

# The analysis of the development of artistic music in Kosovo from the historical and educational perspective

Rreze Kryeziu Breznica\*

Besa Luzha\*\*

\* Corresponding author, Prof. Assistant Dr. Musicologist, University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina", Faculty of Arts, Music Department, Prishtinë, Republic of Kosovo.

Email: rreze.kryeziubreznica@uni-pr.edu ORCID: 0000-0001-5601-5867

\*\*Prof. Assoc. EdD. Music Education Teaching Methods and Research, University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina", Faculty of Arts, Music Department, Prishtinë, Republic of Kosovo.

Email: besa.luzha@uni-pr.edu ORCID: 0000-0003-1635-8376

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## Abstract

The development of artistic music is connected to society's overall development and at the same time depends on the artistic educational philosophy and institutional capacities in society. This is the first time that the development of artistic music in Kosovo is analyzed from both historical and educational perspectives. The purpose of this study is to explore in what ways the historical and societal factors have influenced the development of artistic music in Kosovo, from 1945 to recently. The study uses mainly content analysis of the documents reviewed and music analysis of the music works of specific periods. The study finds that political regimes ruling in the early period 1945-1960 have shown no interest in the development of artistic music in Kosovo. In different political circumstances from 1970-1980 there were opportunities for greater development thus first artistic institutions were created. The period 1980-1990 brought back the assault against cultural empowerment of the Albanian nation living in Kosovo, thus after 1990-1999 the artistic music life in Kosovo ceased to exist completely and hardly survived, including the artistic and educational institutions. This study looks at the one-way trajectory in which artistic music life and artistic music education interrelate and collaborate, but different aspects remain to be further researched, especially in relation to the status of previous artistic institutions that cease to exist further and other interesting aspects in historical research about the music of one country. The results of the study can both serve for further research paths and also be used by the appropriate institutions that manage the creation or maintenance of the artistic institutions that create, cultivate, and promote artistic music in Kosovo. Finally, the cultural life in general but especially the artistic music life and appropriate institutions rebuilt from scratch, and new ones are created in a long, difficult yet dynamic and interesting development journey.

## Keywords

*art music, historical context, Kosovo, music education, music institutions*

## Introduction

This paper aims to shed some light on the historical, social, cultural and political influences on the artistic music development in Kosovo. The relation of music, society and education has been discussed by many scholars and it is generally argued that music is a socially constructed, alternated form of art, involving various social implications in a personal and society level (Wolf, 1989; Gregory, 1997; Green, 1999; Jorgensen, 2008; Wright, 2010; Small, 2012; Peard, 2012; Bonar, 2023).

Jorgensen (2008:256) suggests that music is interrelated with society in multifaceted ways and that it not only follows the society but also impacts, portends, and even constructs and reconstructs it, while Bonar (2023:1) argues that music makes a profound contribution to personal, social and cultural identity; it shapes and is shaped by society and allows us to explore our own individuality as well as connect with others.

The historical, social and political context of Kosovo, provides that the relation

between music and society may be similar to the one described by the American musician Peard (2012) who argues that:

In primitive societies, music fulfills a basic function as an accessible agent of tribal tradition, aesthetic meaning, and personal expression in which all participate. Music means more to those societies than simply sitting in a classroom; they use music to connect with others around them, share their cultural traditions, and build community (p.10).

Kosovo, a poor and developing country, with an underdeveloped society in its recent past, uses music and culture to promote the collective national identity, for the purpose of gaining international recognition.

### Historical Overview

Kosovo, is a small, independent country (2008) in Western Balkans, a troublesome territory with interesting history, culture and people. It was involved in different wars and conflicts in the region, throughout its existence. In the past it was a territory of Albania, formally excluded in 1912, once the Albanian State, declared Independence from the Ottoman Empire, an act recognized and approved by the Conference of Ambassadors held in London, and afterwards in Berlin in 1912-1913. Its recent history is related to a contested process by its main neighboring country, Serbia, which is considered a long-term enemy and hinder for the concluding of a state building journey of ethnic Albanians living in Kosovo, in the last century (Babuna, 2000; Judah, 2008; Kostovicova, 2002a; Malcolm, 1998; Misha, 2002; Misina, 2013;).

The majority population living in Kosovo are ethnic Albanians (90%), part of the 'Albanian nation', described by the noted British historian Noel Malcolm, as one of the oldest established populations in Europe ... to have inhabited the territory of Kosovo since antiquity (Malcolm, 1998, p. ii). Other minority communities living there (about

10%) include Serbs, Bosnians, Croats, Turks, Gorani and Roma, Ashkali, Egjiptian. In the last two centuries Kosovo was driven by disputes between ethnic Albanians and ethnic Serbs over autochthony and the right to rule the territory, shaping all aspects of Kosovan society (see Figure 1).

