UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Wedding Dances from Kosovo, Yugoslavia: A Structural and Contextual Analysis

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts in Dance

by

Janet Susan Reineck

1985

© Copyright by

Janet Susan Reineck

1986

The thesis of Janet Susan Reineck is approved.

Bariša Krekić

Allegra Fuller Snyder

Elsie Ivancich Dunin, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles
1985

Për Veli

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF FIGURES vii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ix

ABSTRACT xiii

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Theoretical Approach 5

Review of the Literature

Studies in Albanian Dance 8

Studies in Dance Ethnology 15

Methodology 21

CHAPTER II: THE ETHNOGRAPHIC SETTING

Kosovo 25

Opoja 35

CHAPTER III: INTRODUCTION TO THE WEDDING DANCES OF OPOJA . . 40

CHAPTER IV: THE MEN'S WEDDING DANCES OF OPOJA

The Sequence of Wedding Events 42

The Journey to Fetch the Bride 50

Men's Dancing During the Wedding Event 60

Dance Structure 71

Attachment and Formation 72

Rhythm 73

The Naming of Dances 78

Basic Movement Units 78

Stylistic Characteristics 81

Motifs 84

Syntax 88

Kellçoja 92

Kajde e Grave 94

The Learning Process 96

Native Evaluations 97

Dance Function 99

CHAPTER V: THE WOMEN´S WEDDING DANCES OF OPOJA

The Sequence of Wedding Events 104

Women´s Singing in Opoja 105

Women´s Dance 109

Dance Structure 114

The Learning Process 119

Dance Function 120

CHAPTER VI: CHANGE AND CONTINUITY 124

CHAPTER VII: NOTATED DANCES

Labanotation Key 136

Opoja Men´s Dances 139

Musical Transcriptions 180

Opoja Women´s Dances 203

Song Texts 210

Women's Song Melodies 215

NOTES 227

REFERENCES 231

APPENDIX I: LANGUAGE

Albanian (Gheg) Pronunciation in Kosovo and Standard Serbo-Croatian Pronunciation 243

Spelling Standardizations 245

The Opoja Dialect 246

APPENDIX II: GLOSSARY

Glossary of Albanian Terms 248

APPENDIX III: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE 252

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure | Page

Maps

1. Yugoslavia 30

2. The Autonomous Province of Kosovo 31

3. Kosovo: Suggested Delineation of Dance Zones 32

4. Kosovo: Ethnographic Zones 33

5. Opoja 34

Movement Analysis Tables

6. The Sequence of Men's Dances: Rhythms and Attachments. . 77

7. Basic Movement Units 80

8. Basic Movement Motifs 86

9. Frequency of the Occurance of Motifs in Men's Dances . . 87

10. Basic Movement Units and Motifs in Which They Occur. . . 90

11. The Sequence of Men's Dances: Typical Arrangement of Motifs 91

Illustrations

12. Shota performed in the older style Opoja dress by dancers from Zhur 220

13. a. Cifteli 221

b. Men's indoor wedding entertainment

14. a. Lodraxhiut (The Drummers) 222

b. The Cyrla Players

15. a. Dance spectators at the tonda 223

b. Men's dancing in Opoja

16. Opoja Men's Dancing 224

17. a. _Kcim Dysh_ (dance for two). 225

b. _Valle_ (opencircle dance)

18. _Kcim në Rreth i Mbyllur Veç e Veç_ (circle dance single file) 226

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Wedding Dances from Kosovo, Yugoslavia:
A Structural and Contextual Analysis

by

Janet Susan Reineck

Master of Arts in Dance

University of California, Los Angeles, 1985

Professor Elsie Ivancich Dunin, Chair

This study is the result of two years of field research conducted among the Albanians of Kosovo, an Autonomous Province in southern Yugoslavia. The research focuses upon the wedding dances in the remote mountain region of Opoja. The thesis provides a description of the dance context with a detailed structural analysis of eleven men's and seven women's dances which are recorded here in Labanotation.

The dancing is further defined in terms of the participants' own evaluations of the dance events, the learning process, and the function which dancing serves in the community. While Opoja is presented here as an area which has maintained a strong continuity of dance traditions, an attempt is made to pinpoint the extent of subtle, gradual changes taking place in response to related changes in social behavior.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Albanians are known for their magnanimous hospitality. Throughout my two years in Kosovo I was extended every kindness and offered tremendous assistance in my work. The research for this study was made possible by the unceasing generosity and good will of the people, both in the towns and in the most remote mountains.

I thank the Fulbright Foundation for funding my stay in Yugoslavia, and the Beograd Fulbright Committee for their frequent and good-humored assistance. My research was made possible by the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo through the efforts of the Ministry of Foreign Cultural Affairs and Prishtina's College of Philosophy. In Prishtina (Priština)[1], my work was enriched by consultations with members of the Albanian Institute, the Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Ministry of Culture and the Cultural Center.

Deepest thanks to the consecutive directoresses of the Shota Ensemble for allowing me to take part in daily rehearsals, and to the choreographer, assistants, musicians and fellow dancers for constant encouragement and good will. Thanks also to the General Director, the Director of Musical Programs and the engineers of Television Prishtina for their help in acquiring beautiful ethnographic footage.

My work would not have been possible without the constant support and help of Professor Dr. Shefqet Pllana, my advisor at the University of Prishtina. Recognized throughout Yugoslavia for his work, Professor Pllana is one of the foremost Albanian folklorists. In numerous

publications ranging from wedding songs to literary biographies, and from oral literature to music and dance, he has made a significant contribution to the study of folklore. Our frequent discussions clarified many theoretical issues and opened my eyes to much of the folklore scholarship in Yugoslavia. Professor Pllana was also a great help in obtaining permission to carry on many aspects of my research.

My principal informant, tutor and guide to the customs and dances of Kosovo has been Xhemali Berisha, a native of Opoja (Opolje) currently working in Prishtina as the choreographer and dance and music director of Shota, the professional dance ensemble of Kosovo. Mr. Berisha has been a unique and valuable informant due to his dual orientation to the study of Albanian dance: while he has a deeply internalized sense of the world-view, customs, dance and music of his native village in Opoja, he is also a professional musician, singer and choreographer, able to appreciate the dance forms of his region from the perspective of a trained observer. There were two primary foci in the work with Mr. Berisha over a two-year period: learning and analyzing the male and female dance forms of Opoja, other parts of southwest Kosovo, Drenica and Rugovo, and discussing engagement and marriage customs, dance events and music and song traditions. He also provided the musical transcriptions for songs and dances included in this thesis, and has aided in translations of song texts. Mr. Berisha gave me invaluable support and guidance for which I am deeply greatful.

To Professor Elsie Ivancich Dunin of UCLA, my academic advisor for the past seven years, my deepest respect and gratitude. Professor Dunin has guided me through successive stages in the study of dance

ethnology and has been a constant source of inspiration, information, advice and support. With unceasing energy she has been active in dance research for the past twenty years and is one of the foremost authorities on South Slavic dance outside of Yugoslavia. It is through Professor Dunin's initial encouragement and support that I chose the field of dance ethnology and made Yugoslavia, and more recently Kosovo, my research focus.

I wish to thank my other Thesis Committee members from UCLA, Professor Allegra Snyder and Professor Bariša Krekić. Both professors have made a substantial impression on my approach to fieldwork and scholarship.

At the University of Hawaii at Manoa, many thanks to Barbara Smith for her insightful criticism and suggestions, and to Gary Danchenka for his excellent orthography of the women's song melodies.

Lindita Aliu, a gifted young scholar in Prishtina, gave me great help in my Albanian studies throughout my stay in Kosovo. I am deeply indebted to her now as she completes the translation of this study into Albanian, so that it may be shared with the Albanians of Kosovo.

Perhaps I have learned the most from participation in the day-to-day lives of the people of Kosovo. Through this contact I have become acquainted with their perception of life: their joys and sorrows, inclinations and affinities, hopes for the future, links to the past, and the values, beliefs and social dynamics which weave the fabric of their lives. Deepest, deepest thanks to the people of my neighborhood in Prishtina, the families Azizi, Rexhepagic, Rexhepi and Sadiku, who took me in as a member of their families, and who sustained me with

wonderful spinach pita and sweet tea. With patience, love and understanding, these families taught me their language, their way of life, and shared with me times of joy and sorrow.

I am also very grateful to others in Prishtina, Prizren and Gjilan (Gnilane) who gave me encouragement and helped me tremendously in making contacts and reaching fieldwork sites: families Aliu, Bahtiju, Hashani, Prekadini, Shahiqi and Stefanović. In the villages I learned some of the roots of Albanian folklore, hospitality and character, was taught proper decorum and grew to love a way of life so rich in customs and lore, respect and honor. I will always remember these village families who have given me the greatest kindness, the highest and softest beds, the place nearest the fire in the dead of winter, countless hand-woven treasures and many, many tears at parting. Falemnderit zemërisht (heartfelt thanks), families Ahmeti, Fetaj, Gjevukaj, Kameraj, Shefiku, Sheqeri and Zhuja.

Warmest thanks to my special friend, Dusha who helped me so much in understanding Albanian village life. Educated in Prishtina, she shared with me her great love for the traditions of her mountain home and spent many hours teaching me, taking me to villages, finding bus tickets when there were none, and carrying cameras and tape recorders through the rain and snow. Her gentle, modest and selfless ways are an example I will always remember. She is my window into the Albanian world, as she passes now from girlhood into marriage.

And to my family, thank you for ceaseless support, encouragement and care.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

In many regions of Yugoslavia, music and dance, once integral aspects of calendar and life cycle customs, have been abbreviated or abandoned altogether during postwar years of industrialization and modernization. Cultural transformations have been hastened by increased ties to urban social and aesthetic values. Yugoslavs in towns, lowland rural areas and even in the most remote mountain villages feel the effects of this in their improved living standard and educational opportunities, the declining influence of religion, and the impact of western cultural values.

In the face of these changes, the folklore of Kosovo, an Autonomous Province in southern Yugoslavia, represents a largely uncharted landscape in which older forms of dance and music are not only actively practiced among parents and grandparents, but survive the effects of modernization and maintain functional integrity among the youth. The Albanian, Serbian, Montenegrin, Turkish and Rom (Gypsy) communities in Kosovo each nurture the cultural symbols which condense and express their own historical and cultural legacies.

For the present study I have chosen to focus on the Albanians of Kosovo, an ethnic group bound together by an adherence to collective social values of the past. Among the Albanians, dance reflects these values and reinforces regional and ethnic identity, serving a vital function in the lives of the people. Especially in villages, dance retains a character that is rooted in a tribal, patriarchal social

organization and the agricultural and pastoral subsistence patterns of former times. Through dance, music and song, the Albanians poignantly articulate themes which have dominated their lives for generations, including destiny and honor, unattainable love, engagement and betrothal, seasonal and historical events and social mores.

In Kosovo, each major ethno-geographic subdivision exhibits a unique world-view and set of customs revealed and reproduced through the artistic expressions of its people. The focus of the present study is Opoja, an ethnographic region in southwest Kosovo. A remote mountain valley of twenty villages, Opoja's relative geographic and social isolation from urban centers and outside influences makes it an ideal place to observe what may be some of the oldest forms of Albanian expressive behavior. At the same time, ritual events in Opoja provide an opportunity to study the ways in which people cope with the gradual influx of changing social values, not by abandoning traditions of the past, but by nurturing them and using them to reinforce their identity and traditional world-view.

The customs associated with betrothal and marriage in Opoja can be seen as a microscosm of Albanian life-style and world-view. Marriage is the most important rite of passage among Albanians, traumatic for the bride and her family, joyful for the groom and his family. All of the economic and emotional resources of both the bride's and groom's families are poured into engagement and wedding events, the success of which reflect heavily upon the honor of both houses. Dance is an integral part and the central focus of many of these events. In Opoja, the girls of the groom's family begin celebrating when the engagement

promise is given, one, two or three years prior to the wedding itself which inspires almost continuous song and dance. The men's dance events are large, outdoor, formal affairs which take place during the three principal wedding days, Saturday through Monday. These last far into the night and command the attention of the 100 to 200 guests.

The intent of this study is to provide a structural analysis of the men's and women's wedding dances in Opoja. In addition, comment is made upon the way in which these events reflect and reproduce established codes of behavior and accomodate social change. The first chapter introduces the geographic and ethnographic setting of Kosovo and Opoja. After a brief discussion of the concept of marriage in Opoja, Chapter IV introduces the men's dancing and its place in the wedding context. The men's dancing is then described in terms of the sequence of events and the dance context including spatial, visual, aural and tactile environmental factors. More than in any other area of Kosovo, the Opoja men have preserved a highly formalized dance sequence consisting of eleven dances performed in a very exacting style. The structural analysis, documented in Labanotation, begins with dance formations and rhythm in the sequence. The dances are classified in terms of basic movement units, stylistic characteristics, motifs, and syntax, all illustrated in schematic charts. Special reference is made to the first, seventh and ninth dances which depart slightly from the basic structural patterns. The learning process and native evaluations of the dance shed light upon the function of men's dancing in reiterating regional and peer identity and community values.

Chapter V considers women's dance and song in the wedding context.

With singing taking on a more prominent role in women's expressive behavior, their dancing is less formal and more spontaneous than men's dancing. While in some villages the girls maintain a sequence of five dance-songs, the emphasis in general is upon improvised solo or duet dancing based upon simple locomotor movements embellished by subtle hand articulations and accompanied by singing. A brief structural analysis of these dances is followed by comments on the girls' learning process and the function of their dancing. The study concludes with an exploration into the structural and functional change and continuity in Opoja wedding dances.

With the exception of a few specific moments during the wedding festivities when women and men of the same nuclear family have the opportunity to dance together, the dancing tends to be segregated into male and female groups. The separate events are treated independently as they exhibit distinctively masculine and feminine movement patterns and styles which express clearly defined sexual and social roles, and moral and aesthetic values.

Theoretical Approach

This study seeks to bring to light the cultural significance of the Opoja wedding dances based upon their explicit qualities--visible aspects of the dances and dance context, and implicit qualities--the participants' own perceptions of these events and the role these dances play in community life. This holistic approach treats dance as one important component of a whole complex of customs, behaviors and attitudes encapsulated in this life-cycle ritual. The dancing within the wedding event is viewed as part of "an entire configuration, rather than just a performance . . . the conception of dance within the larger culture" (Kealiinohomoku 1974:99).

My theoretical orientation is based in large part on the teachings of Elsie Ivancich Dunin and Allegra Fuller Snyder in Dance Ethnology at the University of California at Los Angeles. Central to their perspective is understanding the event in which dancing takes place. The event, in this case the wedding, is an experience of great complexity established by temporal and spatial components (Snyder 1978:1). Each event is "a world unto itself, a particular burst of form" (Geertz 1973:443).

In order to comprehend and render it meaningful, Snyder proposes "slicing through" the event by visualizing it in terms of levels of experience, each one "a particular parameter of time and space, "a system unto itself" which "does not contradict or deny the sense of the whole" (1978:2,3). Snyder delineates eight levels on which a cultural event should be analyzed, from the largest sense of world-view

(conceptualization and ordering of the universe), to the actual ritual, performance or festival, the emic perspectives of the participants, the "dance symbol" (costume, paraphenalia and general, symbol-rich movements), structural analysis based upon Labanotation, basic movement units (Kaeppler's "kinemes" [1972:174]), and manipulation of energy. The present study attempts to treat each of these levels of experience in the wedding event. Professor Dunin emphasizes a systematic, detailed analysis of environmental factors which "slice through" the event at both macro and micro levels. A precise, complete structural anaysis documented in Labanotation complements this and provides the basis for diachronic analysis.

Based upon Dunin's and Snyder's theoretical perspectives, all aspects of expressive behavior such as dance, music, song and ritual customs in the Opoja wedding are viewed, not as cultural _products_, but rather as dynamic _processes_. From this point of view, _traditions_ are not necessarily antiquated customs, but rather living, changing cultural manifestations identified with a particular ethnic group. The event is "an experience that is not static but rather is in a constant dynamic . . . . It is unique and individual and constantly changing" (Snyder 1978:1).

The focal point of the present study is a structural analysis which seeks to find a "grammar of the dance, a set of rules that assigns a structural description to an infinite number of possible forms" (Singer 1974:380). This is not considered to be an end in itself; it is only a stepping-off point for inquiries into other aspects of dance and its role in culture. "If one begins to

perceive the dynamics of structure, a system reveals itself which communicates more than structure" (Snyder 1978:2). "Until one has a grammar of the dance, one does not know what the rules are and hence has no way of knowing how those rules are being bent or broken to incorporate change" (Royce 1977:71). Understanding the dance structure also allows us to draw conclusions about native categories and concepts of movement segmentation, the continuity of a dance form through time, and reflections of cultural values and norms regarding creativity (see Royce 1977:71-76).

The structural analysis of Opoja dances in this study is based upon contact with the source material while learning the dances from a native performer outside of the event context, analyzing and notating the dances in consultation with a native informant, viewing films of performances in the wedding context and of performances by amateur folklore groups, and through participating in and observing events in the field. Insights into the contextual and functional aspects are derived from field observations and interviews surmised from interviews with three generations of informants and observation of their movement styles.

Review of the Literature

Studies in Albanian Dance

Although both in Yugoslavia and Albania studies of Albanian folklore are abundant, there are to date only a few studies dealing specifically with dance in Kosovo. The quantity and quality of published folkloric research is increasing. However, the works are often brief and of a general nature, directed at a native audience able to understand the cultural context for themselves. Most of the publications are in Albanian with brief summaries in Serbo-Croatian, French or English. In longer works, the emphasis tends to be upon collections of song texts omitting musical transcriptions. In recent years, more attention has begun to be paid to the significance of context in the study of folklore.

Folklore study and documentation in Kosovo is relatively new. There are three primary centers for folklore research in Kosovo which publish journals and monographs: the Museum of Kosovo (1945), the University of Prishtina (1960), and the Albanian Institute of Prishtina (1966). As dance is a vital form of aesthetic expression in Kosovo, it is frequently mentioned in passing in contemporary literature. The following authors have made substantial contributions to the study of folklore and each has published articles relating to dance in Kosovo. (They are listed below in alphabetical order.)

In "Kalađojne," Lorenc Antoni, Kosovo's earliest professional ethnomusicologist, reviews the dance form _Kellçoja_ as it is interpreted in Gjakova (Djakovica) and Prizren. Published in 1958 in the _Journal_

of the Museum of Kosovo, the twenty-page article gives a general description of the dance and the various interpretations and number of choreographic figures in different regions. The article also mentions musical accompaniment and the derivation of the name of the dance. (Kellçoja will be discussed at length in Chapter IV.)

Xhemali Berisha, one of the principal informants for this thesis, has recently published an article about men's dancing in Opoja, "Folklori Koreografik i Meshkujve në Opojë" [Men's Choreographic Folklore in Opoja]. This short study evolved during our work together from 1981 to 1983, and is a succinct introduction to the wedding dance event in Berisha's native region. Published in Bota e Re, a popular monthly newpaper directed at university students, it describes and comments upon an event familiar to many Kosovo youth who often take for granted this aspect of their heritage. Topics in the article include the structure of the dance sequence, a description of the dance context, the role of the musicians, and the dance sequence as an integral aspect of the Opoja wedding.

Kadri Halimi, also among Kosovo's pioneer folklorists, presented a short study of the origin of war dances among Albanians in his article, "Vendi i lojës së Rugovës në vallet luftarake Shqiptare" [The place of the dance of Rugovo among Albanian war dances]. Published in 1971 in Përparimi, a monthly research journal, the study is an attempt to place the fighting motif of Albanian dances within an historical and regional context. He proposes that the dance is not, as it is customarily interpreted by performing ensembles, a fight over a girl, but rather a re-enactment of battle motifs.

Sisters Danica and Ljubica Janković, the first and most prolific Yugoslav folk dance collectors, wrote three articles discussing dance in Kosovo. Although their studies deal primarily with Serbian forms, they contribute to a general understanding of dance in Kosovo.

In "Narodne Igre na Kosovu" [Folkdances in Kosovo], 1936, Ljubica Janković gives a fifteen-page survey of Serbian dance forms. She discusses the holidays which involve dancing, the structure of these dances and their instrumental and song accompaniment. A comparison is made between related forms in other areas of Yugoslavia including Serbia, Srem, Boka and South Serbia, and between symbolic references found among non-Slavs. General conclusions are drawn about the rich variety of urban and rural forms.

"Narodne Igre u Metohiji" [Folkdances in Metohija], 1937, by Ljubica Janković is a four-page comment on dances in western Kosovo. The article points out the similarities between urban dance forms in Prizren, Gjakova (Djakovica) and Peja (Peć), and Turkish, Montenegrin and Serbian influences upon these forms. Comments are made upon the loss of older choreographic forms among the youth, the absence of segregated dancing in Peja and the relatively free dance style among the women of Peja. Songs which accompany the dance and musical accompaniment in 2/4, 4/4, and 3/8 are also mentioned.

"Serbian Folk Dance Tradition in Prizren," published in Ethnomusicology, 1962, and co-authored by Danica and Ljubica Janković, is based upon field research from 1934-1955. This nine-page article discusses dances and dance occasions among Prizren Serbs, commenting upon weddings, Dodole, Lazarice and Saint's Day celebrations, the Kala

Kalać sword dance (see Chapter IV), and historical and environmental effects on the dance form.

In 1971 a German film crew from Gottingen documented a wedding in Zhur, a village near Prizren in southwest Kosovo. Professor Shefqet Pllana directed the crew and served as the chief consultant for the film. In a series of pamphlets in both German and Serbo-Croatian, Dr. Pllana gives an account of the events depicted in the film, commenting at length upon the music and dance traditions. He gives a chronological account of the wedding events, attempting to place specific gestures and events within a symbol rich context based upon patriarchal social organization.

Bahtir Sheholli, a professional ethnomusicologist employed by Prishtina's Albanian Institute, wrote while a student at Beograd's music academy a pro-seminar study entitled "Svadbene Pesme, Igre i Obicaji kod Albanaca Muslimana na Kosovu" [Wedding Songs, Dances and Customs Among Moslem Albanians in Kosovo]. Written in Serbo-Croatian, the article outlines the general characteristics of Albanian engagement and marriage customs in Kosovo, the sequence of wedding events and the nature of wedding songs and instrumental music. With one exception, the song texts Sheholli includes are in Serbo-Croatian rather than in the original Albanian, and their sources are not cited. Musical notation accompanies three of the seven songs. There is a brief mention of male and female dance forms.

Several ethno-choreological studies have been published in Albania. Three professional choreologists, Nexhat Agolli, Ramazan Bogdani and Ramadan Sokoli are responsible for extensive work in this

field. Their publications since the 1960s represent an intensive collection and documentation of regional dance forms. The four studies noted below are of particular value in Kosovo dance research as they decribe in some detail dance forms from Has and Opoja (known in Albania as Luma), ethnographic regions which cross the political boundary (see Figure 4).

Folklori Koreografik i Hasit [Dance Folklore from Has] by Bogdani is an analysis of male and female dance forms of this region. The booklet is illustrated with photographs and contains a verbal description of the dance context and choreographic patterns.

Two other studies relate directly to the dance of Opoja. "Kërkime Folklorike në Rugovë e në Opojë" [Folklore Research in Rugovo and Opoja] by Ramazan Bogdani and Agron Xhagolli, provides a general introduction to the music and dance of these regions. Published in a folklore periodical from Tirana, the article is based upon a month-long field expedition in 1979 conducted in conjunction with the University of Prishtina.

In his booklet, Valle të Krahines së Lumës [Dances of the Luma Region], Nexhat Agolli presents, in a style similar to the Has study, a verbal description of the men's dances of Luma. Illustrated with drawings of the dance elements and with musical and metrical transcriptions, the publication is primarily a collection of dance notes.

In Valle dhe Muzika të Pareve Tanë [Our Ancient Dance and Music], Ramadan Sokoli, an ethno-choreologist in Albania, attempts to trace the roots of Albanian dance. His findings, chiefly based upon tombstone engravings, burial urns, antique coins and myths and legends,

give some clues as to possible roots from which some of the Albanian dance forms may be descendant. He believes that the dance origins were part of the ancient Illyrian high culture which he describes as part of the greater Mediterranean source related to ancient Greek culture.

In the funeral dance which is frequently found in archeological evidence, women in two's and three's are depicted dancing in circle formations or carrying objects around a grave. Coins dating back to 330 B.C. show figures of female nymphs circling around the fire. Sokoli associates the evidence of open and closed circle formations depicted in archeological findings with magic and ritual. Oral legends tell of music and dance related to the entertainment of guests, to weddings, sacrifices, holidays, pagan rituals, agricultural and pastoral work, the warding off of sickness, the honoring of deities (especially Apollo), seasonal festivities and fertility.

One of the few definite clues to the rhythm or movement quality of the dancing is a second century B.C. description of a duel between two women of Epirus. "In this battle she [Olympia] moved freely to the daulle [drum]..." (Sokoli 1971:10). The following rhythms noted, making use of the long (--) and short (u) symbols:

daktili	7/8	-- u u
jambi	5/8	u --
molos	9/8	-- -- --
trokeu	5/8	-- u
pirriku	4/8	u u

(Sokoli 1971:11).

These are rough equivalents of meters which are all found in the

contemporary dance repetoire of Kosovo. There is also evidence of musical accompaniment with fyell (sheperd's flute), chordophones, finger cymbals, def (tambourine without metal disks, Gk. tympanon), cyrla (doublereed horn), doubletube flutes (Gr. diaulos) and panpipes.

As in other studies which attempt to uncover ancient dance forms, Sokoli has attempted to compose a contextual picture based upon static images and assumptions linking legends with contemporary evidence. In one section he notes: "For wedding dance we have no archeological evidence, though we cannot conceive of this joyful moment of life without dancing" (Sokoli 1971:8). In Kosovo, even the task of conclusively determining dance forms from the 19th century proves to be difficult. The traces of Illyrian culture then are presented as hypothetical links between ancient and modern dance and music forms.

In the present study, an attempt is made to delineate the dance zones of Kosovo (see Figure 3). This is based upon the geographic distribution of Yugoslav dance forms developed by Ivan Ivančan at the University of Zagreb and expounded upon by Professor Dunin at the University of California at Los Angeles. In his seminal work on the subject (1964-1965), Ivančan distinguishes six dance zones based on stylistic, rhythmic, spatial, directional and musical characteristics. In most cases these dance zones do not coincide with political divisions according to countries, republics or counties. Prior to Ivančan's work, more general proposals for categorizing Balkan ethnographic zones were made. Ivančan's own conclusions come closest to those of Gavazzi (1942). Based on the choreological research and

collection that has been carried out in Yugoslavia during the past twenty years, it should now be possible to revise and refine Ivancan's original hypothesis to make it more precise and comprehensive. The definition of the Kosovo dance zones proposed in the present study has been informed by the ethnographic zones outlined by Professor Mark Krasniqi of the University of Prishtina (1976) (see Figure 4). These divisions are still under discussion and, along with the outline of Kosovo's dance zones, should be regarded as hypotheses rather than conclusions.

Studies in Dance Ethnology

Dance ethnology is a field of study which crosses the boundaries of several disciplines: ethnology, ethnomusicology, anthropology, folklore and choreography. The field is young and there is an ongoing attempt to define, systematize and validate it. The articles and book noted below are some important examples of the growing body of theoretical and empirical research in this discipline which proved helpful in the formation of this study.

Based upon her fieldwork in Tonga, Adrienne Kaeppler set out to devise a structural system which would allow for the emic analysis of ethnic dance (Kaeppler 1972). She developed hierarchical categories using an inventory of "emically significant" movements. Her goal was to discover differences and similarities in movement recognised by a particular culture which would allow the investigator to understand and to function within a culturally specific dance repetoire.

Through participant-observation, Kaeppler created a structural hypothesis which she tested by performing the movements herself and illiciting informants' comments on her performance. In this way she was able to find the basic elements selected from all movement possiblities which were recognised as significant by her informants.

To classify the two primary categories of culturally specific movement she used a linguistic model translated into movement terminology:

kineme (phoneme): basic movement unit of each major body part;

morphokineme (morpheme): smallest meaningful movement unit.

Terminology from folklore and visual arts was used for the broader movement groups;

motif: combination of morphokinemes recurring repeatedly and forming short, independent entities;

genre: the dance itself together with performance characteristics, symbolic meaning, and musical accompaniment.

Joann Kealiinohomoku is one of dance ethnology's foremost scholars. In her article "Dance Culture as a Microcosm of Holistic Culture" she outlines her theoretical premise about the function of dance in human society as "selectively revealing" culture. "I posit that data in depth will show that dance culture is indeed an epitome of the total culture as either a `typical representation' or an `ideal expression' and sometimes both" (1974:103). In her work with the Hopi Indians, she finds that dance expresses the nature of social institutions, interpersonal relationships, and aesthetics and moral values. Central to the analysis of Opoja dance is Kealiinohomoku's

perspective of dance, not as a peripheral aesthetic mode of society, but as an important, effective tool in maintaining social, economic, ethnic and behavioral homeostasis.

Through their extensive research in Hungarian folkdance, Gyorgy Martin and Erno Pesovar have made an outstanding contribution to the science of structural analysis in dance. Like Kaeppler, they base their structural units on linguistic models, the kinetic element being analogous to the phoneme. Hungarian folkdance is made up of clearly distinguishable movement units (as opposed to being through-composed), and working within this genre, Martin and Pesovar developed a detailed hierarchy for the breakdown of movements into basic structural units. The hierarchy is divided into three groups and their subsets:

I. Part: kinetic element, motive element, fractional motive;

II. Minor Parts: group, sequence and cluster of motions, motive, supplemented, enlarged, compound and pair or group of motives;

III. Major Units: sequence of motives; section; movement.

These divisions are very effectively diagrammed using Latin letters, Roman numerals and brackets. Knowing the symbols, one can quickly see the organization of movement. Labanotation is then used to fill in the movement picture. Martin and Pesovar also stress the theoretical relation of movement and musical sequences, the "coincidence of musical and choreographic units" being informed by the quality of cadences which separate sections of dance and music.

Central to this study is the holistic approach to dance research proposed by Anya Peterson Royce in The Anthropology of Dance. As Royce suggests and as I will try to demonstrate in this thesis, in an

anthropological approach to dance the entire context of the dance event must be studied in order to elicit meaningful data. Dance must be considered as an intrinsic aspect of a social event: "the dance and the wedding event are in a certain sense the same thing" (1977:12). Royce also sees dance as an aspect of expressive behavior subject to change; as part of a process rather than as a cultural artifact.

Fieldwork in Opoja has substantiated several of Royce's central theses, including the link between style, symbolism, and ethnic and regional identity. "The whole complex of features that people rely on to mark their identity comprises something I call style . . . composed of symbols, forms, and underlying value orientations" (157). I hope this thesis also serves to exemplify the way in which, as Royce sees it, structural analysis in dance may be used as a stepping-off point for insights into aesthetic preferences which give rise to the change or preservation of covert and overt symbols of cultural identity.

Allegra Snyder of the University of California at Los Angeles is one of the important pioneering theoreticians in dance ethnology. In the 1972 Conference of Research in Dance, Professor Snyder published "The Dance Symbol," a paper examining "clues to the meaning and significance of the dance" in non-literate societies. The Dance Symbol is a theoretical tool, a way of interpreting dance based on the interrelation of subsistence patterns, physical environment, and the dancer's relation to society through individual and group rites of passage. Through this type of analysis, the researcher attempts to interpret the symbolic content of dance within the mythic and environmental complex, and to come to terms with "inner aspects of the

dancer" such as transformation. The detailed conceptual model presented in this work provides a very strong basis for a semiotic and functional interpretation of dance.

"Method and Theory in Dance Research: An Anthropological Approach" (1975 Yearbook of the International Folkmusic Council), by Suzanne Younger, is a concise introduction to and comment upon the anthropological approach dominant among American dance-ethnologists. Younger characterizes the current perspective on dance as an effort "to understand dance as a manifestation of human behavior, rather than merely as a collection of movements" (119). She delineates four major aspects of dance study:

1. Movement notation and description: a primary level of analysis which should not be taken as an end in itself, but which should be applied to discovery of patterns, intra- and inter-cultural comparison, and in the documentation of change.

2. Performance style: an important area of analysis which can be used to differenciate members of a culture from each other and from members of other cultures. While this is an elusive subject due to the lack of adequate vocabulary, Younger suggests the use of Laban's "effort-shape" as an effective model for analysis.

3. Viewing dance as cultural behavior: this implies "the realisation that dance is socially learned behavior" and "an ongoing behavioral and conceptual process and not a static composition of movement" (i.e. process, not product). Beyond viewing dance as a reflection of social values, Younger believes the researcher should investigate why a culture selects the movements it does to fulfill this

function.

4. Dance as a concept: through mimetic devices, on the basis of social convention, or as informed by psychological mechanisms, this aspect of research addresses the symbolic meaning of dance.

Younger critizes the tendency to isolate these aspects of research, stressing the potential for broader applications in their mutual relevance.

Methodology

"Our data - really our own constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to" (Geertz 1973:9).

The material for this thesis was collected from October, 1981 to September, 1983 in Kosovo, Yugoslavia. While living in Prishtina, the capital of the province, I was able to take many side trips to villages during both winter and summer months. Most of these fieldtrips were made to the villages around Peja (Peć) in western Kosovo, in the Rugova mountains on the Montenegrin border, in Prizren in the southwest, in mountains of Has on the Albanian border, and in Opoja in the Sharr (Šar) mountains.

While in Prishtina, my work included library research, interviews and participant observation. In order to communicate and to make use of the existing literature I studied the Serbo-Croatian language prior to my arrival, and Albanian throughout my stay. Eventually I was able to speak literary Albanian used in academic settings and also to communicate in the rural Gheg dialect.

While there are few written articles dealing specifically with Albanian dance in Kosovo, I made use of a large amount of material on history, customs, material culture, instrumental music and songs. This was augmented by regular consultations with folklorists from the University of Prishtina and the Albanian Institute of Prishtina. The

film and video archives of Prishtina's television station were made available to me, and I was given the opportunity to video-tape many fine programs on traditional dance.

In Prishtina I also participated in the daily rehearsals of "Shota," the professional dance ensemble, and practiced dance styles from many parts of Kosovo. I worked daily with the ensemble's choreographer on his native dances. My living situation allowed me to take part in the lives of neighbors in their seasonal and religious celebrations and lifecycle rituals. Frequent dance practice during weddings and informal gatherings enabled me to develop skill in male and female dance styles allowing me to participate fully in weddings throughout Kosovo.

Much of the material for this thesis was gathered during fieldwork in Opoja, an ethnographic region made up of twenty villages nestled in a beautiful, pristine mountain valley in the Sharr range between the Macedonian and Albanian borders. Zhur, a village at the foot of the Sharr, is considered ethnographically to be a part of Opoja, and is sometimes counted as the twenty-first village of Opoja (see Figure 5). Field data were gathered during four to five day visits to several villages including Bellobrad, Shajna and Zhur.

Once in Opoja, I was free to do independent work including interviews, photography and audio cassette recordings. At all times I stayed with families in their homes, taking part in their daily lives. While staying with families I often had long conversations with mothers and grandmothers who gave me some perspective on the past. I walked and talked, ate, washed and slept with the teen-age girls who were my

constant companions, expressing to me many of their personal thoughts and feelings. During weddings I danced and sang with the girls and women, sharing in their deep emotional involvement in the event.

In villages my conversations with men were more formal than in the towns. Typically, I spoke with the head of the household and other village elders in the sitting room of my host's home. In order to observe men's dancing at weddings, I was first given permission by the groom's father, then was escorted to the men's gathering by my host and one of his daughters. (I was accompanied by at least one young woman at all times during fieldwork.) My presence was explained to the male guests who were always very respectful and cooperative in my efforts to film and tape-record.

This fieldwork was supplemented by regular conversations with Shota's choreographer in Prishtina. Mr. Berisha took time to answer my endless questions abou the Opoja weddings and to help me translate song texts. He spent many hours teaching me the eleven men's dances and five women's dances of Opoja, and assisting in the lengthy process of their structural analysis and notation.

To my knowledge, as of 1983 there were only two Opoja girls studying at the University of Prishtina. These girls gave me invaluable assistance in Prishtina in understanding many aspects of Opoja traditions, filling in gaps in field data, and helping me with transcriptions of many song texts.

In light of the sexually segregated nature of Albanian village life in Kosovo, male researchers, especially non-natives, are severely limited in gaining any access to the female sphere of activities. I

feel that as an unmarried woman traveling and working alone in Kosovo, I was in an ideal position to participate in both female and male spheres of family life.

CHAPTER II: THE ETHNOGRAPHIC SETTING

Kosovo

The Albanians are believed to be descendants of the Illyrians who lived throughout much of the territory of present-day Yugoslavia and Albania until the 5th century B.C. Their Indo-European language is said to be the sole surviving relic of ancient Illyrian. Albanians lived under the influence of ancient Greece, Rome, Byzantium, Celtic and Slavic migrations and for almost five hundred years under the Ottoman Turks until the First Balkan war in 1912. In 1913 an independent state of Albania was created, leaving many ethnic Albanians outside of these new borders. In 1918 many of these Albanians were incorporated into the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and in 1944 became part of newly formed country, The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In 1946 the area these Albanians inhabited known as Kosovo-Metohija became the Autonomous Province of Kosovo.

Kosovo is bordered in the north and east by the Republic of Serbia, in the south by the Republic of Macedonia, and in the west by the People's Socialist Republic of Albania. Kosovo's population of nearly 1.6 million is more than 80% Albanian, with 13.2% Serbs and a small number of Montenegrins, Turks, ethnic Moslems and Gypsies (Regional Bureau of Statistics 1982:14). The province covers an area of close to 11,000 sq. km. divided into twenty-two komuna (administrative districts). The majority of the Kosovo Albanians is Muslim with a smaller number of Catholics.

The three offical languages of Kosovo are Albanian, Serbo-Croatian and Turkish, with many people bi- or tri-lingual. There are two major groups of Albanians representing two distinct dialects: Ghegs, located principally in Kosovo, northern Albania, Montenegro and parts of Macedonia (Skoplje, Tetovo, Gostivar and Debar), and Tosks, in southern Albania, Macedonia and northwestern Greece. The standard Albanian literary language introduced in 1968 is a standardization based on the southern Tosk dialect (see Newmark 1982:6).

Historically, Kosovo was part of the north-south link from Beograd to Thessalonika, part of the east-west route from Istanbul to the Adriatic coast, and on the route between Istanbul and Bosnia-Hercegovina. Its strategic position, fertile land and plentiful mineral resources have subjected Kosovo to successive invasions and population movements throughout its turbulent history.

Kosovo may be divided into several major ethnographic regions defined by population migration and settlement within distinct geographic areas (see Figure 3). Dramatic mountain ranges chiselled with gorges almost completely surround its heartland of fertile plains, hills and valleys. Until its establishment as an autonomous region in 1946, Kosovo was considered as two regions: Kosovo in the east and Metohija in the west. This division was based upon centuries of traditions influenced by geographical relief and consequent patterns of economic subsistence. These regions are also identified as *Fusha e Kosoves* (*Kosovo Polje* [The Kosovo Field]) in the east and in the west *Rrafshi i Dukagjinit* (*Dukadjin*) (Krasniqi 1978:7).

The Kosovo Field, with its eleven sub-regions, is the larger of the two areas. Due to relatively poorer agricultural conditions this region relies upon its mining industries. Since World War II the growing industrial centers have attracted steady migration from agricultural or pastoral livelihoods in villages. Older forms of social organization and cultural patterns based upon rural subsistence are rapidly giving way to visible urban trends. Included in this change are greater orientation toward the nuclear family as opposed to the large extended family, smaller dwellings, the abandonment of older costumes, a stress on education and the inclusion of women in higher education and in the work force.

While dance is an important part of weddings in The Kosovo Field men's dances have changed considerably there in the last twenty years. The value placed on the presence of four or five Gypsy musicians to play the cyrla and lodra (horns and drums) has decreased (for illustrations of these instruments, see Figure 14). Whereas in Opoja there can be no wedding without this type of music, there is a growing tendency in other parts of Kosovo, especially in The Kosovo Field, to forgo this expense. Instead, the groom's father hires the traditional Albanian string duet with çifteli and sharki or orchestra of stringed instruments. This orchestral type of stringed accompaniment is not conducive to the slow, heavy, epic-style dances of the past which are dependent upon the music of the cyrla and lodra. The string orchestra is more conducive to light, improvisational dances in which the men are unattached and dance independently (kcim) or very simple repeated step patterns where the men are attached in an open

circle formation (valle).

In The Plains of Dukagjin, with twelve ethnographic subdivisions, signs of an older life-style are more evident. One example of this is the many kulla, multi-storied dwellings in medieval fortress style designed to house enormous extended families and livestock and to ward off intruders. Especially in the central plains area between Istog (Istok) and Gjakova (Djakovica) and in the southwest mountains of Has, dress adapted from pre-Ottoman elements is worn by many women. Today there is a tremendous population movement between the east and west, and cultural distinctions between the two are slowly beginning to fade. In many parts of the plains areas, while women's dancing tends to remain unchanged, every year fewer families hire the Gypsy musicians, making a marked change in the men's repertoire.

There are further distinctions in dance characteristics that parallel ethnographic sub-regions in Kosovo. Based upon discussions with folklorists, with people from other areas of Kosovo, and upon observations at regional folklore festivals, it is possible to distinguish seven main Albanian dance zones in Kosovo (see Figure 4). These divisions are based upon the following factors: type of musical accompaniment for women's and for men's events, women's dance formations, basic movement motifs, sequence and style. The following dance zones may be distinguished: Rugovo, Rrafshi i Dukagjinit, Karadak, Drenica, Siriniq, Shala e Bajgores, and Southwest Kosovo. (Revisions and further refinements upon this general picture will be made possible by future research.)

Opoja, the ethnographic region which is the focus of this paper, lies in the dance zone of southwest Kosovo. Based upon men's dance style and repertoire, Opoja is related choreographically to other ethnographic regions, Has, Podrimja and Gora.

Figure 1.

Yugoslavia

SERBIA
SERBIA
MONTENEGRO
Mitrovica e Titos
Prishtina
Peja
Gjilan
Gjakova
Prizren
ALBANIA
MACEDONIA
Map by Janet Reineck

Figure 2.

The Autonomous Province of Kosovo

Figure 3.

Kosovo: Suggested Delineation of Dance Zones [2]

Figure 4.

