigrant communities from Kosovo reside is noted (Bregasi,

2020). This concept turns out to be particularly relevant in the present period because its realisation, in reality, contributes to the progressive trends of global culture. This idea, at its core, is aimed at preserving the multifaceted spiritual, artistic (literature, music, painting); material (arts and crafts) heritage of mankind and passing it on to future generations (Afonina and Karpov, 2023).

Fischer and Schmitt (2022) revealed one of the models of spiritual, as well as artistic integration of the Kosovo highlanders in the context of pan-European history. They explored the space of life and activity of the ethnos, its creative traditions, in particular the national language, as a symbol of the uniqueness of the people of Albania and the basis of national folklore. This fact becomes especially important and relevant for such branches of oral traditional art of the Rugova population as vocal music, based on texts created by different authors over the centuries. Sharra (2021) studies the history of the Kosovo ethnos during the first half of the twentieth century. The author turns to the coverage of political and military events of this period, their impact on the fate of the Albanian people as a whole and their struggle for their rights, freedoms, and recognition as an independent European nation. This theme is directly embodied in the samples of musical folklore of the inhabitants of Rugova (songs; dances; games). Lajçi et al. (2022) put forward the concept of forming a branch of cultural tourism in Rugova. In their opinion, this region of the Albanian Alps is characterised not only by a unique landscape (caves, waterfalls, lakes) but also by the vividness and richness of cultural and everyday traditions. Specialists pay special attention to highlighting the role and significance of the indigenous folklore ensemble "Rugova" as a keeper and transmitter of the values of the ethnos, concerning the style of dress, ritual actions, and samples of folklore: dances, songs, games. This unique collective is more than seventy-five years old. Its representatives, belonging to different generations, with their talent, skill, and love for the indigenous traditions of the ethnos, bring to the world the unique artistic and spiritual value of the national folklore of Kosovo.

The contribution of Internet resources to the processes of preservation, modernisation, and dissemination of national sources of world creativity is studied. The article considers the role, content, and functional significance of such phenomenon as “post-folklore” in the context of global culture. It embodies one of the large-scale spheres of mass culture; a means of social communication; a phenomenon influencing public and individual consciousness; one of the components of the educational industry. It, also, can be created or collected by private individuals into a valuable collection, thanks to the achievements of information and communication technologies of our time (Voshchenko, 2023; Pastukhov, 2023). This fact opens unlimited possibilities for preserving, renewing, and popularising the art of oral tradition in Rugova.

Van (2023a; 2023b) raises the issue of modern folklore’s transition into the sphere of digital communications. According to the expert, in its context, it is actively developing. It is expressed through the emergence of many new forms of folk art and channels of its dissemination. Thus, one of the oldest cultural phenomena has undergone radical modernisation from the point of view of its carriers: they became Twitter and Telegram. D. Ben-Amos (2023) investigates the specificity and content of such concepts as “folklore” and “intangible heritage” of peoples. The scientist concludes that they, partly touching each other, have their unique nature and, following this, significance, and functions in the context of modern world culture. Valuable is the specialist’s remark that each nation needs to preserve its own spiritual, artistic, and social identity through the system of traditions characteristic of ethnic groups.

Maulana et al. (2023) reveal the fact of manifestation of ethnic self-identification of the people through national folklore, in particular, music and dance. In the present period, the role of economic processes, which also influence the interaction between business and culture, is gaining significant importance. By investing in the sphere of folk art, a reliable foundation for

its preservation and prosperity is created. The contribution of capital to the development of national popular music creates the prerequisites for its transition to the rank of ethnic art. This idea finds its realisation in the context of the oral traditional creativity of Kosovo. It coincides with the results of the present study, highlighting the significance of Rugova folklore in the era of globalisation. Nicolas (2019) makes an important conclusion that modern living conditions, one of the signs of which is urbanisation and the desire of young people to move from rural areas to megacities, carry certain risks for the preservation and transmission of ancient cultural traditions of different ethnic groups (rituals and theatre; songs and dances) to subsequent generations. This suggests the need for states around the world to take measures that can help the functioning and popularisation of folklore in the context of globalisation. This conclusion is also applicable to the oral traditional heritage of Rugova explored in this publication. It needs support for its preservation and expansion of its areas of existence through modern technologies.