In 1989-1999 Serbia, one of the former Yugoslav Republics to which Kosovo formerly belonged within the Yugoslav Constitution, launched an 'ethnic cleansing' campaign against its Albanian population.

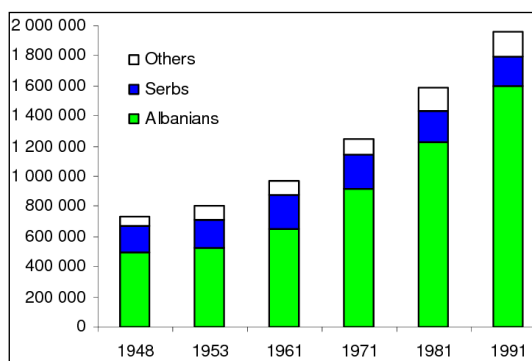


Figure 1. Population of Kosovo by ethnicity, according to population censuses 1948-1991 (Brunborg, 2002)

The resultant genocide was a culmination of the repression, resistance, rebellion and eventually open conflict [that had] engulfed the population of Kosovo for at least a decade before.

This invasion was brought to an end by the timely intervention of the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) military as authorized by United Nation (UN) Security Resolution 1244 (UN 1999), and Kosovo was finally liberated on June 10th 1999. In 2008, it became an independent state, by declaration of its Parliament, nowadays recognized by around 107 countries worldwide. The journey for recognition and membership in European family and institutions continues to dominate the developments in Kosovo.

This journey has become tiring and painful for the Albanians in Kosovo, due to the suffering, loss of many innocent lives and the trauma of the separation from the rest

of the Albanian nation and territory. This painful concession, as a result of the ‘Great Powers Politicking’ (Judah, 2008:38) has created a collective trauma, often evoked and expressed through music (artistic, folk and other genres).

Misha (2002) explains that the recreation of the past is an indispensable part of any process which makes a people a nation..., that is why history occupies an important place in the construction of an Albanian national identity (p. 41). The division of the Albanian people into two separate societies, with completely different social and political contexts was done in order to mark them in very different ways (Judah, 2008:11). Albanians were also identified differently in terms of geography, which was thought to be an intrinsic part of national identities (Kaplan and Herb, 2011). Hence, the music practices of Albanians also differ in relation to the specific social, political, cultural and geographical contexts in which they live. The diverse religious identity, in combination with the different dialects of the Albanian language and different musical expression and practices, represent a rich diversity spectrum within the unity of the supra-national Albanian collective identity.

### Societal Implications and Artistic Music

Kosovo, was in most of its history, a very poor and underdeveloped society, mainly rural and with a high number of illiterate populations. Episodic periods of a strategic, planned and systematic development on certain periods of history, has strongly influenced the music created in artistic and amateur realms (see Photo 1). Other developments, such as systemic cultural oppression and lack of industrialization of the country, until socialist rule, did not provide conditions for cultivating the artistic music, according to the Western Classical Music cannon and norms. Nevertheless, folk music, on the other hand, has had a different development path, specific to the influence of diverse factors in the relation of the music, people and society. Only

when a systemic education was established in Kosovo, the conditions were created to initiate and develop the artistic music life in Kosovo. In the Art Music foundation, folk is used in various ways, ranging from methods of citation, elaborated by the compositional individuality of the composer. Regarding the Albanian folk music, Albanian ethnomusicologist Armira Kapxhiu points out in her article “The Impact of Folklore in the Musical Cultivated Creativity” that in many cases the innovative modal-harmonic of Albanian folk compositions has maintained its importance, as well as other elements like prosperity of melodic figurations, rhythmic variety, instrumental colors etc (Kapxhiu, 2015).

Folk music, in addition to the support that gave rise to the overall musical culture in the country, was also “used” for a creation of a national cultural identity. However, what is known is that the first compositions of Art Music that were of folk music-based were made of simple formal structure. Evidenced are some a cappella choral pieces elaborations and stylizations from folk music.

Regarding the compositional oeuvre of Albanian composers in Kosovo, some of the main and popular choral arrangements are: Lorenc Antoni’s “Na ka dale nusja e mire” [“We’ve got a beautiful bride”], choral song based on a folk and very popular Albanian wedding song, a strophic song with a single theme that is performed throughout the song on the principle of canonical imitation (see Example 1), and after Fahri Beqiri’s “Moj e mira” [“You Beautiful”], also a strophic, typical pastoral poem where, in order to adapt to its content (the dialogue of the girl and the boy), the composer used the dialogue of the voices.