Kosovo: Ethnographic Zones [3]

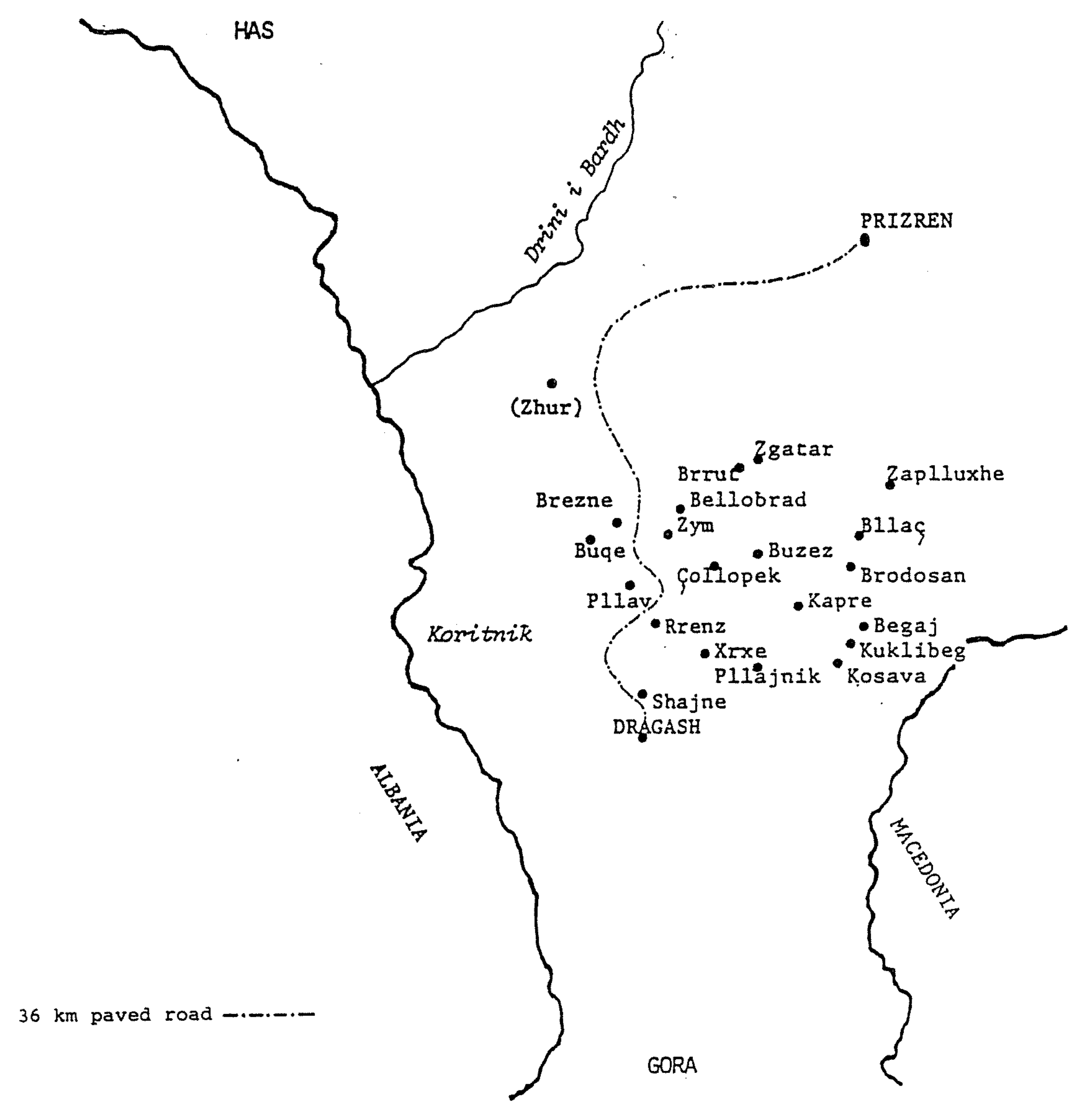


Figure 5.

Opoja

Opoja

Opoja lies in the valley of the Sharr mountains in the southern part of southwest Kosovo. It is bordered in the north by the city of Prizren and environs, in the south by the ethnographic region Gora, in the west by Mt. Koritnik on the Albanian border, and in the east by the Sharr (Šar) mountain range (see Figure 5). Geographically, Opoja extends into the region of Luma in northeast Albania which lies south of the Drini i Bardh (Beli Drin [The White Drin]), north of Debar, and east of Drini i Zi (Crni Drin [The Black Drin]). Opoja's 108 sq. km. of plains and river valleys are sheltered from harsh winters by the mountains on either side. A small amount of arable land yields meager quantities of wheat, beans and potatoes, but is more hospitable to a pastoral economy.

Opoja's twenty-one villages lie within the Commune of Dragash (Dragaš), a town which serves as the cultural and administrative center for both Gora and Opoja.[4] The population of the entire Commune is 35,054, with eighty-four inhabitants per square kilometers and the highest natality in Kosovo (Regional Bureau of Statistics 1982:14). The majority of people in Opoja is Albanian. In Gora, the majority is ethnic Moslem. The ethnic breakdown for the Commune is 53.2% Albanian (primarily in Opoja), 41.2% ethnic Moslem (primarily in Gora), with a very small number of Turks and Serbians.

Though every village in Opoja now has its own four-year elementary school and a nearby eight-year elementary school, the only high-school is in Dragash. The villages began to be equipped with electricity in

1953 with the installation of a hydro-electric plant in neighboring Gora. Though travel between the villages of Opoja and Dragash is still frequently by foot or horse-drawn wagon, a 32 km paved road between Dragash and Prizren was opened in 1973 and now has several bus connections daily, greatly increasing communication between the villages and the urban centers. A better road has meant a greater exchange of goods and services between Dragash and Prizren, more students entering technical schools and college in Prizren and Prishtina with a corresponding decrease in illiteracy (94% before 1950, 40% in 1961 and 30% in 1971), and a greater proximity to urban culture in general (Ekonomska Politika 1973:637).

Due to poor agricultural resources and relative geographic isolation, Opoja has been one of the most underdeveloped regions of Kosovo. As a result, for centuries the area has been known for its migrant workers (kurbetxhi in the standard form and gyrbetxhi in the popular form), men living outside of Opoja for most of the year. In the past, as today, Opojans sought work as shepherds, in restaurant trades, in ice cream and pastry selling, and in a wide variety of semi-skilled jobs. Formerly work was found principally in Istanbul, Ankara, Thessalonika and Sofia. After the Second World War, work was also sought in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, France and major cities in Yugoslavia (Berisha, Xh. 1982c).

The material culture of Opoja reflects this contact with other societies. The century-old trade connection with urban centers meant that imported commercial goods were present relatively early in the region. Hence, for example, the loom-woven, long chemise (kemish)

typical throughout Kosovo until the First World War early gave way to the floor-length, full pantaloons (dimia) which require twelve meters of purchased fabric. Other purchased goods such as western-style men's clothing and porcelain coffee cups became a part of the material culture. The old-style houses of Opoja with slate roofs were gradually eliminated and replaced by large houses using modern building materials.

The men of Opoja tended to leave their families behind them when seeking work abroad. A young man would typically bring a bride into his family and subsequently seek work where one of his relatives had established himself, returning only once or twice a year for brief visits, usually during the harvest and wedding season. The men would work abroad for periods of ten to twenty years, finally returning to settle in their homeland.

Many of the Opoja girls' songs lament the absence of their menfolk. In this song recorded in 1978 in the village Brezna, a girl has pleaded with her loved one not to go abroad, saying she could support them by selling her handwork.

A t'kom thonë, bre djalë, mos shko në gyrbet,[5]
Se paret e tua i çes tuj bo vek.
A s't'kom thonë, bre djalë, mos shko me fitue,
Se paret e tua i çes tuj larue.
A s't'kom thonë, bre djalë, mos shko n'Beligrad,
Se paret e tua i çes boj çarap.

Did I tell you, dear one, not to go abroad,
For I can earn the money working at the loom.
And didn't I tell you, dear one, not to go seek your fortune,
For I can earn the money as I weave.
And didn't I tell you, dear one, not to go to Belgrade,
For I can earn money knitting socks (Mustafa 1982 #322).

This migrant work has had several important consequences. While poor in agricultural resources, the constant supply of capital has given Opoja a strong economic base relative to other mountainous regions of Kosovo. As a result of this capital, the Commune of Dragash was able to help meet the expense of installing electricity in all villages by 1965. Some of the other mountain areas such as Has, Rugovo and Karadak are still without a paved road and have only recently acquired electricity. This is interesting from an ethnographic standpoint. In spite of the fact that Opoja has had stronger links with urban culture via radio, television and travel, of all ethnographic zones of Kosovo (with the possible exception of Has), it appears to have maintained customs and folklore to a greater extent. This may be due to the fact that Opoja families have historically been maintained by one or more members sending capital back to them to supplement their economic means to remain in their homeland. Based upon conversations with families in Rugovo and Karadak, it appears that in other mountain areas lacking this economic advantage, notably Rugovo, Drenica and Karadak, most families have had to leave their villages to live and work in the towns, some returning during summer months to graze their sheep in the highlands. Where this is the case, older forms of dance and music have undergone greater transformation, reflecting the changes in their life-style (Berisha, Xh. 1982c).

Going to work outside of Opoja with the sole intention of bringing economic security to their families, the men usually view their stay abroad as an economic proposition and tend to remain Opojan in world-view and behavior. They do not usually settle together in large groups

and assimilate only minimally into the temporary, new cultural environment. Importantly, underlying cultural patterns are maintained by family members left at home. In commenting upon this type of subsistence pattern, Margaret Mead writes, "Through the generations, new adaptations are made to the absence of fathers, but the culture, although altered, can still be transmitted coherently" (Mead 1970:32).

Maintenance of customary behavior is reinforced by the periodic visits of the men who usually participate fully in the traditional life-style and ceremonial events. Those who live abroad have in fact become some of the most active participants in this older layer of customs, including engagement and marriage celebrations and the dance, music and song associated with these events, outwardly and inwardly reaffirming their identities after a period of absence.

CHAPTER III: INTRODUCTION TO THE WEDDING DANCES IN OPOJA

Dance in Opoja is a central focus within the wedding event, inextricably woven into the three days of activities. In order to have a clear contextual picture in which to view the dance, it is important to understand the nature of the wedding itself. Throughout Opoja today wedding celebrations are fairly predictable, as most families use the same patterns of organization, follow similar sequences of events and incorporate the same ritual behavior including traditions of dance and song. This study describes a typical Opoja wedding 1979-1983.

The wedding activities are strictly segregated, women of the groom's family gathering in the groom's home while the men are gathering some distance away, usually at another house in the neighborhood. The men's and women's sides of the wedding are discrete, self-contained entities, with distinct customs and dance contexts. Because of this the two groups will be treated separately in the following discussion.

The marriage of two young people begins with the matchmaker. While the custom of arranged marriages negotiated by a matchmaker is gradually disappearing in many parts of Kosovo, especially in the towns, in Opoja it is still very common. Until the 1970s girls were engaged by their parents to boys they had never seen before the wedding night. "The girl must reconcile herself to her fate. She cannot go against her father's wishes. Even if she does, her father's will prevails" (Shefiku, D. 1983). Since the 1970S, the girls still follow

the wishes of their parents, but many have had contact with their fiances through secret letters or clandestine meetings.

When the groom's father is satisfied with his initial indirect inquiries about the bride and her family, he engages a male relative or close friend to act as the go-between. This marriage-broker, the msit or shkus as he is called in Opoja, is responsible for all formal contact between the two houses and plays a crucial role in the lives of the girls and boys whose destinies lie in his hands. If the girl's father finally consents to the match after repeated attempts on the part of the matchmaker, he promises his daughter's hand in marriage and formally gives his word to her family. The negotiations between the two houses during the engagement period of up to two years are conducted according to custom and involve the entire extended family in preparations and celebration. The girls of the groom's family mark each step in the engagement and marriage with songs pertaining to each part of the process.

One or two weeks prior to the wedding, relatives and friends begin to gather informally at the home of the groom. Through these nightly gatherings, the entire village becomes filled with the spirit of the wedding. The girls and women gather on the balcony or in the courtyard of the groom's house to celebrate in song and dance. The men spend these evenings in the oda a burrave (men's sitting room) in conversation, story-telling, indoor games and listening to instrumental music played on the kavall (a long, end-blown shepherd's flute) fyell (shorter, six-holed flute), and çifteli (pear-shaped, two-stringed instrument) or sharki (larger, five-stringed instrument) (see Fig. 13).

CHAPTER IV: THE MEN´S WEDDING DANCES OF OPOJA

The Sequence of Wedding Events

The Arrival of the Musicians

On Friday afternoon or Saturday morning the Gypsy musicians hired by the groom´s father arrive at the home of the groom. This is a joyous moment marking the true beginning of the men´s wedding festivities. The girls celebrate the musicians´ arrival with song:

Te kurti . . .
Edhe kur t´na hin mori lodrat n´kurt,
Era drandofilla, era gruni but.

> The courtyard . . .
> And when the drums enter the courtyard,
> They bring the soft fragrance of roses and young wheat.

E lodrat me ardh . . .
Edhe kur to t´bojnë lodrat me ardh,
Oni nona nusos mshilu no bunar.

> The drums arrive . . .
> And when the drums arrive, the bride´s mother
> Hides in the well.

E lodrat porpjet . . .
E kush po na i bjer o lodrat porpjet,
Oni djemt e ri toj bo shyret.

> The drums are beaten . . .
> And he who beats the drums for us,
> Brings joy to the young men.
>
> (Berisha, Xh. 1982. Melody A)
> (For song melodies, see Appendix III.)

When the musicians arrive on Friday, their first obligation after

being served coffee is to entertain the men of the village who have gathered in the guests' sitting room (odë e burrave) in the groom's home. This occasion calls for a specific musical genre known as nibet, a combination of improvised tunes, dance melodies, or music from the pehlivane (wrestling competitions). The nibet is played on two cyrla (oboe-like double-reed aerophone: see Figure 14) with one taking the melodic lead as the other following in a drone or parallel melody. The nibet lasts about an hour, and may be played at other moments during the wedding when no dancing is taking place as a form of indoor entertainment for the male guests. At the end of the hour, the lodra (double-headed large drum: see Figure 14) join in, signaling the climax of the nibet.

At seven or eight o'clock Saturday morning, the musicians, accompanied by a group of men from the groom's neighborhood, go to a designated open area outside the neighborhood and play a specific melody which is heard throughout the village signaling the official commencement of the wedding festivities. At this point, all of the men and boys of the village are free to come and join in the celebration. After this initial melody, the musicians and their escorts make their way through the village which is filled with their shrill, piercing music.

If the musicians come Saturday morning, they announce their arrival on the outskirts of the village by playing improvised or popular melodies. As they play, they are met and escorted by a group of men to the groom's home where they are served coffee. This dramatic arrival is heard throughout the village and is also a sign to every

villager that the festivities have begun.

Whether the musicians have arrived on Friday or Saturday, usually late Saturday morning the first men's dancing takes place in the enclosed garden (kurt or oborr) of the groom's home. This dancing takes place before the arrival of the invited guests, and usually involves the close neighbors who help in the preparations. The man in charge of the wedding, (the Zot i Dasmës [Wedding Master]), may also invite close friends who are enthusiastic dancers to participate in the dancing. The dancing takes place as other preparations are carried out nearby: two or three male cooks work over the large kazane (cauldrons of stew); girls and women from the groom's family may peer from the windows and doorways when not busy with preparations, or girls may gather to sing in one corner of the courtyard or inside of the house.

The man who directs the wedding events, (the Komandanti [Commander]), initiates the dancing by calling for the musicians to begin Kellçoja, the first in the ordered sequence of men's dances. As this is a fairly informal occasion, the Commander may decide to choose only two or three of the most popular dances out of the traditional repertoire, depending upon whether the musicians arrived early or late and if there is adequate time before the arrival of the guests. After these dances, the dance leader (valltari i parë) may elect to change to more informal group dances not belonging to the sequence, such as Sheriange. At this point, depending upon the willingness of the groom's family, girls may join in this group dance, one of the few occasions when males and females dance together. This sexually integrated group is in accordance with customary behavior as the

participants are all of the same extended family.

After this first dance event in the courtyard of the groom's home, the Commander invites the male participants to proceed to the <u>tonda</u>, the set dance area some distance from the groom's home where men's dancing is be held for the duration of the wedding. The musicians take their places to one side and are served coffee with the men of the groom's family and the other villagers who now begin to arrive.

Either the Commander or the men among themselves choose a group of four to eight guests from the village to begin the first performance of the full dance sequence. Usually the Commander sees to it that only two groups execute the sequence in order to allow enough time for preparations before the arrival of the invited guests. Each dance in the sequence of eleven dances lasts about three or four minutes, depending upon the inclination of the leader. The <u>Kellçoja</u> melody of the first dance again cues the villagers that the wedding has begun and they are welcome to come and take part. "N'Opojë, kur të bijë lodra, thirret krejt katundi" (In Opoja, the striking of the drum summons the whole village [Berisha, Xh. 1982a]). After the sequence is completed the second time, all may join in one of the more informal dances such as <u>Sherianqe</u>. The performance of only one of these dances serves as an overture to the other dances to come later during the wedding.

After the dancers are again served coffee around eleven or twelve o'clock, the Commander announces that the time has come for a group of men to proceed through the village to gather supplies such as tables, cuttlery, pans, trays and carpets that are needed to serve the large

number of invited guests. This organized procession of younger men is accompanied by one _cyrla_ and _lodra_. "Ustallar nisin nja kajde" (The musicians strike up a tune). The other pair of musicians remains at the house to welcome any guests who may arrive early. The group of men stop along the way in the open spaces (_sheshi_) to perform some of the newer dances, usually _Sherianqe_, and so make their way through the village, gathering supplies and carrying the wedding festivities into every house. In some Opoja villages, especially in the flatlands, the men may also take this opportunity to extend invitations personally to the heads of each household.

Then the men return to the _tonda_ and if the invited guests have not yet arrived, the Commander may select another group of men to perform the full sequence of eleven dances. At this point the dancing begins to take on a somewhat more formal character in anticipation of the guests′ arrival, and the older, more skilled dancers may be asked to perform. At mid-afternoon the Commander chooses two young men to meet the arriving guests on the main road outside the village. When these escorts return to the _tonda_ to announce the guests′ arrival, they fetch the musicians who will accompany the guests into the village. If the dancing at this time is fairly informal or being performed by younger men, it will be interrupted as all four musicians leave for the main road. But if a group of older dancers is executing the full sequence in a serious manner, the dancing will continue and one pair of musicians will remain to see it through to its proper conclusion.

All men assembled at the _tonda_ give their undivided attention to the arrival of each group of guests. The music of the _cyrla_ and _lodra_

accompanies the guests who bring gifts for the groom's family. Occasionally lambs, rams or calves or more recently carpets or small furniture items are offered as gifts which the young men carry aloft, making a stately procession with the guests and musicians through the village. The order of the guests' arrival is significant in deciding the sequence of dancers for the evening and is noted by the Commander.

When all the guests have arrived, the Commander assigns each group to an oda or konak, a guest room in one of the nearby houses where they will be lodged for the next two days. Each group then proceeds to their oda accompanied by two young men (hyzmeqaret [servers]) who see to their needs, and by a village elder who acts as their personal host, leading muhabeti, the discourse between the men.

After a short rest, a drum beats out, announcing dinner. During the meal, the Commander and the Wedding Master visit each oda, extending a personal welcome: "Mirë se keni ardh, e ju boftë mirë!" (Welcome to you, enjoy yourselves!), or, "Keni hek zamet, e mirë ne keni n'gojë buk!" (Your journey has made you weary, eat heartily!) To which one of the elder guests replies: "O për t'mirë, e bofshit darsma gjithmonë!" (To your health, and may you have weddings always [Berisha, R. 1982]).

After dinner, the Commander again visits each oda to invite the men to the dance area for the evening's festivities. Sometimes this procession is accompanied by the cyrla and lodra. Once the men have assembled, the Commander makes sure that the guests are invited to dance according to their order of arrival at the wedding. Any oversight in this matter can be a serious affront to the honor of the guests. The Commander directs the invitation to dance to one member of

each group, saying, "Tash ju e keni rendin me lujt" (It is now your turn to dance). It is customary for an invited guest to bring to the wedding two or three close friends, and he usually chooses men with some dance ability. If the man has come alone or with friends who do not choose to dance, he may join another dance group. If he does have a company of at least two or three able dancers, he normally does not bring anyone else into his group.

This gathering in the _tonda_ Saturday night is the men's central dancing activity during the wedding. Men from different villages or families in effect compete with each other. The dancers display not only their dance ability but also their physical stamina and moral fiber through poise and restraint during their performances. During the evening usually four of five groups dance through the full sequence which lasts from thirty to forty minutes. Once the Commander has invited a group to perform, the group's leader determines the length of each dance. The leader tends to limit the duration of his group's performance in deference to the following groups. After the performance by the guests, the neighborhood men may have the opportunity to join in a popular dance outside of the formal sequence such as _Kaçamak_ or _Kara Isuf_. The end of the event is determined by the Commander who signals the servers to take the guests to their respective _odë_ to sleep.

On Sunday morning around seven or eight o'clock after the guests' breakfast, the Commander tells the director of the musicians to summon his musicians to play. They are to play as each group is brought to the _tonda_ once again. Now the focus is the preparation for

the journey to the bride's village. If her village is nearby, there may be an additional round of dancing, usually by some of the more enthusiastic young men. Otherwise, the stage is set for the departure of the bridal party. About half an hour before the Commander directs the musicians to play a special melody, Kajdēn e Krushqve (The Tune of the Wedding Party) as the sign of departure. The Commander and the groom remain at the house.

Journey to the Bride's Home

The journey of the wedding party to fetch the bride is very significant, since it is one of the few occasions in which the male members of an extended family and their friends are seen on the open road in one large group. In former times, especially among the Albanian mountain tribes, conflicts between rivals over honor, authority and property often made it dangerous for men to venture beyond their own fortified homes. The frequency of blood vendettas also increased the risk of up to 200 men assembling openly. The men in this procession displayed the strength and authority of the family, village or tribe they represented.

The Canon of Lek Dukagjinit decreed that the wedding party proceed on the appointed day, regardless of any ill-fortune besetting the family of the bride or groom.

> On the day which has been agreed upon, the wedding guests leave for her, without a word. The wedding guests will leave for her that day; even if she is on her deathbed, she will be taken bodily, dragged to the house of the groom . . . . And if there is a death in the house, the wedding guests must depart; the bride enters the groom's house as the dead person leaves. And afterward, the death of the person is mourned and lamented (Gjeçovi 1933:113;44).

Though the severity of this law has been mitigated, its essential message is still expressed in the formality of this event.

The journey of the wedding party is thoroughly organized beforehand following a strict protocol especially in the ordering of the men in the procession, which is also dictated by the Canon. In Opoja, the procession is led either by a Moslem priest (Hoxha) or the First Guest

(Krushku i Pare). The First Guest is a respected village elder (plak i menshem), "One who truly displays the qualities of a leader" (Gjecovi 1933:121;50). It is his responsibility to act as the symbolic leader of the wedding party and as their spokesman when they reach the bride's home. "The Canon does not seek in the leader a wealthy man, but someone who has the bearing of a leader; he may be ugly to behold, but must please the house of the groom" (Gjeçovi 1933:121;50b)

After the First Guest are ten men both from within the groom's village and from other villages who have an important relationship to the groom's family. Each bear on one shoulder a hand-woven scarf from the groom's family which identifies him as an important member of the wedding party. The Flagbearer (Bajraktar)[6] follows these men carrying the flag of the Albanian people which is adorned at the top with either flowers, an apple or quince and a pair of socks or a shirt that has been made for him. The Flagbearer is the most visible member and in a sense the focal point of the bridal party.

After the Flagbearer are four or five more prominent guests. They are followed by the remaining members of the bridal party, a mixture of men from the groom's village and those invited from other villages. The group is arranged according to age beginning with the elders, and, except during the course of the journey if it is a long one, proceed in a single file. The musicians are in line after the male children, who follow the last adult male guests. The musicians are followed by the bridal wagon or automobile (kerr i nusës). The man responsible for planning and maintaining order in the bridal procession, the Çaush, walks along the side of the men. The Wedding Master takes his place by

the bridal wagon. Some of the girls' songs at the home of the groom describe this aspect of the wedding procession:

Kerrit por on . . .
E kush to ti rri e kerrit por on,
Mori agababa me shumë jerdom.

By the wagon . . .
And for the man who goes by the wagon side,
There is a great honor.

Me kator rrota . . .
Edhe more kerr me kator rrota,
Me kon nusja keqe, linja te votra.

With four wheels . . .
The wagon with four wheels,
If the bride is unworthy, leave her at her hearth.

(Berisha, Xh. 1982. Melody B)

Until two or three decades ago the bridal party went on foot and horseback in the mountainous regions of Kosovo. "Ka pas rast kur kanë shku ma tepor se dyqind krushq nor ta kon qen afro tetëdhjet me kuaj e pre tyne shtatë ose tetë atllar" (There were cases of more than 200 hundred wedding guests, eighty on horseback with seven or eight fine horses [Berisha R. 1982]). There were no women in the bridal party. The bride was brought on a white horse which was led by a boy whose parents were both living. After the mountain paths were widened, the bride was brought in a wagon drawn by oxen or horses. Several women from the groom's family were then included in the wedding procession traveling in this wagon which was covered by red carpets, hiding the women inside who sang and played the tambourine throughout the journey.

Qilima t´ri . . .
Gji pe vonojmë kerrin me qilima t´ri,
O mori Gjylnas pe bina te ti.

The new carpet . . .
We have decorated the wagon with a new carpet,
Oh Gjylnas, to take you away with us.

Gratë e kerrit . . .
Edhe udha marrë ori gratë e kerrit,
Shkoni kqyrnja shpinë e ati gabelit.

Women of the wagon . . .
Good journey to you, women of the wagon,
Go take a good look at the house the those vagabonds.

(Berisha, Xh. 1982. Melody B)

In recent years, if the bride´s village is distant, when the guests return they travel in tractors, automobiles or buses, in which case the women travel by car after the men. This change necessarily detracts from the formal organization of the wedding procession which, in spite of this change, is still adherred to a closely as possible.

When the wedding party reaches the bride´s village, they are greeted at a predetermined place some distance from her home. The women are driven directly to her house while the men proceed to a house in the neighborhood. The male guests are greeted individually by the men of the bride´s family who line up to receive them. Each man exchanges formal greetings with each one of his hosts who say, "A u lodhët? Mirë se erdhët!" (Are you weary? Welcome!), to which the guest answers, "Ka pak. Mirë se ju gjetim!" (A little. Glad to be here!). The guests congratulate their hosts, saying, "Për hajrë dasëm!" (Blessings on your wedding!), answered by, "Hajrë paç!" (And to you also, blessings!).

The male guests are seated in designated places in the men's sitting room and are served <u>sherbet</u> (sugar-water or juice), coffee and cigarettes. A fairly formal conversation then ensues between the <u>miku</u> (the bride's father, literally: friend), the Moslem priest or village elder and the Wedding Master, with a minimum of interference from the others present. "Only the First Guest speaks; the others remain silent unless called upon by name" (Gjeçovi: 1933:25;55).

At this point the dancing begins, with a performance of one to to three dances (the first, second and third dances in the sequence of eleven dances) by a group of men from the bridal party. As the wedding party, especially when traveling on foot, still has far to go that day, it is in their interest not to prolong this dancing. If the guests dance more than three dances, the men of the bride's household have the right to dance as long as they want. "Luj ti ma tepor, keqyr gji po bojne mrapa ata!" (If you dance too much, wait and see what the others will do!" [Berisha M. 1982]). The Commander has chosen in advance three to ten of the finest dancers for this short exhibition reflects directly upon the quality of the groom's kin. After this sequence is completed, a select group of men from the bride's family also performs the same dance sequence. The dancing of the men from the bride's family continues until the bride is ready to depart.

The arrival of the wedding party at the groom's home is announced by the two messengers or by honking automobile horns. The procession is greeted with great jubilation at the groom's garden gate. The Wedding Master casts grains of wheat over the heads of the arriving guests to insure fertility and prosperity in the marriage. The

occasion is punctuated with the continuous, emotional singing of the girls who were left behind at the groom's house, accompanying themselves on the _def_ (a large tambourine, about one and one-half feet in diameter; see Figure 18.). Some songs ask the wedding party about their reception at the bride's house:

> Toj nga . . .
> Edhe krushqit ton e po vin toj nga,
> Me babon e nusos qysh jeni da?
>
> > In a flurry . . .
> > Our wedding guests arriving in a flurry,
> > How did you fare with the girl's father?
> >
> > (Berisha, Xh. 1982. Melody B)

Some songs are directed at the women who accompany the bride, mocking the bride or her family to tease her into breaking from her formal, solemn posture:

> Teri te dera . . .
> Oni mori gra e teri te dera,
> O gji me pa qypin o me bybera.
>
> > To the door . . .
> > Oh dear women, come to the door,
> > To see the pepper barrell which has arrived.
> >
> > (Berisha, Xh. 1982. Melody B)

There are also melancholy songs directed at the bride:

> Nepor mahalle . . .
> Kur erdhe Gjylnas e nepor mahallë,
> Mori devojknis ja bone hallall.
>
> > Through the neighborhood . . .
> > When Gjylnas comes through the neighborhood,

Her girlhood is gone forever.

(Berisha, Xh. 1982. Melody)

Assisted by the groom's mother and father or other close relatives, the bride steps out of the car or wagon with her right foot first to insure harmony with her new family. (In former times when the bride arrived on horseback, the boy who had led the horse was to be passed under the belly and over the back of the horse three times, a custom intended to insure the birth of sons [Berisha, Sultane 1983]). After the bride has left the car, the groom's mother or sister performs a gesture intended to bring sweetness into the life of this new member of the family, either placing candy or sugar in her mouth, or dipping her fingers in sugar-water or honey and directing her to touch the top of the threshold three times. In another ritual gesture, another small boy (whose parents must both be living) is held up to the bride under her veil, for which he receives a pair of socks the bride has made for him.

This done, the groom's father and mother or a close relative ceremoniously escort the bride to the kneading trough (<u>maxha</u>) and in some cases to other parts of the groom's house as another act related to insuring fertility. Amidst the enthusiastic singing and dancing filling the courtyard, the bride, walking with slow, deliberate steps, is taken to the sitting room where she remains veiled and stands rigidly as the girls continue to express their joy and excitement through constant song and dance.

Upon arrival at the groom's home, the male members of the bridal

party leave the area near the groom's house in order to afford the women privacy in receiving the bride. Only the closest relatives of the groom remain behind to unload the bride's trousseau. If the bridal party arrives early in the day, the men proceed directly to the dancing area (tonda) for a brief round of dancing. Otherwise, the immediate focus for them is upon the great feast which has been prepared for all of the men and boys who have participated in the wedding. Each group is escorted to its assigned room to eat. After the meal, the Commander invites each group to the tonda for the evening's dance event. At this time, the full dance sequence is performed several times, but with a more informal ordering of the dancers. Any of the men from neighboring villages may take this opportunity to join in. Their invitation is the call of the cyrla and lodra. Following this event, men who live nearby may request permission to return home.

During the course of the festivities Sunday evening, the groom prepares to enter the bridal chamber accompanied by his male peers. Meanwhile, the bride has entered the bridal chamber with her new sisters-in-law and awaits the groom in her rigid, formal posture. The Commander tells the men close to the groom to gather at the entrance to the bridal chamber where each one in turn gives a farewell salutation to him and slaps him on the back. His parents are next to the door to bid him his last farewell as a boy. Girls and boys of the immediate family are gathered in the courtyard for this auspicious moment, the girls playing the def and singing,

E po na vjen gjynah . . .
Edhe por Ridvonin po na vjen gjynah,
Mor´ beqarnija o gji e la.

We are sorry . . .
We are sorry now for Ridvani,
As he leaves his bachelor days behind him.

(Berisha, Xh. 1982. Melody B)

The men return to the _tonda_ for more dancing, while, if no males are present, several women may gather at the door of the wedding chamber to sing quiet, sensual songs without the _def_ accompaniment.

Monday is _Dita e Grave_ (Women's Day) when the bride, her trousseau and handwork are on formal display for the neighborhood women. This is a highlight for the women and girls who have a chance to judge the quality of this new property of the groom's family, to praise or criticize the bride's relative worth according to clear and broadly accepted criteria.

As is customary throughout the wedding process, the girls of the groom's family open the day's festivities with song, _def_ playing and dancing among themselves inside the groom's home and in the courtyard. After this, the men begin their part of the festivities with a special dance known as _Kcim i Dhendrit_. As this dancing involves only the more immediate members of the groom's family whose presence does not disturb the girls and women present, it is held in the courtyard of the groom's house rather than at the _tonda_.

The dance sequence is performed by a maximum of eight dancers. For the first time during the wedding, the groom is obligated to dance: "Edhe si diti edhe nuk diti, pa tjeter duhet me dal: (And whether he knows how [to dance] or not, he must join in [Ahmeti M. 1983]. In any case he must go through the motions of at least two or

three dances. Until the late 1960s, the groom was not to dance at any other occasion during his wedding, and was to keep out of sight all day Sunday, as all attention centered on the arrival of the bride. Nowadays, the groom is usually freed from these restrictions, and if he is an avid dancer, may participate in other dances and activities.

As with the other men's dance events, within the last ten to fifteen years other dances are added at the close of the traditional sequence, including various line, solo or duet forms such as Sherianqe, Kaçamak, Jeleno Mome (Macedonian Eleno Mome), Zhikino (Serbian Žikino Kolo), Hasianqe, Deli Agush, etc. Before these begin and after the traditional sequence has been completed, the women may perform parts of their dance sequence to the accompaniment of the cyrla and lodra. (This will be described in further detail below.)

Sherianqe and the other non-sequence dances dominate the occasion, providing the opportunity for men, boys, and girls of the same family to dance together. A girl, for example, may feel free to join in line next to a brother or cousin. The event may include several performances of Shota (see Figure 12) in which a girl and boy act out a flirtatious pantomimic dance. This is a very important social event, one of the rare opportunities in Opoja, especially among more conservative families, when males and females share in an emotional, outwardly expressive occasion.

At the conclusion of the dancing, the lead drummer approaches each man who gives him a gift of money according to his means, while some of the women may present him with a hand-woven scarf or knitted socks.

Men's Dancing During the Wedding Event

From Friday to Sunday the men's dance area (tonda) is the center of activities, serving as the stage for dance, music and the arrival of guests, for meeting, conversing and socializing. If weather permits, the men are at the tonda almost constantly, leaving only to eat and rest and Sunday afternoon to bring the bride from her village. When there is heavy rain the men gather inside but do not dance. They pass the time instead with conversation, folk-games, and entertainment provided by indoor cyrla music (nibet) and songs played on the two-stringed instrument, çifteli (see Figure 13).

The dance space has several names. Tonda is an older name, used primarily in the villages on the mountain foothills Brezne, Buqe and Pllav. Possible etymologies for this word include tonet (that which is our's), and tanda or tenda (vine arbor) referring to the awning built above the spectators for shelter (Berisha, Xh. 1982b). This term is also heard in other ethnographic regions of Kosovo (specifically in Drenica and Gollak), where it is pronounced tant. In the villages of the Opoja flatlands and in other areas of Kosovo, the word loma is also used to describe the dance space. This term is derived from lema (the threshing floor) a flat area also used for dancing in other regions of Yugoslavia, the Serbo-Croatian equivalents being gumno and guvno. Young people in Opoja tend to refer to the dance area as loma, bafqe (garden), or simply vend për lodrat (place for the drums).

Usually each neighborhood in a village has one open place commonly used as the tonda (see Figure 15). A flat, smooth area is chosen which is suitable for dancing and large enough to accomodate up to 200 male guests. It must be some distance from the main village road lest the dance event come under public scrutiny, and a reasonable distance from the groom's home so as not to interfere with the women's activities.

The guests are seated in a four by five meter rectangular area recognized as the apex of the tonda. It is situated on the east side so that the spectator's backs are to the sun, (and in the early 1980s among some families) was shaded with an awning of branches or tarps supported on log posts. The ground is covered with ferns or straw upon which skins and rugs are strewn to provide the guests with maximum comfort. The village elders claim the most priviledged seating at the top of this carpeted area (i.e. farthest away from the dancers). The other invited guests are in front of them with the younger men from the groom's own village and older children at the bottom (i.e. nearest the dancers). Like all aspects of the wedding, the seating area is thus well-defined and reflects the customary organization of the men's sitting room where the elders are at the top (i.e. nearest the hearth) with the children at the bottom (i.e. nearest the door). During the dancing young boys may squat or stand along the periphery of the tonda and thus are free to mimic or follow behind their favorite performers.

In some villages this arrangement is modified with men from the groom's village seated on planks or logs on two other sides of the dance periphery giving further definition to the tonda. Even when this is the case, the carpeted seating area is recognised as the principal

focus; dances performed in an open circle (all eleven dances with the exception of the first, second, eighth and tenth dances in the sequence) begin with the dancers facing this apex. Thus, the _tonda_ serves in a theatrical sense as a conventional stage with the dancers consciously oriented toward their public.

The _tonda_ is further defined by the location of the coffee-maker who is kept busy above his fire (or more recently, above his electric hot-plate) situated to one side of the carpeted area. The coffee-maker is specially chosen by the Wedding Commander and according to older custom was to be of the same tribe as the Wedding Master to guard against contamination of the coffee. Besides the thick, sweet coffee, the guests enjoy a constant flow of cigarettes offered by the Wedding Master or one of the other hosts as a gesture of hospitality and respect.

The _cyrla_ players are seated together on the periphery of the _tonda_ about one meter apart. The drummers are on their feet between these musicians and the dancers. While the second drummer remains fairly stationary two or three meters from the _cyrla_ the lead drummer actively approaches and sometimes penetrates the dance circle.

As the dancing often continues into the night, a line of bare electric lights is strung across the _tonda_. Before the coming of electricity, the space was illuminated by _kandila_, gas lanterns filled with three wicks and supported on staffs, or _pishtar_, torches of pine brances. In describing the dance event, informants rarely fail to mention these lanterns which provided a characteristic, soft, dramatic effect in contrast to the harshness of modern electric lights.

The guests pass their time at the _tonda_ socializing, observing, and participating in the traditional dance sequence and sometimes in the newer repertoire of dances which might follow. The traditional dance sequence, the focus of the event, consists of several interrelated parts which together create a continuity of form. After moving into the center of the _tonda_, the dancers walk four or five steps in a counter-clockwise circle arriving at a comfortable spatial arrangement (about one meter apart in the unattached dances), finally assuming the starting position in one or two measures of music. This introductory phase provides a period of concentration as the dancers recall the dance patterns which follow and prepare for the musicians to crystalize rhythmic and melodic pattern.

Following the signal of the lead dancer, the performers begin, attempting _të lujne si nja_ (to dance as one). "No one begins a movement until the leader has given the sign; unity is maintained throughout the dance" (Berisha, Xh. 1982b). Each dance unfolds, develops and culminates under the direction of the leader "who is able to embody and express through movement the beauty of the dance" (Berisha, Xh. 1982b). The dance ends when the leader feels that the motifs have been thoroughly expressed and need not be repeated. Each dance is followed by an interlude of single file walking in a counter-clockwise circular path. Again, this gives the performers a chance to prepare for the upcoming dance as the musicians begin the new rhythm and melody. This alteration continues for forty to sixty minutes until the entire sequence of eleven dances has been executed.

The performance of this sequence is initiated by the Commander who is responsible for the continuity of the dance event as well as all other organizational aspects of the wedding. When the time is right, he invites three to eight dancers to rise to the occasion, choosing the performers according to certain conventions. Before the invited guests arrive, the most enthusiastic dancers may volunteer. Saturday afternoon, the Commander must call upon groups of guests in the order in which they arrived. On Sunday the protocol is less rigorous as attention is focused on the journey to the bride's village. Occasionally the mood in the _tonda_ calls for a serious, _traditional_ performance, and the Commander responds to this by choosing older, more seasoned dancers. During the course of the wedding the dance sequence is performed up to ten times, giving everyone a chance to participate, the better dancers performing more often. Some of the older men no longer have the strength to execute all eleven dances. If they are specially requested to dance, they may perform only the first and slowest dance and the second dance and then step out.

As the performers approach the center of the _tonda_ to begin the sequence, one dancer usually asserts himself as the leader, assuming control of the moment by being the first to integrate himself into the rhythm and melody. Out of respect for the other dancers, one man usually does not lead all eleven dances; after leading the first two or three dances, he yields to the next man in line, signaling to him during the walking interlude. If the second dancer does not want to lead, he may defer to the man to his left, or may lead one dance as a token gesture. As the sequence of motifs in each dance is arranged

spontaneously by the leader, he must be a skilled performer able to direct his group with conviction and clarity.

Though the dance leader ultimately directs the execution of the dance sequences, the musicians help to create and maintain the essence of the event. At the request of the Commander or an assistant appointed to take responsibility for the musicians, they begin the shrill, powerful music which resounds throughout the village. "The dance event usually begins with a rapid beating of the _thupra_ [thin stick] on the left side of the drum with an occasional striking on the right side with the _qekiç_ [larger, heavier stick]" (Berisha, Xh. 1982b). Followed by the second drummer, the leader produces an evocative, gripping rhythm which brings the dancers to their feet. The lead _cyrla_ player makes a few tests on his reed, finally reaching a tone in accord with the second player's. He then begins a short, improvised musical phrase and after a few notes is joined by the second player on a _bordun_ (drone). This second player then alternates between accompanying the leader in a drone and playing the melody in another interval, usually an octave apart.

This rhythmic and melodic introduction continues for two or three minutes until the dancers have taken their starting positions and the lead drummer and shawm player have reached a climactic synchrony which generates into the sounds which signal the first dance.

The _cyrla_ music sustains the tension of the dance event and provides the melodic orientation for the dancers. By circular breathing (simultaneous inhalation and exhalation) the players produce a continuous, hypnotic sound from their fixed positions on the

periphery of the tonda. The cyrla player comes into direct communication with the dancers when, if he is tired or fails to produce the desired effect, with a pointed glance or a shout of Hajde, hajde! (Come on, let's go!), the lead dancer expresses his dissatisfaction to the musicians who come to life and embellish their playing.

The drummers are more actively involved with the dancers, the lead drummer constantly responding to the disposition of the dance leader, accenting his principal movements and creating a rich rhythmic texture for the dancers. When the lead dancer and drummer are thoroughly absorbed in the dance, they reach a creative unity, the drummer moving into the dance circle to increase their communication and to demonstrate his own virtuosity. The lead cyrla player breaks into an exciting improvisation, thrusting the cyrla high into the air and moving his upper body in sympathy to the dancer's movements.

These dramatic moments draw in the spectators who are thoroughly involved in the performance, shouting encouragement to the dancers: "Ju lumshin komot!" (Your blessed feet!), "Na kenaqet!" (It pleases us!), and, "E keni kall!" (You are afire!), and generously tipping the musicians when the spirit moves them. There is special interest paid when three or four dance sequences immediately follow one another and the competitive spirit grows as each group tries to surpass the others in technical accuracy and subtlety of interpretation.

Environmental Factors

The men of Opoja are drawn to the weddings, especially to the events at the tonda, by the camaraderie, entertainment, friendly competition, drama, and sense of social and cultural identity they can

expect to find there. Spatial, visual, aural and tactile qualities all combine to create the special atmosphere synonymous with the dancing central to these events.

First, a sense of unity, group identity, impregnability and strength is created by the clear boundaries of the tonda defined by the spectator's seating areas and logs, planks, fences or the side of building which make the periphery. (This sense of solidarity had real significance in former times when the mountaineers were often involved in tribal conflicts or blood vendettas.) Further orientation is created by the various spatial foci: the group of principal spectators who give the area a frontal aspect, the position of the musicians on an adjacent side of the periphery, and the roughly circular dance space at the center of the <u>tonda</u>. Spatial relationships between the men in the <u>tonda</u> also follow a clear pattern. The principal spectators, sitting cross-legged on padded carpets, arrange themselves close together, to accomodate the many guests who may be gathered in this small space, and in following the customary behavior of an indoor setting.

The Gypsy musicians also maintain customary spatial (and social) boundaries; while in a sense their music is part of the emotional essence of the event, they are noticeably separated from the Albanian men. (An exception is with the lead drummer, whose special role as a jester and showman gives him access to the inner circle of dancers.) Though separated by several meters, the musicians also tend to maintain physical proximity to each other, demonstrating their cultural and musical integrity.