Schein et al. (2015) consider musical culture in general and the creative traditions of ethnos in particular as a significant construct of social psychology and sociology. It epitomises one of the key links in the progress of modern life. This is confirmed by the effect that the folklore samples of the Kosovo Highlanders have on society. Thus, it is possible to accept such a concept. Chitondo and Carmichael (2021) raise the issue of communication culture in virtual workgroups existing in the context of Internet organisations. It creates prerequisites for increasing the quality level of their content and turning them into intellectual clubs. This fact opens the possibility of spreading ethnic communities (including the mountaineers of Kosovo) in the global network and discussing topics related to the national heritage of the inhabitants of Rugova. This conclusion is quite admissible from the point of view of the modernisation of mechanisms for broadcasting folklore sources belonging to Kosovo highlanders using modern engineering. Lidskog (2017) highlights the significance of national musical art

in the sphere of spiritual self-identification of ethnic groups in immigration. According to the researcher, it contributes to the creation of a fruitful dialogue with representatives of other states and constructive interaction on issues of economics, sociology, politics, psychology, and other branches of social life. This concept is also reflected in the folklore of the Kosovo highlanders. As for Rugova's work, the worldwide popularisation of her artistic traditions forms cultural and everyday bridges that unite the people of Kosovo with foreign countries.

Li (2023) notes the value of cultural intelligence in the context of globalisation. It, following the results of a study conducted by a specialist, contributes to increasing the level of ethnic self-identification of various national groups (including the highlanders of Kosovo) in the context of a multicultural world space. Authors can agree with this conclusion, as it stimulates the creation of conditions for the formation of the national identity of the inhabitants of Rugova. In particular, it reveals the value of its oral traditional musical heritage. According to the concept put forward by Popescu (2023), there is a direct relationship between the quality of interethnic communication and the level of cultural intelligence manifested in the process of realising various production projects. The deep spiritual development of a person based on national traditions favours the growth of their authority and demand as a specialist in a particular field of work. Such a conclusion is applicable in the context of this publication. It emphasises the relevance of preservation and popularisation (including multimedia) of ethnic art, in particular the folklore of the inhabitants of Rugova, among the population of Kosovo and beyond. Susilo et al. (2023) raise the issue of developing critical intercultural awareness in the context of comprehension of artistic materials provided by YouTube resources. This aspect aims to improve the quality of the materials provided by media resources and their positive impact on the preservation of humanistic values of humanity. This idea resonates with the needs of the folk art of the Kosovo Highlanders of the present period. Its realisation will contribute to the comprehension of this unique tradition of musical art.

Guliyev (2018) considers modern resources of digital communication technologies as a leading means of dissemination of folklore sources while preserving such aspects inherent in folk art as anonymity, oral transmission, and originality of embodiment of images, ideas, and artistic material. This factor contributes to the preservation and popularisation of authentic performance, which emphasises its special value. A similar conclusion applies to the national traditions of Rugova inhabitants. The originality of their folklore implies the interest of a wide audience in understanding their origins as they are. A similar point of view is held by another contemporary scholar: Voichici (2020). The specialist sees multimedia resources as a means of recording authentic folklore samples, their transmission to users of the Internet system in their original version (without any changes and artistic processing), as well as the realisation of the functions of a large-scale world archive. They are, in fact, of great help to scholars and lovers of oral art (including Kosovo highlanders). At the same time, according to modern specialist Bronner (2009), folklore continues to be a sphere of human activity that must be seen, heard, perceived, and felt through live communication and contact with it. This is the specificity and uniqueness of folk art, especially those regions that are being studied in the present period. This is quite true for the national art of Rugova. This conclusion corresponds to the concept of this publication, which aims to reveal the uniqueness of the national artistic traditions of Kosovo.