Example 1. The notations of Lorenc Antoni song Na ka dale nusja e mire [We've got a beautiful bride]

The song is also structurally simple, with in the rhythmic spectrum (see Example 2). modulations in close tonalities with changes

Example 2. The notations of Fahri Beqiri song Moj e mira [You Beautiful]

Vinçenc Gjini's "Blegëron delja" ["Bleating Sheep"] It is a treatment of popular music song by Kosovar composers mr. Gjini, another evidence of the creation of a national creative style within the Art Music foundation of the 60s. It is one of the most

popular and still popular songs, also a pastoral song but merged with the composer's original invention, while preserving its basic elements by which the song can be easily recognized (see Example 3).

Hej! de - le ble - ge - ro, ble-ge-ro  
 Ble-ge-ro, mo-ri de-le, ble-ge-ro, ble-ge-ro, mo-ri, de - le, ble-ge-ro, Ble - ge-ro, mo-ri,  
 de - le, në ma-le tue kër- ku,- Ble- ge- ro, de - le, në ma-le tue kër-  
 ku,- Ble- ge- ro, se ço-ba-ni u mar - tu - e  
 Ble- ge- ro, se ço-ba-ni u mar - tu - e *rit.*

Example 3. The notations of Vinçenc Gjini song Blegëron delja [Bleating Sheep]

As the composer Rafet Rudi indicated, in isolated societies, such as population of Kosovo, folk music is far more popular and sits in a dominant place in the actuality of cultural “consumption” while in place with more developed culture and with a higher degree of social-economic development it is less present (Rudi, 2002:252).

At the moment of the establishment of professional music institutions, many performers of folk music continued their studies, becoming part of professional music activities.



Picture 1. Choir of society “Agimi”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Conductor and director of Agimi, composer Lorenc Antoni is seen in the center, sitting. Photo provided from the monograph “Agimi”

## **Music and Education**

Many scholars, including McCulloch (2011) and Cox and Stevens (2016) assert that studying past developments in education (including music education) is important to shed light on current and future developments. More specifically, Bresler (1998) shares the viewpoint that 'contexts affect what teachers teach and how they teach, shaping explicit and implicit messages and values.

Education has been at the heart of all of the key struggles of modern times in different parts of the world. It has been a rallying call for social progress, change and equality, and has been fundamental to social class struggles, struggles for democracy, and the fight for social justice. Kosovan education, and music education too, similarly illustrate such struggle for political independence and the defense of national interests that particularly shaped what went on in schools (Cox and Stevens, 2010:5). Education, according to (Kostovicova & Prestreshi, 2003: 1082) is a 'sphere where a sense of national identity is mapped and reinforced'. Important historical events and political developments that have influenced educational reforms in Kosovo (Bacevic, 2014) also affected the area of music education in Kosovo.

The purpose of this study was to explore in what ways the different historical and societal factors have influenced the development of artistic music in Kosovo, 1945-2000, with emphasis on music repertoire, music institutions and music education development, institutions and music teaching methods and philosophy.

## **Method**

Qualitative (descriptive) method is used in this research. This study, beside literature review, applied document analysis methods, (including archival documents, music documents and music analysis) in addition to the reference on already conducted research by others and by both authors. In addition, interviews and public statements

with artists, composers, and music educators who lived, created and performed in various periods were also used. Photographs, samples of music works, are used for illustration purposes.

## **Findings and Discussion**

Kosovo has experienced different political and societal developments under different rules, since 1945, and it is important to see through documents how artistic music started and was developed. Interviews with persons who have experienced those developments in various periods of time will shed light and illustrate certain developments. The political regimes ruling in different periods, had an impact on the form and level of development of the artistic music in Kosovo.

The general education system in Kosovo is analyzed by various scholars, and a historical periodization through different phases is developed, which undoubtedly can also serve to analyze music education developments in Kosovo (Osmani, 2015, Qirezi, 2015, Luzha, 2005, 2015, 2016, Kryeziu-Breznica, 2016).

Luzha (2015:31) had identified six periods in which the trajectory of music education in Kosovo can be analyzed historically:

- Education and music education as identity consciousness (1912-1945)
- Education and music education as a basic human right (1945-1968)
- Education and music education as emancipation (1969-1980)
- Education and music education as struggle (1981-1989)
- Education and music education as survival (1990-1999)
- Restoring education and music education in a post-war context (2000-to present)

Kryeziu-Breznica (2016) has identified 4 different periods according to Kosovo musicology, in order to analyze historical developments of music works and composers, institutions, and the overall development of artistic music in Kosovo.