The hosts of the event, the Wedding Master, Commander, Çaush, the assistants and servers, reveal their special roles by penetrating the imaginary boundaries between guests and musicians, moving back and forth between the groom's house (where the food is being prepared), the konaket (where meals are served), and the tonda. While their hosts duties necessitate crossing the spatial limits, the guests on the other hand show consideration for their hosts by respecting these boundaries. As in other aspects of the wedding, this mirrors everyday behavior in the traditional Albanian society: while there is tremendous physical closeness between people, property and territorial boundaries are clearly defined and heeded.

The dancers maintain a clear spatial relationship among themselves. They tend to remain equidistant, about one or two meters apart, taking enough room for their broad arm and leg gestures, squats and turns, while staying close enough to be able to see and sense the other dancers' movements in order "to dance as one." In the open circle/line dances, they face their public but do not approach them or exceed the imaginary boundaries of the dance space, maintaining a clear performer/spectator relationship.

The visual factor in the dance event begins with the outdoor setting in which snow-capped mountains, fields of ripening wheat and green meadows carpeted with wildflowers often provide the scenic backdrop. Also of importance is what can not be seen, i.e. the women's activities at the groom's house which must be out of sight of the men at the tonda. Within the tonda, the visual focus naturally falls upon arriving guests, the antics of the drummer and on the dancers. The

musicians' focus rests upon the dancers. There is little visual contact between the musicians themselves, as all concentration is reserved for the performers.

Ideally, the dancer's focus is on the ground ahead of him or on the leader. Wandering eyes show a lack of involvement and are considered a weakness in the overall performance. The dance leader is to maintain an intensely concentrated focus on the ground ahead, broken only by momentary visual communication with the lead drummer, or occasionally, sideward glances to check on the synchronization of his group. Needless to say, the dancers are not to have eye contact with the audience whom they only acknowledge by beginning and ending the open-circle/line dances facing them.

A description of sound qualities affecting the dance event is rather simple: during the dancing, the shrill peal of the _cyrla_ underscored by the thunderous beating of two great _lodra_ drowns out any other sounds, monopolizing the attention of everyone within earshot. During breaks, a euphony of sounds is heard: in the _tonda_ there is the men's conversation varigated by the coming and going of guests. From the distance is heard the plaintive cries and cackles of cows, sheep, dogs and roosters, the clatter of wagon wheels on the potholed road, and last but never least, the girls' constant singing punctuated by the rhythm of the tambourines, the unmistakable trademark of the Opoja wedding.

For the dancers, there are three main tactile sensations which contribute to their experience of the event as a whole. First is contact with the ground, usually a fairly flat surface of hard-packed

soil and grass with scattered pebbles and pits. Today the dancers wear storebought western-style hard leather shoes and their feet are less sensitive to the dance ground surface. Before the 1950s, laced moccasins (opingat) were worn with heavy socks, giving the dancers more sensitivity and probably affecting their performance. Today, the men who dance in stocking-feet tend to move with somewhat greater flexibility. In terms of costume, the few men at the Opoja weddings who still don the old-style tirq (pants of stiff, felted wool) tend to dance in a more restrained, deliberate way, perhaps reflecting both the effect of the unyielding costume and the sense of movement and behavior associated with the past.

The most important tactile element is between the dancers themselves. In Opoja, the dancers are joined in open circle dances by three types of hand-holds. For example, the seventh dance in the sequence which is performed gishtë për gishtë (small finger to small finger) is one of the two lyrical dances, with lighter, smaller, more internalized movements requiring no physical support from adjacent dancers. The four dances performed dorë për dorë (hand to hand at shoulder height) are relatively heavier, involving squatting and balancing, the greater contact contributing to the strength of each dancer. The shoulder hold in the fifth dance provides a solid base for squats and balances. At the same time this type of hold tends to move the open-circle into a line formation, significantly changing the character of the dance. The dances outside of the traditional sequence are performed hand to hand.

analysis will be based upon the smoother, heavier, more contained style of the older men.

Attachment and Formation

The traditional dance sequence in Opoja consists of eleven dances built upon twelve basic movement motifs which are spontaneously arranged by the dance leader. Though all of the dances are built upon these same elements, each assumes a special character by its juxtaposition of four components: attachment (hand-hold), formation, rhythm and music (see Figure 6 for the relationship between the first three components).

Five of the men's dances, the first, second, eighth, ninth and tenth in the series, are performed free of any attachment and are designated as lëshutë (loose, released, free). The remaining six dances involve one of three forms of attachment: dorë për dorë (hand to hand, gishtë për gishtë (finger to finger), and krah për krah (shoulder to shoulder).

The two basic formations in the dance sequence are closed and open circles which travel in a counter-clockwise direction. When the dancers are not linked by a hand-hold, they are spaced about one meter apart from each other in a closed circle (në rreth të mbyllur veç e veç).

When they are linked with a hand-hold, the dancers perform in an open

Dance Structure

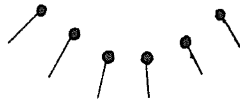
A newcomer to Opoja seeing the traditional wedding dances for the first time would doubtless have difficulty distinguishing one from another. The combination of walking and hesitation, bending and straightening, and unexpected drops and turns performed in unison, conjured by the peal of the _cyrla_, would probably appear to him as one long, obscure medley of movement. But if this neophyte chanced to stay a while, availing himself of a choice opportunity to feast his eyes upon several repetitions of this sequence, he might begin to notice that each dance has a special quality which evokes a certain mood in the dancers, musicians and spectators.

In general, the performers themselves are not consciously aware of the structure of their dances. They do not have a specific name for most of the dances and can usually only guess at the number of dances in the sequence. But once the _cyrla_ and _lodra_ call the performers to their feet, an hour-long sequence of endless combinations of patterns presents no difficulty whatsoever. Having seen and performed the dances countless times since boyhood, the dancer finds the movements are to be easily performed. One or two seemingly undiscernible measures on the _cyrla_ are immediately familiar to the dancers, cueing the choreographic sequence to follow.

As each dancer displays a personal style, any study of this kind must assume "an ideal dancer-observer in a completely homogenous group" (Singer 1974:381). As the younger dancers in Opoja (those born after World War II) exhibit somewhat freer, less exacting movements, this

circle (*në gjysëm rreth*) which varies in shape depending upon the number of performers. With fewer dancers the open circle tends to shape into a line rather than an arc. The open circle also ends more toward a line when the dancers are in a shoulder-hold, such as in the fifth dance of the sequence.

During the musical interlude which precedes each dance, the performers walk single file in a closed circle. If the next dance is a linked one in an open circle, the leader walks until he is facing the audience or musicians, the other dancers joining sequentially in line next to him.



With the exception of the seventh dance, the formation of dancers remains the same throughout the sequence. In the seventh dance the performers begin in an open circle and are joined by small fingers, later releasing contact and dancing individually, at which point the circle closes.

Rhythm

The rhythm of each dance contributes significantly to its uniqueness. Although the performers distinquish between the different rhythms and can cue the musicians by imitating the rhythm with their

voices, they do not recognize these rhythms formally and have no native terms for them. The seven different rhythms of the eleven dances are 12/8, 9/8, 7/8, 4/4, 3/4, 2/4 and rubato (see Figure 6).

The term rubato is used by the musicologists and the choreographers in Kosovo to mean a free deviation from the basic tempo in the interest of performance expression. This unmetered rhythm of the epic-style dance, Kellçoja, introduces the men's sequence of dances. The musicians follow the slow, sustained movements of the lead dancer, the drummer emphasizing every or every second step with a constant drum-roll and a heavy beat at the end when the step has reached its culmination, and by accenting the quicker bends and squats of the dancer with a sharp striking of the drum. This unmetered rhythm in the first dance demands concentration and sensitizes the reciprocal reactions of the musicians and dancers; without a strictly set rhythm to fall back on, they must depend upon an intimate communication which will be maintained throughout the eleven dances.

A key rhythmic pattern in both men's dancing and instrumental music throughout southwest Kosovo is 12/8 which occurs in the second, third and tenth dances of the Opoja sequence of dances. This assymetrical timing lends itself to a frequently used movement motif found throughout southwest Kosovo (see Motif "B"). The dancers and musicians divide the twelve counts into two parts, 7/8 and 5/8, emphasizing four accented beats:

In the first section (7/8), the action of the first accented beat tends

to be a pause or lift (a gesture which does not take weight), while the second, longer accented beat is often a step or squat (an action taking weight). This movement gives the characteristic appearance of hesitation. Rather than stepping assertively on the down beat, in the 12/8 rhythm the dancers tend to pause or otherwise prepare for the next movement. The 5/8 is also divided into two accented beats, the first beat slightly longer and receiving more emphasis than the first.

The 9/8 rhythm (the eighth dance) is also assymetrical and divided into four beats:

♫ ♫ ♫ ♫♪

♩ ♩ ♩ ♩.

with the last and longest beat receiving emphasis. As the beats are significantly shorter than those in the 12/8 rhythm, this dance tends to have a quicker tempo than its thematic counterpart in 12/8 and places the emphasis on different steps.

The 7/8 rhythm is performed with three accented beats:

♫♪ ♫ ♫

♩. ♩ ♩

with the first and longest beat receiving the stress as in the first section of the 12/8 rhythm. In both dances in 7/8, the performers are linked, in the fifth dance by a shoulder-hold and in the eleventh by a hand-hold. Though these two dances are in the same open-circle formation and have the same rhythm, they differ very much in character as they are built upon different movement motifs.

The 4/4 meter (the seventh dance) and 2/4 meter (the fourth and ninth dances) are the only symmetrical rhythms in the sequence, and

impose yet another character upon the movement vocabulary. They tend to be played in a quicker tempo than the other rhythms and give a slightly lighter, more lyrical style to the dances.

Played very slowly with emphasis on the first beat, the 3/4 meter imparts a heavy, earthbound quality to the fourth dance in the sequence. Perhaps because this meter is simple and sparse in contrast to the longer asymmetrical patterns, the steps and gestures are particularly forceful.

DANCE NO.	ATTACHMENT	FORMATION	RHYTHM
1	unattached	closed circle	rubato
2	unattached	closed circle	12/8
3	hand to hand	open circle	12/8
4	hand to hand	open circle	2/4
5	shoulder hold	open circle	7/8
6	hand to hand	open circle	3/4
7	finger to finger	open circle	4/4
8	unattached	closed circle	9/8
9	unattached	closed, open	2/4
10	unattached	closed circle	12/8
11	hand to hand	open circle	7/8

Translation:

unattached	<u>lëshutë</u>
hand to hand	<u>dorë për dorë</u>
shoulder hold	<u>krah për krah</u>
finger to finger	<u>gishtë për gishtë</u>

Figure 6.

The sequence of men's dances: rhythms and attachments.

The Naming of Dances

Participants may refer to some of the dances in this sequence by the manner of attachment (e.g. Dorë për Dorë [Hand to Hand]), and others by their number in the sequence (e.g. Vallja e Dytë [The Second Dance]). The first and ninth dances have descriptive names: Këllçoja (The Sabre Dance), and Kajde e Grave (The Women's Tune). The dances vary among participants and villages. In some cases names are given to dances which relate to dances in neighboring regions. For example, the tenth dance is sometimes called Hasianqe (The Dance from Has), describes a certain movement sequence thought to be performed in the neighboring region of Has.

Basic Movement Units

The eleven dances fall into three genres most easily characterized by epic, lyric and epic/lyric, terms which are frequently used in Kosovo to describe oral folklore and music. "In song, the epic style is associated with historical events, the lyrical style with love. In dance, the epic style is smooth (rrafsh) and heavy (rendë) with little ornamentation and is characterized by an earthbound, masculine quality. Lyrical dances are softer, with more ornamentation" (Berisha, Xh. 1982c).

In Opoja the first dance in the sequence, Këllçoja, is of the epic type, with very slow, strong, smooth movements. It is believed to depict battle motifs, and was once danced with a sabre and sheath (Halimi 1971:432). The seventh and ninth dances are lyrical in comparison, with smaller, lighter steps and graceful hand gestures.

The epic and lyric dances incorporate four special motifs into the basic movement repertoire and will be discussed below. The remaining nine dances fall between these two categories, having smooth, heavy movements which are relatively lighter in character than those in _Kellçoja_. These are the dances which, through various combinations of formation, rhythm and twelve interchangeable motifs make up Opoja's basic dance repertoire.

The basic units (_kinemes_ or _kinetic elements_) of the traditional Opoja dances stem from locomotor movements which have been lengthened, exaggerated and ornamented to create a stylistic continuity. Figure 7 lists these basic movement units with their Albanian equivalents.

I. STEPS WHICH TAKE WEIGHT

forward walking steps	hecjet përpara
backward walking steps	hecjet mbrapa
crossing with one foot in front of other with momentary taking of weight	hap i kryqezuar
small knee bend with weight on both feet	thyerje e vogel e gjunjeve me peshën e trupit në të dy kembët
deep knee bend	ulje të thella

II. LEG GESTURES

gesturing leg lifted slightly fwd*, fwd diag* or place low, with contraction at hip and knee joint	thyerje e kembës në gju pak përpara, anash ose në vend e çuar nga toka
drawing foot to knee of supporting leg	thembra e kembës vendoset në gju
toe touching ground fwd or fwd diag	gishtat e kembës prekin tokën përpara ose anash

III. FOOT GESTURES

heel-toe touch on ground fwd or fwd diag	thembra dhe gishtat e kembës prekin tokën përpara ose anash

IV. ARM GESTURES

one arm lifted front, rounded, in front of chest, palm down, in sympathy or opposition to stepping or gesturing leg	dora e thyer në bryl përpara gjoksit, bashkërishte ose me këmbë të kundert që është në levizje

*fwd = forward
**diag = diagonal

Figure 7. Basic movement units

Stylistic Characteristics

Certain movement qualities characterize the execution of these kinetic elements creating stylistic continuity throughout the dance.

Whole Body

The first of these is the overall integration of movement as all gestures tend to bring about a sympathetic response in the rest of the body. This is most evident in the dances performed without a hand-hold in which steps or leg gestures are accompanied by a slight torso contraction and sympathetic arm movements. When the dancers are linked, torso and arm responses are limited (except for those of the leader), but there is still a sense of total integration and as soon as hands are released (as in a turn), the whole body comes into play.

Pulse

Another important stylistic characteristic is the body's constant rhythmic pulse which is achieved by a very slight, soft, bending and straightening at the knee corresponding to accented beats. Though in the older style this is sometimes barely perceptible, it is clearly visible among younger dancers.

Center of Gravity

Especially during slow, deliberate movements, the dancers tend to maintain a slightly low center of gravity by a constant, small knee-bend.

Bending

This slight knee-bend is carried through to other body parts. There is rarely a total straightening of arms, torso or legs.

Movement Emphasis

In general the dancers perform with a smooth style which sometimes even gives the appearance of slow motion. Certain beats are emphasized by accented leg-lifts, squats, toe-touches or knee bends placed at the beginning or end of motifs.

Body Carriage

The body carriage which tends to be maintained throughout the execution of these basic movement units helps to create the style characteristic of Opoja men's dancing.

Head

Visual focus is concentrated forward-low, toward the center of the circle or on the dance leader. No deliberate head articulation.

Torso

Slightly contracted from the waist, involving some further contraction and extension to emphasize slow, deliberate steps associated with the epic style and battle motifs. Also common at beginning and end of dance motifs. Held more erect in the lyrical movements.

Legs

Tend to remain slightly bent at the knee joint, except, among some performers, when accenting a forward-low lift at the conclusion of a dance motif.

Feet

Tend to maintain a <u>natural</u> position, sometimes slightly inverted during leg gestures. No deliberate contraction or extension at the ankle joint. In leg gestures the feet may be touching or slightly lifted off the floor.

Arms

Relaxed and slightly flexed at elbow joint, swinging in natural opposition to locomotor leg movements or in sympathy with them. Usually for emphasis at the beginning or end of a dance motif, one arm (usually that of the gesturing leg) is lifted slightly forward and bent at the elbow in front of the chest in accordance with the leg gesture, the other arm crossing in back, often touching the small of the back.

Hands

Like the feet, the hands tend to maintain a soft, natural position, slightly contracted. Exception: especially among younger dancers, in the lyrical motifs found in the seventh and ninth dances, the hands become the most expressive body part, gently making small, inward circles from the wrist with slight rhythmic contractions of the hands.

Motifs

The kinetic elements are joined in various patterns to produce twelve basic motifs which are arranged in different sequence to create eleven distinct dances. For the purposes of this structural analysis and the Labanotation, each motif has been given a letter name from "A" to "M" for the motifs most frequently performed, and "N" to "Q" for the four additional motifs.

Kaeppler defined the motif as "a frequently occuring combination of morphokinemes [combined kinemes] that forms a short entity in itself" (Kaeppler 1972:202). To Martin and Pesovar, the motifs are "the smallest organic units of the dance . . . whose rhythm and kinetic patterns from a relatively closed and recurring structure" (Martin and Pesovar 1961:5). The motifs are short movement patterns which have a definite beginning and end which is consciously recognized by the performers themselves and thus can be remembered and juxtaposed in endlessly varying combinations. They demonstrate the way the smallest units "can be combined from the point of view of the holders of the tradition themselves" (Kaeppler 1972:173).

Though the motifs are clearly identifiable, in each dance they are expressed slightly differently. Each motif may be easily and spontaneously manipulated by the dancers to accommodate four variables: formation/attachment, rhythm, style and syntax or ordering. Formation and attachment affect the motifs by delimiting the range of movement. When the dancers are unattached in a closed circle they are freer to change directional focus and use the arms and torso to a much greater extent. A hand- or shoulder-hold gives the performers more

security and greater movement potential in balances and squats (see examples "B" in the second and third dances).

The motifs are noticeably altered when they are performed in different rhythms. For example, motif "B" - the most common men's movement pattern in southwest Kosovo, is performed in 12/8, 9/8, 7/8 and 2/4 in the Opoja dance sequence. With each rhythm, the motif is governed by different rules relating to the length of time or number of beats it takes to perform each movement. Occurring at different points in the measure, the movements are then accented in different ways (see example "B" in the second and eighth dances).

Variations in style between different performers naturally changes the appearance of the motif. As previously mentioned, there are two major styles, one generally associated with the older way of dancing by performers born prior to the 1940s and the other relatively newer style. The former is more subdued and internalized, with smaller steps, lower leg gestures and a smoother carriage. The latter is more common today, reflecting the more permissive, informal behavior of contemporary life in Opoja. Naturally within these two styles there are many personal variations. Later in the presentation of native evaluations the acceptable limits of stylistic variations will be discussed.

A	walking single-file in LOD*, CCW**
B	basic traveling step in LOD with turn toward left diag***
B1	basic traveling step with cross-step or hold toward left diag
C	basic CW**** turn immediately followed by CCW turn
C1	basic CW turn immediately followed by CCW turn
D	basic CW turn with squats at beginning or end
D1	CW turn with squats followed by CCW turn with squats
E	side to side squats
F	walking forward with lifts toward focal point of circle
G	walking forward with squats toward focal point of circle
H	walking backward away from focal point of circle
J	drawing gesturing foot to knee[8]
K	heel-toe touches
L	two traveling steps, two step-holds in LOD, CCW (basic _Valle_ step)
M	gesturing leg held forward-low
N	syncopated ball-change traveling step, symmetrical
O	same as "N" but on one side only
P	legato walking steps, multi-directional
Q	quick bending and straightening, weight on both legs, one in front

* line of direction[9]
** counter-clockwise
*** in relation to the focal point of the circle
**** clockwise

Figure 8. Basic movement motifs

	MEN´S DANCES NOS. 1-11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
A	Walking single file*											
B	Basic travel step		x	x	x				x		x	x
B1	Basic travel + cross								x		x	
C	Basic CW turn		x	x	x				x		x	
C1	CW + CCW turn										x	
D	CW turn + squats		x			x			x		x	
D1	CW & CCW turns, squats										x	
E	Side squats			x	x		x				x	
F	Walk + lifts			x	x	x	x					x
G	Walk + squats		x	x	x	x	x	x		x		
H	Walking backward					x		x		x		
J	Foot to knee			x	x							x
K	Heel-toe touches			x		x						x
L	Traveling step		x			x		x				
M	Gesture fwd-low		x									x
N	Ball-change							x		x		
O	"N" to one side								x			
P	Legato walking	x										
Q	Small knee-bend on both legs simultaneously	x										

* Occurs before each dance.

Fig. 9.

Occurance of the nineteen motifs in the men´s sequence of dances

Syntax

After learning the movement style, motifs, formations and rhythms, a novice must master one more important element in order to "speak the dance language" of Opoja. This final element is the traditional ordering of motifs within each dance. It is in this internal ordering or dance syntax that the leader's expertise and creativity are tested, and the dance attains a coherent form. Though the arrangement of movement patterns is spontaneous, some recurring patterns appear which may be described as the realization rules of this dance type (see Singer 1974:394). These rules involved the grouping of related elements and their placement in the dance. For example, the most basic traveling pattern (motif "B") is very often placed at the beginning of a dance, followed by a variation on this step ("B1"), then the basic turn ("C"), the turn ornamented with a squat ("D"), and so forth.

Though the realization rules are not strictly set, the following groupings and orderings of the most frequently occurring motifs are typical:

At the beginning of a dance,

B - basic traveling step

B1 - basic traveling step with cross-step or hold

C - basic turn

D - turn with squats

Mid-sequence,

J - drawing one foot to the knee

K - heel-toe touches

And,

F - walking forward with lifts

G - walking forward with squats

H - walking backward

Break-steps or pauses,

M - holding gesturing leg forward-low

E - side-to-side squats.

BASIC MOVEMENT UNITS / BASIC MOVEMENT MOTIFS	A	B	B_1	C	C_1	D	D_1	E	F	G	H	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	O
Forward walking steps	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x				x				x	
Backward walking steps											x								
Crossing step			x																
Small bend at knees																			x
Deep bend at knees						x	x	x		x									
Gesturing leg lifted		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x						x				
Drawing foot to knee												x							
Toe touching ground				x							x		x	x					
Heel-toe touch													x						

Figure 10. Basic movement units and the motifs in which they appear

NO.	ATTACHMENT	TYPICAL ARRANGEMENT OF MOTIFS
1	unattached	P,Q
2	unattached	B,Bl,M,C,D,M,D
3	unattached	Bl,J+K,F+H+E,C
4	hand to hand	B,J+K,F,E,C
5	shoulder hold	L,H,F,K,G
6	hand to hand	E,J+K,F,G,C
7	finger to finger	L+H,N,O,N,H,G
8	unattached	B,C,B,Bl,D
9	unattached	N,O,H,G
10	unattached	B,Bl,C,Bl,Cl,E,M,Bl,Dl
11	hand to hand	B,J,+K,F,E,C,M

Figure 11.

The sequence of men's dances: typical arrangement of motifs

Këllçoja

Before concluding a discussion of the structural aspect of men's dancing in Opoja, further mention must be made of Këllçoja, the first dance in the sequence. This dance differs from the others in the sequence as it is in a slower, epic style, is unmetered, and does not incorporate the basic motifs which make up the other dances. In addition to this, it is one of the few Albanian dances specifically mentioned in the literature.

The name këllçoja is the Albanian derivation of the Turkish term kılıç oyunu meaning sabre dance (Pllana 1975:4). It is recognised by other names, such as the Moslem Albanian Kalađojne, the Catholic Albanian Kalaidoni, Serbian Kalađojna and Gypsy Kelleç ojni (Antoni 1958:245). Antoni describes the Prizren city version of Kalađojne performed to a Gypsy čalgidzi orchestra (clarinet, violin and hourglass drum) as now "disappearing, especially in the cities, along with the costumes which went well with the calm, slow, elegant steps" (Antoni 1958:245).

Ljubica Janković also mentions Këllçoja in her discussion of Prizren's Serbian dances:

> The wedding guests would dance the Kalać and various other kolos, to the accompaniment of singing and musical instruments . . . .
>
> The circular procession appears in the Kalać, a round dance with dancers holding the edges of a large kerchief or linked and crossed kerchiefs in the center. The Kalać is probably of ritual origin, being parallel to the crossed sticks among the Shiptars [Albanians] and the crossed swords or knives among Turks, although the dance and the way of dancing is not the same.

> The name Kalać derives from the Turkish word K'l'c which means knife. The dance is also called Kalaçojni or Kaladzojni meaning the dance with the knife (Janković 1962:116).

Some folklorists describe Këllçoja as a series of dances performed with weapons or weapon-substitutes. Pllana states that the series is composed of twelve dances (1975:4); Antoni four to twelve dances (1958:245), Janković five dances (1962:116), while Halimi states that it consists of twenty-four dances with nine different figures (1971:432). Agolli refers to the dance as Këllçoja e parë (the first Këllçoja) (1964:11).

In Opoja, the dance is pronounced Këllçoja, Kollçoja or Kallçoja, and is understood to be the first in a sequence of eleven dances. "Këllçoja is an expression of joy; it is the beginning of the wedding" (Berisha, Xh. 1982c). A Turkish speaking Albanian informant used a Turkish name in describing this dance. "The first dance was Këlliç-ojnasi - the dance with the sabre" (Berisha, M. 1982). Though local amateur groups sometimes perform Këllçoja with sabres, none of the informants questioned during this study recall ever having seen sabres actually being used at weddings. However, based upon the kinds of motifs and movement style associated with Këllçoja, the derivation of the name and other references to the use of sabres in this dance, it is reasonable to assume that it falls into the general category of Albanian war dances (Valle Luftarake[10]) having been danced in the past with weapons and depicting battle motifs. In today's Këllçoja as performed in Opoja, no weapons or weapon substitutes are used, but the wide, slow sweeping arm gestures and the heavy steps which characterize

this dance seem to reflect its precious association with rehearsal and reenactment of fighting motifs.

Këllçoja is considered to be the most demanding dance in the sequence, requiring familiarity with the steps and performance skill. With no steady rhythm to rely upon, the dancers must be able to follow the very subtle cues of their leader. "I remember the first time I joined the adults in the dance cycle when I was about ten. I was unsure about dancing Këllçoja because it really requires refined performance ability. It takes a man of twenty years old or more. I remember very well. I said I wouldn't join into Këllçoja, but waited until the next dances in the cycle" (Berisha, Xh. 1982c).

Këllçoja also brings into play two special motifs: slow steps placed precisely in specified floor patterns, and staccato bending and straightening of the knees while one foot is placed slightly in front of the other (Motifs "P" and "Q").

Kajde e Grave

Two other dances in the sequence deserve special mention. These are the seventh dance, Gishtë për Gishtë (Finger to Finger), and the ninth dance, Kajde e Grave (The Ladies' Tune). These lyric dances incorporate two more special motifs into the standard movement repertoire, a syncopated "ball-change" on alternating feet (Motif "N") or on one side only (Motif "O"). Though danced in a slightly heavier style among the men, this motif is also the basic movement pattern in the women's unattached solo or duet form known as kcim.

This motif is unique in men's dancing as it involves special hand articulation. While among older generation dancers this was simply a

slight movement at the wrist joint causing some small rhythmic contractions of the hands, younger dancers take this opportunity to incorporate graceful wrist turns and finger articulations into the dance. Though younger dancers seem to be enthusiastic about this kind of movement which is a clear departure from the staid, smooth movements of the other dances, their elders sometimes look askance at this style which they associate with female dancing.

The Learning Process

In Opoja, dancing is learned gradually and informally, usually during the weddings when younger boys follow several meters behind the older dancers, eventually internalizing their movement styles and the step patterns. In the words of a native dancer:

> Learning these dances is a very spontaneous, indirect process. The physical lay-out of the tonda is well suited for young dancers to try steps behind the more seasoned dancers. As the children watch, they empathize with the dancers; a performance by a skilled dancer will inspire the boys to try out the movements on their own . . . . If an experienced dancer has the interest, he may teach the dances to one or two boys in the family who have a special aptitude. This may take place during the evenings when the village men gather for relaxation and conversation. My cousin and I were taught in this way by my uncle.
>
> No one thinks about learning the style. All aspects of the dance are learned simultaneously. I choose a good dancer and imitate him, and as I do so, a picture of this particular dancer and his style is created in my mind. After I have seen him dance two, ten, twenty times, I create that dance within myself (Berisha, Xh. 1982c).

The learning process has been stimulated by the activities of amateur folklore groups in Opoja, the largest and most active of which are the Cultural-Artistic Associations (Albanian: Shoqeria Kulturore-Artistike) of Zhur and Dragash. In 1978 an annual folklore review began in Kosovo which precipitated the formation of village folklore groups from Opoja. Now every elementary school has its own group which may be chosen to compete at the regional review. From Kosovo, one group is selected to enter the Balkan Festival at Ohrid on a national level from which they may qualify for the international festival at Zagreb.

> The groups rehearse for a month or two before the Kosovo festival. Dancing is not a part of physical recreation at Opoja schools because we have no adequate space, no gymnasium. But it's not much of a problem to prepare for the festival because everyone knows the material. The performances are to be as authentic as possible - just showing the way the people dance, the way they dance at weddings . . . . In Opoja, all children learn by watching and practicing at the weddings. We do not teach the dances. Some boys starting school at seven already know how to dance - it has entered the body and the blood of the children (Saliu 1982).

Native Evaluations of the Dance

Having examined the external structure of the dance, one may begin to look into the performer's own perceptions of the dance performance, what constitutes a _good_ dancer, a _successful_ performance, and what qualities are universally accepted as being important in stylistic interpretation. Royce defines these native evaluations or aesthetic judgements as "the set of rules a culture has that bind artistic activity . . . criteria which, if followed, will produce an artistic expression that is culturally acceptable" (Royce 1974:178,181).

Among the Opoja dancers there is clearly a consensus of opinion on these aesthetic criteria. Even men who are not active participants share in evaluating the performers. "I myself don't know how to dance, but I _know_ who dances well" (Ahmeti, Avni 1983). Although, as previously mentioned, younger dancers tend to deviate more liberally from the traditional dictates of style, both young and old tend to agree upon the qualities which constitute an ideal dancer. Based upon interviews with dancers of different generations and from different

villages, four qualities seem to be most important in a good dancer. Two informants, one of the older and one of the younger generation were particularly articulate in describing these native concepts and their comments may be helpful in clarifying them.

The first, and perhaps most important criteria is that the performers dance as one:

> One behind the other, all must move as one, and not mix up the movements, for if someone does not watch the leader, or tries to outdance him, putting his foot on the ground before the leader does in accord with the melody, he spoils the dance. The dance is good when everyone moves in the same way... (Ahmeti, Avni 1983).

> All were to squat when the leader gave the sign, every dancer, not you to bend while I lift, but to dance as one (Berisha, M. 1982).

It is also important that the dancers maintain concentration and a steady eye focus:

> The men sometimes say, `He dances well, but glances too often from side to side.´ The dancer must have good concentration, focusing just ahead of himself or occasionally on the other dancers to see if they are synchronized. This concentration comes from being completely involved in the dance, from embodying the spirit of the dance (Berisha, Xh. 1982c).

A dancer´s style should also be smooth (rrafsh).

> Baki´s father was also a good dancer. He always held a cigarette while he danced, never danced without it, and he never looked around him, no, he just danced, and smoked, and danced the way it should be done, rrafsh. And Tahir and Shabon danced, but not rrafsh. They did not dance as one... In Buqe the dancing was the best, performed the most smoothly (Berisha, M. 1982).

> When he takes a step, his body should not show vibrations. A good dancer performs in a very precise way (Berisha, Xh. 1982c).

Good dancers also have a heavy, earthbound quality:

> A good dancer is one who dances very slowly, who does not move in ways which are not in keeping with the accepted dance form. His body must be held in a strong, solid way, with his feet well planted, using the whole of the foot (Berisha, Xh. 1982c).
>
> We don´t dance light dances; we don´t dance like women. Like men, not like women (Berisha, M. 1982).

Dance Function

Having formulated a visual picture of the dance event and of the structure of the dancing itself, we can begin to look into the meaning and function of dance in the lives of the participants. While conversations with performers and spectators reveal explicit functions of the dance such as entertainment, recreation and competition, implicit functions such as the demonstration of social allegiance, the reiteration of aesthetic and social values and symbolism must be deduced from observations of village life and knowledge of the culture.

Entertainment is the most visible function of Opoja men´s dancing. Especially before the coming of electricity to Opoja some fifteen years ago, the men passed their leisure time with household recreation such as story-telling and folk-games. At weddings, dancing was the main source of celebration and entertainment and as such was relatively highly developed as a popular art form. The dance event gave the wedding a central focus for the men and took their minds off day to day problems and survival concerns.

Each dance performance also functions as a type of competition, a test of skill for the dancers who are constantly being watched and

judged by their audience. In Opoja, the competitive spirit visible in folk-games and village sport events carries over to the dancing, as groups of performers representing different families, tribes and villages match their skills. "Saturday night is the most important time for dancing . . . it is like a festival, a competition with several groups competing one against the other" (Berisha, Xh. 1982c). This competitive spirit is stimulated by regional festivals[11] in which the dance skill and the quality of the repertoire of the Opoja amateur[12] groups are matched against those of other regions.

Opoja is an example of what Margaret Mead calls a "post-figurative culture" which displays "a persistent, unquestioning sense of identity and of the pervasive rightness of each known aspect of life" (Mead 1970:31). Reinforcement of identity with culture and community are important functions of men's dancing. In the very act of participation, dancers and observers demonstrate allegiance to their community and help to reinforce social solidarity.

This sense of community identity is particularly important for the many men who work abroad many years, returning home on holiday during the wedding season. In reference to Yugoslav migrant workers, Rajkovic states:

> One gets the impression that they need customs in order to maintain balance on the insecure road between two fixed points - the West European world in which they have temporarily found a source of prosperity, and the culture of their native land in which they find their identity (Rajković 1976:35).

A native of Opoja describes his own experience:

> The men long for their homeland. When my father would return home after working ten years in Istanbul, he would weep when he heard the music of

> the cyrla and lodra... Këllçoja evokes great feeling in the men... the dancing of their birthplace has entered their blood. The men now have tape-recorders and bring their music with them. When I visited Mehmet when he was working in Paris we played the wedding music and danced Këllçoja" (Llutfija 1983).

The men return home during the wedding season filled with longing for home and family, and for the spirit of their birthplace whose very essence is captured in the sound of the cyrla and lodra, and in the powerful movements which epitomize cultural ideals of character, strength and reserve. The epic dance sequence draws the men into the aesthetic expression of their forefathers. "As the weddings commence, the drum thunders out as if to call the men home . . ." (Berisha, Xh. 1982b).

Identity with one's village is evident in the awareness of the characteristic dance styles of performers from different villages.

> In Shajna they dance differently. I have danced with Latif from Shajna, and in Brezne with Tahir and Ymer. They knew I could dance and would ask me to, make me. We danced. I danced in my own way. There was Sahit from Pllav. He was a fine dancer. (Berisha, M. 1982).
>
> Some villages, for example Xerxe, Kuk and Zym, have no good dancers, and just hire the musicians and wait for the good dancers from other villages to arrive (Ahmeti, A. 1983).

Through the dance a statement is also made about peer group identification. Men of the same generation tend to perform together. A younger man's entrance into a group of older dancers may show his acceptance of and identification with the older, more conservative dance style and the behavior it reflects.

Another implicit function of the Opoja dance event is in the

reflection, reiteration and validation of established community values. It is an opportunity for the participant to see "what his culture's ethos and his private sensibility look like when spelled out in a collective text" (Geertz 1973:443). In a sense the dance event is a microcosm of the culture at large, revealing the social organization and customs characteristic of Opoja. The dancing is what Paul Radin calls a "drama depicting the ideal," a portrayal of the qualities which are most valued by a group of people (Royce 1974:23).

> What all social drama shares is an intensification or exaggeration of ordinary behavior. These kinds of events allow an outsider to see values stated forcefully. On this basis one may then begin to say something about priorities with regard to values and rules for behavior; one may order the cultural rules" (Royce 1974:27).

The interaction of hosts and guests at the dance event reflects customary social behavior such as regard for guests demonstrated in the consideration given to the ordering of dance groups, both visible in the seating arrangements and spatial relations at the tonda. The human qualities valued in Opoja are also the characteristics most important in dance performance. Emotional reserve, understated expression, concentration, physical strength, masculinity, and importance of the group over the individual are all demonstrated through movement.

The dance event provides a context in which each man has the potential to personify the cultural ideals of physical and emotional strength. As the performer moves through the dance sequence, he embodies these ideals and undergoes a transformation, "that which takes movement out of the realm of pure, or normal movement, and into dance." "Much of dance has to do with what we call impersonation . . . for the

dancer must feel within himself . . . that he is more than himself, or other than himself" (Snyder 1972:222).

In terms of symbolic function, musicologists and folklorists have often drawn a relationship between the epic-style dance motifs and the re-enactment or rehearsal of battle motifs (see Pllana 1975:7; Halimi 1971:429). Though this is clear in the performance of Opoja demonstration groups who perform with sabres or sticks or handkerchiefs as weapon substitutes, it is unlikely that the Opoja dancers of today are aware of this while they are performing.

> It is misleading to say that the dancers are aware of symbolism as they dance. They are concerned only that the dances are performed in the proper style. I myself am aware, for example, of the association of _Këllçoja_ with war dances, but have never thought of this while dancing" (Berisha, Xh. 1982a).

CHAPTER V: THE WOMEN'S DANCES OF OPOJA

The Sequence of Wedding Events

In the weeks prior to the wedding, the girls of the groom's extended family and neighborhood gather nightly to express their joy and excitement about the coming marriage. Soon a bride will enter their lives, leaving behind her own home and family. In a Kosovo marriage, it is not only the husband who takes a wife: the family gains a daughter, a sister, a cousin; the neighborhood gains a new member; the village delights in the festive atmosphere.

> Marriage according to the Canon: Marriage under the Canon means to create another family nucleus, to increase the household by one more servant, to gain another hand for work, and to increase the number of children (Gjeçovi 1933:111;28).

The singing and dancing which precede the wedding take place on the balcony and in the garden of the groom's home. The participants are hidden from view by the high outer walls surrounding the house and courtyard which protect the women's activities from unwanted scrutiny. Parents and relatives mingle in the periphery of the courtyard attending to preparations and hospitality as the girls' songs ring out through the village.

Whereas the Opoja men's dance events are fairly formal, occur primarily during weddings and require the presence of hired musicians, girls' dancing in Opoja, as elsewhere in Kosovo, is more frequent and spontaneous. The requisites for dance events are few and simple: hearty, willing voices (always in plentiful supply) and one or more <u>def</u>

(tambourines) which are standard household items.

Except during specific occasions described below when the girls dance outdoors to the cyrla and lodra, their dancing is always accompanied by singing and the playing of def. Before beginning a description of women's wedding dancing, the singing style and song content should be considered.

Women's Singing in Opoja

While dance events accompanied by singing occur throughout engagement and wedding festivities, there are numerous other opportunities for song and dance. Among these are the calendrical holidays: Verza (the first day of spring), Shinkolli (St. Nicholas' Day), Shingjergj (St. George's Day), and Bajram (the culmination of the Moslem month of fasting). At these times the girls often sing of the rebirth of spring in their mountain valley, and frequently refer to elements of nature.

Several major themes run consistently through the song repertoire which touch upon the lives of each girl. The participants tend to be teen-age girls on the threshold of womanhood conscious of their approaching betrothal and the time when they will leave behind their home and girlhood. Their anxiety, excitement and curiosity about the coming change of life are rendered in song. The texts often express the hope that a fine and handsome husband will be chosen for them. There are also predictions about the harshness or ease of life to come with future in-laws.

Many songs tell of the engagement of a boy or girl of their family or neighborhood. They sing of the bride who will grace their

hearth, their family, their village, who will be as tall as an oak, with the whitest skin, a thin waist, a graceful manner and an industrious spirit:

E bardhë si bora . . .
Ti mori Valdeta e bardhe si bora,
To ka hija edhe konora.

As white as snow . . .
Oh Valdeta as white as snow,
The bridal crown suits her well.

E mirë për vek . . .
Ti ori Valdeta e mirë për vek,
Sikur bora no Koritnik.

And good at the loom . . .
Oh Valdeta, you work well at the loom,
And are as lovely as the snow on Mt. Koritnik.

Lule e bardhe . . .
Ti ori Valdete lule e bardhe,
Sikur bora no malin Sharr.

White flower . . .
Valdeta, white flower,
As lovely as the snow on the Sharr mountains.

(Reineck 1983a. Melody C)

The songs tempt the bride, telling her that it is time to leave behind the drudgery of her parents' house, to come to their home, suggesting that she will pass her time sitting under shade trees weaving garlands of wildflowers. As soon as the engagement is finalized, the bride's future in-laws welcome her through song:

`Dafil me fleta . . .
Ti ori Valdete drandafil me fleta,
Po vish te na mos to t'dhimot jeta.

Rose in bloom . . .
Oh Valdeta, oh rose in bloom,
When you come to us, your life will not burden you.

(Reineck 1983a. Melody C)

During engagement, <u>Kengët e Marhamës</u> (Songs of the Scarf) tell of the day gifts will be exchanged between the families of the betrothed:

Morrom marhomon . . .
Ani na Murfetës ja morrom marhamon,
Ju shkurtuan ditot me nanon.

We have taken the scarf . . .
We have taken the scarf of Murfeta,
And the days with her mother grow few.

(Reineck 1983a. Melody C)

Numerous songs ridicule the matchmaker for his efforts which seal the engagement. These songs function as one of the girls' few outlets for sarcasm and free poetic expression, at the same time calling attention to the superiority of the boy's family:

Nuson e keqe . . .
O sit na ke bo e nuson e keqe,
Bishtin e gelit to ta vem musteqe.

Unworthy bride . . .
And if he brings an unworthy bride,
May his moustache turn into a rooster's tail.

(Euqe 1982, Melody D)

E pa sofron . . .
Edhe shkusi jonë e kur e pa sofron,
Mori me ni rendi e liroi shokon.

He saw the dinner table . . .
And when our matchmaker saw the dinner table,
He wasted no time in loosening his sash.

(Berisha, Xh. 1982. Melody B)

As the girls gather to sing and dance inside the house, on the balcony or in the courtyard, they stand or sit in a circle with bodies pressed together. Attention is focused toward the center of the group as they blend their high, strong voices to create the characteristic Opoja sound.

The songs tend to follow a basic structural and melodic pattern. The texts are set in such a way that names of people or places may be altered to fit the occasion. The self-appointed lead singer is usually the strongest _def_ player, skillful at remembering and manipulating texts. She begins each verse with an introductory phrase of one measure which is identical to the last measure of the first line. This prefaces the line and cues the text for that verse. The other singers then join in as the first line is sung once, followed by the second line which is sung twice.

The Opoja girls' songs are also characterized by a harmonic dissonance, the girls with higher voices harmonizing in a major or minor second on certain notes. Thus, while there is no clear polyphony, what appears to be random detours into fleeting dissonances are in fact elements of well-defined heterophony.[13]

The singing may last thirty minutes, less if the girls are anxious to begin dancing. The song and dance event will then continue until the thematic repertoire of the songs has been fully expressed, and each girl has had the opportunity to exhibit her dance skill.

Women's Dance

Whether the dancing takes place during a wedding or other social event, within the high-walled courtyard, inside the women's sitting room or in a field or village street, the spatial relationship, sequence of dances and general atmosphere generated by the girls does not change significantly.

As in most of their activities, the girls group closely together maintaining physical contact. There is a feeling of group solidarity as the girls huddle close creating a psychological barrier against intrusion by the outside world, the male world. Indoors, limited space restricts the floor pattern and movement style. Depending upon the economic means and preference of the host, the guests may sit on covered foam-rubber floor pads set along the room's periphery or on store-bought couches against the walls. The room is carpeted with loom-woven or purchased rugs, with the center of the room left free of furnishings. The space is filled to capacity with girls and women, the eldest among them claiming the places of honor nearest the wood-burning stove in the winter or in the corner of the room opposite the entrance, while girls and young women huddle among peers. As the girls, young women and new brides get up to dance in pairs or groups, older women sit back, evaluating their ability and appearance while children play and scramble about on the crowded floor.