Papadakis and Kapaniaris (2022) put forward another term of the present period: "digital folklore". It is it that creates a modernised virtual culture that influences the formation of Internet communities; information sources; communication resources. In such a context, the role of folk art of various ethnic groups of the modern world community (including Kosovo) is increasing. Thus, the noted point of view of these scholars coincides with the idea of the value of fixing the oral traditional heritage of the highlanders. Jackson and Liggett (2020) reveal the importance of the activities of entertainment workers (DJs) in popularising folklore sources both

in the homeland and abroad. Audio samples of folk art become, thanks to this, widely known to modern society, in particular, to young people. This fact opens up great prospects for fixation, author's arrangements, as well as dissemination of music originated in Rugova. It, to a certain extent, corresponds to the conclusions of this publication about the relevance of folk art and the unlimited possibilities of its renewal through modern technologies.

All the above-mentioned studies are of great value in the context of revealing the problem of mastering the leading aspects of the musical folklore of the highlanders in the Balkans. They contribute to its perception as a voluminous historical, spiritual, cultural, as well as material phenomenon of modern civilisation. At the same time, each of them is focused on one particular sphere. This publication attempts to present the folk art of the inhabitants of one of the regions of Kosovo (Rugova) as a single complex integrated system, including aspects whose functional role and significance are key to deciphering and preserving its uniqueness in the era of globalisation.

## 6. Conclusions

During the investigation into the musical folklore of Rugova, a region in Kosovo, distinct characteristics emerged across various facets including song art, folk choreography, theatrical performances, sports games, and traditional crafts such as costume design and decoration. These findings underscore the unique content and stylistic nuances embedded within each branch, shedding light on the rich cultural heritage of the region.

The Kosovo Highlanders' folklore fund has been delineated into key categories across its branches. Ethnos' songwriting principles encompass vocal performance, harmonic structures, genre orientations, and interpretive nuances. The distinct features characterizing Rugova's vocal music, such as monodic texture, pentatonic sound patterns, microchromatic elements, and specific instruments like lahuta, çiftelia (chiftelia), and kavall, have been

identified. Noteworthy samples of song folklore, spanning heroic-epic narratives alongside every day and lyrical expressions, have been catalogued within the Kosovo ethnic group. Heroic-epic vocal heritage, exemplified by pieces like *"Meta i balit Zog Asllani"* and *"Kush po del për qaf t'qakorrit"*. Additionally, women's lyrical songs, including lullabies and love songs, as well as labour songs tied to activities like hay harvesting, and ritual songs related to meal preparation, are widely known. Examples of these compositions sung by women's voices, as well as women's singing traditions evident in pieces like *"Në der të t'banit kush po kjan"*, *"Boll e mirë si po mbledh sane"* and *"Na u pre dhia na u pre cap"*, have gained prominence in this rich cultural tapestry.

The study unveiled the intricate components of Kosovo's dance heritage, showcasing the narrative foundations of individual dances alongside the distinct figures and movements emblematic of choreographic styles. Additionally, ethnic games geared towards the preservation and dissemination of Rugova's longstanding traditions were underscored, featuring renowned examples like the *"Dance of Rugova"* and the game *"loja e kapuqave"*. Emphasis was placed on the significance of national costumes, lauding their role in providing comfort, adaptability, and protection in the region's challenging climate and terrain, while also highlighting their unique and aesthetically pleasing designs.

The research introduces a novel concept by identifying the oral traditional creativity of Rugova inhabitants as a comprehensive integral system comprising various key components. Its significance lies in its applicability across multiple disciplines including musicology, cultural studies, organology, folk performance, and music pedagogy. The study's practical value is underscored by the need for its findings in these fields. Further exploration of this topic could involve expanding ethnographic investigations to other regions where ethnic Albanian highlanders reside, preserving and perpetuating their ancestral traditions in daily life, thus offering promising avenues for future research.