- First phase-1945 -1955
- Second phase -1955-1965
- Third phase -1965-1975
- Fourth phase-1975-2000

These two types of periodization are combined to present the findings of this study, where historical events, and circumstances are interrelated with the evidence of development/creation of music education and professional music institutions.

### Preconditions for the General Education in Kosovo (15th -19th Century)

In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, only some religious orthodox and catholic schools existed in Kosovo. Later, the main education institutions established during the period under Ottoman rule in Albanian territories, in the beginning of 16<sup>th</sup> century (Albania and Kosovo) were the Muslim community schools with lecturing in Turkish-Ottoman and Arabic languages.

Rare schools run by different regimes in forthcoming centuries (16th-19th century)

would continuously deprive learning in Albanian language. However, a number of great Albanian intellectuals that were highly educated in the Istanbul madrasas and in Alexandria or Baghdad or at the various Catholic centers/churches in Rome, Vatican etc, attempted to initiate some learning in Albanian language for the Albanian children and youth in Kosovo, using religious environments as schools (Malcolm, 1998, Osmani, 2015). Each religious community had its own schools recruiting pupils. The learning subjects as part of the aforementioned school initiatives, however, were always part of the religious prayers and practices, in addition to the family related practices.

### 19th Century - Albanian Renaissance Movement - Initiation of the National Albanian Educational System

The period of the Albanian National Renaissance (19th century) in general stands out for the extraordinary commitment to the spread of national education in all Albanian territories. The opening of the Albanian school in Korçë (1887) was followed by the opening of the first Albanian schools in the regions of Kosovo: Prizren, Stubëll, Letnicë, Pejë, Gjakovë, Zym, Ferizaj, Vushtrri, Zllakuqan, Janjevë, etc.) The adoption of the alphabet of the Albanian language (1908) was also a push towards the restoration and development of Albanian national education.



Picture 2. Stublla church<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>The first school in Albanian language in Kosovo

Of great importance for the beginnings of music education in Kosovo is the first non-religious school in Albanian language, opened in Stublla (see Picture 2) in 1905, in a small village in South-Eastern Kosovo. Later, under Austro-Hungarian rule, better conditions provided the opening of new schools in the Albanian language (Kryeziu-Breznica, 2018:34).

Fifty schools in the Albanian language with 100 teachers and 4,000 students were opened during this period. A priest named Dom Mikel Tarabulluzi (1868-...) traveled in the highlands of Karadaku region, not only to perform the pastoral duties but also to expand the stimulus knowledge in Albanian and the Albanian National Renaissance ideas, thus to encourage students to attend the schools (Osmani, 2015, Matoshi, 2020).

The students of Dom Mikeli School were learning not only the Albanian language, but also other school subjects such as: mathematics, history, catholic religion and lectures were held in Albanian language. For the first time music became an integral part of this school program. The Albanian language was divided in singing (reading) and calligraphy, while historically music was one of the preferred school subjects. Since the beginning of the work of this school, there were organizations of school and church choir, but also cultural society for recital and theater appearance (web 1).

This is evidence of the first steps towards artistic music practices in Kosovo which did not exist until the aforementioned period of time.

Whilst there was a formal education system established in Albania, (already since 1908), in this period, characterized by Hobsbawm (1990) as the period in which the "nationality" principle was fixed and changed Europe's map (Hobsbawm, 1990 in Carretero, 2011:9) no stable formal education system was present in Kosovo yet. Therefore, little evidence is found on what was happening in terms of education

and music education, which was limited to singing practices, mainly.

### **World War II Period - Establishment of the Kosovo Education System**

The beginnings of the construction of the educational process in Kosovo are characterized by the difficult circumstances that reigned during the Second World War. A turning point in these circumstances can be considered the efforts to lay the foundations of the organized educational and educational system with lessons in the Albanian language in the territory of Kosovo, especially the one administered by Albania, in which case we can consider that the construction of an education system for Kosovo, was developed directly from Albania. During the analysis of sources on the development of Albanian education in Kosovo in this period, we notice an important reference to musical education, which we mention by underlining this text: First they started teaching them Albanian songs (Veseli, 2003:18). With this, the initiatory process of learning the Albanian language was described, considering the learning of the Albanian song as a first and necessary step in this major project. This proves that the importance of musical education, namely singing for the general education of students, was understood, especially in raising the patriotic feeling.

It was exactly this period which gave a tremendous contribution and inspiration for starting the professional music education sphere which leads to the need for the establishment of music education institutions and philosophy. In this period, Kosovo became part of a after World War 2 newly created country of Yugoslavia, consisting of 8 different nations.