The girls and women are clad in long, full pantaloons (<u>dimia</u>) - a dozen meters of light, purchased fabric drawn together at the waist and ankles. Various types of homemade and purchased sweaters and blouses complete the outfit. The long pantaloons set off the feminine

qualities of the girls' dancing while giving them freedom of movement as they lounge or squat on the floor. During wedding festivities the girls don their finest pantaloons of white nylon or satin. A rectangular white apron (bafqe) woven at home and off-set with dark pink stripes is worn in front. A sheer white blouse is worn which is adorned with collar and cuffs of nylon thread (oja) painstakingly crocheted into floral patterns. This is highlighted by a small, sleeveless vest (jelek) decorated with a combination of striped ikat fabric purchased in Prizren, and with dense, circular patterns of thin black cord (gajtan). Long thick hair is caught in a waist-length braid characteristic of Opoja. Shoes are removed at all times when entering the carpeted rooms. When dancing outside, any shoes found on the porch--rubber sandals or any manner of purchased shoes, albeit battered and mud-laden--are taken, often regardless of ownership or size. So completes the Opoja costume which emphasizes the ideals of femininity and grace reiterated in the dance (see Figure 17).

With the def players and singers clustered together on one edge of the room, a small area in the center is reserved for dancing. As the number of participants grows, the dance space gradually expands, pressing the singers and onlookers against the circle's perimeter. The room throbs with the girls' high-pitched singing, the chattering of women, the babies' cries and the incessant, syncopated beat of the def.

In other areas of Kosovo, notably on the plains in the west and in the town of Prizren, Gypsy women are hired to provide dance music at weddings. In Opoja, while male Gypsy musicians must be present to

insure a successful celebration, their female counterparts are not admitted to the girls' wedding festivities. The Opoja girls are skillful _def_ players and singers, relying strictly upon their own resources to maintain their musical heritage.

For the most part the girls dance and sing indoors; dancing in the courtyard tends to be reserved for special moments during the course of the wedding. As mentioned above, some of this outdoor dancing occurs during the weeks prior to the wedding when the intent is to imbue the entire village with a spirit of celebration, carrying songs and rhythms over every garden wall. During the wedding itself, spontaneous outdoor dancing to the tambourines may occur at various highpoints: during the arrival of the guests Friday afternoon, in anticipation of the male musicians' arrival Saturday morning, at the departure of the wedding party to fetch the bride, and at her arrival and on Monday morning.

When the dance event is transposed to an outdoor setting, the girls tend to maintain their limited use of space and restricted movement style. The ground is usually bare earth with stones and potholes creating a very irregular dance surface. This presents no obstacle; even on the rockiest, most uneven surface, the girls' small, rhythmic steps are performed with grace and poise as pantaloon hems are muddied and sandals slip over loose stones.

There is another dimension to the girls' dancing in Opoja. On Saturday morning and evening and on Monday morning, if there is time and the Wedding Master approves, the girls may enjoy one of their few chances to dance to the accompaniment of the _cyrla_ and _lodra_. Because the musicians are usually busy entertaining the men throughout Saturday

and Sunday, the girls have this opportunity to dance only if there is time after the men´s dancing. Depending upon the disposition of the weddings´s host, the men present in the courtyard at this time busy themselves with tasks and do not intentionally watch the girls dancing. If men outside of the extended family are present, the Commander may ask them to leave the courtyard to afford the girls some degree of privacy at this time.

In the last decade, the practice of giving the girls this opportunity to dance to the cyrla and lodra has become more common. But even with this slight deviation from convention, a certain protocol is still observed. During men´s dancing, while the cyrla players remain seated on the area´s periphery, the drummers enter the circle of dancers, heightening the intensity of the performance. At the girls´ events, however, these same drummers remain on the periphery of the courtyard. (In former times among some families the musicians played with their backs toward the girls [Berisha, Xh. 1982c].) As the cyrla players strike up a tune and the drum roll announces the commencement of dancing, boys and men temporarily leave the courtyard, until, curiosity beckoning, they return, clustering together on one edge of the space. The girls, undaunted, ignore this good-natured intrusion and continue dancing. While the mere presence of male spectators reflects a relaxation of the rigid social restraints characteristic of Opoja, the basic moral code is not upset. The onlookers are all relatives or neighbors of the dancers, and as such are not potential husbands. The male presence is significant as one of the only mixed social occasions, but the fact that they are usually the girls´

brothers and cousins minimizes intrigue.

During the weeks preceding the marriage and while awaiting important moments during the wedding (such as the arrival of the men's musicians and of the wedding party), the dance events are in a sense an emotional warm-up for the young women of the groom's family. Non-participants are pre-occupied with preparations and socializing. Children scamper around the dancers, younger girls attaching themselves to the end of the open circle from time to time. These dances may last roughly between fifteen and forty-five minutes depending upon the dancers' level of enthusiasm. The activity is not physically strenuous, and is not a test of endurance. The performers are usually unmarried young women from the groom's family and/or village who are busy with food preparations or in seeing to the needs of arriving guests. Their task is to radiate the pride of the groom's family and to personify the emotion of the event.

Usually during outdoor dancing accompanied by the men's musicians there is more a sense of performance than when the girls are dancing for themselves. Looking on from doorways, windows, balconies, stairwells and the periphery of the courtyard, everyone pays close attention to the performance. The girls usually must be coaxed into dancing, stepping into the dance space gingerly. It is simply not proper to be too eager. These events involve all women and children at the wedding plus the unmarried males, and may last from one to two hours, usually until the musicians request a pause.

Dance Structure

In Opoja, as throughout Kosovo, there are two principal female dance forms: kcim, in which the dancers are not joined by a hand-hold, and valle, in which the dancers are attached by a hand-hold (see Figure 17). The kcim is performed as solo (kcim njesh) or in a duet (kcim dysh) (Berisha, Xh. 1982b). The Opoja girls also call these unattached dances veç a veç (each on her own) and lëshutë (free) (Shefiku, D. 1983). The performers are surrounded by the girls who sing, clap and play def providing strong musical accompaniment and peer support. The dancer uses little space, usually a roughly circular area two to four meters in diameter as she performs syncopated, small steps in place and walking steps traveling counter-clockwise. As these small steps maintain the rhythm, expression is centered in very gentle contractions and rotations of the hands. During the kcim the head and torso are held relaxed and upright with small twists and tilts of the shoulder area sympathetic to the hand gestures. In solo dancing, the eyes are usually cast forward-low, while in a duet the girls tend to focus upon each other. The hands are held at shoulder height in front of the body, arms relaxed and bouncing slightly from the shoulders in a steady rhythm.

The style of gestures also varies from villages to towns, from mountain areas to flatlands. The dancing in the towns of Gjakova (Djakovica) for example is characterized by a staccato wrist-drop and finger extension. In Has, the mountainous region just west of Gjakova, women perform strong, accentuated arm gestures with the hands lifted to

eye level, rhythmically sympathetic to steps and leg gestures.

The most common rhythms used in the kcim are 4/8, 7/8, (♪♪♪ ♫ ♫ or ♫ ♫ ♪♪♪) and 9/8 (♫ ♫ ♫ ♪♪♪), the latter sometimes referred to as čyček (see Dunin 1973:13). The three basic rhythms may be played in any order during the dancing depending upon the players´ and singers´ choice of songs, the 4/8 meter predominating. "Depending on how the def is played, that is how they dance" (Shefiku, L. 1983).

The most common step pattern is symmetrical, most typically in place or as a walk forward in a small, counter-clockwise circle side, syncopating the even 4/8 rhythm. Regardless of the floor pattern, the feet tend to maintain this rhythmic pattern:

the basic 4/8 played by the tambourine: ♪ ♫ ♪ ♪

the step pattern: ♪. ♬ ♩

Throughout Kosovo, where the word kcim tends to refer to dances in which the performers are unattached, valle often implies an open circle dance in which they are joined. In Opoja, the word horo is sometimes used in place of valle, especially for women´s dances. The most common valle, widespread among male and female dancers in Kosovo, is a simple assymmetrical walking pattern. It is based upon a 7/8 (♪♪♪ ♫ ♫ or ♫ ♫ ♪♪♪) or 4/8 (♪ ♪ ♪ ♪) rhythm, and can be adapted to other meters including a 9/8 (♫ ♫ ♫ ♪♪♪) and 12/8 (♪♪♪ ♫ ♫ ♪♪♪ ♫).

The pattern in valle consists of three steps (right, left, right traveling in a counter-clockwise circular path a hold (closing free

foot next to support or lifting the free foot), one step to the left on line of direction, and a second hold (see Labanotation of step pattern in the third Women's dance, Çitmi Dhent). This is a common pattern in the dancing of many ethnic groups, and in dance literature is often referred to as the branle simple (Janković 1969:125). The pattern is structurally identical to many dances found throughout the world. It exists in many regions of Yugoslavia, from Croatia to Macedonia where it is performed in a variety of tempos, paths and styles, serving different functions and recognized under different names. In Yugoslavia it is often simply referred to as Kolo, or in Serbia and Macedonia, as Lesno Oro (the light dance). In Kosovo the pattern does not have a special name, but is usually identified as valle or by the name of a popular song which may be used to accompany the dance.

In Kosovo, this most common form of valle is performed in an open circle traveling counter clockwise. In the past it was performed in separate men's and women's groups. More recently it is danced in sexually integrated groups especially in towns and during some village dance events, notably on Sunday after the bride's arrival at the home of the groom. In most regions of Kosovo the women's version tends to be a very subdued walking pattern. The men's version is more lively, incorporating greater knee flexion and higher leg lifts. The basic attachment for both men and women is by hand (dorë për dorë) or small fingers (gishtë për gishtë). When a women's line is led by one or more girls playing def, the first girl who is not playing puts her arm around the back of the player's waist or holds onto the waistband of her apron or pantaloons. The men also use a belt-hold in some regions.

As in the kcim, the style of dancing valle varies in the different dance zones of Kosovo. In the western mountainous region, Rugovo, for example, a distinctive women's style is achieved by a shoulder hold. A heavy, earthbound quality is created by a rhythmic vertical movement emanating from heel-drops rather than knee flexion. The Rugova men perform this dance in a similar fashion, but with higher leg lifts, side steps with the legs usually slightly turned out at the hips, and a low center of gravity maintained by a fairly constant knee bend in the supporting leg.

Due to a relative geographic isolation and a tendency towards adherence to an older, conservative world-view, the women of Opoja have retained several variations of the basic kcim and valle. In most other areas of Kosovo, these older variations are only surviving in their most basic forms.

One women's dance form characteristic of Opoja is a sequence which combines the kcim and valle. A small group of girls linked by a shoulder-height hand-hold begins the basic valle step traveling counter-clockwise, as the first girl in line strikes a rhythm on the def. After several verses of song, two girls break from the line and take up positions opposite each other in the center of the open circle. While the others continue the basic walking pattern of step or stand watching the two in the center, the two girls begin kcim dysh as a free-form duet. When they are satisfied with their performance, they join the linked circle as another pair takes their place in the center.

Another women's dance form in Opoja is kcim në rreth të mbyllur (unattached dance in a closed circle) (see Figure 18). As the girls all

use hand gestures in this dance leaving no one free to play the def it tends to be performed to the accompaniment of the cyrla and lodra when the girls dance in the courtyard of the wedding host. In this dances the girls perform a syncopated forward walking step with small hand gestures (as in kcim) while progressing single file in a counter-clockwise circle. Depending on the number of participants, the circle may be an arc or a full circle.

As this closed-circle dance usually occurs during outdoor events which may be open to male spectators, it tends to be performed in a modest and restrained, yet proud and elegant style. Facial expression is serious or subdued, eyes focused straight ahead or forward-low with perhaps a few stolen glances toward the male spectators or other dancers in the circle.

The last category of women's dances found in Opoja is a series of variations upon the valle (see Chapter VII for Labanotation, songs and musical transcriptions). Each of the five dances in the series is performed in an open circle traveling counter clockwise with the hands at shoulder height, linked by small fingers (gishtë për gishtë) or hands (dorë për dorë). The first three dances are based upon the assymmetrical step in valle (Motif "L") performed to different rhythms:

1. Ka Ra Dilli - 4/8
2. More Guri i Gjevahirit - 9/8 (♫ ♫ ♫ ♫♪)
3. Çitmi Dhent Kah Fusha Bre Djalo - 7/8 (♫♪ ♫ ♫)

The last two dances in this series utilize a symmetrical step pattern with slightly larger steps to the right which allow the dancers to progress counter clockwise. The patterns involves a syncopated

crossing step (Motif "B1") to different rhythms:

4. E Para Horos - 12/8 (♫♪ ♫ ♫♪ ♫ ♫)

5. Tahir Bega - 7/8 (♫♪ ♫ ♫),

During dances one through four the symmetrical or assymmetrical (valle) step pattern repeats ad infinitum to the accompaniment of the song from which the dance derives its name. The last dance, Tahir Bega, is an exception. Here the song and movement alternate. After performing the basic cross step for four or six measures to the def or cyrla and lodra, the girls approach the center of their circle creating a closed circle by clasping hands low at their sides, and sing one verse a cappella. They then resume a shoulder-height hand hold as they move back into the original open circle retaining the same leader. The alternation between dancing and singing continues until the song ends.

The Learning Process

Almost every girl in Opoja is able to perform the local songs and dances in the appropriate style. They have usually danced since childhood, imitating among friends the patterns and styles of the young women. Frequent dance events afford the girls ample opportunity to watch the dancing of their peers and of the young brides from other villages and to develop their own styles:

> The children always watch while the girls dance. Usually after fifteen years of age they begin to join in with the older girls. But the little ones are sometimes very good; some learn to dance as soon as they learn to walk" (Shefiku, D. 1983).

While some girls participate in the local folklore performing

ensembles, this does not tend to affect the gradual learning process which takes place at home. For the most part the dance and music performed is extracted from the village context, with little or no choreographic manipulation.

Dance Function

> She sang many songs about her life and about weddings, and with the songs she also performed dances in the closed rooms. These were simple songs, and simple dances. The structure and content of these dances is a mirroring of the feelings and thoughts of the women in her communal life (Agolli 1968:1).

Frequent song and dance events in Opoja serve several essential functions in the women's lives. The wedding dance event is one of the few occasions when a large group of women and children, including all female members of the extended family and relatives who live in different villages or towns gather simply to enjoy the occasion, exchange news and scrutinize the young girls and brides. When someone is dancing, close attention is paid to her performance; otherwise, high-pitched conversation creates a constant din broken only by the percussive striking of the tambourines. With the exception of those girls attending high school in Dragash, Opoja girls tend to remain within the confines of their home or immediate neighborhood most of the time, hence the dance events are very important for the young women anxious to see girls from outside their village.

On the surface dancing provides one of the few forms of group entertainment among women. Requiring only an enthusiastic assemblage

of girls and a _def_ or two, women's dancing occurs more frequently and with greater spontaneity than men's dance events which tend to be formal affairs during the wedding. As impromptu entertainment at home, at holidays, and especially during engagement and marriage celebrations, song and dance are a outward demonstration of joy, an demonstration of their affiliation with the groom's family, and a manifestation of the girls' deep involvement in their communities.

Through dance the girls demonstrate their skill and grace. In large village families which stress the welfare of the group above the individual and where teen-age girls are often occupied in tending to the needs of others, dance events are one of the few occasions during which girls receive the undivided attention of their peers and elders. Even in the most informal settings there is a sense of performance and display, whether for a few of the dancer's close girlfriends or for the scores of women assembled for a wedding. "We dance for pleasure mostly . . . and the girls like to show off when they have new clothes . . . like a competition" (Shefiku, B. 1983).

The spectators also judge the girls as potential brides for unmarried brothers or sons. Performances are followed attentively as the women assess the poise, character and physical attributes of the dancers. During the wedding, performances by eligible girls are mandatory. Usually the girls decline at first, but sooner or later rise to the occasion. "It is somewhat shameful to jump too quickly into the dancing. One must be coaxed" (Shefiku, L. 1983). The girls are prodded and cajoled, with, "Çu! Çu për hatër të shoqeve!" (Get up! Get up for the desire of your friends! [Berisha, Xh. 1982b]).

Whether or not they are particularly skillful dancers, all new brides must perform, prompted by mother- and sisters-in law. The spectators have the opportunity to judge the young women who have recently been incorporated into the groom's extended family and neighborhood. Their beauty, grace, and the relative value of their costume and jewelry are taken to reflect directly upon the quality of their husband's family. In answer to a question, "For whom do you dance?"

> For everyone. But take, for example, a wedding . . . . There are brides there, the brides that have come in the last month or two, and the brides mother-in-law wants the other women to see how her bride dances . . . ." The bride must dance more modestly, seriously. Not too much. Slowly . . . " (Ademaj 1983).

Through participation in dance events leading up to and during the wedding, girls display their relationship to the groom's family. Beyond this, through dance the girls identify their bonds with and allegiance to their family, peers, neighborhood and village. Slight variations in movement style and song repertoire further identify the performers by village. "In our villages [Brezne, Buqe, Pllav], the girls know more dances, the older dances. They are better dancers, better singers" (Hulaj, D. 1983). The few girls who join local amateur folklore groups and travel to regional, national and international competitions display their identity as Yugoslavs, as Albanians, and as girls of Opoja.

The dance events are also a bond to their artistic and social heritage. As mentioned previously with regard to change, the continual re-enactment of old dance forms links the girls to the past while song

texts begin to reflect signs of social change. The modest demeanor and quiet, feminine, internalized movements reiterate the qualities which are valued in the community. Even those attending high school in Dragash, or the handful of girls at college in Prizren or Prishtina anxiously await the wedding season. Their enthusiastic participation in the dance events reinforces solidarity among the village girls, upholding and fortifying established codes of behavior.

CHAPTER VI: CHANGE AND CONTINUITY

Since the 1950s, modernization, urbanization and increased communication with neighboring towns have precipitated gradual social changes in Opoja which are reflected in the engagement and marriage customs and in men's and women's dancing. The changes in performance style and repertoire are principally external; the essential character and the function of dance in the wedding context remains intact due to a number of factors which allow for adaptation and the potential for continuity. In a process which Royce calls "selective syncretism," innovations in style and content are incorporated into certain aspects of the dance and music sequences, providing a way to accomodate changing social conventions while preserving the fundamental character of the event.

Changes are visible in different ways in the men's and women's dancing. The men's dancing now has a larger number of participants who perform in a more open, exaggerated style. According to older informants, in former times fewer men took part in the dancing due in part to a lower natality rate and a larger number of males working abroad which left fewer men at home to take part regularly in wedding events. In addition, the standard of living was lower and few men had the economic means to hold large weddings with many guests. Especially in the last twenty-five years the living standard and natality rate have increased, as have the number and size of weddings and the average men's ability to stage an elaborate wedding.

Another reason that fewer young men danced prior to the 1970s was in deference to the older men.

> In the past, young men and boys greatly restricted their behavior in the presence of elders. For example, one would not sit in front of one's elders with legs crossed, knees overlapped, a position considered unmanly. The younger men did not feel as free to dance with more seasoned performers or under their scrutiny. Today, especially in the village where older standards of behavior have become more relaxed, a good-sized group of up to fifteen younger dancers are eager to begin the sequence of dances as soon as the musicians arrive. In the past, only three to five experienced dancers would begin (Berisha, Xh. 1983).

In terms of stylistic changes, there is general agreement that men's dancing in the past was slower, smoother and more internalized. "Before, fewer men danced, not like today. We danced! We really danced, hey, we didn't fool around! We danced heavily, evenly." ("Përpara kemi lujt ka pak vet, jo si sot. Kemi lujt! Hej, jo shaka me bo! Kemi lujt rrafsh" [Berisha, M. 1982]).

Today, dance style tends to have more exaggerated gestures. These changes in performance are not intentional, but gradual, unconscious adaptations of traditional movement norms.

> The heightened pace of life in general has changed the quality of dancing. You have heard the way the old men speak--very, very slowly--taking time for long breaths, thinking about what they are about to say. This behavior style is also seen in the dancing. The younger men dance faster, turning their bodies more, moving their hands more, whereas the old men dance very smoothly, calmly. It reflects the change in the times.
>
> I think that everyone attempts to dance like the older men, but the modern pace of life cannot help but influence their movements. The older men sometimes become irritated at the accelerated tempo

> and lack of concentration among younger dancers, and sometimes call out to them, criticizing them as they dance (Berisha, Xh. 1982c).

The women's dancing shows visible change in the disappearance of some dances from the traditional sequence of five, in an increasing emphasis on the improvised step pattern (kcim), and, as in the men's dancing, in a more exaggerated movement style.

The first type of change is in the disintegration of the set sequence of five dances described above. While the assymmetrical valle pattern is still a popular dance form, the symmetrical crossing step is beginning to be excluded from the girls' repertoire in some Opoja villages. The last dance in the women's sequence, Tahir Bega, may be used to gauge this change. In the three villages on the foothills of the western side of the Opoja valley (Brezne, Buqe and Pllav), for example, these dances are still part of the wedding dance repertoire (Berisha, Xh. 1982c; Hulaj, D. 1983). In other villages, the girls can still perform the song but have some difficulty executing the step pattern as it is no longer part of their standard repertoire. The cyrla and lodra players will perform Tahir Bega upon request, but in some villages the girls are hard-pressed to remember the step pattern (Reineck 1983a Bellobrad; Reineck 1983b Shajna).

Dance style is also a primary indicator of change among women. According to informants from both older and younger generations, today's dancers exhibit a freer, livelier style. A woman of some seventy years comments: "Nuk kane dit përpara. Pak kanë dit. Tuqna. Tash asht ma lirë, ma hapur." (They didn't know how to dance in the old days. Only a little. We were ashamed, shy. Now it is freer, more

open [Bahtiju, N. 1983]). The open circle dances involving a simple repeated step pattern seem to have changed little over the years. The stylistic change is more visible in the improvised, unattached dancing (kcim), where the girls express individuality through hand gestures. After piecing together recollections of today's grandmothers, it appears that in the pre-World War II style of kcim, arms were kept closer to the body, there was less finger and wrist articulation, less sympathetic torso movement and smaller, more even steps:

> The change in women's dance is similar to the change in dance style among men. Girls attempt to imitate an older, more experienced dancer with the beautiful, quiet, internalized style, but a newer style is popular which has a more open character with broader movements and more ornamentation (Berisha, Xh. 1982c).

In different ways, both men's and women's dancing in Opoja accomodate changing cultural fashions in ways which do not alter the basic structure and function of the dance. Among men, this accomodation takes place in the addition of non-native dances to the repertoire at the conclusion of the formal execution of eleven dances.

After World War II, soldiers returning home and since then men working in other parts of Yugoslavia have brought back to Opoja popular dance forms from the regions with which they have had contact. Hence, from Serbia has come Žikino Kolo and Čačak (Albanian: Zhikino and Çaçak or Vallja e Serbisë), from Macedonia Eleno Mome and Pajduško (Albanian: Jeleno Mome and Pajtushka), and from Kosovo's urban centers Sherianqe. Rather than being included in the traditional dance sequence, these dances are performed afterwards, and only during appropriate, informal moments of the wedding. At these times, the dancers have an

opportunity to incorporate choreographic and stylistic elements appropriated from exhibitions of performing groups seen at local festivals or on television. While playing for these newer dances, the musicians may incorporate popular radio tunes into their repertoire, satisfying the musical tastes of the younger dancers. "The newer dances do not affect the traditional sequence, for it has a definite conclusion; it is a complete entity in itself" (Berisha, Xh. 1982a). While respecting the traditional form, the younger men´s interest in popular trends is fulfilled.

Women accomodate changing social norms and fashions by incorporating contempory issues and sentiments into the texts of well-known Opoja songs and by using popular radio tunes to accompany dances both by song and on the _cyrla_. Asked how the songs sung today differ from those of her mother´s generation, an Opoja girl comments, "The melodies are the same, just the texts have changed. Before they talked about shepherds, then teachers, now about doctors!" (Shefiku, D. 1983) In some cases, the substitutions reflect changes in life style such as the acquisition of cars and electricity.

> Limuzina . . .
> E to t´ju shkojmë Kozajvë me limuzina,
> ´Ni ne ta man e në kofshin trima.
>
> > The car. . . .
> > We will come to the Kozaj family by car,
> > If they are so brave, let them try to keep their bride from us.
>
> Me nizet veta . . .
> To t´ja çojme sereminë me nezet veta,
> Limunzinë e parë kunatat e veta.
>
> > With twenty people . . .
> > We will send our wealth [to the bride] with

twenty people,
In the first car will be the bride's own
sisters-in-law.

Kalle aletrikon . . .
Ori sha Batjarit kalle aletrikon,
'Ni edhe sande e kije çikon.

Turn on the lights . . .
Oh wife of Batjar [the bride's mother], turn on
the lights,
Your daughter is with you only one more night.

(Reineck 1983b. Melody E)

Some newer lyrics reflect changes in social conventions, such as sending teenage girls to school which was rare until a few years ago.

Ani lumja une, e vajza Opojës,
Ani ja kam mesye, mori deros shkollos.

Oh I am happy, an Opoja girl,
I am determined to go to school.

(Reineck 1983d. Melody not recorded)

Another major change has been the growing use of <u>new</u> folksongs to accompany the <u>kcim</u> and <u>valle</u>. These songs, known as <u>Këngë Popullore</u> (Songs of the People), comprise the most popular category of vocal music in Kosovo today, forming an intermediary musical layer between the older, lyrical village songs and new urban arrangements. Arranged by various composers and made popular through Radio-Television Prishtina and amateur folklore groups, older melodies take on a new format, with traditional male or female solos being sung by mixed duets sometimes backed by choruses and radio orchestras. In some Opoja villages, these songs predominate; in others they are alternated

continuously with the older repertoire. A young woman from Bellobrad village explains: "Of course the singing tradition still lives. The songs continue, but the texts are changing. Now there are more Këngë Popullore from the radio. At weddings, for example, rarely do they sing those old songs, Tahir Bega, Çitmi Dhent Kah Fusha . . . . Now they take the new songs, Oj Zogo, etc., from the radio. The dancing and def playing go on as they always have" (Shefiku, D. 1983).

The incorporation of new lyrics and songs into the repertoire serves a vital function in the lives of the Opoja girls. While performing the older dances which are socially approved and thoroughly congruous with the conservative world-view of their communities, the girls sing songs reflecting the values and life-styles of their more "emancipated" peers in the towns. The songs enable the girls to participate vicariously in social change without damaging their identities in the village. The dances and melodies are a link to the past while the incorporation of new lyrics touches the future.

Another way change is accomodated is through designated opportunities for sexually integrated dancing during the wedding. Depending upon the disposition of the groom's family, Saturday night or Monday morning the girls may be afforded the opportunity to dance in the groom's courtyard to the music of the cyrla and lodra. When the girls are finished dancing by thenmselves, the boys who have been looking on may join in a simple open circle dance (valle). Whether or not this happens depends upon the attitude of the groom's family. "In our mother's time the women did not dance with the men as

we do today. The more fanatical families do not allow it" (Shefiku, L. 1983).

During the mixed events the young men and women may also perform together in two special dances, Kaçamak and Shota. Accompanied by a special melody, Kaçamak is an improvised pantomimic dance in which the making of kaçamak (corn gruel) is acted out in a humorous way. In the past, this was exclusively part of the men's repertoire. Today in some Opoja weddings the dance may be performed in the courtyard and a few girls may join the boys in a mixed group of four or more as the large number of male and female guests look on from the periphery (Shajna 1983).

Yet another aspect of Opoja's current folklore which allows for accommodation of change is the inclusion of the dance Shota into the informal repertoire (see Fig. 12). Disseminated through Kosovo's amateur folkloric ensembles, Shota has entered the repertoire of villages throughout Kosovo and is often performed at the most auspicious moment of the wedding, when the bride arrives at the groom's home and prepares to cross the threshold. Based upon the traditionally segregated kcim, since the 1950s Shota has become a flirtateous duet, a symbol of youth and beauty expressed in a stylized, improvised interplay between a boy and girl involving teasing gestures with the giving and taking of a handkerchief. The step pattern is simply an exaggeration of the basic solo step for men and women, a syncopated step found throughout Kosovo.

In Opoja, if the Wedding Master approves, the atmosphere is conducive to it and there are willing and able participants, Shota may

be performed Sunday evening or Monday morning during _Kcim i Dhendrit_ (The Groom's Dance), a time usually set aside for the most informal dance expression during the wedding. When played on the powerful _cyrla_ and _lodra_, the familiar _Shota_ melody takes on the characteristic Opoja sound. While the floor patterns and hand gestures are larger and freer than in the older, segregated rendition of _kcim_, the dancers are usually brothers and sisters or cousins, thus lessening sexual intrigue.

> In Opoja, _Shota_ is often danced when the groom enters the bridal chamber on Sunday night, and then it is danced with a girl's closest male relative. My brother knows _Shota_, and we dance together" (Ademaj 1982).

Associated with youth and love, _Shota_ finds its place in Opoja as an expression of new freedoms for young men and women. While it is still not common in Opoja, the occasional appearance of this freer, mixed dance form clearly shows an accomodation of change in the dance tradition.

One important element favoring this continuity is the functional validity of the dance event in the context of present-day Opoja village life. When social organization changes to the extent that dance is merely an anachronism, it must either undergo change which gives it new social significance, or be lost to future generations. "An occurance must be relevant to the current life style in order to continue to exist" (Dunin 1973:196). The major functions of Opoja dancing as discussed above, as entertainment, competition, in the reflection of social values and norms, and in cultural identity, are all determining factors in its present vitality.

The function of reinforcing regional identity has special significance in contemporary life due to increased contact with neighboring ethnographic regions, with urban centers in other parts of Yugoslavia, and with foreign cultures via television, radio, foreign work, and, specifically in terms of dance, with the regional, national and international festivals and foreign tours in which the Opoja groups take part. In this contact with other peoples, the music and dance traditions reinforce each participant's identity as an Opojan. For the factory workers in Germany, the merchants in Istanbul, the physical laborers or food vendors in Ljubljana or Beograd, or the students attending college in Prishtina or Prizren, the dance and music of their homeland provides a psychological refuge in the face of other cultures. Unique expressive behavior, what Yugoslavs call folklor, serves "as part of their identity, as an antiworld into which they can project their wishes . . ." (Rihtman-Augustin 1976:14). The dance also provides a cultural foothold in the face of modernization and the accompanying change in social customs and values. "Traditional peasant folklore will live on in village communities, easing the alienation in the modern world of shifting values" (1976:14).

There is also potential for continuity in the fact that the dance is not limited to one function serving the needs of a small elite or initiated few, but serves multiple functions and involves the entire community. Far from segregating the community into separate factions according to age, class or skill, the dance event draws the community together.

The Opojans are optimistic about the future of their traditional dance repertoire. There is general agreement that the performance of the traditional sequence, while somewhat freer in style today, is in fact growing in popularity. It is likely that this growing interest in the older dances and in the wedding as a whole is largely due to increased contact with the outside and the desire for identification with homeland through its indigenous traditions. When asked whether these customs might begin to be lost with an increasing number of young people studying and finding work in the cities, a young girl in Prishtina replies: "No! The _def_? The _kcim_? We will never lose them" (Shefiku, L. 1983). Her father concurs: "It cannot be forgotten. It is in the blood of the people" (Shefiku, L. 1983 and Shefiku, S. 1983).

CHAPTER VII: NOTATED DANCES

Labanotation Key

The boxed letter ([A] [B] , etc.) refers to the Motif being executed in that section.

The boxed Roman numeral ([I] [II], etc.) refers to the order of Variations being performed.

Focal Point

The large black dot refers to the center of the circle - the focal point of the group of Dancer. In , for example, the dancer's left shoulder is diagonally toward the circle's center. In , the dancer is facing LOD (line of direction).

Timing

Note the differences in the different musical values designated by the four square basic unit. may represent either ♩ or ♪.

Eye Focus

The eyes tend to focus foward low .

Step Size

Steps tend to be slightly smaller than normal walking. is understood.

Special Men's Keys

Pulse

There is an understood slight rhythmic flexion and release at the knees throughout each dance. This pulsation corresponds to the rhythmic accents of each particular meter and varies in size depending on the dancer's individual style and the unique character of each dance.

Body Tilt

Steps are often accentuated with a slight forward bend of the upper body: . This bend often occurs prior to a deep knee bend.

Arm Movements

In non-attached dances, the beginning arm position is noted before the beginning of each variation, so that the variations may be treated independently and set in a different order. When not performing specific gestures, the arms swing as in normal pedestrian walking. When the arm is in back-low position, there may or may not be contact on the back of the waist . When the arm is held flexed in front of the sternum, the position may vary between . In open circle dances, the leader (the dancer on the right end of the crescent) has more freedom of expression with his right arm, and may wave a handkerchief, make broad, sweeping gestures in front to or , or in back . This illustration, represents a handkerchief.

Palm

When the arm is in front or at the side, the palm is usually place low.

or [notation symbols] .

Legs

The deep knee bend is usually performed as a five degree contraction:

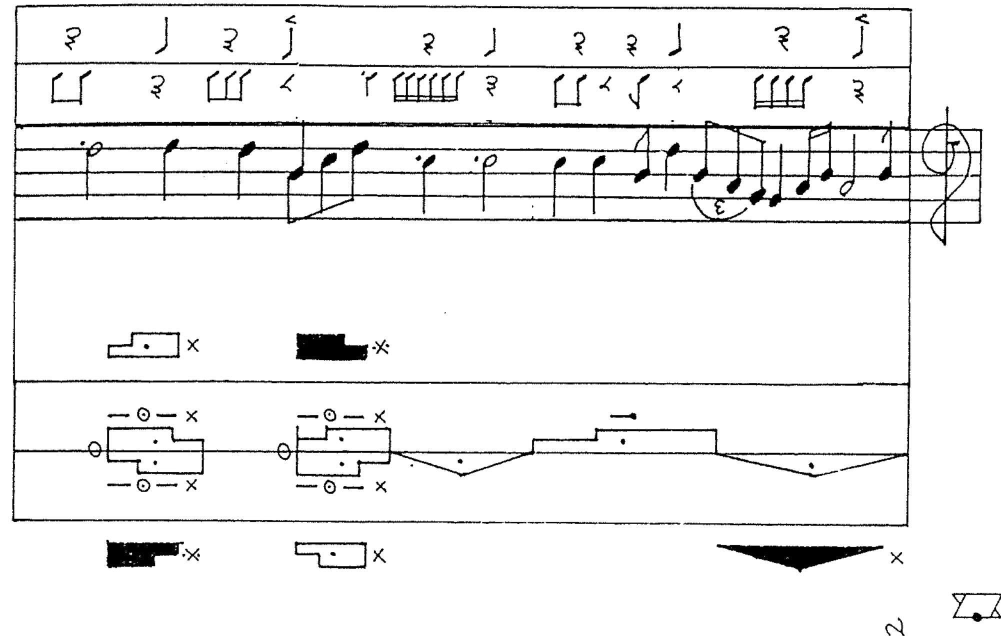
[notation symbols] . When the leg is lifted off the floor, the ankle is

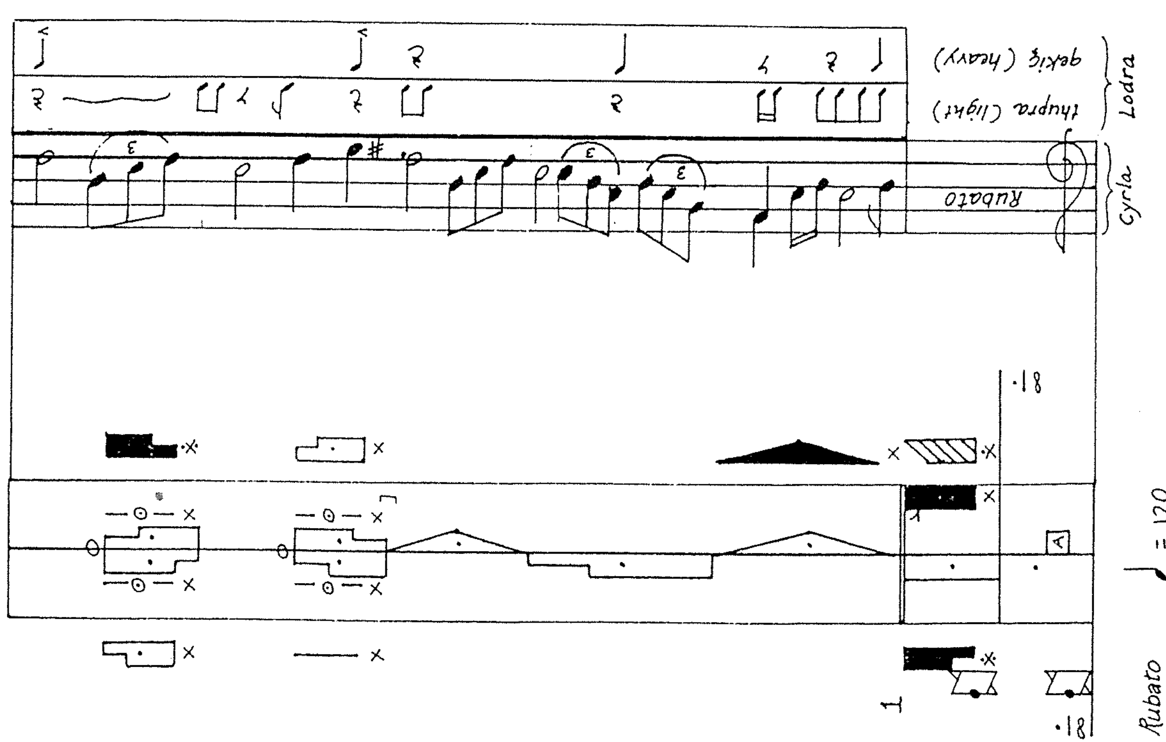
slightly contracted: [notation symbol] .