## References

- AFONINA, Olena, KARPOV, Viktor. Art Practices in Modern Culture. **Kultura i Suchasnist: Almanakh**, v. 2, p. 76–81, 2023.
- AVDYLI, Merzhan, & KRYEZIU, Veli. Historical, Cultural and Musical Analysis of Folk Songs about the Çanakkale Battle in Albanian Music Folklore: Albanian Teachers' Opinions. **Rast Musicology Journal**, v. 10, n. 2, p. 289-309, 2022. DOI: 10.12975/rastmd.20221028.
- BEN-AMOS, Dan. Between Intangible Cultural Heritage and Folklore. **TFH: The Journal of History and Folklore**, v. 36, p. 17-73.
- BIZHGA, Denis. The Influence of Folklore on the Cultivated Albanian Music of the XX Century. **European Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies**, v. 5, n. 3, p. 47-55, 2020.
- BREGASI, Majlinda. Angela Cirrincione – A Life Dedicated to Albanology [Angela Cirrincione – Una Vita Dedicata All'albanologia]. **Palaver**, v. 10, n. 1, p. 163-174, 2021. DOI: 10.1285/i22804250v10i1p163.
- BREGASI, Majlinda. The Socioeconomic Role in Linguistic and Cultural Identity Preservation – The Albanian Case in Italy. **Palaver**, v. 9, n. 1, p. 221-249, 2020. DOI: 10.1285/i22804250v9i1p221.
- BRONNER, Simon J. Digitizing and Virtualizing Folklore. In Trevor J. Blank (Ed.), **Folklore and the Internet: Vernacular Expression in a Digital World**. Denver: University Press of Colorado, pp. 21-66. 2009. DOI: 10.2307/j.ctt4cgrx5.5.
- CHITONDO, Margaret, & CARMICHAEL, Teresa. Culture Formation in Virtual Organisations. In **6th Business & Entrepreneurial Economics Conference**. Zagreb: University of Zagreb, pp. 179-185. 2021.
- DOSZHAN, Raikhan. Multi-Vector Cultural Connection in the Conditions of Modern Globalisation. **Interdisciplinary Cultural and Humanities Review**, v. 2, n. 1, p. 27-32, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.59214/2786-7110-2023-2-1-27-32>.

DUSHI, Arbnora. Approaches of the Albanian Folkloristic in Kosovo: Background, Researches, Publications. **Traditiones**, v. 48, n. 3, p. 73-91, 2019. DOI: 10.3986/Traditio2019480304.

ELSIE, Robert. **The Albanian Bektashi: History and Culture of a Dervish Order in the Balkans**. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019.

FISCHER, Bernd J., & SCHMITT, Oliver Jens. The Space and Time of Albanian History. In **A Concise History of Albania**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 3-22. 2022. DOI: 10.1017/9781139084611.003.

GULIYEV, Hikmet. Folklore in Virtual Communicative Sphere: The Problem of Orality [Kommunikativ Mühitdə Folklor: Şifahilik Məsələsi]. **Young Researcher**, v. 4, n. 2, p. 151-156, 2018.

ISMAILI, Nevrije, & KRASNIQI, Nerxhivane. An ethnomusical analysis: Albanian highland songs. **Rast Musicology Journal**, v. 10, n. 2, p. 257-271, 2022. DOI: 10.12975/rastmd.20221026.

JACKSON, David J., & LIGGETT, Lori. Ethnic Music and Identity: Surveying Polka DJs and IJs. **Polish American Studies**, v. 77, n. 2, p. 9-29, 2020.

KASHAHU, Ermelinda, & DHIMA, Edlira. Impact of Albanian Folklore in Literature. **Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies**, v. 2, n. 1, p. 253-256.

KRASNIQI, Mark. **Rugova – Ethnographic Monograph**. Prishtinë: Akademia e Shkencave dhe e Arteve të Kosovës (Seksioni i Shkencave Shoqërore). 2017.

LAJÇI, Dardan, KUQI, Bekë, KARJAGDIU, Lirak. Cultural and Identity Values of the Rugova Region in Function to Develop Tourism in Kosovo. **Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism**, v. 12, n. 3, p. 831-845, 2021. DOI: 10.14505//jemt.v12.3(51).23.

LI, Lin. Ethnic Self-Awareness and Cross-Cultural Communication of International Students in the People's Republic of China

[Autoconcepto étnico y comunicación intercultural entre los estudiantes internacionales en la República Popular China]. **Culture and Education**, v. 35, n. 1, p. 155-187, 2023. DOI: 10.1080/11356405.2022.2133283.

LIDSKOG, Rolf. The Role of Music in Ethnic Identity Formation in Diaspora: A Research Review. **International Social Science Journal**, v. 66, n. 219-220, p. 23-38, 2017. DOI: 10.1111/issj.12091.