As part of this system, the overall socialist development and focus on human resources and education, resulted in first established primary and secondary music education institutions (music schools) in two different cities of Kosovo Autonomous Province-Prizren (1948) and Prishtina (1949). There was no



professional staff available with a proper artistic music education or qualification.

This experience has been evidenced also in other countries with similar difficult social-political circumstances as Kosovo, as it is accounted by the authors Nils Wallin (1924-2002) and Björn Merker (1943- ):

Establishment of music educational institutions would prove extraordinarily difficult because at that time (after WW2) the economic and cultural situation was suffering from the politics in place that were always in high tensions. Opening music institutions was an imperative need of this time (p.62).

If we compare with neighboring countries of the Balkans, “Mokranjac” Music School in Serbia was founded in 1899. A school with the same name, “Mokranjac” School of Music in Macedonia was founded in 1934 and, whereas in Albania, “Jordan Misja” School of Music was founded in 1944. Kosovo is the last country to begin with music education.

The opening of the first music school in Kosovo came as a result of the initiative of the so-called provincial council of Yugoslavia. The Serbian-Croatian composer Josip Slavenski (1896-1955) was sent to identify whether Kosovo, in this case the city of Prizren, as the one with better organized music activities, meets the conditions for the opening of a professional music school. Slavenski, fortunately, decided that the school should open seeing the great will of amateur musicians. With the consent of the then ministry of education, Slavenski opened the first school of this type (elementary music school) in Prizren on 25 October 1948 (see Photo 3), and considering the result and high interest, a year later, 1949, high music school was founded in the same city. The school was named after him - “Josip Slavenski” (now named after the Albanian composer Lorenc Antoni) (Kryeziu-Breznica, 2018:36).



Picture 3. “Lorenc Antoni”, (the first music school in Kosovo, Prizren, then named “Josip Slavenski”)

In the years to follow, from 1948, during Yugoslav time, music education and practice continued to expand across the country. It is worth mentioning the First Provincial Music Festival organized on May 25-30, 1956, in which, according to the data presented in a report, found in the Kosovo National Archives titled “Dymbëdhjetë vjet zhvillimi kulturuer të Kosovës e Metohis, Prishtinë, (1958) it is

mentioned that in this festival, “51 choirs, 53 orchestras, 37 groups of singers and 95 soloists, duets and other ensembles with close to 3,500 performers were evidenced”. In this period, the ‘Normal Schools’ which were set to train the general classroom teachers for the schools in Kosovo, required students to learn to play an instrument, in order to become effective teachers. These

pedagogical institutions contributed a lot to the development of music education in Kosovo (Luzha, 2016).

### **1950-1970 - Overall Cultural Emancipation Through Music**

In this period several young musicians in Kosovo, continued to study professional artistic music studies in other centers of former Yugoslavia (Belgrade, Sarajevo, Zagreb, Ljubljana etc). As a result, the first generation of the Kosovo artistic musicians is evidenced (Kryeziu-Breznica, 2016). They also became the first generation of artistic

music teachers in Kosovo. Other music primary schools were opened in other cities of Kosovo, and much more pupils enrolled for learning singing and playing various music instruments (Luzha, 2016).

From archival documents, which are related to the educational process, such as school certificates, we understand that as far as music education as a subject in general schools is concerned, it was called Song in primary school, and Music in secondary school.

**Table 1.** Foundation time of elementary music schools in Kosovo

City	Foundation Year	Name of school
Prizren	1948	“Lorenc Antoni”
Pristina	1949	“Prenk Jakova”
Mitrovica	1954	“Tefta Tashko”
Gjakova	1970	“Prenk Jakova”
Peja	1976	“Halit Kasapolli”
Gjilan	1979	“Prenk Jakova”
Ferizaj	1996	“Çesk Zadeja”

In 1963, within the High pedagogical School of Prishtina, the music education department was founded, and this was the only Higher Music Education program functioning in Kosovo. Until 1967-68 teaching was only

conducted in Serbian language and 300 students had graduated in that period, 87 of whom were Albanians (Kryeziu-Breznica, 2018).



**Picture 4.** Faculty of Arts, University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina”

The music education in schools, advanced, and the subject included more components than the singing component. According to archival documents, curriculum documents of the time (1965) it can be shown that the components of the music education in general schools included:

- Singing songs (folk and artistic) and rhythmic and melodic exercises
- Children's musical games
- The instruments in the school's instrumentarium
- Free expression in music
- Listening to music

This approach increased the scope of music activities, including school choir and orchestra, ensemble practices, competitions etc. The singing and playing of instruments in general schools was done via both methods a) by ear and b) with music notation, using absolute solfege method.