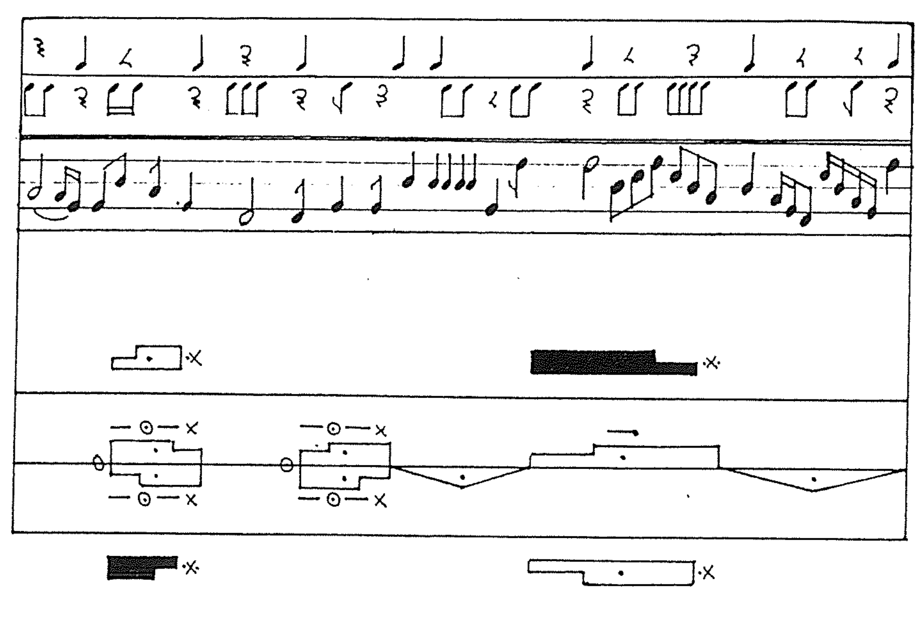
OPOJA MEN'S DANCES

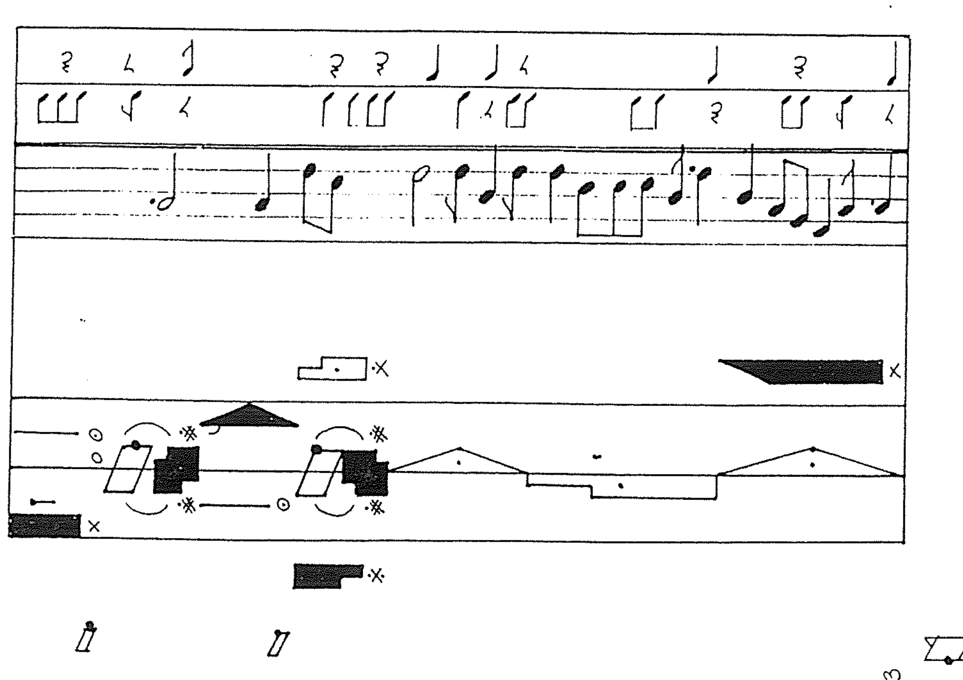
Këllçoja (Vallja e Parë) p.1

Formation: Closed Circle
Non-Attached

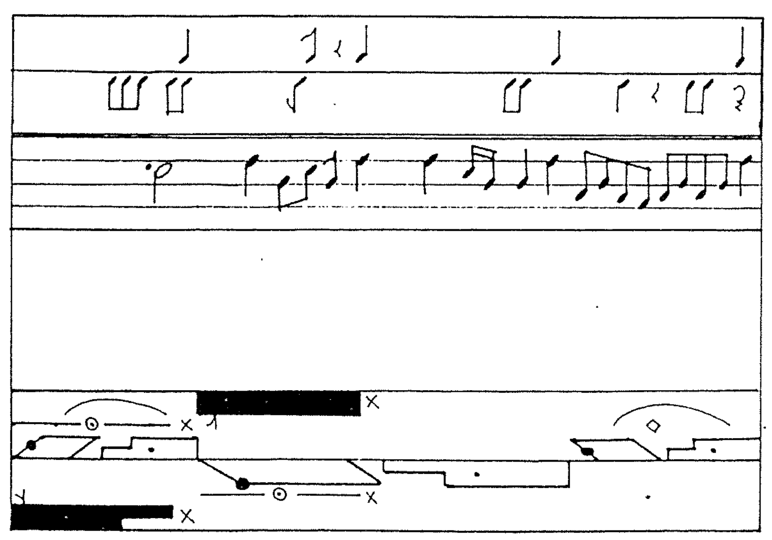








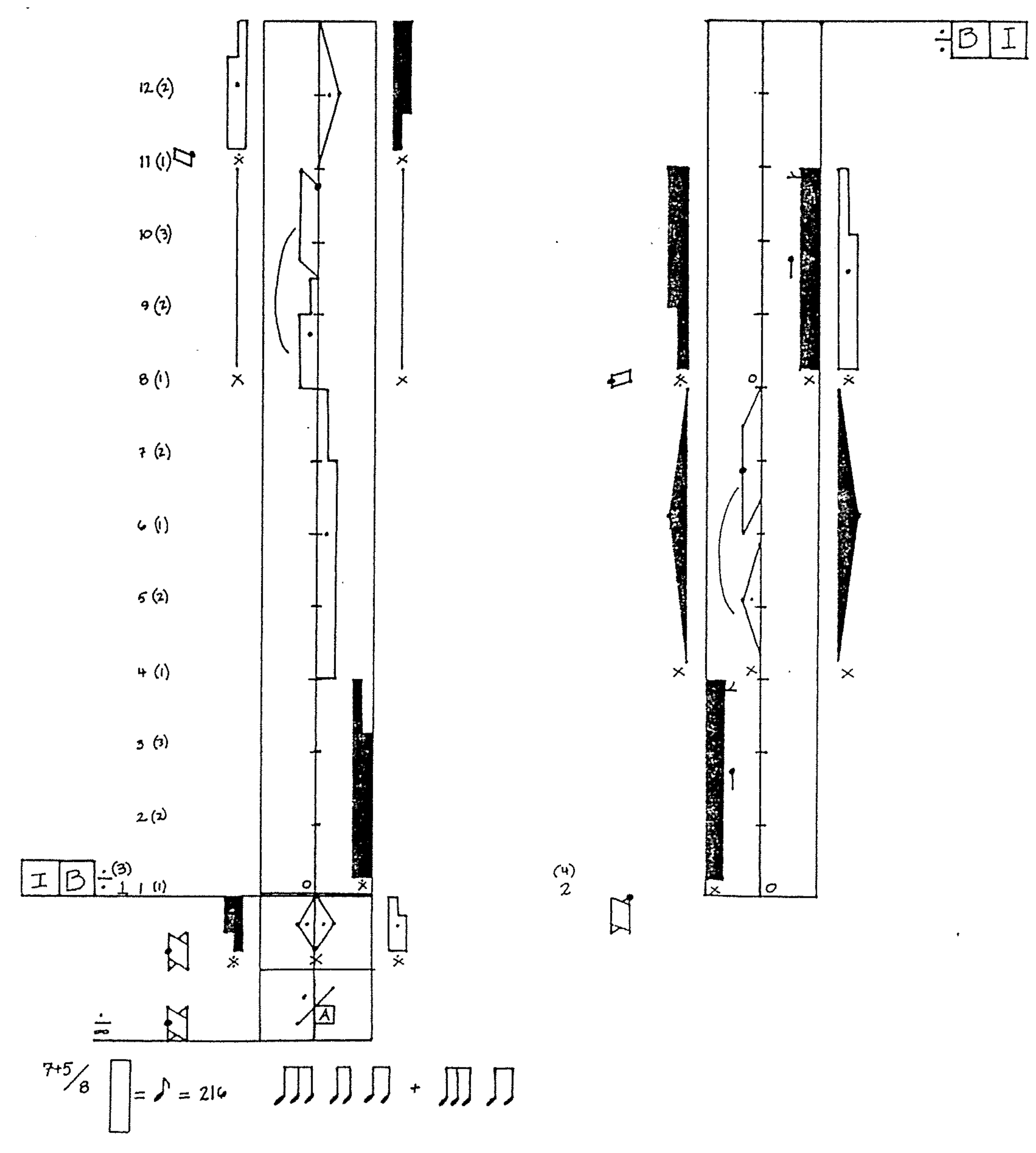
Këllçoja (Vallja e Parë) p.3



Këllçoja (Vallja e Parë) p.4

Second Dance (Vallja e Dytë) p.1

Formation: Closed Circle
Non-Attached



Second Dance p.2

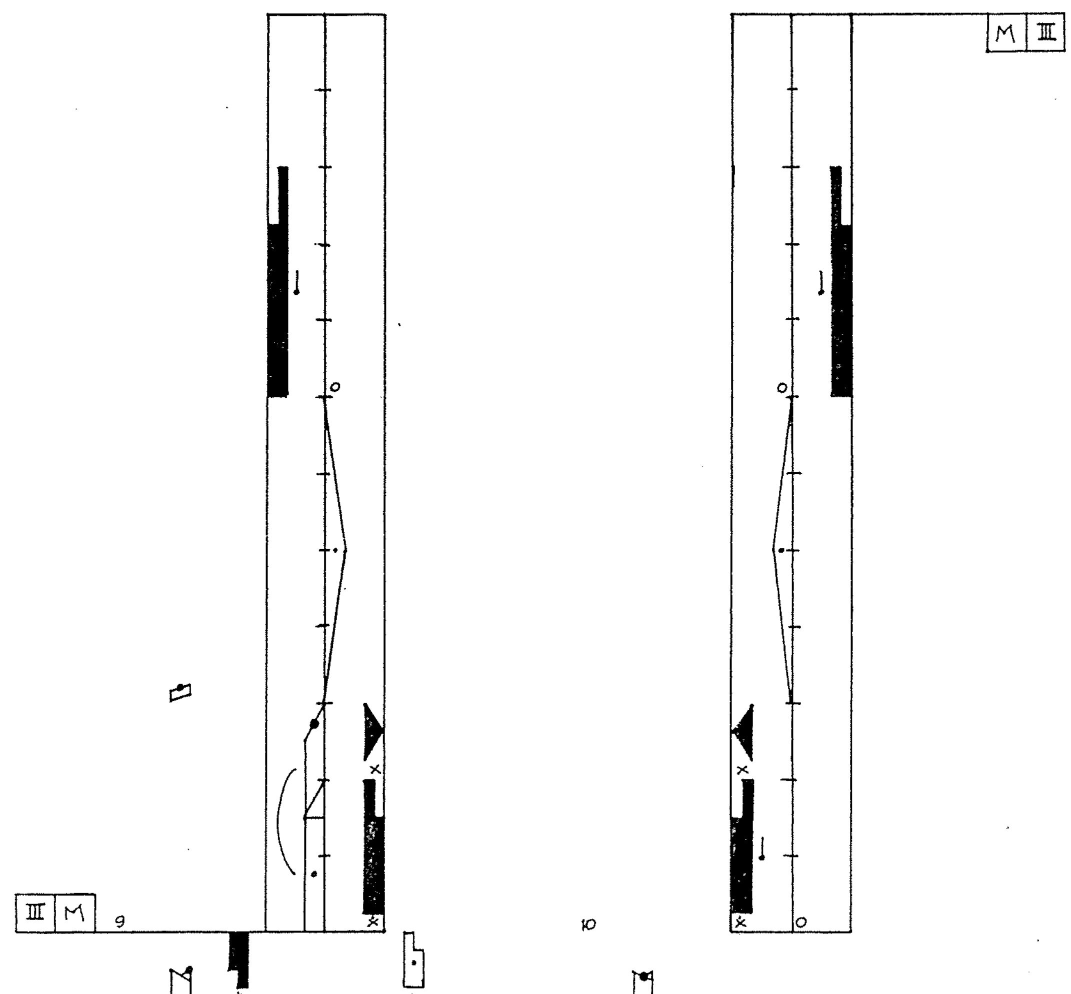
Meas 1

B1 II ÷(7) 5

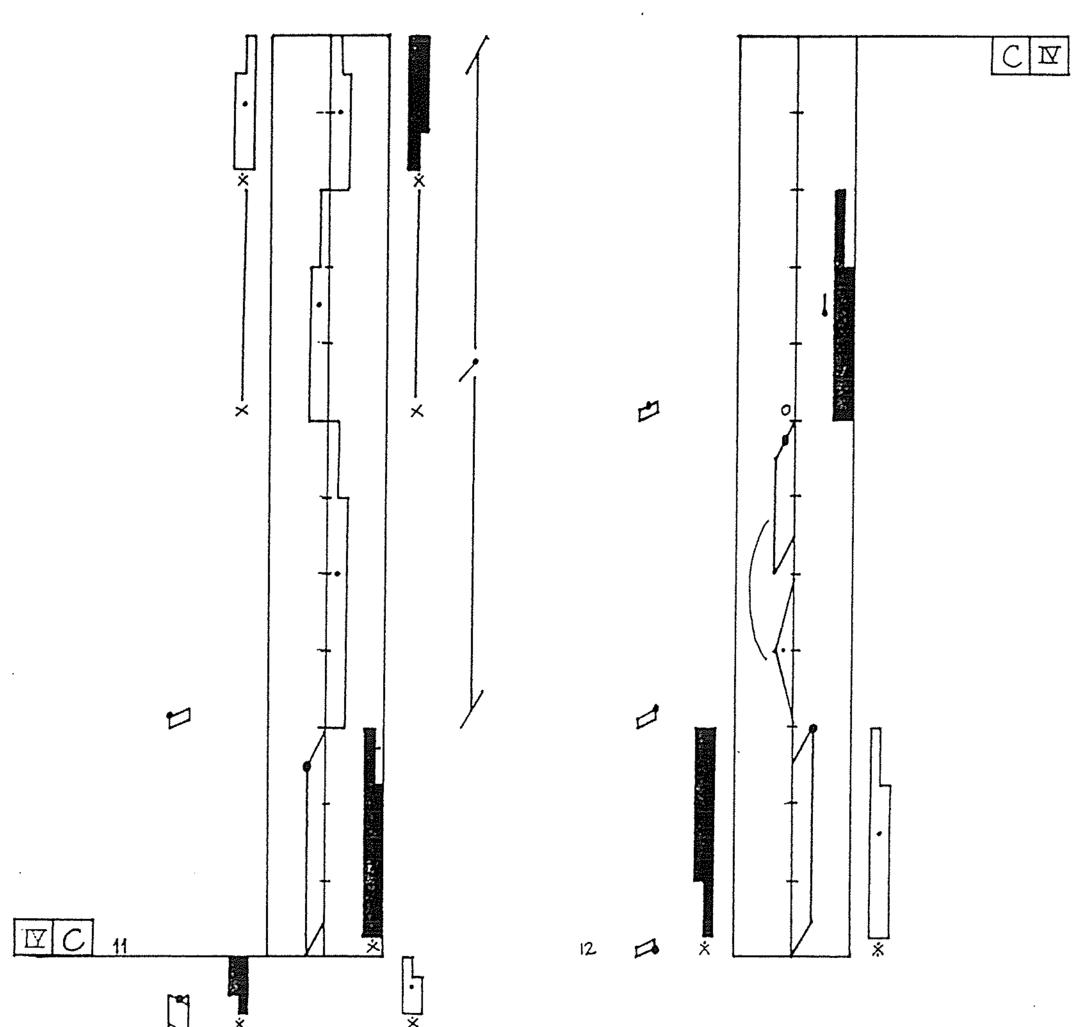
(8) 6

÷ B1 II

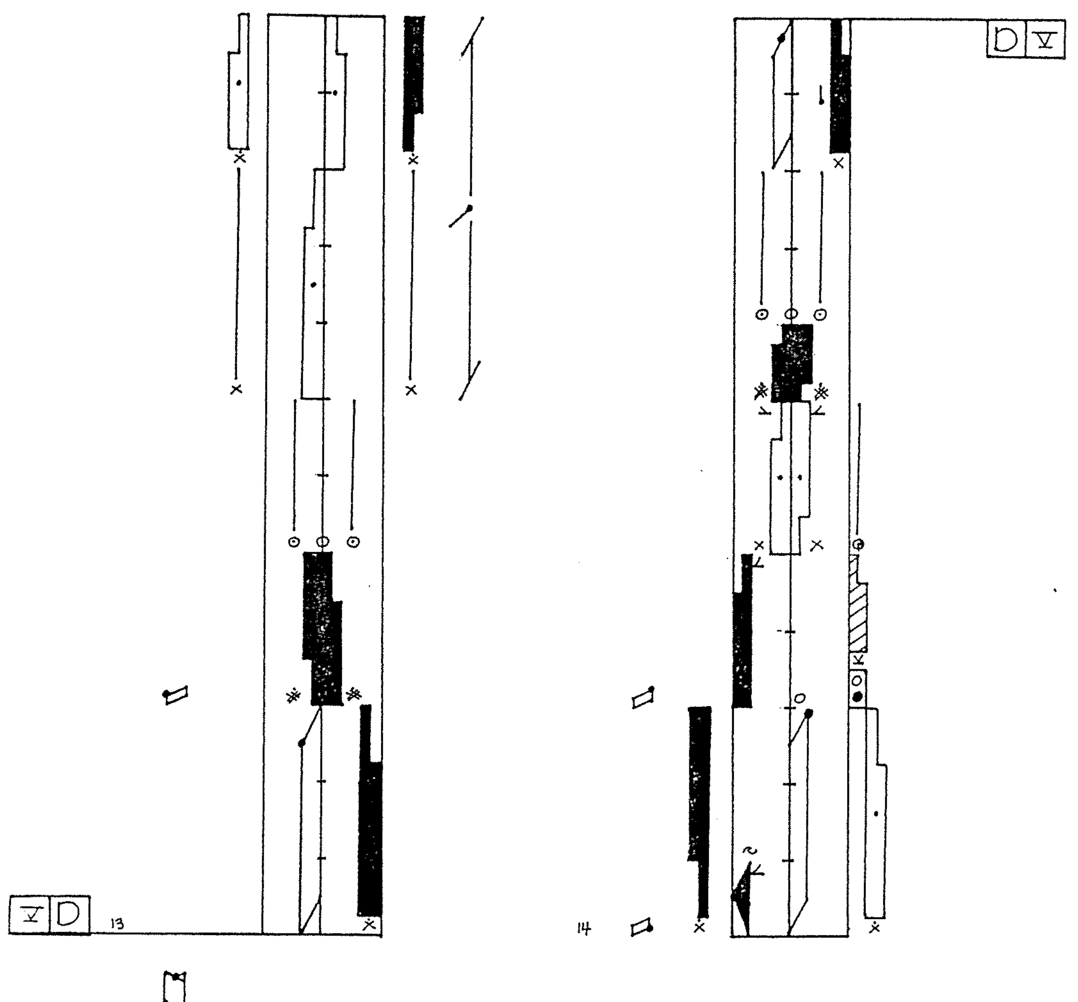
Second Dance p.3



Second Dance p.4

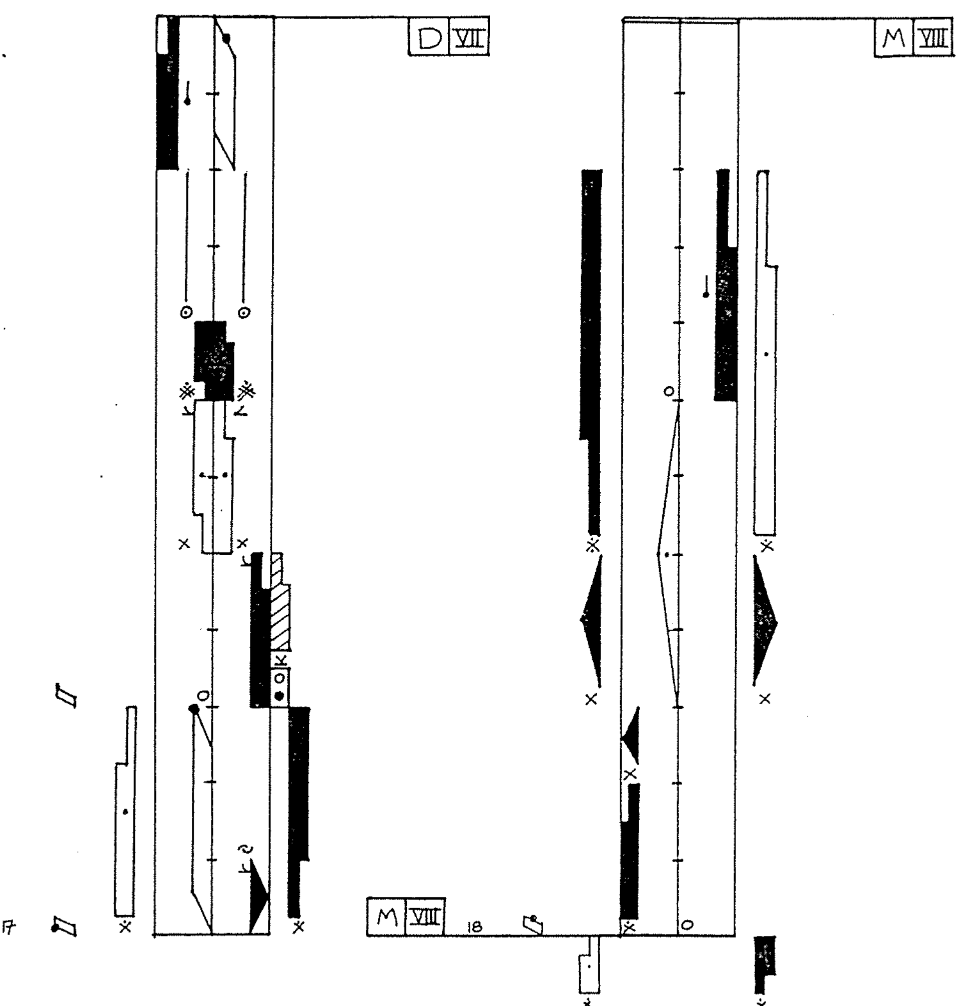


Second Dance p.5



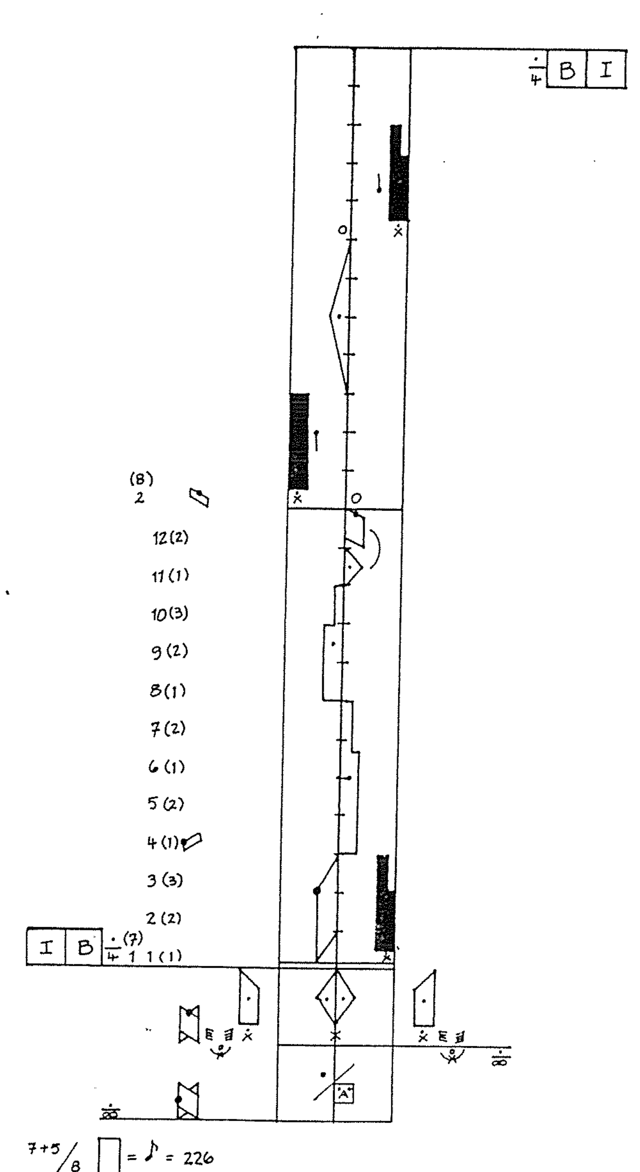
Second Dance p.6

Second Dance p.7

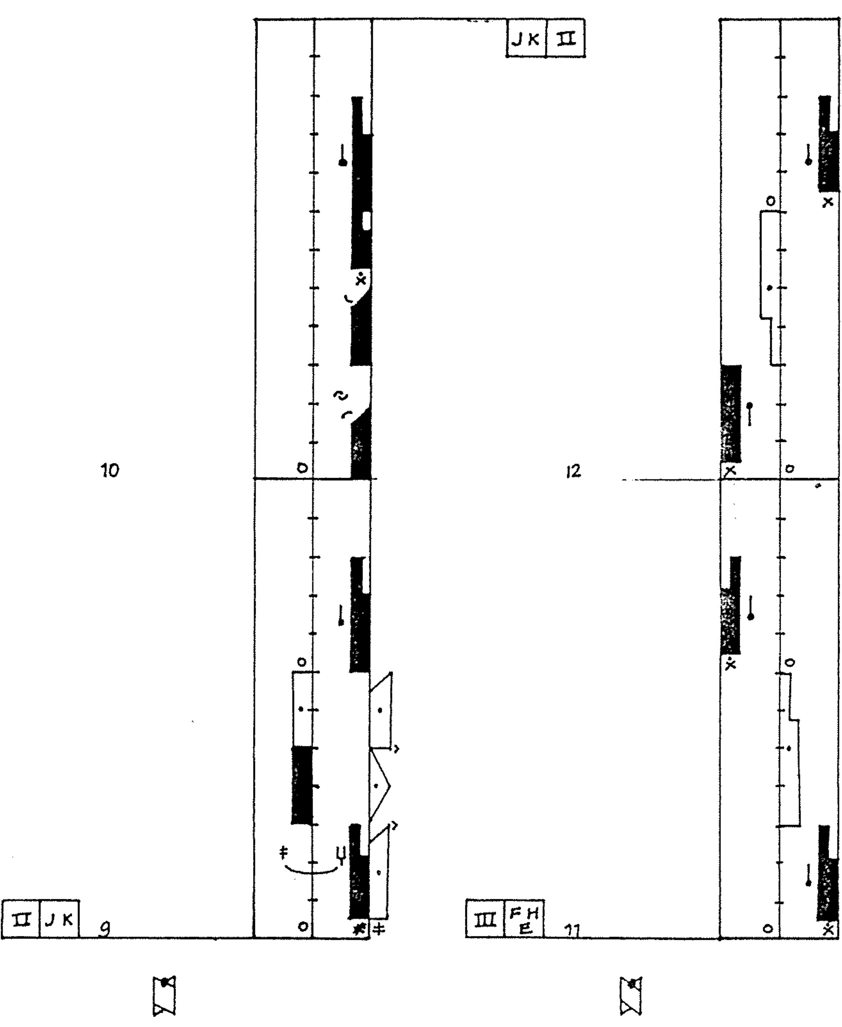


Third Dance (Vallja e Tretë) p.1

Formation: Open Circle
Hand to Hand



Third Dance p.2



Third Dance p.3

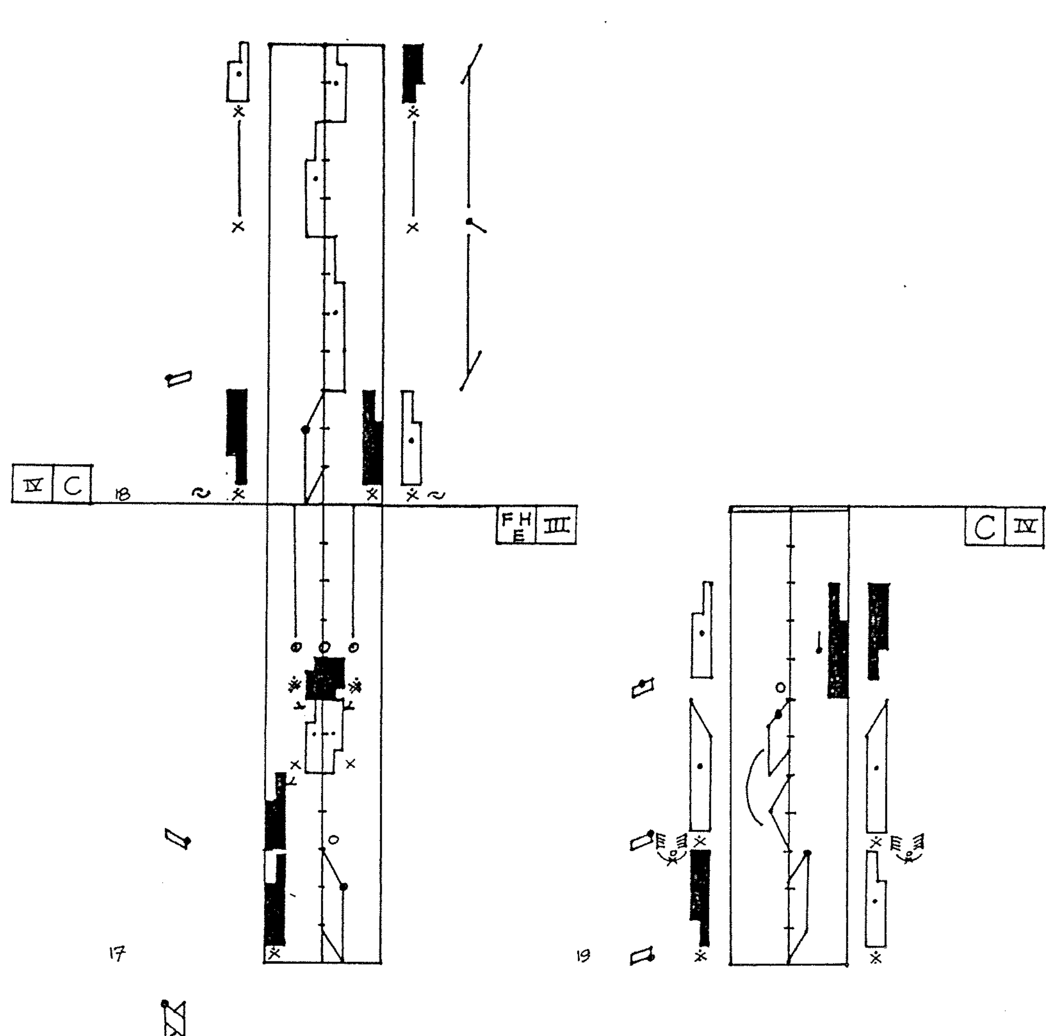
14

13

16

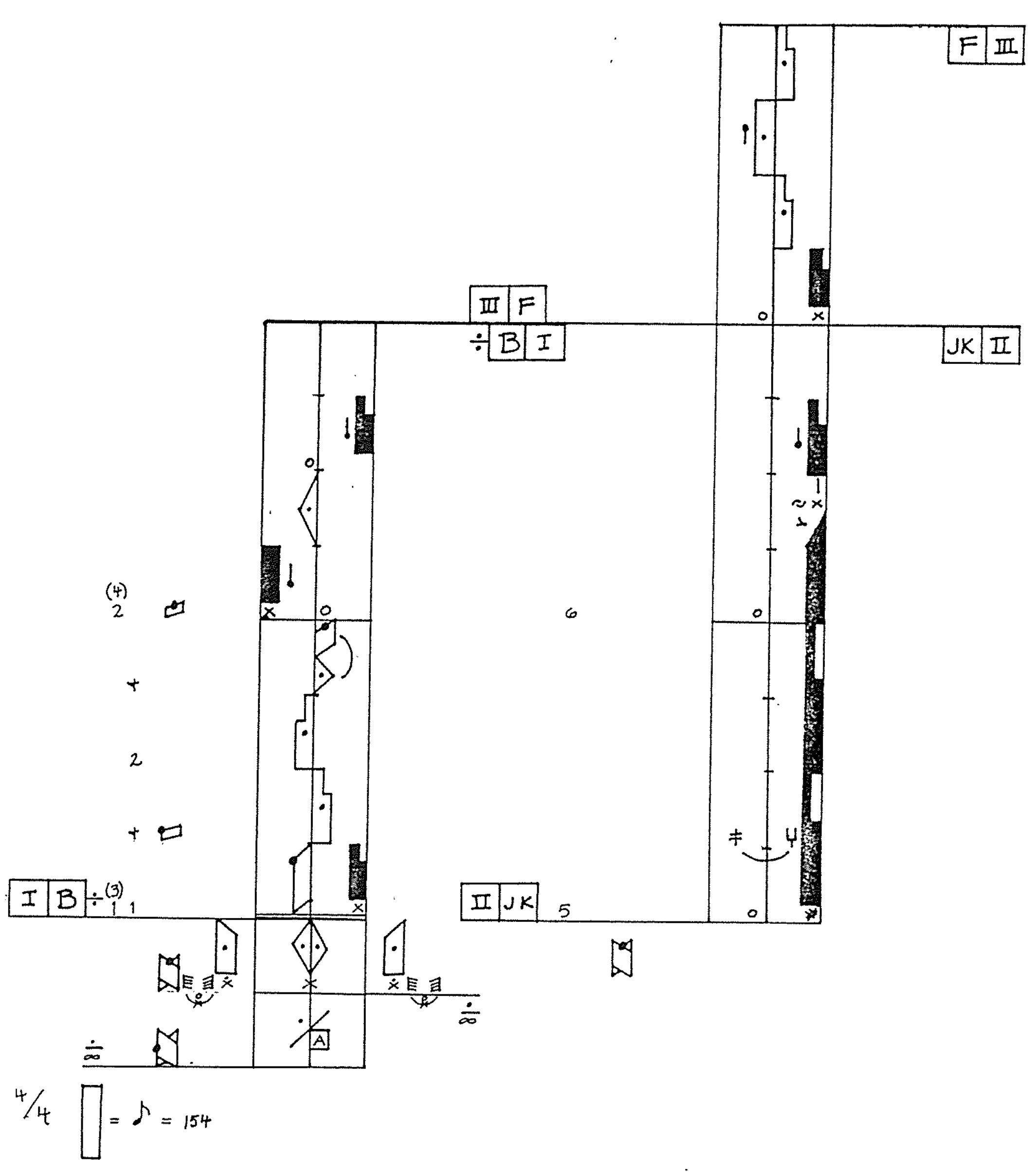
15

Third Dance p.4

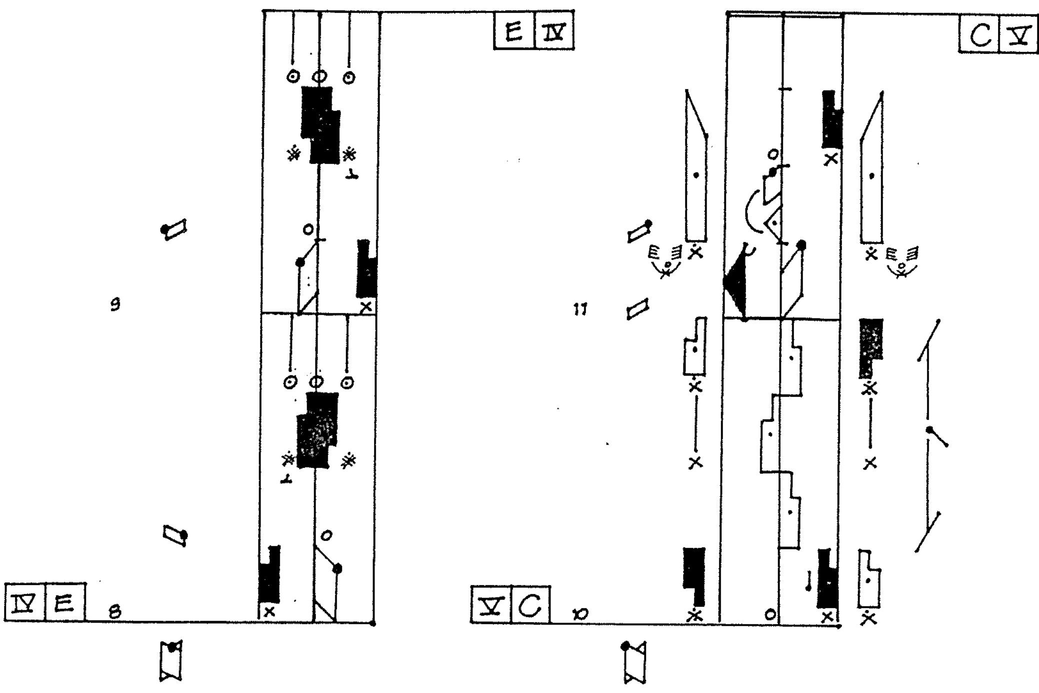


Fourth Dance (Vallja e Katërt) p.1

Formation: Open Circle
Hand to Hand

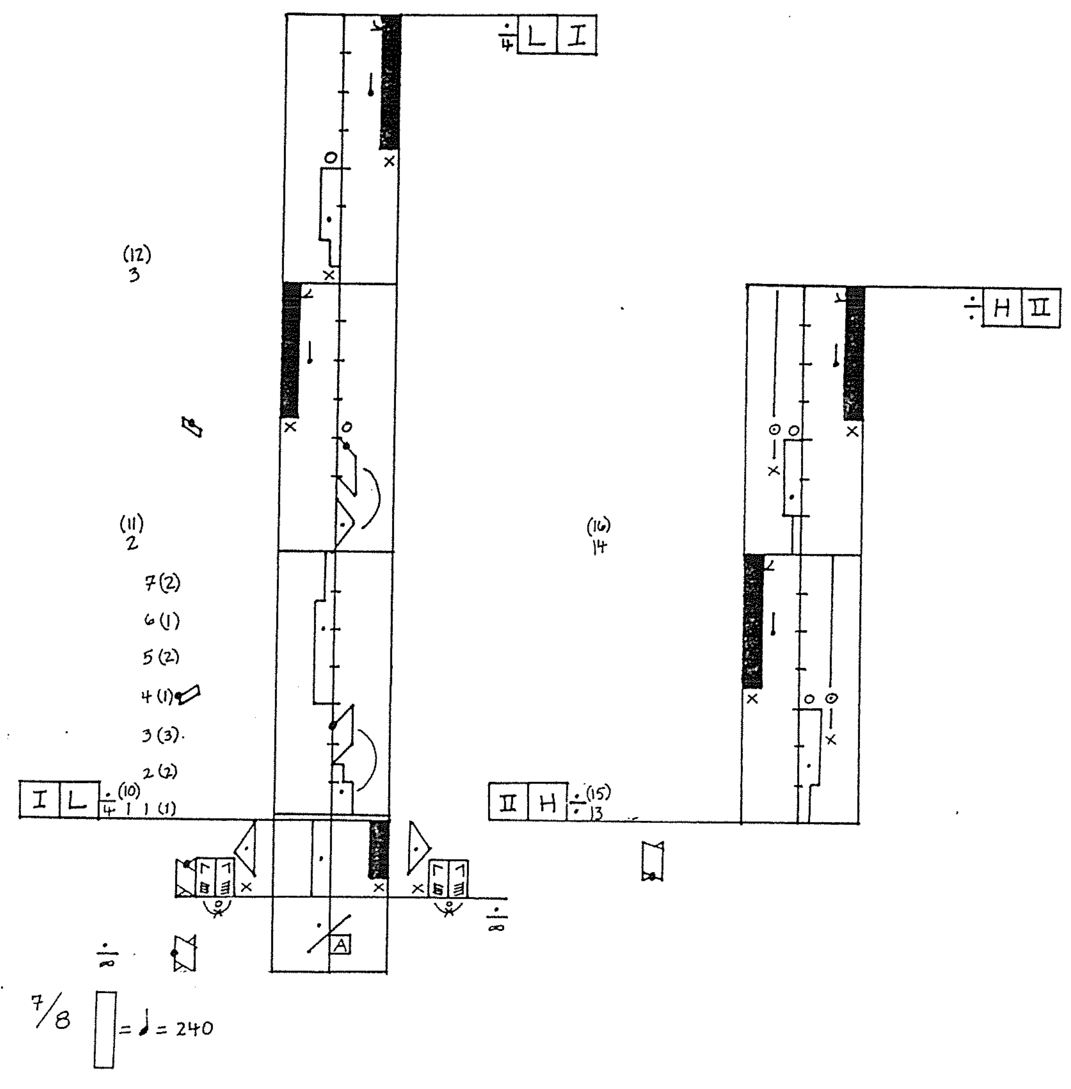


Fourth Dance p.2

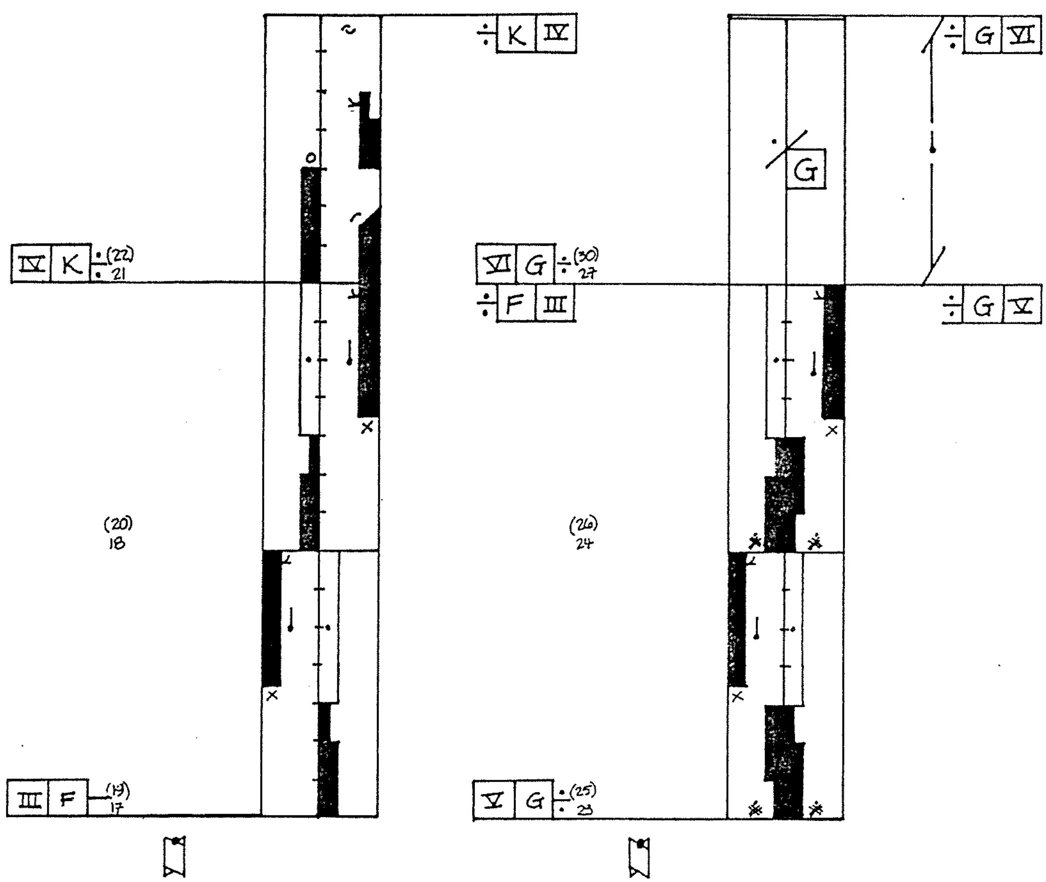


Fifth Dance (Vallja e Pestë) p.1