MAULANA, Ikbāl, WINDARSIH, Ana, RASTATI, Ranny, WIDYAWATI, Nina, PURWADI, Purwadi, & ISNANIAH, Siti. The Transformation of the Ethnic Pop Music Industry and the Negotiation of Cultural Identity. In Desmond Onyemechi Okocha, Muhammad Yousaf, Melchizedec J. Onobe (Eds.), **Handbook of Research on Deconstructing Culture and Communication in the Global South**. London: IGI Global, pp.158-173. 2023. DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-8093-9.ch011.

NICOLAS, Arsenio. Traditional Music and Contemporary Trends: Music in ASEAN Communities. **Sorai: Jurnal Pengkajian dan Penciptaan Musik**, v. 12, n. 1, p. 54-56, 2019. DOI: 10.33153/sorai.v12i1.2623.

PAPADAKIS, Stamatis, & KAPANIARIS, Alexandros. **The Digital Folklore of Cyberculture and Digital Humanities**. Hershey: IGI Global, 2022. DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-4461-0.

PASTUKHOV, Oleksiy. Sensual and Psychosomatic Benefits of Modern Dance: High Heels. **Mystetstvoznavchi Zapysky: Zbirnyk Naukovykh Prats**, v. 43, p. 64-69, 2023.

POPESCU, Ruxandra Nicoleta. The Impact of Intercultural Communication on Cultural Intelligence. **Management and Economics Review**, v. 8, n. 2, p. 220-236, 2023. DOI: 10.24818/mer/2023.06-0.

SCHEIN, Edgar H., COSTAS, Jana, KUNDA, Gideon, SCHULTZ, Majken, CONNOLLY, Tomoko Hamada, WRIGHT, Susan, HOFSTEDTE, Gert Jan, & WAH, Dixon Wong Heung. Opinions: All about Culture. **Journal of Business Anthropology**, v. 4, n. 1, p. 106-150, 2015. DOI: 10.22439/jba.v4i1.4792.

SHARRA, Myrteza. On the Administration of Vacated Lands [Mbi administrimin e Tokave të Liruar]. **Albanon**, v. 1, n. 4, p. 43-49, 2018. DOI: 10.54273/ra.v1i4.127.

STAMOVA, Mariyana. The Albanians in the Balkans During World War II [Albanci na Balkanu tokom Drugog svetskog rata]. **Historical Views**, v. V, n. 8, p. 152-164, 2022. DOI: 10.52259/historijskipogledi.2022.5.8.152.

SUSILO, Andi, YANG, Ping, & QI, Ruying. Developing Critical Intercultural Awareness Through Video Clip-Assisted Intercultural Tasks. **Higher Education Pedagogies**, v. 8, n. 1, art. 2235337, 2023. DOI: 10.1080/23752696.2023.2235337.

VAN, Tinan. Folklore in Social Networks (Using the Example of Twitter and Telegram). **Philology: Scientific Research**, v. 2, p. 10-16, 2023a.

VAN, Tinan. The Development of Internet Memes as a Form of Online Folklore in the Era of the Pandemic. **Litera**, v. 5, p. 97-106, 2023b.

VOICHICI, Oana. Folklore and the Internet the Life of Urban Legends in the Digital World. In **Proceedings of the 7th LUMEN International Conference. MEPDEV 2015 "Multidimensional Education and Professional Development. Ethical Values"**. Bologna: MEDIMOND, pp. 551-555. 2015.

VOSHCHENKO, Volodymyr. Post-Folklore as a Socio-Cultural Phenomenon of the Network Society. **Philosophical Horizons**, v. 47, p. 61-68, 2013. DOI: 10.33989/2075-1443.2023.47.282558.

VULA, Elsa. Empirical Research of Translating Albanian Literary Text into English by Albanian EFL Students. **Journal of Educational and Social Research**, v. 12, n. 2, p. 346-366, 2022. DOI: 10.36941/jesr-2022-0057.

## Authorship contribution

Both authors contributed equally to conceiving the study, analysing the data, and writing this paper.

## Publisher

Federal University of Goiás. School of Music and Performing Arts. Graduate Program in Music. Publication in the Portal of Periodicals UFG.

The ideas expressed in this article are the responsibility of their authors, and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the editors or the university.