### 1970-1980 - The Flourishing of Artistic Music in Kosovo

In the decade 1970-1980, Kosovo Autonomous Province, experienced an overall development that influenced also the educational processes, characterized with a fast pace of development, including the general and professional music education institutions (Luzha, 2015, Kryeziu-Breznica, 2016, 2018). In addition, the Society of Musical Pedagogues and the Society of Music Artists of Kosovo (1972) were also established.

These three societies were the main providers of the artistic music life in Kosovo through various publications and music manifestations such as:

The festival: Days of Kosovo music (1979);

Competitions of music talents

Musicological tribunes;

The festival: The New Music Scene of Prishtina (1981)

These institutions not only promoted and performed Kosovo Albanian Artistic Music works, but they also promoted the artistic music performance more specifically. In terms of genres and repertoire, the performances included works from early music until the modern music of Stockhausen and alike.

The Assembly of Kosovo on 31 July 1973 approved the Law on establishment of the Academy for Figurative Arts in Pristina, whereas the Board of University of Pristina on 21 September 1973 approved the decision for the academy to begin with its work. The academy began working on 25 December of the academic year 1973-74. In the academic year 1975/76, the branch of Art Music was established (see Picture 4). This marks the beginning of the Professional High Music Education system in Kosovo.

The Symphonic Orchestra of the Radio and Television of Prishtina (RTP) was established formally in 1975, although the initial organization of this orchestra is noted already in the early 1950's, with few small wind ensembles and bands being active with performance (Brizani, 2022). The Symphonic Orchestra of RTV of Pristina became the mainstay of orchestral music in Kosovo. This orchestra, focused its repertoire in classic and romantic music as well as in the literature of Kosovo authors, and had many successes, in particular during the 80s. Moreover, proof that the 1970's are considered as the most productive years of the development of Art Music, is shown also by the establishment of the Kosovo Ballet Ensemble at the National Theatre in 1972. The creation of the institutions encouraged Kosovo composers to expand the repertoire in style, forms and music language.



Picture 4. Choir of RTP<sup>3</sup>

### **1980-1989 The Period of Struggle and Resistance Against Cultural Oppression**

The latter periods, as described in great detail in the previous research conducted by Luzha (2015, 2016) and Kryeziu-Breznica (2016, 2018) Kosovo Artistic Music Scene faced serious challenges for Artistic music in Kosovo, due to the attempt of the Serbian regime for acculturating Kosovo Albanians, through constant oppression against institutions, experts and general population.

The oppression culminated with the political oppression and abrogation of Kosovo's autonomy (1989), however, earlier, since 1981, the "witch hunting" political process against Albanian intellectuals was initiated in the name of protecting the Yugoslav national identity from the separatist tendencies of Kosovo Albanians.

### **1989-1999 The Period of Survival**

The period 1989-1999 is characterized with an absolute cease of functioning and the dissolvment of all artistic music life and institutions. The impact was a heavy one due to the beginning of the last war in Kosovo (1999). A well-known composer and conductor, Rafet Rudi, explained:

The lack of leadership, submission to requests from the political establishment, violent expulsion of conductors from duty, ultimately resulted in the dissolution of orchestra's members (p.40).

The majority of artists emigrated, many were arrested, the education system collapsed entirely with the massive expulsion of teachers and students (1991) and the remaining intellectuals in Kosovo, together with the political elites of the period, re-established and maintained the voluntary parallel education system operating in illegitimate and non-traditional educational institutions and conditions, for the purpose of survival.

Being excluded from the public educational system the teaching continued in private homes and improvised spaces, lent for free by parents of the pupils, teachers as well as people of goodwill. This situation aimed to avoid the total collective abandonment of education by the younger generations, in exchange to the low quality of educational outcomes.

<sup>3</sup> Photo provided by the Radio Television of Pristina archive

Table 2. Foundation of public secondary music schools in Kosovo

City	Foundation Year	Name of school
Prizren	1949	“Lorenz Antoni”
Pristina	1950	“Prenk Jakova”
Mitrovica	1998	“Tefta Tashko”
Gjilan	1998	“Prenk Jakova”
Ferizaj	1998	“Çesk Zadeja”

Any attempt to organize a music activity in this period from Kosovo Albanians privately or from the parallel institutions was considered illegal and combated by the Serb regime of the time. The only allowed music activities were those of the ad-hoc established Women’s Choir performances

conducted by Bahri Cela, and organized in the Catholic Church in Prishtina and few individual attempts. We were determined to keep alive our education system by pursuing it ‘underground’, which, according to Clark (2000) represented an act of ‘civil resistance’.