Formation: Open Circle
Shoulder Hold

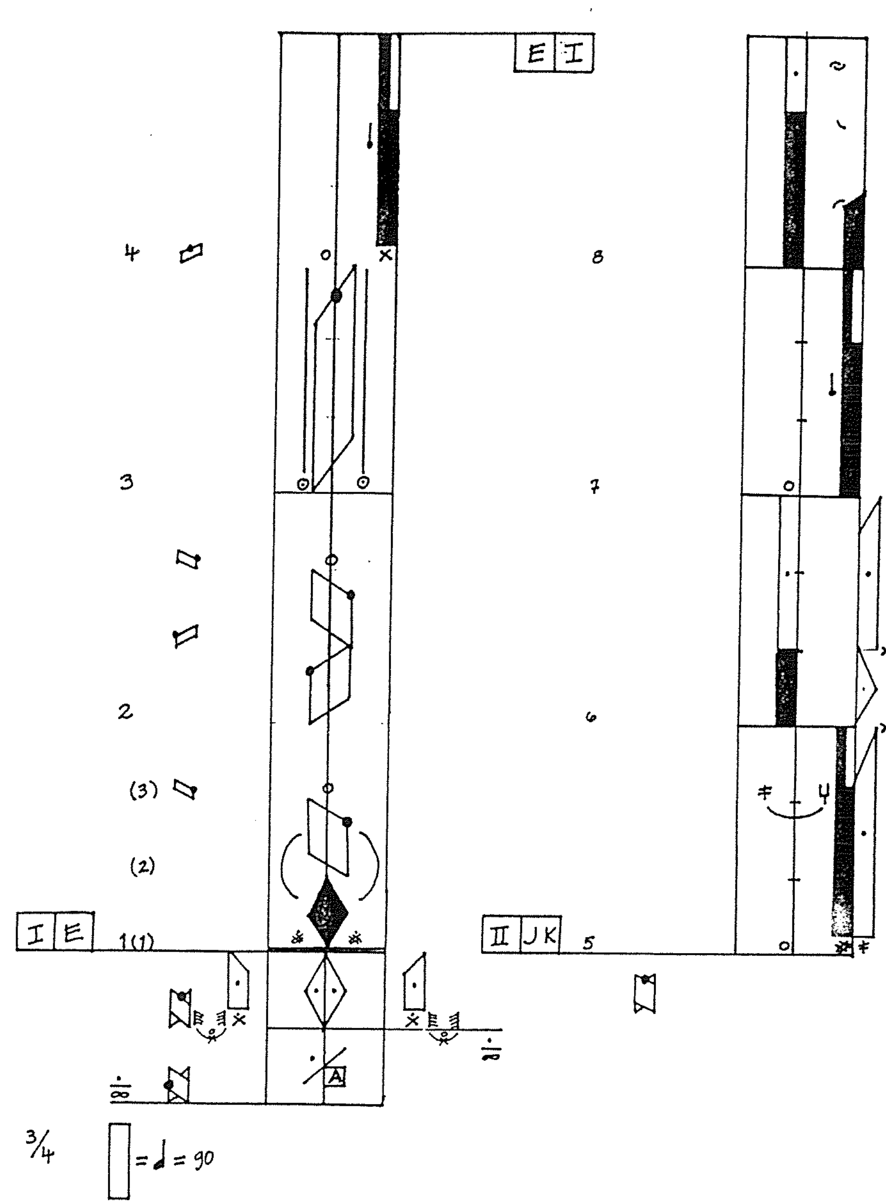


Fifth Dance p.2

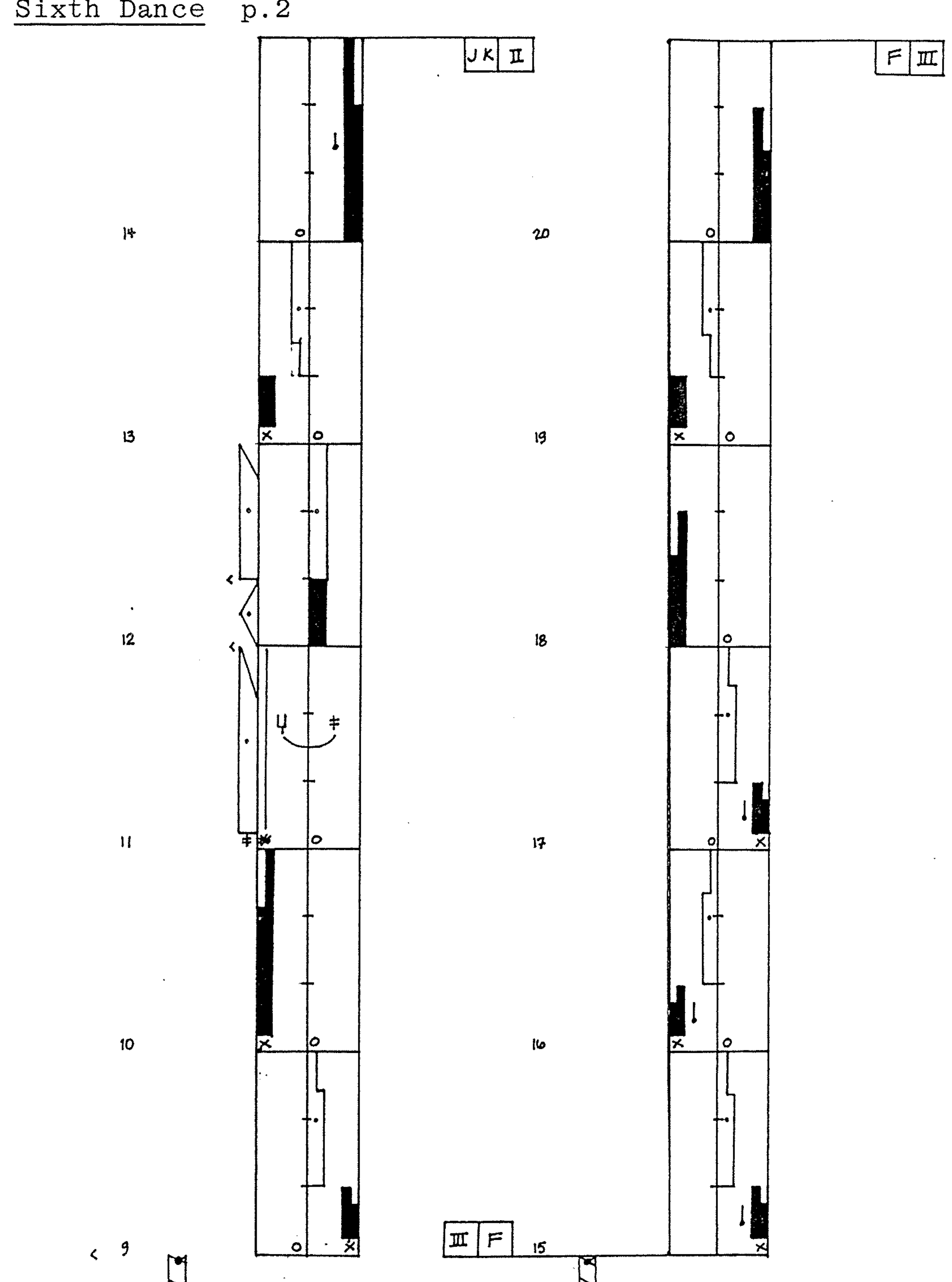


Sixth Dance (Vallja e Gjashtë) p.1

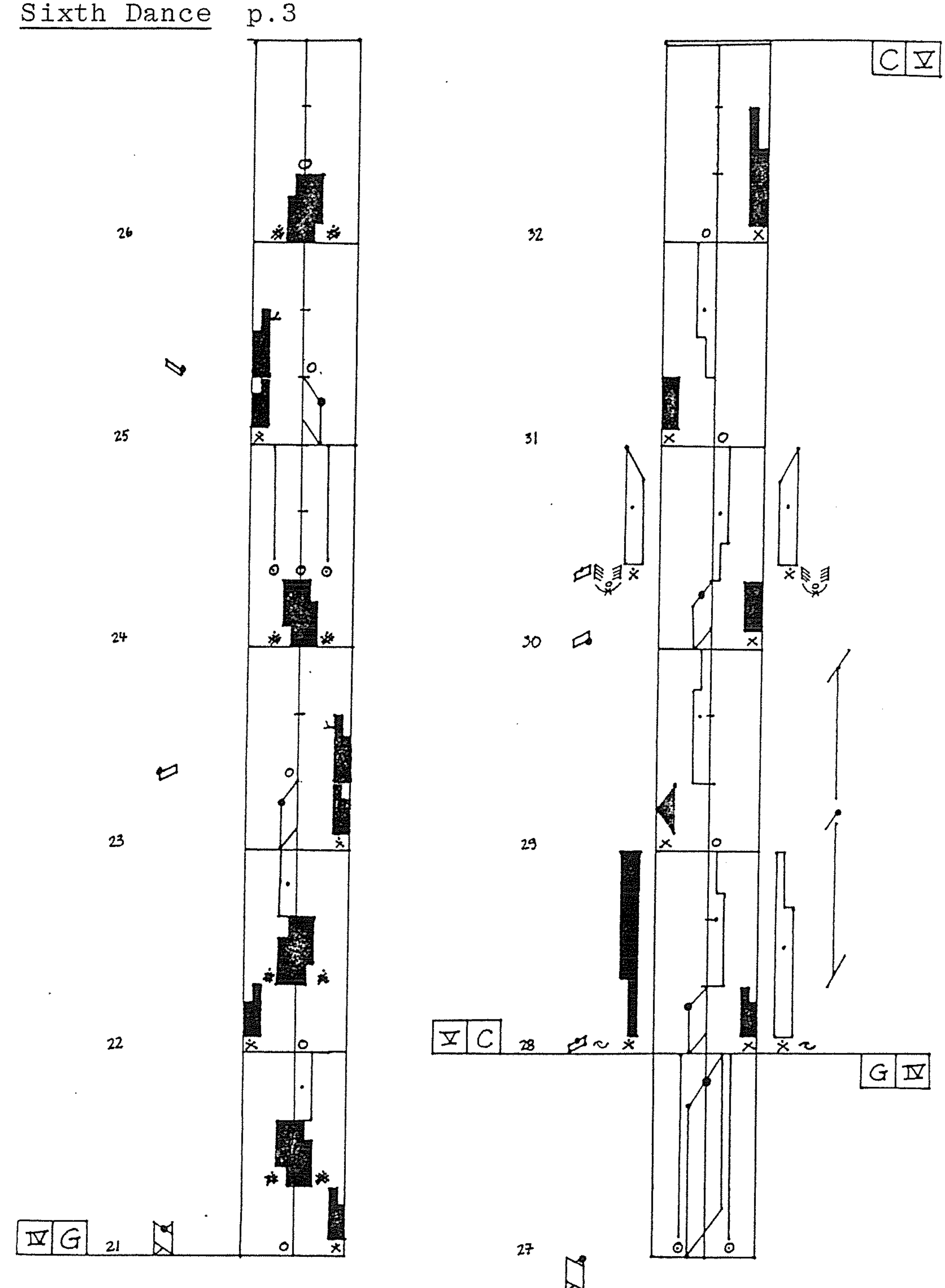
Formation: Open Circle
Hand to Hand



Sixth Dance p.2

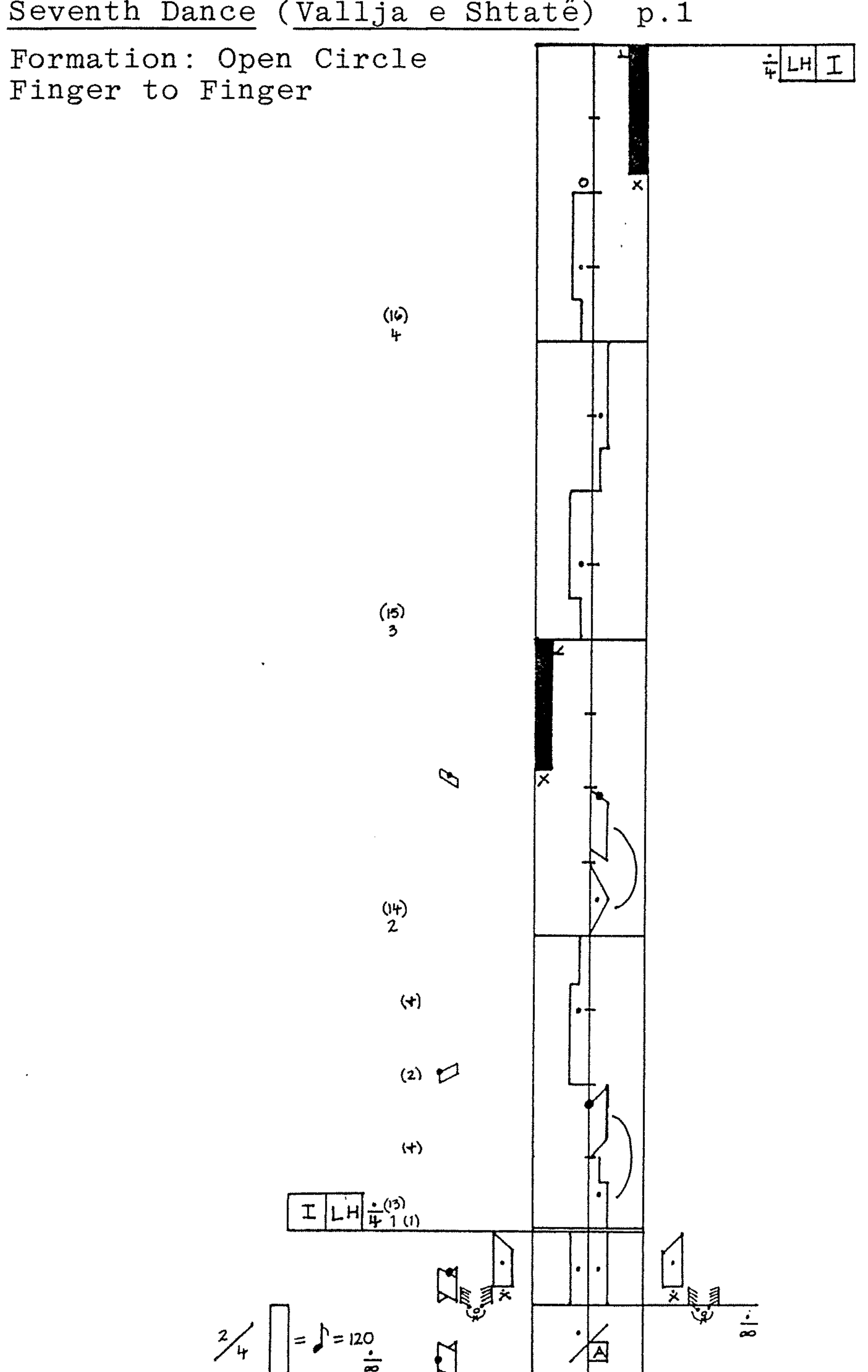


Sixth Dance p.3

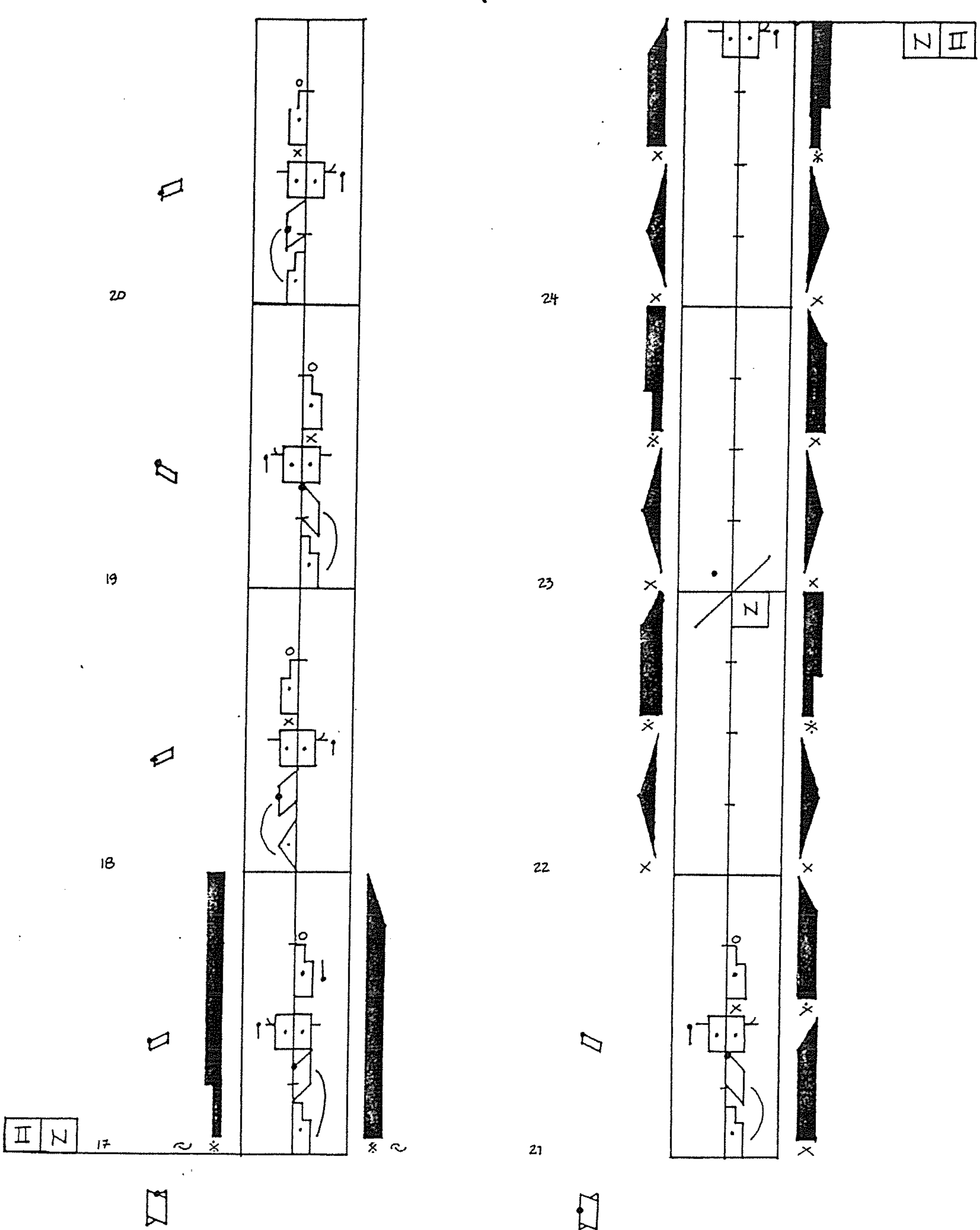


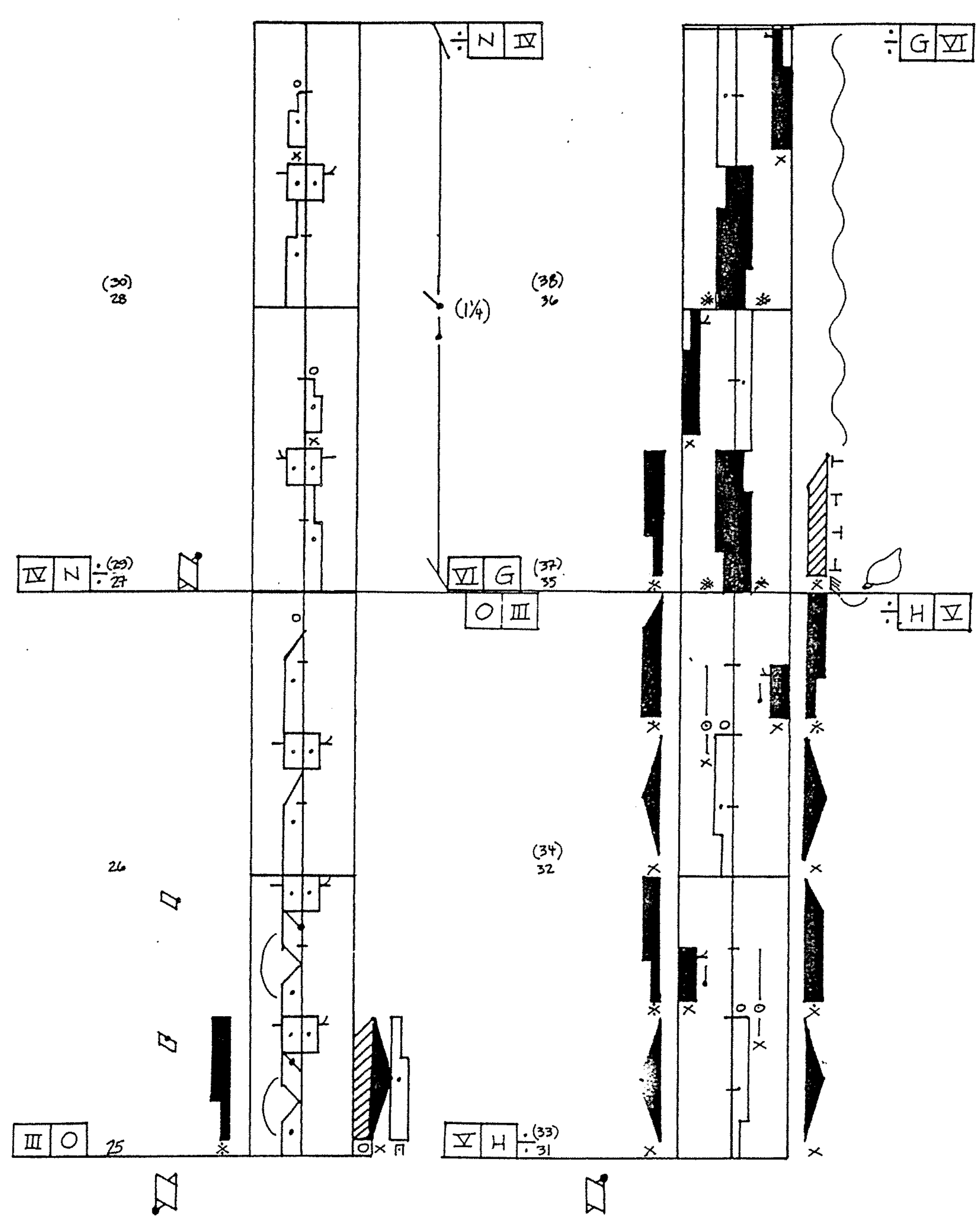
Seventh Dance (Vallja e Shtatë) p.1

Formation: Open Circle
Finger to Finger



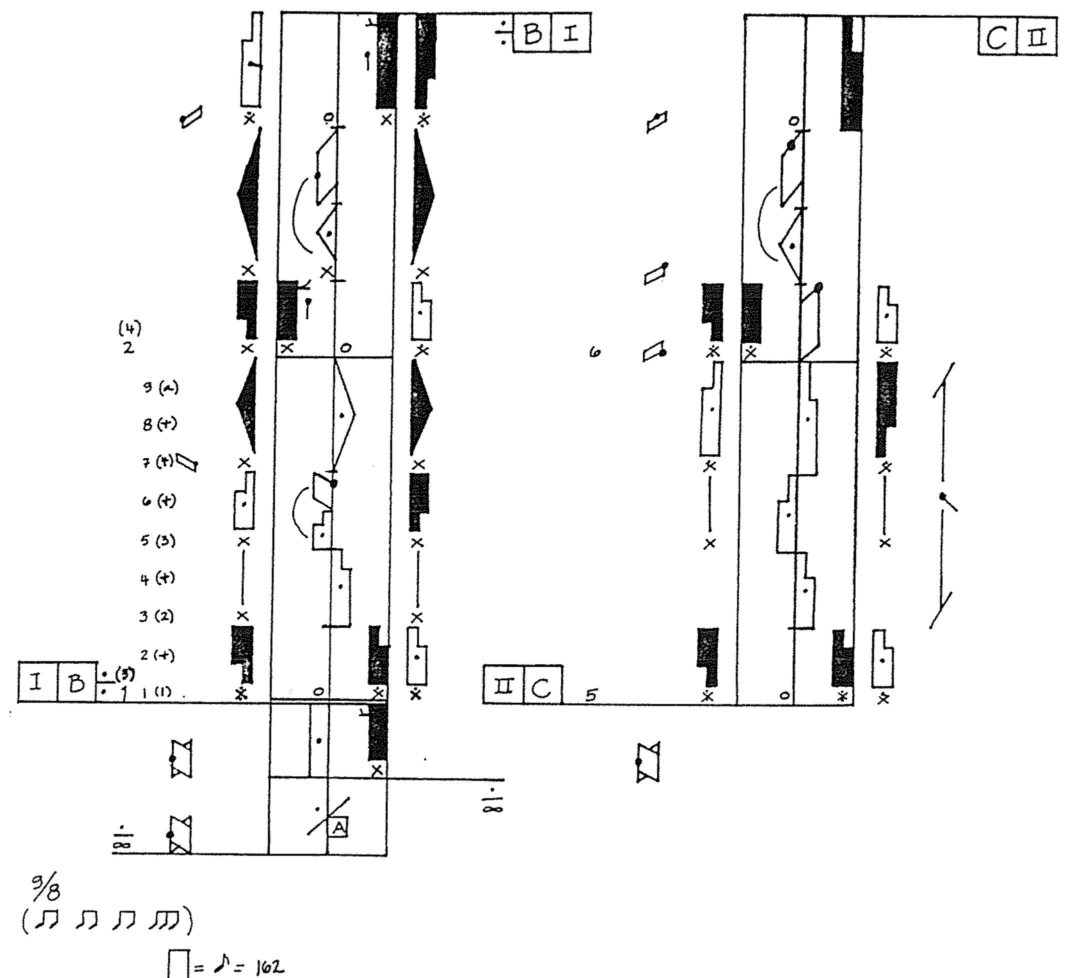
Seventh Dance p.2



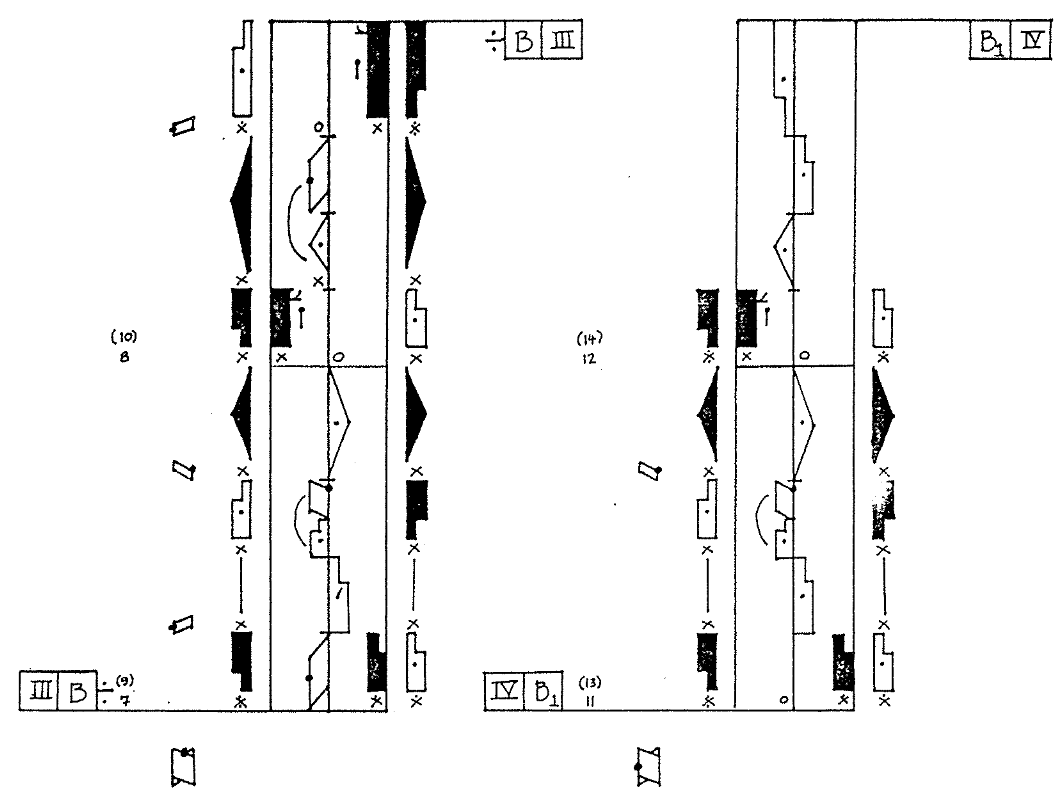


Eighth Dance (Vallja e Tetë) p.1

Formation: Closed Circle
Non-Attached



Eighth Dance p.2



Eighth Dance p.3

15

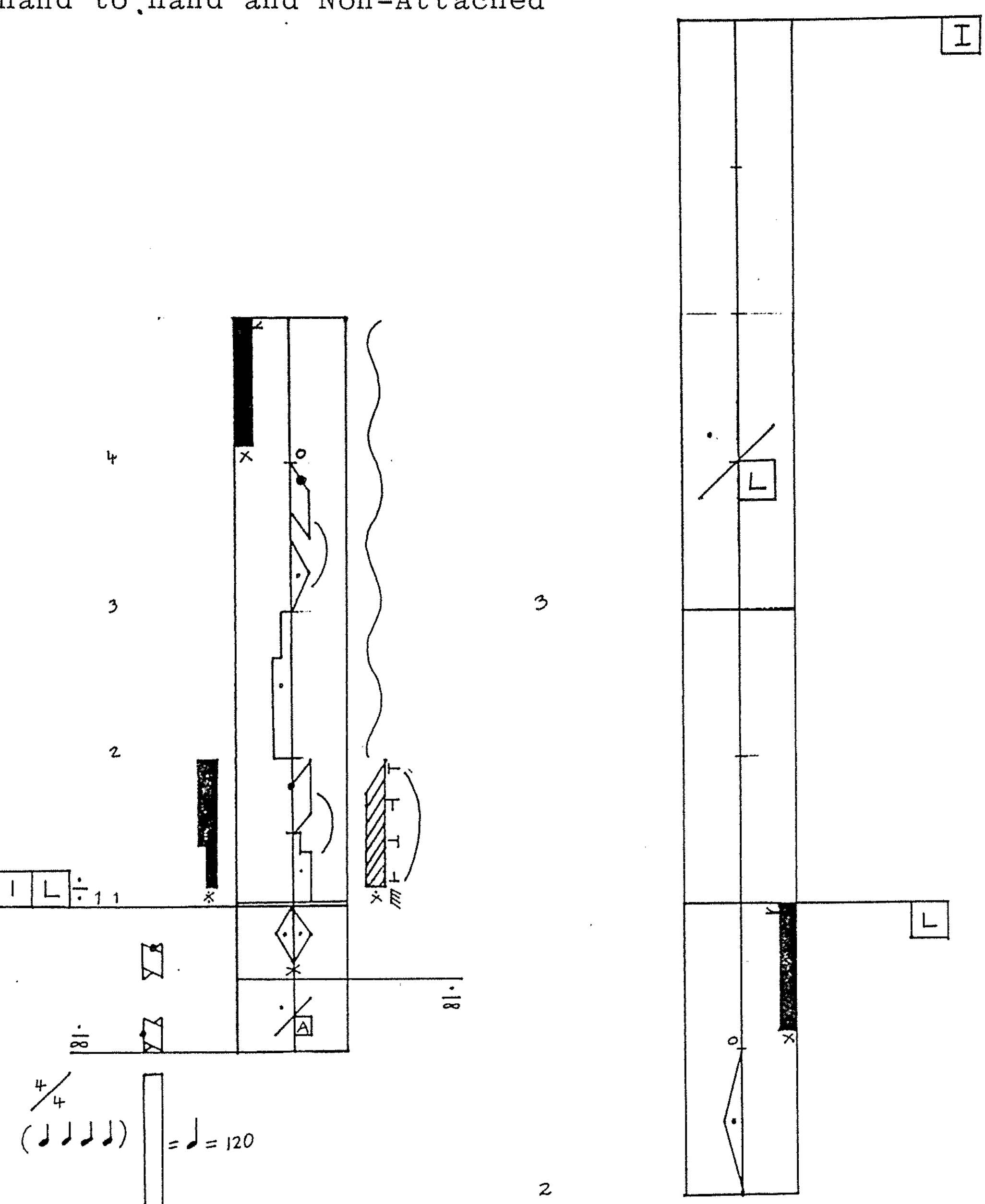
16

17

18

Ninth Dance (Vallja e Nentë - Kajde e Grave) p.1

Formation: Open Circle and Closed Circle
Hand to Hand and Non-Attached



Ninth Dance p.2

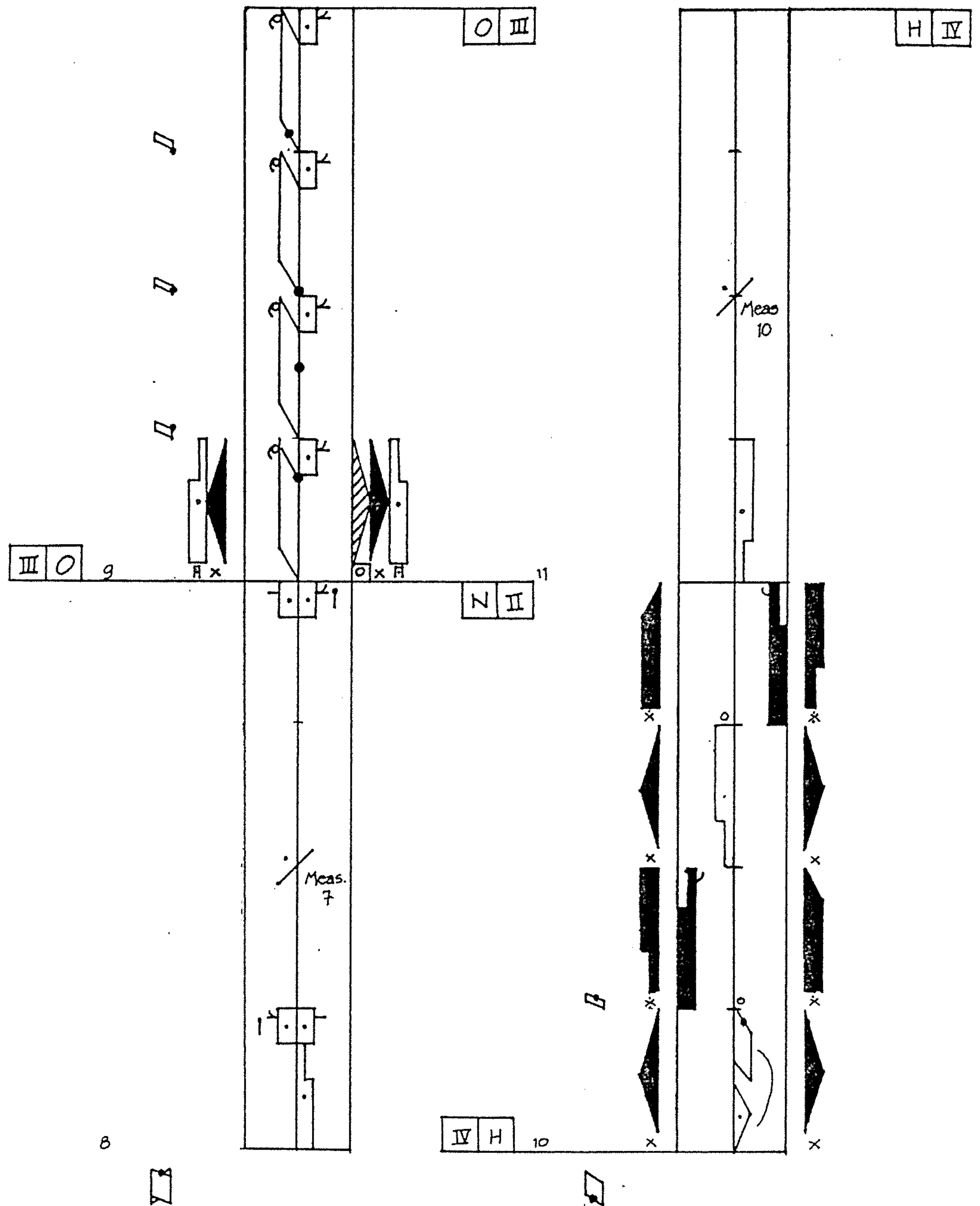
5

7

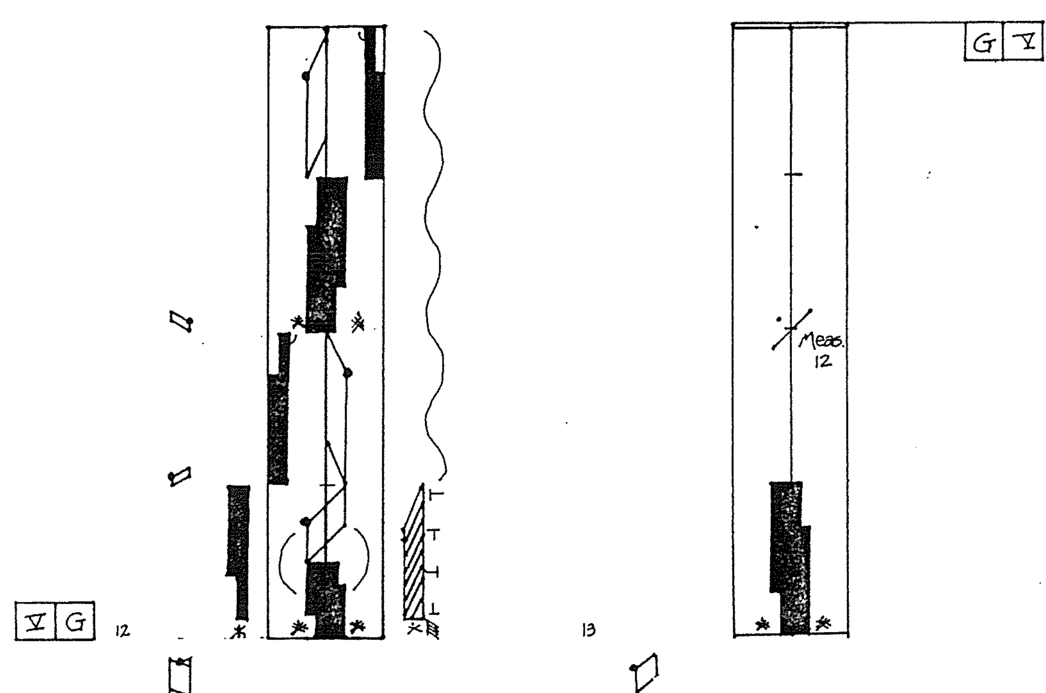
6

9

<u>Ninth Dance</u> p.3

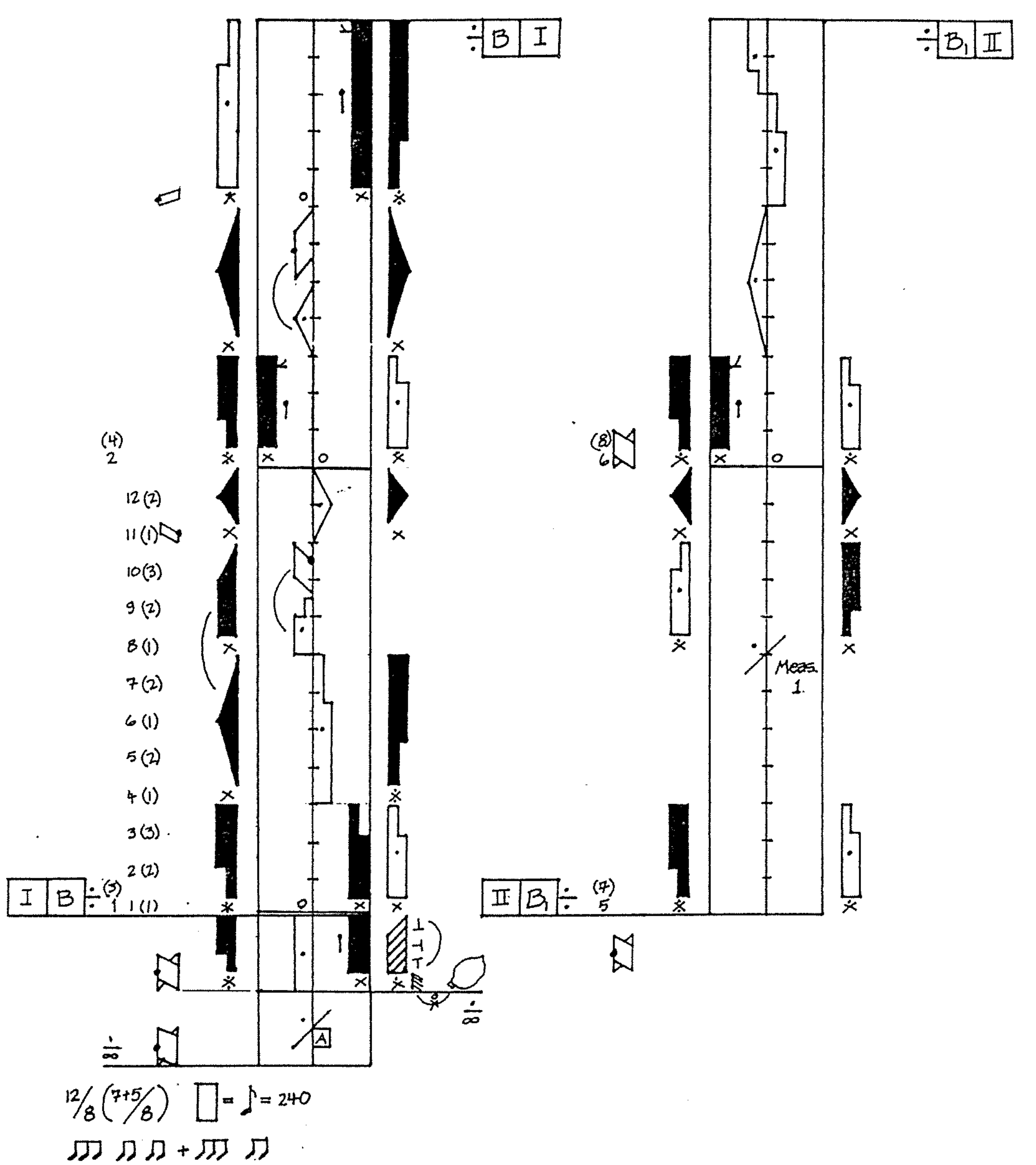


Ninth Dance p.4



Tenth Dance (Vallja e Dhjetë) p.1

Formation: Closed Circle
Non-Attached

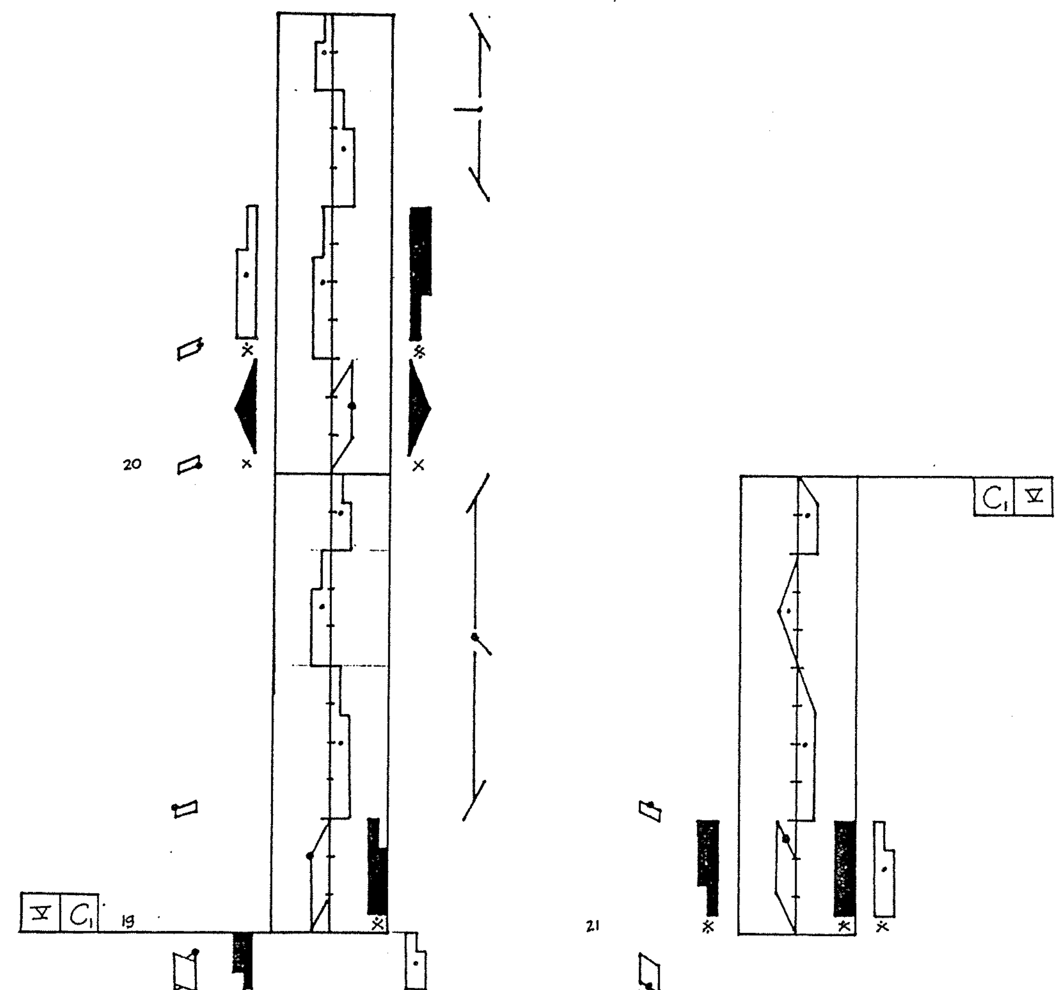


Tenth Dance p.2

(18)
12

(17)
11

Tenth Dance p.3



Tenth Dance p.4

23

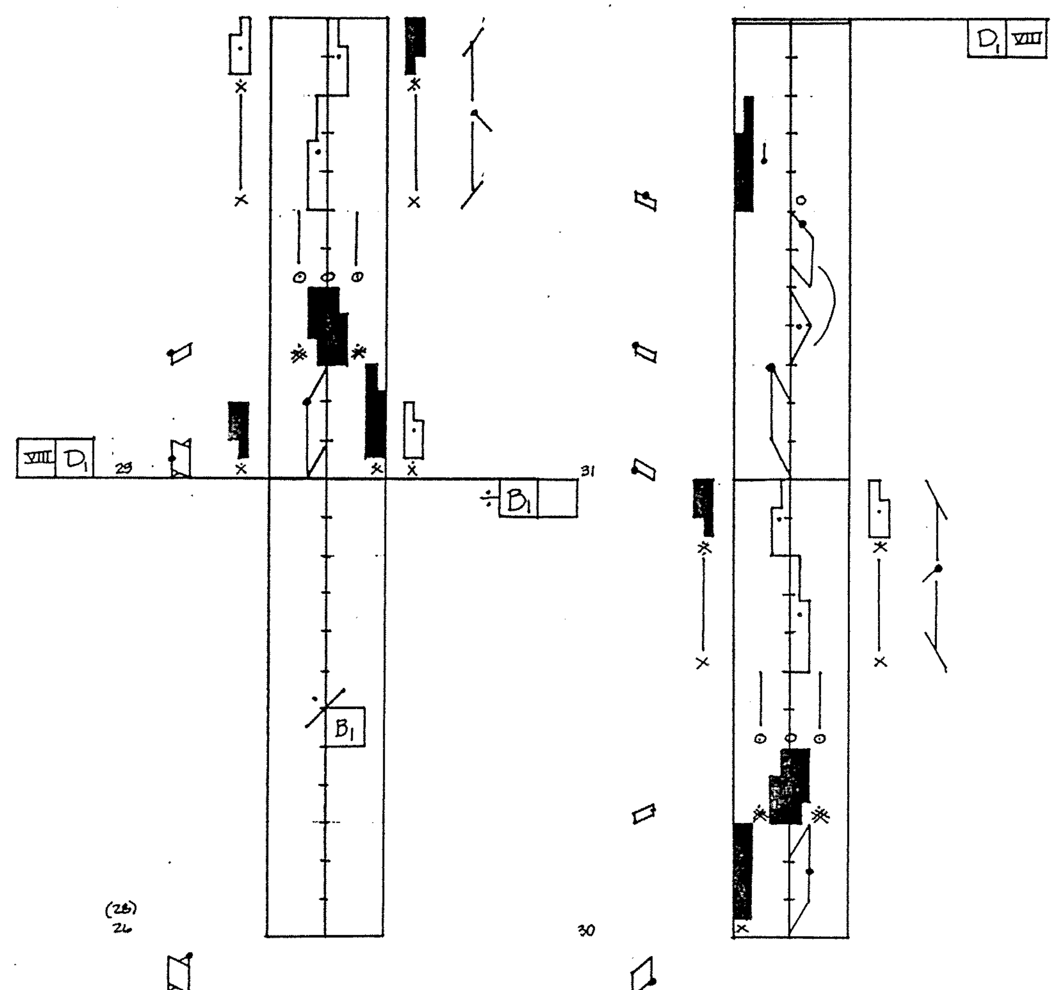
VI | EM 22

VII | B1 ÷ (27) 25

EM | VI

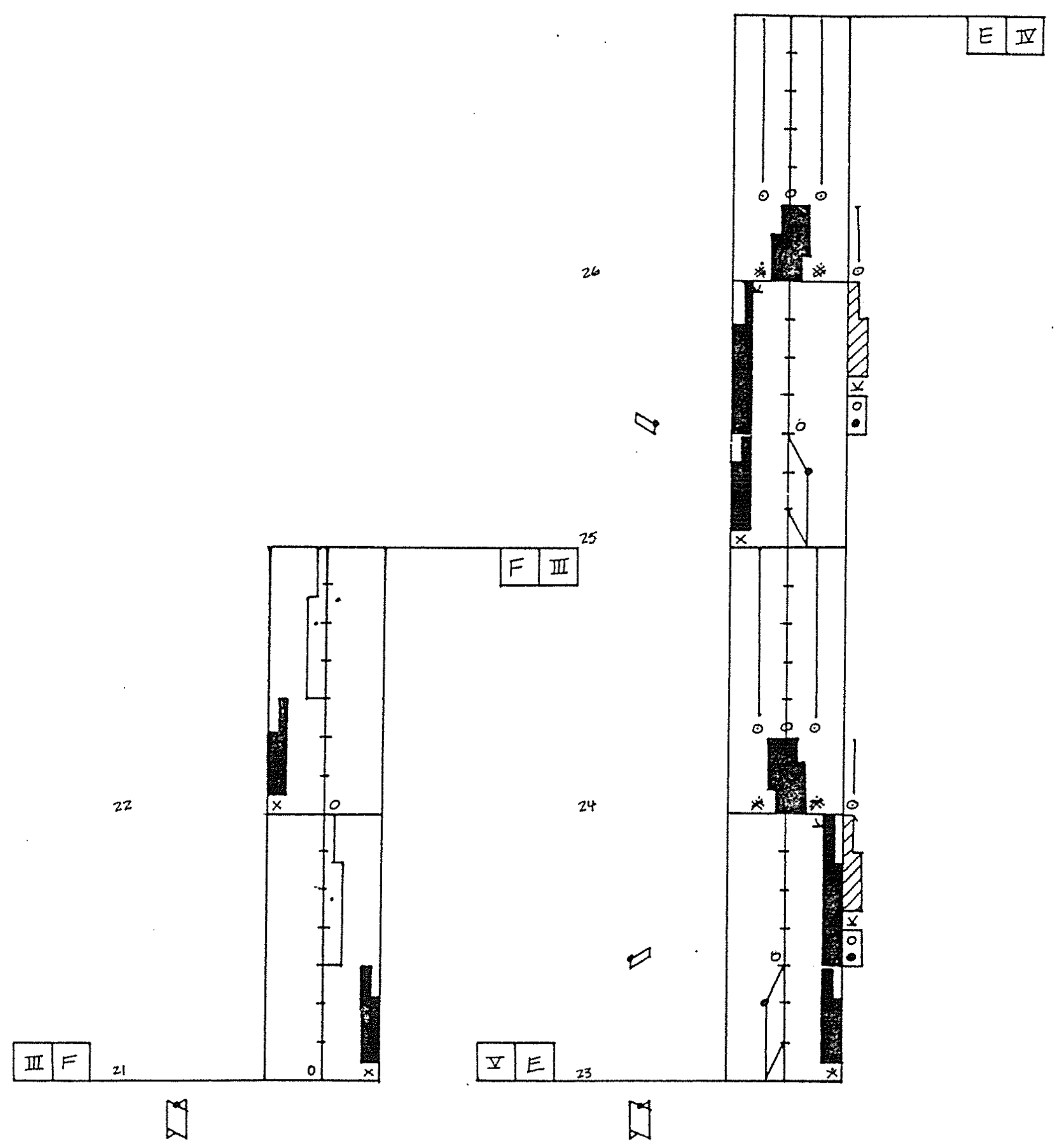
24

Tenth Dance p.5

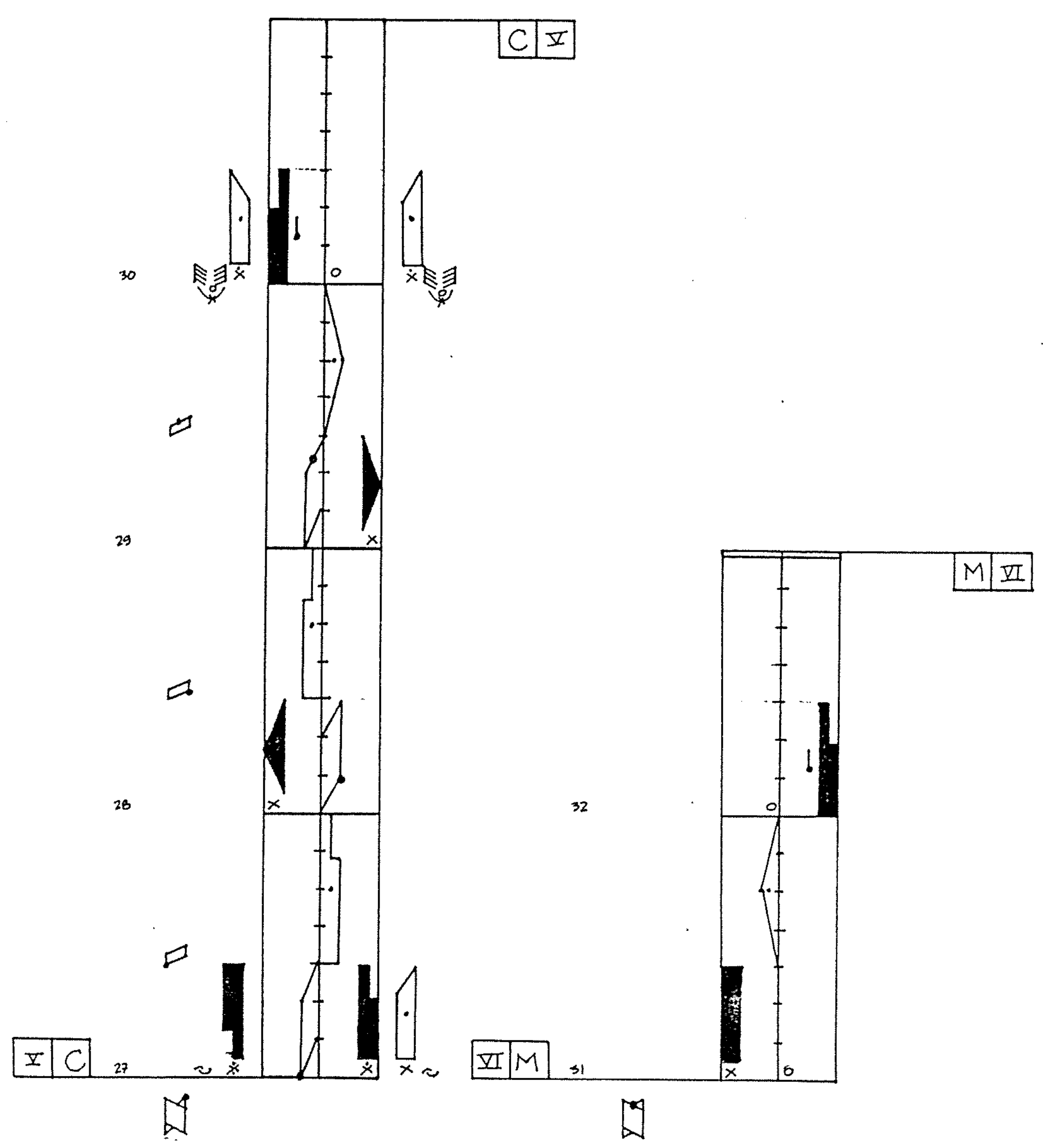


<u>Eleventh Dance</u> (<u>Vallja e Njëmbëdhjetë</u>) p.1

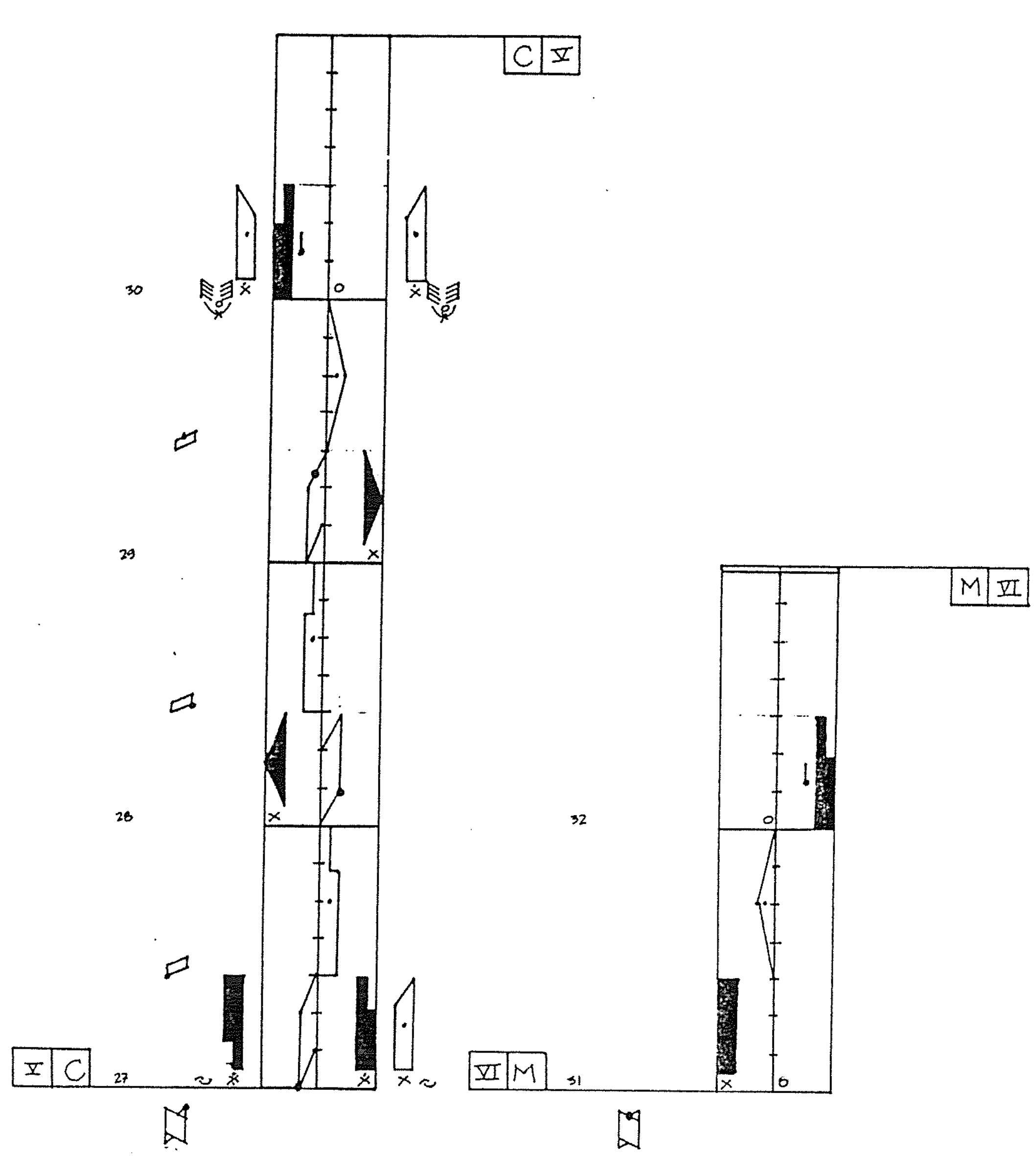
Formation: Open Circle
Hand to Hand



Eleventh Dance p.3



Eleventh Dance p.3



MUSICAL TRANSCRIPTIONS OF THE OPOJA MEN'S DANCES

BY XHEMALI BERISHA

= - 154
DY SURLE
LODRA
çekiçi
thupra
5
10
15
20
25

30

35

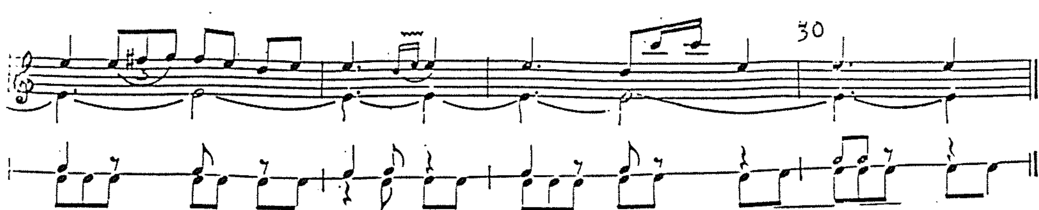
40

♪ = + 154
DY SURLE
LODRA
Çekiçi
thupra
5
10
15
20
25

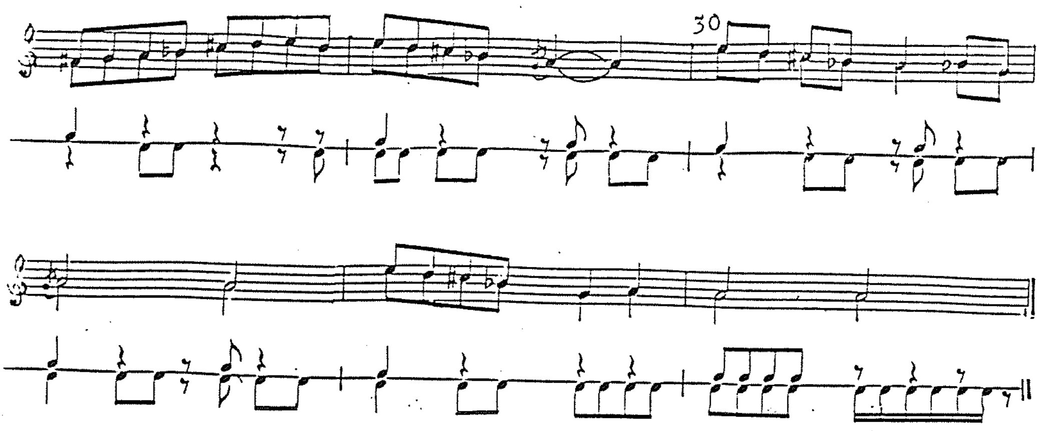
30

35

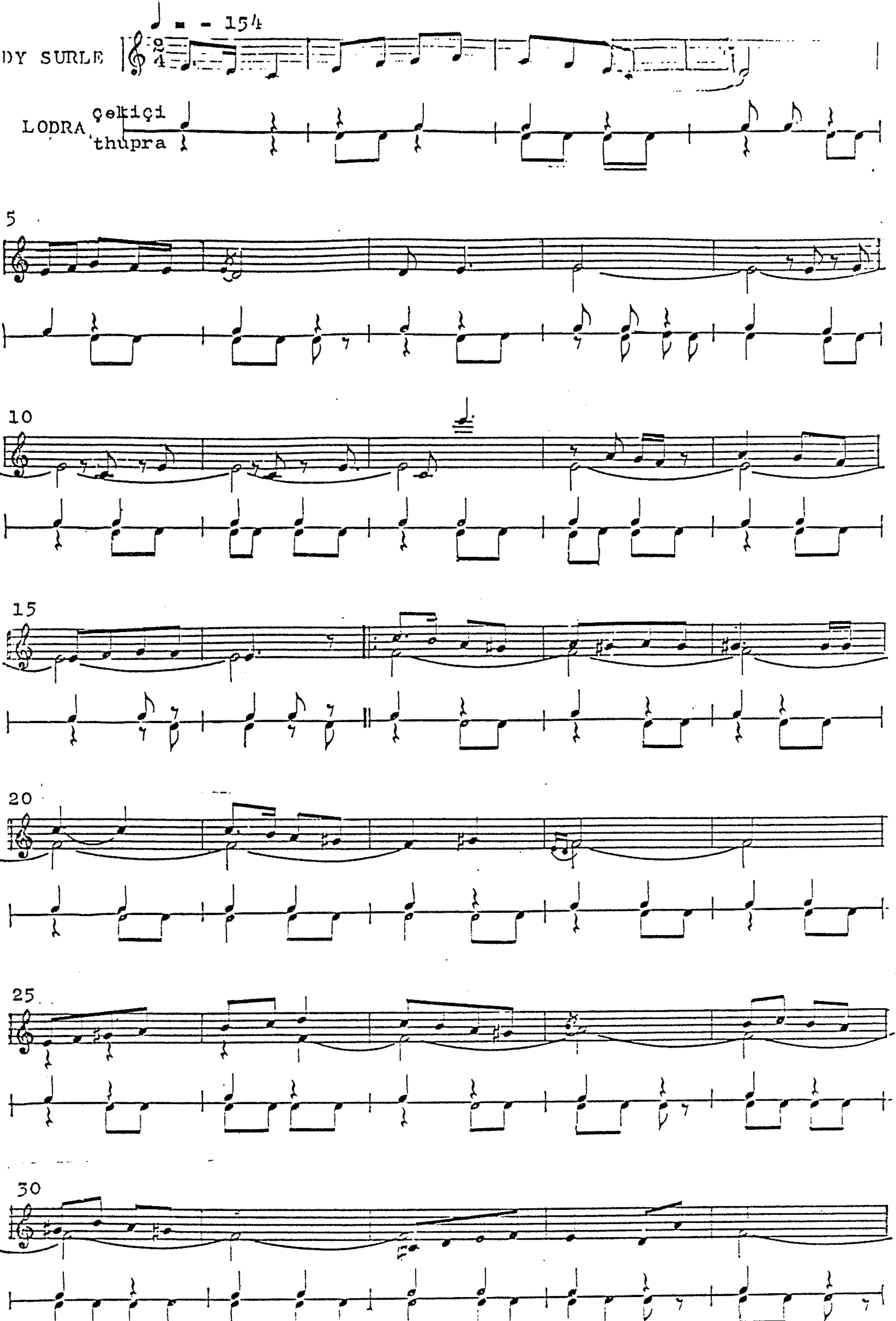
Third Dance (Vallja e Tretë)


30

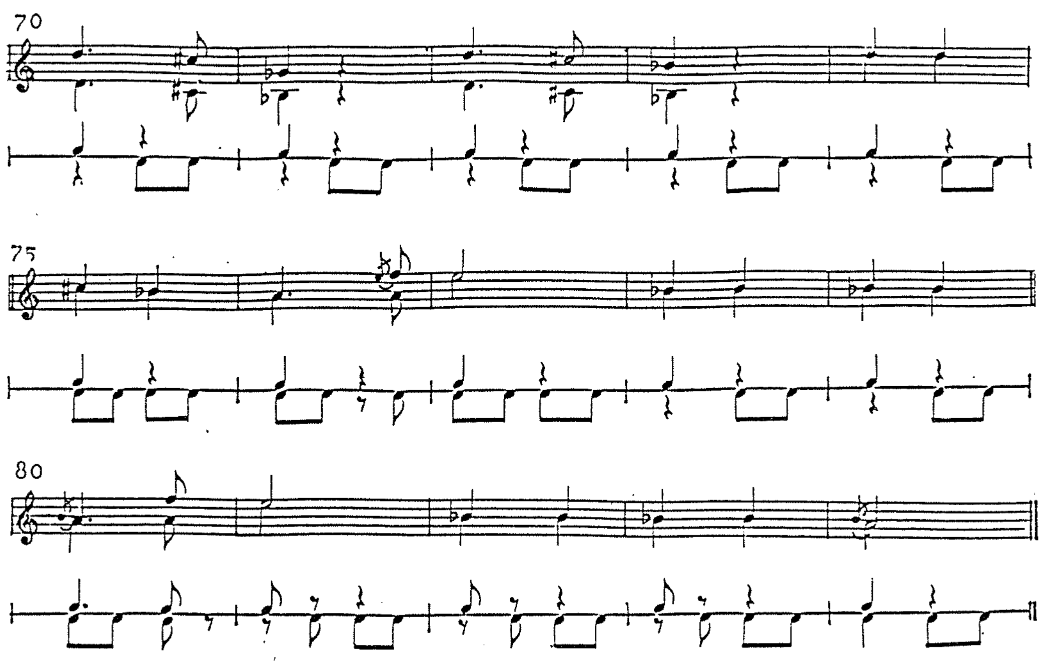
Fourth Dance (<u>Vallja e Katërt</u>) p.1

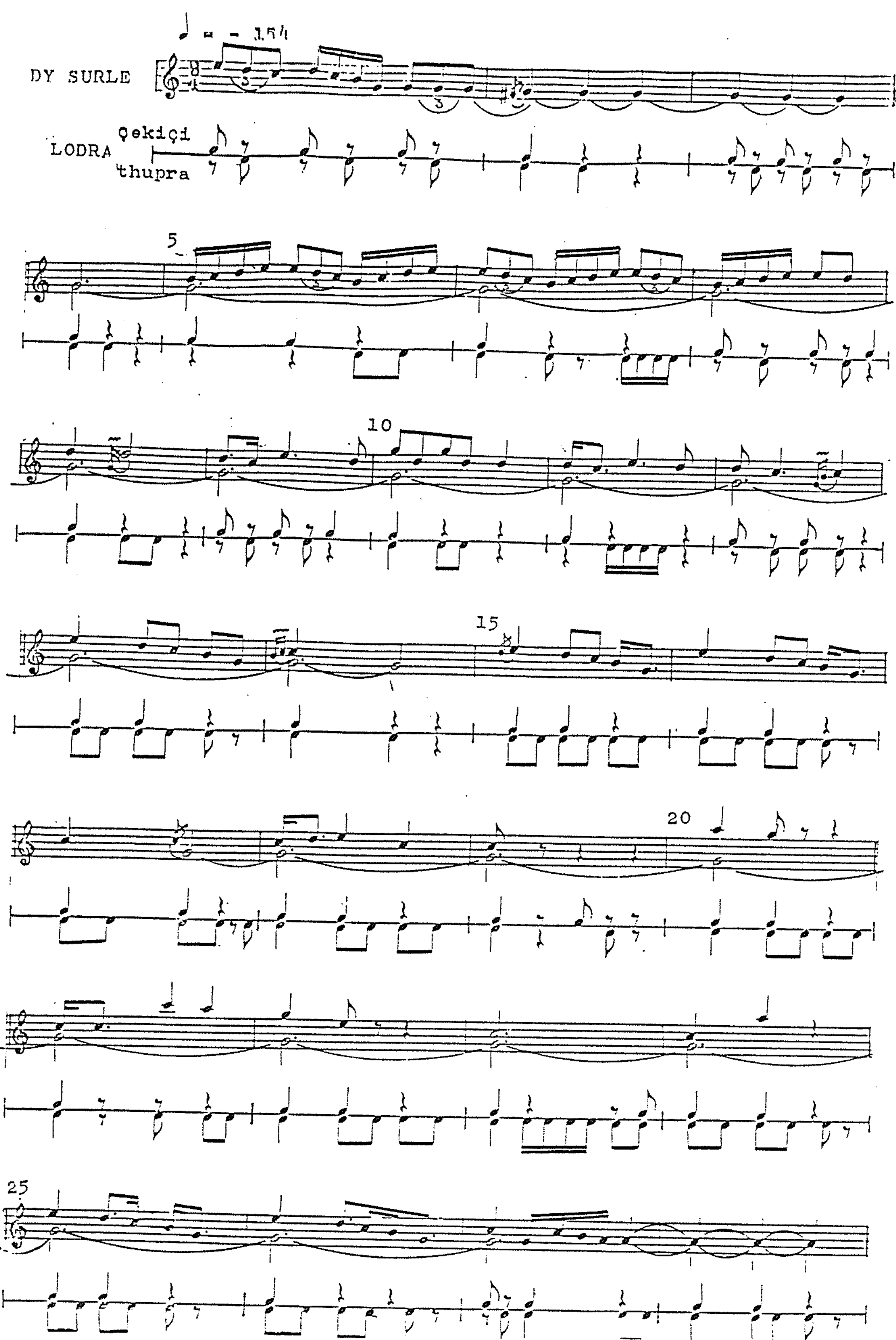

30

Fifth Dance (Vallja e Pestë)



35
40
45
50
55
60
65


70
75
80


♩ = 154
DY SURLE
LODRA
Çekiçi
thupra
5
10
15
20
25

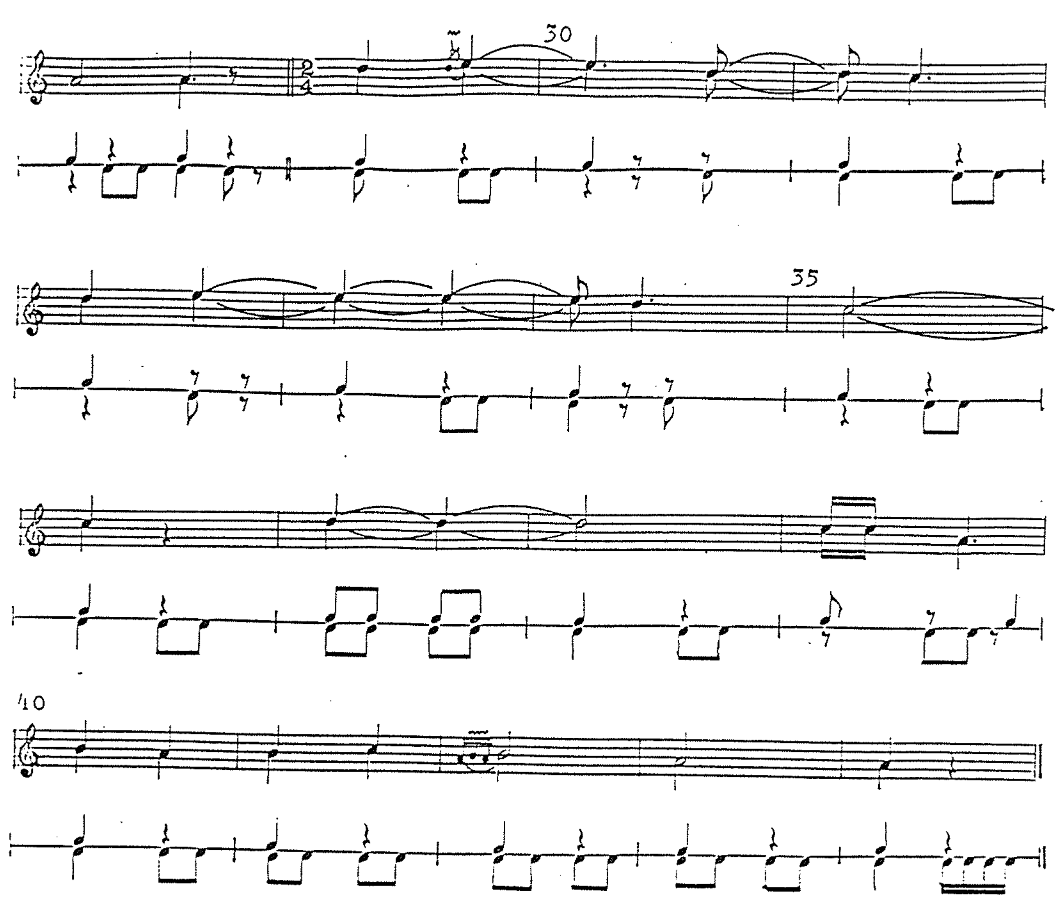
30
35
40
45

Seventh Dance (Vallja e Shtatë) p.1

30
35

♪ = + 154
DY SURLE
LODRA Çekiçi
thupra
5
10
15
20

♩ = - 154
DY SURLE
LODRA
Çekiçi
thupra
5
10
15
20
25


30
35
40

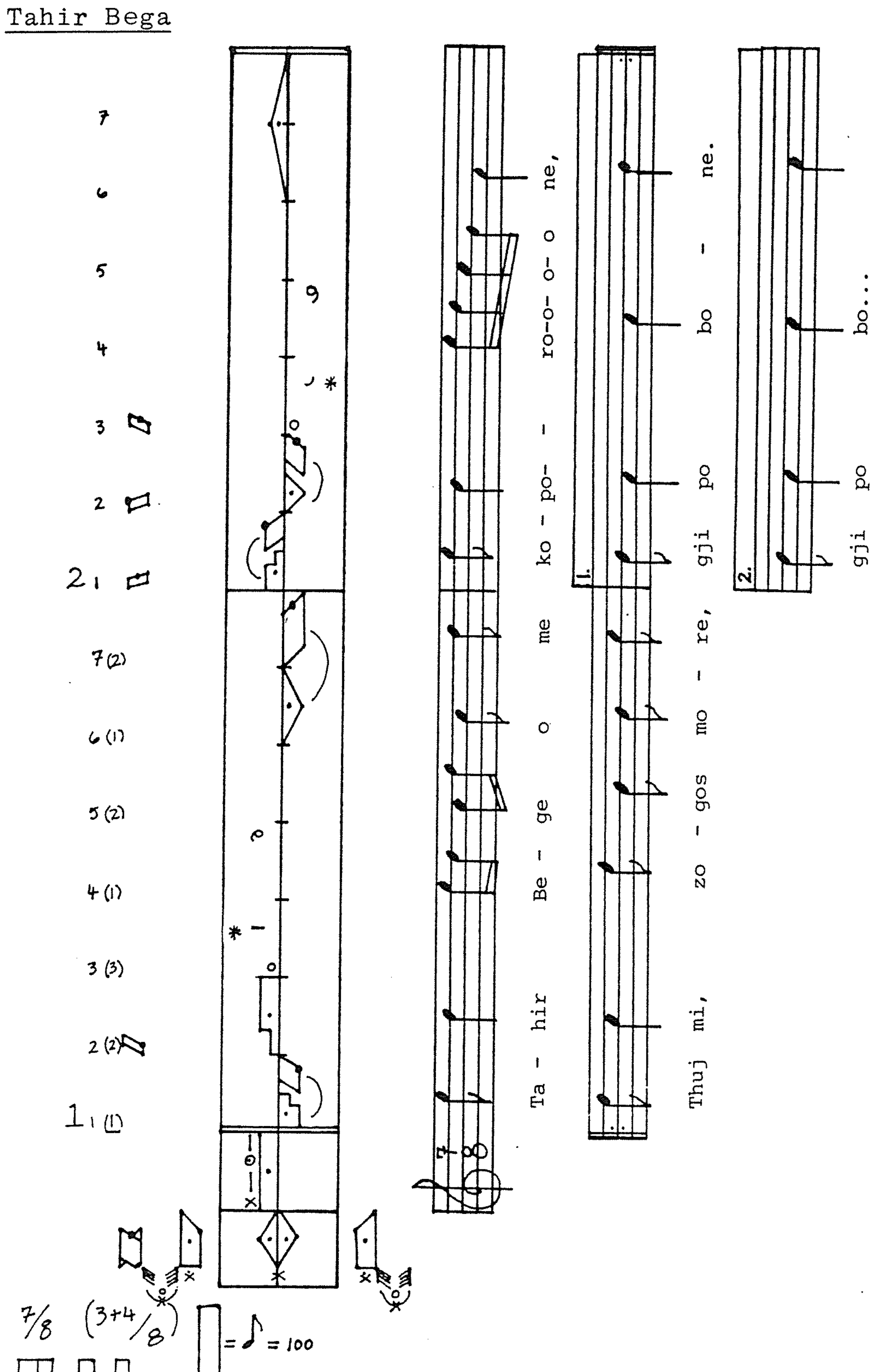
♪= + 154
DY SURLE
LODRA
çokiçi
thupra
5
10
20