Picture 6. A concert of Besa Luzha, organized privately in 1996, was the last concert allowed in the forbidden “Red Hall” in Prishtina.

Experiencing immense difficulties, and degraded quality of educational services, with teachers and pupils being arrested and killed, music and music education were reduced to the singing component solely and mainly served to keep the spirit alive by nourishing the Albanian identity and supporting the fight for freedom and resistance.

Phases as described above, filled with unrest, significantly affect Art Music life through underdevelopment of professional musical institutions (see Figure 2) and future generations that ultimately result in a very late appearance and modest Art Music life. During this period professional art music ceased to exist, while a very limited local traditional music continued to develop.

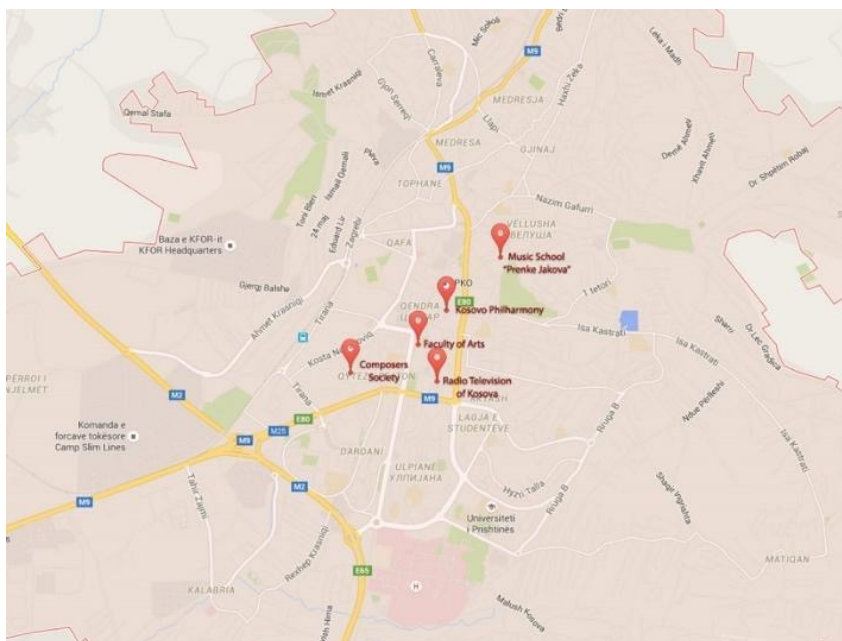


Figure 2. Map of main music institutions in Pristina<sup>4</sup>

### 1999-2022 Restoration and Creation

The period from 1999 evidenced the initiatives for a complete reformation of the education system in accordance with the highest international standards. The new education system and Curriculum, aimed towards building mental abilities, professional skills, civic culture, individual and social wellbeing of Kosovo citizens. Implementation of modern methodologies for teaching and learning is based on high standards and objectives.

In this period, the enthusiastic musicians in the country and those who returned in the free Kosovo revived the music scene in Kosovo by organizing special music events (Luzha, 2005) and re-establishing the professional music institutions.

The Philharmonic Orchestra of Kosovo was founded in Pristina in 2000 (see Photo 8), just a year after the end of warfare and turbulent events, with the initiative of local musicians and support of the Department of Culture in Kosovo. Within the same

institution was founded the Choir in the year 2003 (see Photo 7), first as opera choir and later as part of the Philharmony (Kryeziu-Breznica, 2018).

The Chamber Orchestra with 14 to 16 musicians whose conductor was Bahri Çela (now deceased); artistic director became the returned cellist Antonio Gashi (1966- ) and the concert maestro Sihana Badivuku (1967- ). This aimed to be the continuation of the work carried out by the previous Choir and Symphonic Orchestra of RTP (see Picture 4 and 5).

<sup>4</sup> Customized map created by Rreze Kryeziu Breznica using Google Maps



Photo 7. Choir of Kosovo Philharmonic (2016), PC: Arben Llapashtica



Photo 8. Philharmonic Orchestra of Kosovo (conductor Nathalie Marine, 2015), PC: Arben Llapashtica

Alongside public music schools and general music education that relies on four pillars: creativity and performance, learning about music language, learning about music and society through music listening and music appreciation (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology-MEST, 2011) any private music schools, studios and courses emerged, due to the increased interest of families for music education of their youngsters, offering singing and instrument learning courses. The Music Department of the University of Prishtina has increased the number of students, and programs and currently feeds

the entire professional music sector in Kosovo.