25
30
35
40
45
50

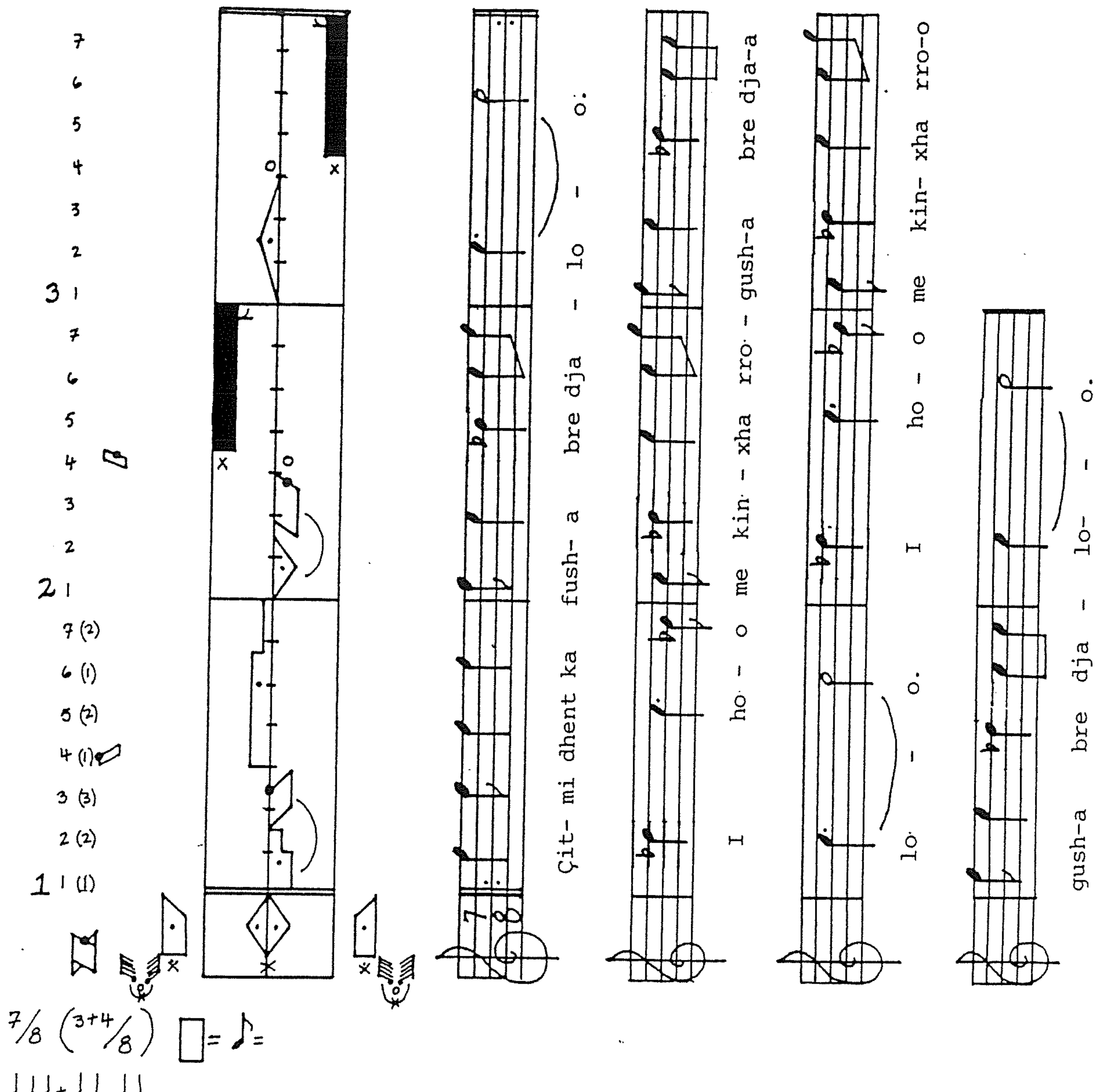
55

♪ ≈ + 154
DY SURLE
LODRA
Çekiçi
thupra
5
10
15
20
25

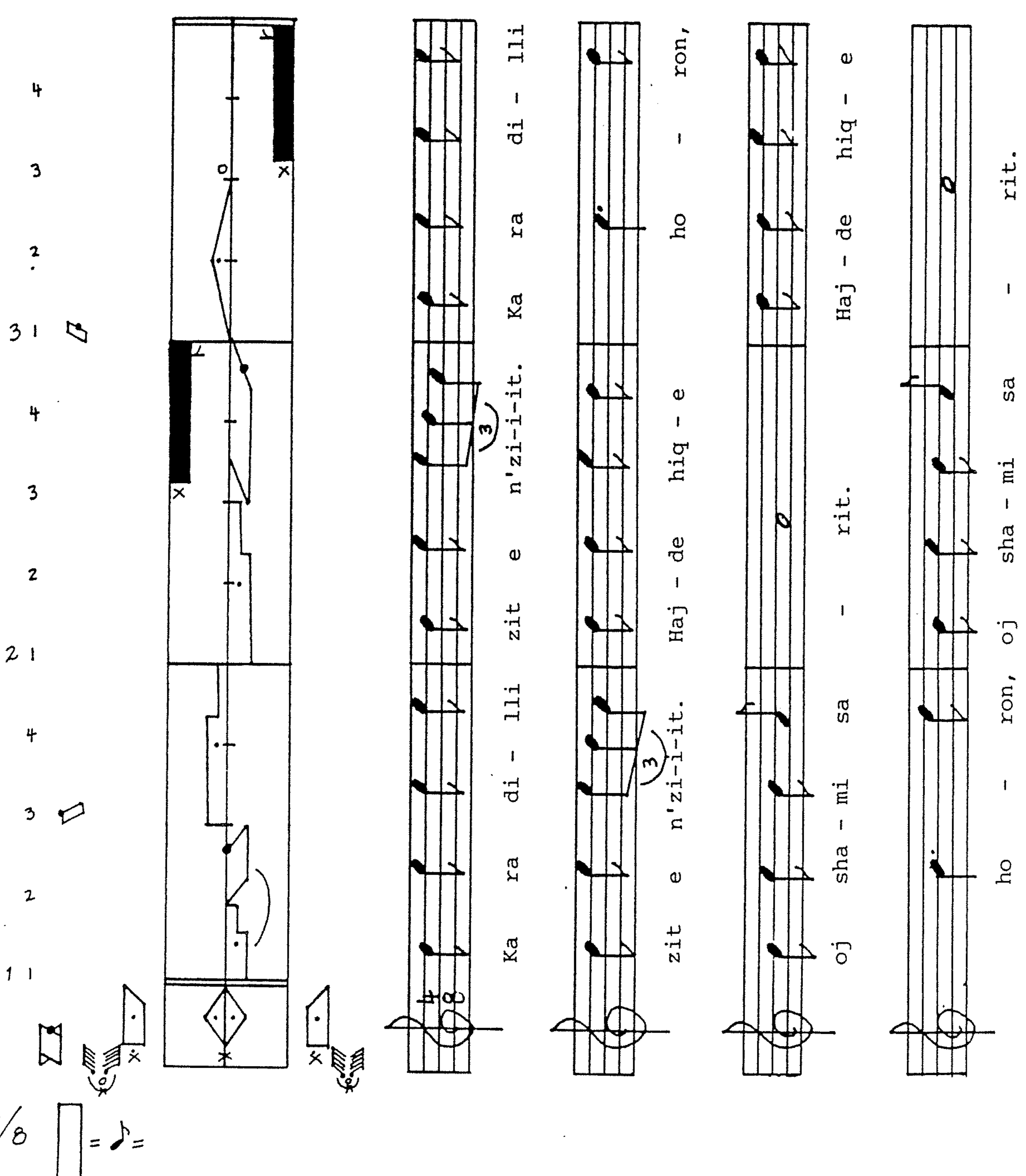
Tahir Bega



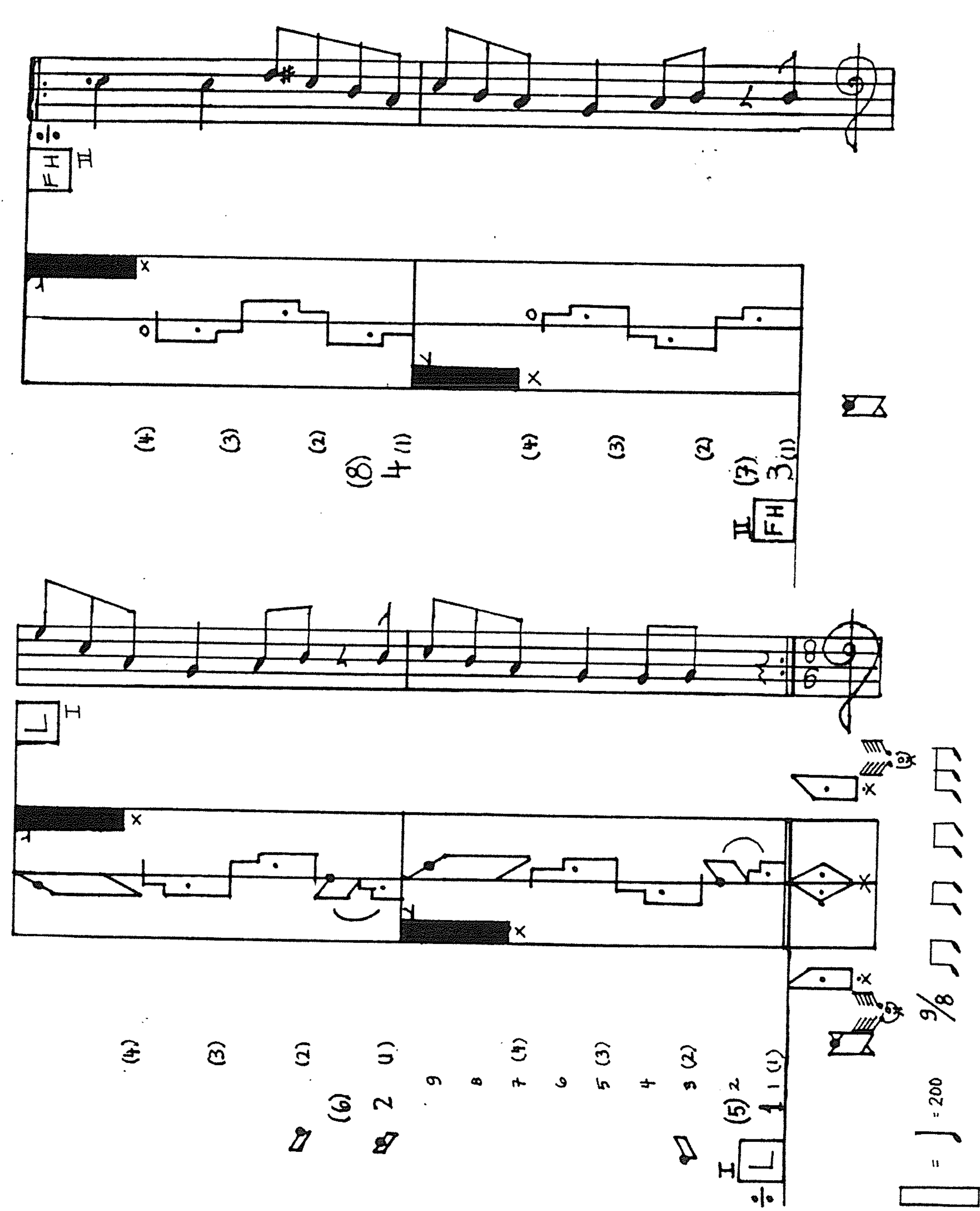
<u>Çitmi Dhent Ka Fusha Bre Djalo</u>



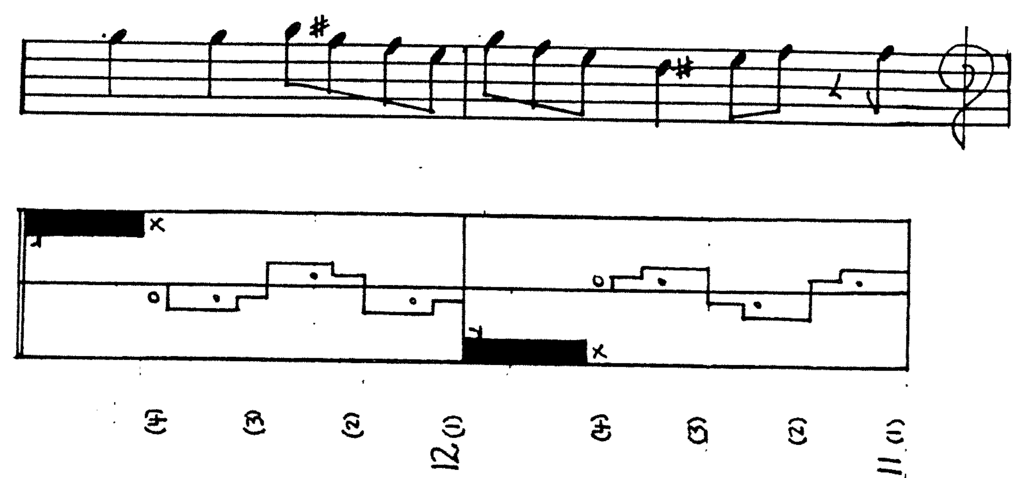
Ka Ra Dilli

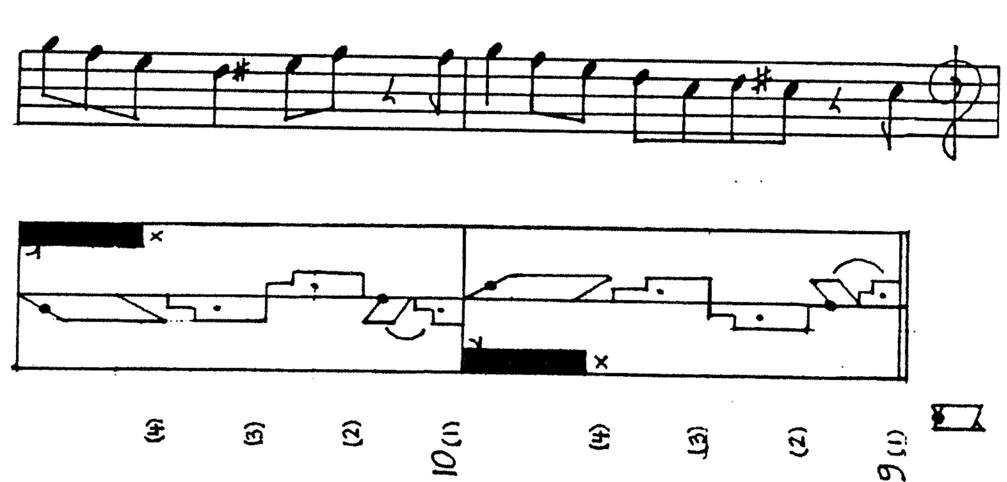


More Guri i Gjevahirit

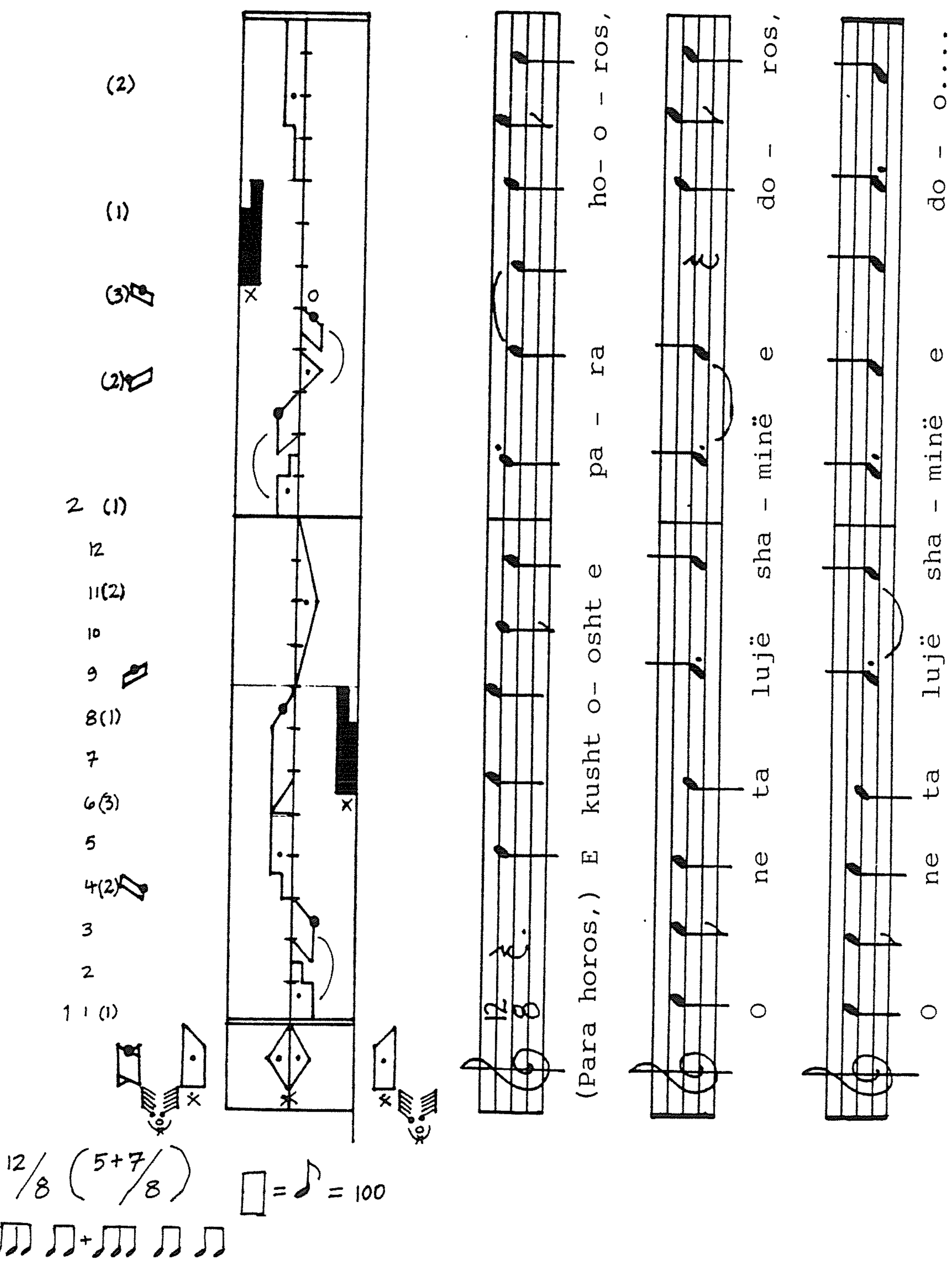


More Guri i Gjevahirit p.2





E Para Horos



SONG TEXTS

Tahir Bega

Tahir Bega o me koporane,
Thuj mi, zogos mori gji po bone.*

Thuj mi zogos mori gji po bone,
Jam tuj kepe e ni gjemadane.

Jam tuj kepe e ni gjemadane,
Jam tuj vuj o sumlla rrogjone.

Tahir Bega, oh with your handsome jacket,
Tell me, my bird, what you are doing.

Tell me my bird what you are doing,
I am sewing a vest.

I am sewing a vest,
And putting on buttons of cowhorn.

*The second line of each stanza is repeated twice.

Çitmi Dhent

Çitmi dhent ka fusha bre djalo.*
I ho, me kinxha rogusha bre djalo.

Çitmi dhent ka bjeshka bre djalo.
I ho, me kinxha ka lesha bre djalo.

Çitmi dhent ka vija bre djalo.
I ho, me ke hup shamija bre djalo.

Let your sheep graze upon the pasture, lad,
I ho, with the lambs, lad.

Let your sheep out upon the hillside, lad,
I ho, with the wooley lams, lad.

Let your sheep out along the streambed, lad,
I ho, you have lost your kerchief, lad.

*Each line is repeated twice.

Ka Ra Dilli

Ka ra dilli zit e n´zit,*
Hajde hiqe horon, oj shami sarit.

Ne ne ne, of aman aman, } Chorus
E ori Sevda, e Sevdaja jone.

Ka ra dilli gardhe e n´gardhe,
Hajde hiqe horen, ori bofqe bardhe.

(Chorus)

Ka ra dilli molle e n´molle,
Hajde hiqe horen, ori vetull holle.

(Chorus)

The sunlight fell upon the wall,
Come join the dance, oh beauty, oh colored scarf.

Ne ne ne, of aman aman, } Chorus
Oh Sevda, oh our Sevda.

The sunlight fell upon the fence,
Come join the dance, oh beauty, oh white apron.

(Chorus)

The sunlight fell upon the apples,
Come join the dance, oh beauty, oh fine eyebrows.

(Chorus)

The sunlight fell upon the flowers,
Come join the dance, oh beauty, oh red apron.

(Chorus)

*The first line of each stanza is repeated twice.

E Para Horos

Para horos,
E, kush eshte ajo e para horos,
O, ne ta luje shamine e doros,
O, ne ta luje shamine e do....

O e para horos,
E, kush eshte ajo e para horos,
O, ne ta heke vallon kadalos,
O, ne ta heke vallon kada....

To ta heke,
Edhe une vallon to ta heke,
More luj mi komot ma shpejt e shpejt-e,
More luj mi komot ma shpejt e shpe....

The first dancer,
And who is the first dancer,
Let her wave the handkerchief she is holding.

The first, dancer,
And who is the first dancer,
Let her lead the dance gracefully.

To lead,
And I will lead the dance,
Oh let my feet be agile.

WOMEN'S SONG MELODIES

Melody A

Melody B

Melody C

Melody D

Melody E

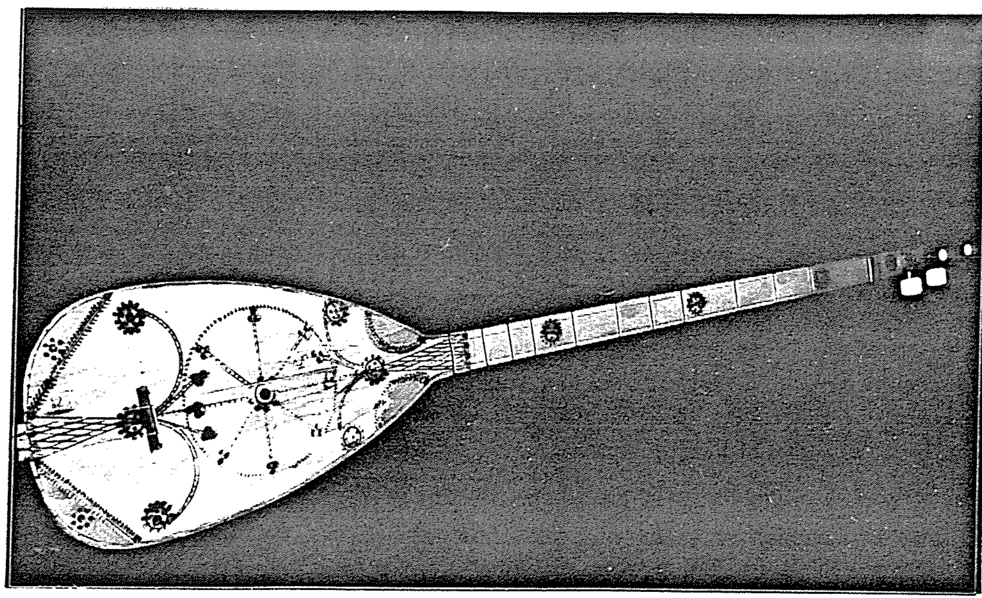
ILLUSTRATIONS

(Photographs by Janet Reineck)

Zagreb 1981

<u>Shota</u> performed in indigenous Opoja dress
by dancers from Zhur

Figure 12.



Prishtina 1982

Ciftelia

Obiliq 1982

Indoor Wedding Entertainment

Figure 13.

Lodraxhiut (The Drummers)

Prizren 1983

Shajna 1983

Cyrlaxhiut (The Cyrla Players)

Figure 14.

Dance Spectators at the <u>Tonda</u>

Bellobrad 1983

Bellobrad 1983

Men's Dancing in Opoja

Figure 15.

Bellobrad 1983

Prizren 1983

Opoja Men's Dancing

Figure 16.

Bellobrad 1982

Kcim Dysh (Dance for Two)

Bellobrad 1983

Valle (Open Circle Dance)

Figure 17.

Shajna 1983

Bellobrad 1983

Kcim në Rreth i Mbyllur Veç e Veç
(Circle Dance Single File)

Figure 18.

NOTES

NOTES

1. The first entry of each place name within Kosovo is given in the Albanian, definite form, followed by the Serbian form in parenthesis. Thereafter, place names within Kosovo are given in their Albanian form.

2. As there is no final consensus among Kosovo scholars on the exact delineation of Kosovo's ethnographic regions, the boundaries shown here are at best a rough approximation of what are, in reality, very subtle divisions. This map, based upon an article by Mark Krasniqi (1976), is included to give the reader a general understanding of the relative position of these regions.

3. To the author's knowledge, this map represents the first attempt at making an approximation of the delineation between Kosovo's dance zones. The gradual changes and divisions between one zone and another are very subtle and will require extensive fieldwork to arrive at a more conclusive analysis. The map is given in its present form as a general indication to the reader.

4. There are twenty villages in Opoja proper. Zhur lies at the foot of the Sharr mountains, and though it is not a geographical part of Opoja proper, shares with it a full range of cultural characteristics including dance and music.

5. In quotations and song texts, the Opoja dialect of Albanian has been preserved (see Appendix I: 3. The Opoja Dialect).

6. The Serbo-Croatian form is <u>barjaktar</u>.

7. Kaeppler calls the smallest movement unit the _kineme_ (Martin and Pesovar's _kinetic element_) describing it in this way:

> Kinemes are units treated as comparable to phonemes; that is, they are elements selected from all possible human movements and positions and are recognised as significant by the people of a given dance tradition. Kinemes are those actions and positions which, although having no meaning in themselves, are the basic units from which all dance of a given tradition is built.... The first task is to locate the basic movement units and define the range of permissible variation within these units (Kaeppler 1972:174).

These smallest units are "largely unconscious as separate entities to the people who perform them" (:185).

8. To avoid confusion with Roman numerals used in the Labanotation to denote Variations, the letter "I" has not been used to designate a Motif.

9. This terminology is derived from Hutchinson's usage (1977).

10. It is thought that the Albanian war dances (_Valle Luftarake_) evolved in northern Albania and in Kosovo as a demonstration of skill performed by warriors gathered in anticipation of battle, and as a re-enactment of important movments during battle. Through time these improvised pantomime gestures became more and more stylised and dance-like, while maintainimg their essentially epic character. Today in Kosovo this epic motif appears among Albanians in two basic forms: as an improvised solo or duet, and as a set sequence performance by several dancers on a counter clockwise path. _Kellçoja_, Opoja's version of _Valle Luftarake_, is in the second category.

11. Each year in Yugoslavia folklore festivals are organized on the local, regional and national levels. Screening committees from cultural centers choose groups to represent their indigenous artistic traditions. Some festivals have stimulated the transposition of these traditions into arranged versions removed from their original forms. In Kosovo, organizers of the annual Gllogovac festival of music and dance insist that the artists perform as they would during a festive event in the village. Consequently, this festival presents a wealth of relatively unadulterated artistic forms and, most importantly, the villages are encouraged to maintain traditions of the past.

12. The cultural-artistic amateur associations are youth organizations with sections of drama, music and dance. While some of these groups are sponsored by the university or workers' councils, most emanate from a village or cluster of villages and practice their unique local artistic repertoire.

13. A typical discussion of the subject:

Question: "Do the girls attempt to sing in one voice?"

Answer: "The voices differ. They sing the way they want. Some have a higher voice and some lower... they sing the way that suits them. However it's easier" (Shefiku, D. 1983).

REFERENCES

REFERENCES CITED

Agolli, Nexhat
1964 Valle të Krahines së Lumës [Dances of the Luma Region]. Tirane: Instituti i Folklorit.

Antoni, Lorenc
1958 "Kalagjojne," Glasnik Muzeja Kosova i Metohije [Journal of the Museum of Kosovo and Metohija] (Prishtina) 3:245-267.

Backer, Berit
1979 Behind the Stone Walls: Changing Household Organization Among the Albanians in Yugoslavia. Master's Thesis (Social Anthropology), University of Oslo.

Berisha, Xhemali
1982 Fieldnotes. Buqe village, Opoja, 20-25 July.

1984 "Folklori Koreografik i Meshkujve në Opoja" [Men's Choreographic Folklore in Opoja], Bota e Re [The New World] (Prishtina 25 May):6.

Bogdani, Ramazan
1977 Folklori Koreografik i Hasit [Dance Folklore of Has]. Tirane: Instituti i Folklorit.

Bogdani, Ramazan and Agron Xhagolli
1980 "Kërkime Folklorike në Rugovë e në Opoja" [Folklore Research in Rugovo and Opoja], Kultura Popullore [Popular Culture] (Tiranë):219-228.

Coon, C.S.
1950 The Mountain of Giants: A racial study of the North Albanian Mountain Gheg. Papers of the American Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, 23(3). Cambridge, Massachusetts: Peabody Museum.

Dunin, Elsie Ivancich
1973 "Čoček as a Ritual among Gypsy Women." Makedonski Folklor, [Macedonian Folklore] (Skopje) 6(12):193-98.

Ekonomska Politika
1973 Kosovo - Dikur e Sot [Kosovo - In the Past and Present]. Beograd.

Geertz, Clifford

1973 The Interpretation of Cultures. New York: Basic Books.

Gjeçovi, Shtjefen (editor)
1933 Kanuni i Lekë Dukagjinit [The Canon of Leke Dukagjin]. Shkoder: Gjeçov.

Halimi, Kadri
1971 "Vendi i lojës së Rugovës në vallet luftarake shqiptare" [The place of the dance of Rugova among Albanian war dances]. Përparimi [Progress] (Prishtina)17(5):425-437.

Hasluck, Margaret
1954 The Unwritten Law in Albania. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hutchinson, Ann
1977 Labanotation or Kinetography Laban: The System of Analyzing and Recording Movement: Third edition. New York:Theatre Arts Books.

Mustafa, Myzafere and Enver Mehmeti (editors)
1982 Këngë të Ndryshme Popullore [Collected Folk Songs]. Prishtina: Rilindja.

Ivančan, Ivan
1964-65 "Geografska Podjela Narodnih Plesov u Jugoslaviji" [The Geographic Distribution of Folk Dances in Yugoslavia], Narodna Umjetnost [Folk Art] (Zagreb)3:17-38.

1976 "Folk Dances in Various Regions of Yugoslavia," Folk Arts of Yugoslavia (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Tamburitzans Institute of Folk Arts):230-37.

Janković, Ljubica
1936 "Narodne Igre na Kosovu" [Folkdances in Kosovo], Glasnik Etnografskog Muzea (Beograd)11:1-16.

1936 "Narodne igre u Prizrenu i okolini" [Folk Dances in Prizren and Environs], Srpski Književnih Glasnik [Serbian Literary Journal (Beograd):209-216.

Janković, Ljubica and Danica
1962 "Serbian Folkdance Tradition in Prizren," Ethnomusicology (Ann Arbor, Michigan)6(2):115-125.

1964 Narodne Igre [Folkdances]. Beograd: Srpska Akademia Nauka (8):184.

Kaeppler, Adrienne L.
1972 "Method and Theory in Analyzing Dance Structure with an Analysis of Tongan Dance," Ethnomusicology (Ann Arbor, Michigan)16(2):173-117.

Kahn, Margaret
1980 Children of the Jinn. USA: Wideview Books.

Kealiinohomoku, Joann
1974 "Dance Culture as a Microcosm of Holistic Culture," in Tamara Comstock (editor), New Dimensions in Dance Research: The American Indian. CORD Research Annual (New York: Committee on Research in Dance)6:99-106.

Kici, Gasper
1978 Albanian-English Dictionary. Italy: [no publisher listed].

Krasniqi, Mark
1976 "Regjionet Etnografike të Kosovë" [Ethnographic Zones of Kosovo], Gjurmime Albanologjik (Prishtinë)6:7-16.

Martin, Gyorgy and Erno Pesovar
1961 "A Structural Analysis of Hungarian Folk Dance," Acta Ethnografica Academiae Scientiarum Hungariaciae [Ethnographic Papers of the Hungarian Academy of Science] (Budapest)10(1-2):1-40.

Mead, Margaret
1970 Culture and Commitment. Garden City, New York: Doubleday - Anchor Press.

Newmark, Hubbard, Prifti
1982 Standard Albanian - A Reference Grammar for Students. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.

Pllana, Shefqet
1975 "Albanishe Mannertanze aus Zur" [Albanian Men's Dances from Zhur], Publikationen zu Wissenschaflichen Filmen: Sektion Etnologie [Publication of Scientific Films: Ethnology Section] (Gottingen) 10 (A film pamphlet).

Rajkovic, Zorica
1976 "Folk Customs--A Survey," Folk Arts of Yugoslavia (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Tamburitzans Institute of Folk Arts).

Regional Bureau of Statistics
1982 Prishtina Census.

Reineck, Janet
1982 Fieldnotes. Zhur village, Opoja, 19-21 June.

1983a Fieldnotes. Bellobrad village, Opoja, 7-9 January.

1983b Fieldnotes. Shajna village, Opoja, 13-15 March.

1983c Fieldnotes. Zhur village, Opoja, 10-12 May.

1983d Fieldnotes. Bellobrad village, Opoja, 5-8 June.

1983e Fieldnotes. Shajna village, Opoja, 13-16 August.

Rihtman-Augustin, Dunja
1976 "Transition of Folk Culture in Yugoslavia," Folk Arts of Yugoslavia. (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Tamburitzans Institute of Folk Arts).

Royce, Anya Peterson
1977 Anthropology of Dance. Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press.

Sheholli, Bahtir
1973 "Svadbene Pesme, Igre i Običaji kod Albanaca Muslimana na Kosovu" [Wedding Songs, Dances and Customs among Moslem Albanians in Kosovo]. Beograd Music Academy (a pro-seminar study).

Singer, Alice
1974 "The Metrical Structure of Macedonian Dance." Ethnomusicology (Ann Arbor, Michigan)18(3):379-304.

Snyder, Allegra Fuller
1974 "The Dance Symbol," in Tamara Comstock (editor), New Dimensions in Dance Research: The American Indian. CORD Research Annual (New York: Committee on Research in Dance) 6:213-224.

1978 "Levels of Event Patterns: An Attempt to Place Dance in a Wholistic Context" (research paper). (Presented at the joint American Dance Guild/Congress on Research in Dance Conference at University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii, August.)

Sokoli, Ramadan
1971 Vallet dhe Muzika e tė Pareve Tane [Our Ancient Dance and Music]. Tiranė: Shtepia Qendrore e Krijimtarisė Popullore.

Younger, Susan
1976 "Method and Theory in Dance Research: An Anthropological Approach," in Bruno Nettl (editor), 1975 Yearbook of the International Folk Music Council (Kingston, Ontario, Canada)7:116-133.

Zaimi, Nexhmie
1937 Daughter of the Eagle. New York: Ives Washburn, Inc.

INTERVIEWS BY JANET REINECK

Informants:

Ademaj, Selvinaze
1983 Taped interview. Prishtina, 27 January.

Ahmeti, Alemxhyze
1983 Taped interview, Shajna, Opoja, 13 March.

Ahmeti, Avdullah
1983 Taped interview, Shajna, Opoja, 13 March.

Ahmeti, Avni
1983 Taped interview, Shajna, Opoja, 13 August.

Ahmeti, Merxhon
1983 Taped interview, Shajna, Opoja, 14 March.

Bahtiju, Nafeja
1983 Taped interview, Prizren, 8 May.

Berisha, Mehmet
1982 Taped interview by Berisha, Xhemali, Buqe, Opoja, 21 July.

Berisha, Rafet
1982 Taped interview by Berisha, Xhemali, Buqe, Opoja, 21 July.

Berisha, Sultane
1983 Taped interview, Zhur, Prizren, 19 June.

Berisha, Xhemali
1982a Taped interview, Prishtina, 6 June.

1982b Taped interview, Prishtina, 27 August.

1982c Taped interview, Prishtina, 9 September.

1983 Taped interview, Prishtina, 22 February.

Dukagjin, Enver
1983 Informal conversation, Prizren, 16 July.

Hoxha, Besire
1983 Taped interview, Prishtina, 27 January.

Hulaj, Drita

1983 Informal conversation, Shajna, Opoja, 13 August.

Saliu, Avni
1982 Taped interview, Bellobrad, Opoja, 8 January.

Shabani, Hamdi
1982 Taped interview, Zhur, Prizren, 19 June.

Shefiku, Besa
1983 Taped interview, Bellobrad, Opoja, 7 January.

Shefiku, Drita
1983 Taped interview, Prishtina, 27 January.

Shefiku, Lule
1983 Taped interview, Prishtina, 27 January.

Shefiku, Sadri
1983 Taped interview, Bellobrad, Opoja, 8 January.

ADDITIONAL SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY ON ALBANIAN DANCE AND MUSIC

Agolli, Nexhat

1965 Valle Popullore [Folkdances]. Tiranë: Institut i Folklorit.

1967 "Vezhgime rreth valleve të karakterit luftarake" [Study concerning dances with a fighting character], Studime Filologjik [Philological Studies] (Tiranë) 2.

1973 "Nje Valle e Tipit me Shpate" [A Dance of the Type with a Sabre], Studime Filologjike [Philological Studies] (Tirane) (3)27.

Antoni, Lorenc

1965 "Osnovne Karakteristike Šiptarskog Muzičkog Folklora Kosova i Metohije" [The Fundamental Characteristics of Albanian Music Folklore of Kosovo and Metohija], Kongres Folklorista [Folklore Congress] (Prizren).

1971 "Albanska Muzika; Narodna," Muzička Enciklopedia (Zagreb: Yugoslavenski Leksikografski Zavod)1:27-31.

1972 "Çiftelia," Narodno Stvaralastvo--Folklor [Creative Works of the People]. (Beograd)11:823-30.

1972 "Elementet Polifonike nê Muzikën Popullore të Opojës" [Polyphonic Elements in the Folkmusic of Opoja], Gjurmime Albanologjike [Albanian Journal] (Prishtine: Instituti Albanologjik)2.

1972a "Trajtat Polifonike të Muzikës Popullore Vokale të Gegëve në Jugosllavi" [Polyphonic Forms of Vocal Music among the Ghegs of Yugoslavia], Gjurmime Albanologjike (Prishtinë: Instituti Albanologjik)2.

1977 Folklori Muzikor Shqiptar [Albanian Musical Folklore]. Prishtinë: Rilindja.

Berisha, Rrustem and Myzafere

1979 Këngë Dashurie I [Love Songs]. Prishtinë: Instituti Albanologjike.

Bogdani, Ramazan

1976 Të Njohim Vallet Tona Popullore [To Meet Our Folk Dances]. Tiranë: Shtepia Qendrore e Krijimtarisë Popullore.

1977 "Vallet Pantomimike si një Fushe e Rendësishme e Koreografisë Popullore dhe Funksioni i Tyre" [Pantomimic

Dances as an Important Area of Folk Choreography and Their Functions], Studime Filologjike [Philological Studies] (Tiranë: Akademia e Shkencave)2:119-131.

1978 Në Truallin e Vallës Popullore [In the Path of Folk Dances]. Tiranë: Shtepia Qendrore Krijimtarisë Popullore.

1978a Shpirti i Popullit ne Valle [Folk Spirit in Dances]. Tiranë: Shtëpia Botuese "Naim Frasheri."

1978b "Traditat e Folklorit Koreografik të Malesisë se Madhe" [Choreographic Folklore Traditions of Malsia e Madh], Studime Filologjik (Philological Studies) (Tiranë: Akademia e Shkencave)2:99-139.

Çetta, Anton
1974 Balada dhe Legjenda [Ballades and Legends]. Prishtinë: Instituti Albanologjik i Prishtinës.

1974a Këngë Kreshnike [Heroic Songs]. Prishtinë: Instituti Albanologjik.

Çetta, Anton and Anton Berisha
1980 Këngë Dasme I [Wedding Songs]. Prishtinë: Instituti Albanologjik.

Dietrich, Wolf
1981 "Local Styles in the Music of Tapan and Zurla in Southeastern Europe." Paper presented at the Seventh International Symposium of Balkan Folklore, Ohrid.

Fetiu, Sadri
1982 Ninulla [Lullabies]. Prishtinë: Instituti Albanologjik.

Halimi, Kadri
1957 "Folklor nga Opoja" [Folklore from Opoja], Jeta e Re (Prishtinë)9:407.

Institut i Folklorit
1965 Këngë Popullore Dashurie [Folksongs of Love]. Tiranë.

1966 250 Këngë Popullore Dasme [250 Wedding Folksongs]. Tiranë.

Janković, Danica
1937 "Svadbene Igre u Našem Narodu" [Wedding Dances among Our People], Proučanu Narodne Poezije [Folk Poetry Research]. (Beograd: Srpska Akademia Nauka i Umetnost):201-11.

Janković, Ljubica
1937 Narodne Igre [Folkdances]. Beograd: Srpska Akademia Nauka. 2:88,94-123,159-71.

1937 "Narodne Igre u Metohiji" [Folkdances in Metohija], Prilozi Proučavanju Narodne Poezije [Folk Poetry Research] (Beograd)4(1):119-122.

1969 "Paradoxes in the Living Creative Process of Dance Tradition," Ethnomusicology (Ann Arbor, Michigan) 8(1):124-128.

Janković, Danica and Ljubica
1952 Narodne Igre [Folkdances]. Beograd: Srpska Akademia Nauka 7(B):129-134.

1957 Prilog Proučavanju Ostataka Orskih Obrednih Igara u Jugoslaviji [Contribution to the Research of the Remnants of Festival Dances in Jugoslavia]. Beograd: Srpska Akademia Nauka.

Kruta, Benjamin
1980 "Veshtrim i Pergjithshëm i Polifonisë Shqiptare dhe Disa Çeshtje të Gjenezës së saj" [General Study of Albanian Polyphony and Some Cases of its Genesis], Kultura Popullore I [Folk Culture] (Tiranë).

Munisha, Rexhep
1979 Kendimi i Femrave të Podgurit [Women's Singing of Podgur]. Prishtine: Instituti Albanologjik.

1981 Les Chants Montagnards Chez les Albanais [Albanian Mountain Songs] Doctoral Dissertation (Music) University of Paris.

Pllana, Shefqet
1972 "Këngët e Martese nder Shqiptaret e Kosovës" [Albanian Wedding Songs of Kosovo], Glasnik Muzeja Kosova [Journal of the Museum of Kosovo] (Prishtinë)9:51-108.

1974 "Albanske Narodne Pesme i Igre Kosova" [Albanian Folksongs and Dances of Kosovo], Medunarodna Smotra Folklora [International Folk Festival] (Booklet for the annual festival in Zagreb).

Sheholli, Bahtir
[No date] "Neka Zapazanja o Izvornoj Narodnoj Muzičkoj i Koreografsko-Folklornoj Tradiciji Albanaca na Kosovu" [Some Attention to Folk Dance and Music Traditions in Kosova] (Unpublished manuscript).

Sokoli, Ramadan
1975 Folklori Muzikor Shqiptar--Organografia [Albanian Folkmusic--Instruments]. Tiranë: Shtepia Botuese e Librit Shkollor.

Traerup, Birthe

1974 "Albanian Singers in Kosovo," Studia Instrumentorum Musicae Popularis III [Studies of Popular Instrumental Music] (Stockholm: Musikhistoriska Museets Skrifter)5:1-21.

1975 "Folk Music in Prizrenska Gora, Jugoslavia," Musik og Forskning I [Music and Research] (Kobenhavn: Akademisk Forlag).

1977 "Wedding Musicians in Prizrenska Gora, Jugoslavia," Musik og Forskning III [Music and Research] (Kobenhavn: Akademisk Forlag):76-95.

Albanian (Gheg) Pronunciation in Kosovo and Serbo-Croatian Pronunciation

* Letters which have the same sound in English and in Serbo-Croatian

Albanian Letter	Albanian Example	English Approx.	English Example	Serbo-C. Approx.	Serbo-C. Example
a	dahire	a	father	a	Gnilane
b*					
c	cyrle	ts	hats	c	Lazarica
ç	çaush	ch	chin	č	čačak
d*					
dh	dhender	th	they	--	--
e	def	e	bell	e	Peć
ë	lëshutë	ur,u	turn/tuff	--	--
f*					
g	gishtë	g	glad	g	igre
gj	gjemadane	j	joint	dj (đ)	Djakovica
h*					
i	kcim	i	piece	i	Djakovica
j	jelek	y	yard	j	Janković
k*					
l	lëshutë	l	leap	--	--
ll	Bellobrad	l	hill	l	Kalač

m*					
n*					
o	horo	o	poke	o	polje
p*					
q	tirq	ch	chill	ć	Peć
r*					
rr	rrafsh	r	[trilled r]	--	--
s*					
sh	Sherianqe	sh	shop	š	Priština
t*					
th	thupra	th	thought	--	--
u	nusja	oo	moon	u	Čupurlika
v*					
x	nxenes	ds	heads	--	--
xh	hoxha	j	job	dz	dzamadan
y	dyte	u	[French] "tu"	--	--
z*					
zh	Zhur	z	azure	ž	Žikino

Spelling Standardizations

In order to render Albanian words more readable the "ë" ending has been avoided. Albanian place names and other nouns which end in "ë" in the indefinite form are rendered in the definite form, giving the word an "a" ending. For example, the city Pejë is given in the definite form, Peja, while a Moslem priest, hoxhë is given as hoxha.

The Opoja Dialect

In quotations and song texts, the Opoja form of the Gheg dialect has been preserved. The substitution of "o" or the nasalized "a" is one characteristic of the Opoja dialect. The following are some examples of this discrepancy which appear in the text:

Literary Albanian	Opoja Dialect	English Equivalent
një	nja	one
do t´	to t´	will
në Koritnik	no Koritnik	on Mt. Koritnik
nanën	nanon	mother
çka	gji	what

APPENDIX II: GLOSSARY

Glossary of Albanian Terms

Notes

Nouns: Except in proper nouns and compound expressions, each noun is given first in the indefinite form. The ending in parenthesis which will follow the last consonant of the base word is the definite form of the noun.

Verbs: In Albanian grammar, it is common practice to give the verb in the first person.

lit. = literal meaning

bajraktar(i)	flagbearer
besë(a)	pledge of honor
Çaush(i)	lit., corporal; the man chosen to organize the wedding procession
cyrle(a)	(indefinite plural: cyrla) (also zurna, zurla) - oboe-like double reed aerophone usually played by Gypsies to accompany men's dancing
dahirë(a)	(also daire, def) tambourine
def(i)	(indefinite plural: defe) tambourine
Dita e Grave	Women's Day; in Opoja, the Monday after the wedding when women from the groom's village gather to scrutinize the bride and her handwork
dorë për dorë	hand to hand
dhëndër	(dhëndri) bridegroom
fis(i)	tribe, clan

gajtan(i)	cord; black, cord-like ribbon made from the twisting together of threads, used as a decoration down the sides and at the top and bottom of the women's and men's woolen trousers and in various patterns on the women's vest
horë(a)	especially in Opoja, the term used to mean an open circle dance performed by women in a hand-hold traveling counter-clockwise
hoxhë(a)	Moslem priest
hyzmeqar(i)	servant, helper
jelek(u)	vest
kaçamak(u)	lit., corn gruel; a men's dance in which the preparation of corn gruel in pantomimed
Kajde e Grave	lit., women's tune; ninth dance in the men's sequence
Kara Isuf	lit., black Isuf; a men's open circle dance performed in southwest Kosovo
kcim(i)	unattached, improvised dance form performed by men and women throughout Kosovo
kcim dysh	(or dyesh) improvised, unattached dance performed in a duet
Kcim i Dhëndrit	The Groom's Dance; in Opoja, the dance event on the Monday morning following the wedding when, for the first time, the groom is obliged to dance
kcim njesh	solo improvised dance
këcej	I jump; I leap; I dance
Këllçoja	the sabre dance; the first dance in the Opoja men's sequence
këmishë(a)	chemise
kerri i nusës	the bride's car; the wagon or automobile in which the bride travels to the home of the groom
Komandanti	The Commander; a close relative of the groom's who directs all of the wedding events, delegates authority to the various assistants, and in general is responsible for the organization and success of the wedding

konak(u)	large room; room in one of the homes of the groom's neighbors where men gather to have meals and to sleep during the wedding
krah për krah	shoulder to shoulder
krushk(u)	friends of the groom's who go to fetch the bride
Krushku i Parë	The First Guest; the leader of the wedding procession
kurbetçi	(also gyrbetçi) - in popular usage, a person who works away from home, usually in another part of Yugoslavia or outside of the country
kurt(i)	courtyard outside the home enclosed within high walls, where many of the wedding activities, including dance and singging events take place
lëshutë	free; unattached
lodër(lodra)	double-headed large drum played in duets with two shawms (cyrle) to accompany men's dancing
lojë(a)	play; game; dance
luaj	I play; I dance
mik(u)	lit., friend; groom's male in-law
muhabet(i)	conversation
musllukqi	scouts sent ahead to secure the way for the wedding party
nderim(i)	respect; honor
nibet(i)	improvised tune played on the shawm (cyrla) as men's indoor entertainment, without drum accompaniment
nuse(ja)	bride
oborr(i)	yard; garden; courtyard
odë(a) e burrave	men's sitting room
opingë(a)	moccasin
pehlivan(i)	wrestler
qekiç(i)	lit., hammer; large, heavy drum stick

rrafsh	flat, smooth
sherbet(i)	sugar-water or juice served to guests
Sherianqe	The City Dance
Shota	male-female duet dance based on the kcim motifs ornamented with flirtateous, pantomimic gestures
tirq(i)	men's wool flannel trousers
tondë(a)	in Opoja, the outdoor area set aside for dancing; also called the loma (threshing floor), bashqe (garden), or vend për lodrat (place for the drums)
thupër(thupra)	lit., switch; thin drum stick
valle(vallja)	lit., dance; usually open circle dance traveling counter-clockwise in which the dancers are attached by a hand hold
vallezoj	I dance
Valltari i Parë	The First Dancer; the dance leader
Zot(i) i Dasmës	The Wedding Master; usually the groom's father or head of the groom's household if other than father

APPENDIX III: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX II: RESEARCH QUESTIONNARE

Analysis of the Dance Event: Checklist for Interviews

This survey was compiled over an eight-month period from informal conversations, observations and literature. The set of questions was then used as a back-up or checklist after an interview to see whether or not major points had been covered in the course of conversation. In no instances were informants asked the questions directly as they appear below. Rather, each person was encouraged to suggest his or her own groundwork for describing and analyzing the dance event.

When

During what stages of the wedding process do dance events regularly occur?

Are the dances an essential or peripheral aspect of this part of the wedding?

How long does the dance event tend to last?

What determines the length of the event?

Pick a typical circumstance during which dancing would occur.

Where?

Give a general description of the dance space.

Where are the dancers, musicians, spectators in relation to each other?

How may the size or shape of the space affect the manner of dancing or the repertoire of dances?

What formation do the dancers make?

Along what path are they moving?

Who?

Who participates in the dancing (e.g. everyone, only the more experienced dancers, children...)?

How many people tend to participate?

Do the same people always dance, or does this vary depending upon their particular roles during a given wedding event?

If not everyone dances at the same time, how is it determined who will dance first (e.g. the first to arrive, the host, the guest . . .)?

Who tends to instigate the dancing (e.g. the head of the household, the most energetic dancer, the most experienced dancer, the musicians . . .)?

Is there clearly a leader in the dancing?

Why is he/she the leader?

How may he/she affect the manner of dancing (e.g. the speed, length of the dance, dance repertoire . . .)?

How is it communicated who is to lead?

Judging the Dancer

What makes a "good" dancer? What are the desired qualities in a dance (e.g. originality, exactness, strength, grace, concentration...)?

How is approval shown for the dance (e.g. by the other dancers, by the audience, during or after the dance, by being asked often to dance, by being asked often to weddings . . .)?

How much does interpretation vary from dancer to dancer?

The Learning Process

When does a person begin to learn to dance?

How might he/she learn (e.g. following behind the other dancers, watching passively and practicing later with friends, including him/herself among the dancers, if so, where in relation to the more experienced dancers . . .)?

Are there various and distinct stages in the learning process (e.g.

watching, practicing, participating . . .)?

What kind of encouragement does the beginner receive during the learning process (e.g. the assimilation of body posture, style, step patterns, dance formulas or complete dance sequences...)?

How much of the learning is deliberate, conscious, and how much is a matter of unconscious assimilation?

At what age does a dancer tend to be at his prime?

Change

Do you have any idea how old these dances might be?

Do you believe that the dance event has changed significantly since its early origins? within your lifetime? since 1920? since 1950? since 1970?

If there were definite periods of change, when were these periods?

What were possible reasons for these changes (e.g. emigration, immigration, the going and coming of guest workers, improved communication with other villages and cities, the use of alcoholic beverages . . .)?

Have there been any significant changes in the dancing itself (e.g. in tempo, style, body carriage, step patterns, formation . . .)?

In the music (e.g. in the melodies, instrumentation, quality of musicianship, the source of musicians . . .)?

Who has been most affected by change (e.g. younger dancers, older dancers, musicians . . .)?

Are changes more likely to occur between one generation and the next or in one dancer over an extended period of time?

Who tend to be the most active initiators of change?

How do they affect these changes (e.g. by actively introducing new elements during the course of the dance, by separating off from the other dancers . . .)?

How much interest is there in preserving the dance event in its present form?

Who tends to be most insistent about warding off change, if anyone (e.g. the older generation, the more religious members of the community, the guest workers who return home for short intervals each year, the younger generation involved in amateur cultural groups)?

What do you personally feel about changes occurring (if any) in the dance event?

Are there elements in the dance event which you feel are essential to the character/quality/purpose of the event which should not undergo change?

What changes might occur which would have little or no effect upon the essential character of the event?

Purpose

For whom does the dance event have the most significance?

Is the dance event purely a matter of enjoyment, entertainment, or does it serve a specific purpose for various people at the wedding (e.g. display of beauty/strength, character, masculinity/femininity, community solidarity . . .)?

Do the movements in the dances have (or did they have in the past) symbolic meaning?

The Dances

What are the names of the dances done during various parts of the wedding process?

Is there a fixed order to the repertoire?

What/who determines that order?

Describe a specific dance in terms of:

formation
handhold
meter
basic movement units and their correlation to rhythm
syntax of basic units
variations
individual stylistic variations

Description of stylistic characteristics:

General description of the use of the body parts in terms of:
- range of flexion and extension
- quality of movement (e.g. sustained/percussive)

Comparison

Compare the dance event of your village and
- a neighboring village
- a bordering ethnographic area

in terms of:
- music (performance style, melodies chosen, instrumentation)
- movement style
- the relative "significance" of the dance in the total wedding process
- the manner in which the dance event tends to be conducted
- the degree to which the dance event has changed over a given period of time.