**Photo 9.** The walls of a classroom about Albanian folk music, but also about wind instruments, and Classical music period and composers in Prishtina at 2013

The music life in Kosovo has enriched a lot with numerous high artistic level music festivals in Pristina, capital city of Kosovo, but other cities as well. High level artists, local and international, participate, and the number of music audiences is increasing continuously. Hence, these new initiatives have resurrected the artistic music life in Kosovo, offering hope for progressive development in the near future.

Just recently, in 2021, the Opera of Kosovo was created by the Kosovo Assembly as the newest professional music institution, and the initiative for creation of a second orchestra for opera repertoire is underway.

## **Conclusions**

This study looked at the one-way trajectory, in which artistic music life and artistic music education in Kosovo interrelated and collaborated, mainly since the establishment of the genuine Kosovo education system, in 1945. It was evidenced throughout the study that the historical, political and societal factors influenced the form, the level and the structure of the artistic music life in Kosovo.

A great contribution to the development of artistic music in Kosovo, resulted from the establishment of professional educational institutions in the country. The documentation and evidence show that these institutions, although for a short period of time, managed to establish an identity but also gave a worthy reflection of culture in Kosovo.

There are still different aspects remaining to be further researched, especially in relation to the status of previous artistic institutions that cease to exist further and those re-established in 2000 to nowadays; the artists that left Kosovo and the ones who returned and contributed; other interesting aspects research about the music of one country such as new music works, literature, repertoire, audience behavior etc.

The results of the study can both serve for further research paths and also to be used by the appropriate institutions that manage the creation or maintenance of the artistic institutions that create, cultivate and promote artistic music in Kosovo.

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## Biodata of Authors



Prof. assist. Dr. sc., **Reze Kryeziu - Breznica** is an Albanian musicologist. Her academic and research work is mainly focused on Albanian and Balkan music. Kryeziu - Breznica was born in Prishtina (1986) where he took her first piano lessons in the elementary music school while in secondary education, she attended lessons in music theory. Reze graduated from the University with distinguished success at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Prishtina (Kosovo) in the direction of Musicology in the class of musicologist and veteran of music education in Kosovo, Prof. Engjëll Berisha. The Department of Musicology was closed after Kryeziu - Breznica graduated, making her the sole heiress of E. Berisha's class and the school of Albanian musicology in Kosovo. At the same time, she attended studies in the direction of Music Pedagogy at the same Institution of Higher Education. Reze continued her studies at the 'master' level (Musicology) at the Faculty of Music at the University "Cyril and Methodius" in Skopje (Macedonia), in the class of Prof. Stefanija Leskova - Zelenkovska. She completed her doctorate at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Philosophy at the University of Bern (Switzerland) with mentor Prof. Britta Sweers. As one of the most active personalities in the classical / artistic music scene of Kosovo, Kryeziu - Breznica is the initiator and bearer of many cultural activities, conferences and musicological tables and musical events in Kosovo. She is the general director of the International Music Festival "DAM" and secretary of the Association of Composers of Kosovo and co-founder of the Balkan Composers Competition in Prishtina (BCCP). Kryeziu-Breznica has undertaken a recent initiative to reinvigorate and optimize the publishing sector within the Association of Composers of Kosovo. As part of this effort, there has been a notable focus on the release of publications that showcase the musical talents and creations of local composers. Specifically, her latest research resulted with three publications. These publications are characterized by the inclusion of cyclical songs and chamber compositions, offering a diverse and comprehensive representation of the creative output within the local composition community. This strategic move not only highlights the commitment to fostering and promoting the rich musical landscape of Kosovo but also serves as a testament to the ongoing efforts to document and disseminate the artistic achievements of the region's composers. Since 2009 he has been teaching "History of World and Albanian Music" at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Prishtina. Kryeziu - Breznica has done valuable work in compiling the Biographical Dictionary of Women Composers in Kosovo (2017) while four of her publications are "Monografi - Reshat Randobrava", "Goca e Kaçanikut" and "The History of Art Music of Albanians in Kosovo", "Mes dashurisë dhe kërshtërisë për muzikën".



**Besa Luzha** is an experienced music teaching trainer and researcher, curriculum developer and department manager for more than 20 years in University of Prishtina Faculty of Arts-Music Department. In addition she has been actively engaged in policy development, coordination and communication as Program Coordinator at Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Prishtina Office, promoting social democracy for the last 23 years.

Her love for classical music has influenced her to become an active festival organizer since 1999, re-establishing the music life in postwar Kosovo. Currently she manages the credible International Piano Festival "ChopinPianoFEST Prishtina" [www.chopinfest.org](http://www.chopinfest.org) since 2010, and is also engaged in organizing team of the Rame Lahaj International Opera Festival (RLIOF) [www.rliof.com](http://www.rliof.com) since its establishment.

