



Contemporary Dangers in Researching the Field in the Republic of Srpska in Retrospect to the Yugoslav War in Bosnia and Herzegovina: An Experience from the Field in the Area of Kozara and Potkozarje

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Abstract

In May 2019, Nikola did his fieldwork in the Kozara-mountain and Potkozarje-area (northwestern Republic of Srpska/Bosnia and Herzegovina), researching the traditional folk dances, songs, music, and customs of the Serbian population. During his research, he noticed and was told that many dances and songs were influenced by the Serbian and Croatian population from Croatia (Slavonija- and Banija-region). After he tried to conduct further research on these influences, he was met with nationalistic and chauvinistic remarks against the Croatian and Muslim population in the area, and the Republic of Croatia in general, even though the Serbian population was discussed. The research on that day was nearly cancelled from the informants' end. This audio-exchange (including materials from the field) gives insights into the (political) mentality of the population after the Yugoslav wars and the dangers of conducting research in this area particularly concerning the three major ethnic groups.

Keywords: fieldwork, ethnochoreology, ethnology, Kozara and Potkozarje, Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Yugoslavia

In the year 2019, I initiated my ethnographic, ethnomusicological, and ethnochoreological fieldwork research in the region of Kozara (Козара) and Potkozarje (Поткозарје), as part of an assignment for the courses Ethnochoreology and Choreographic Composition during my undergraduate studies in Stage Folk Dance and Music (Сценска народна игра и музика) at the Belgrade Dance Institute—IUI (Институт за уметничку игру) in Serbia. In this regard, the aim of the assignment was not only to learn how to conduct fieldwork research, but more so to create a completely new artistic and choreographic piece for the stage based on the collected information after the fieldwork research was conducted.



Figure 1 *The Main Street in Prijedor, Beginning of the 20th Century, Archives of the Museum of Kozara in Prijedor, Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Several ethnically diverse people (Serbs, Muslims, and Croats) in the main street of Prijedor at the beginning of the 20th century.*

At first, my research focused solely on the Serbian population and their tangible and intangible cultural heritage in the area. However, I felt that it was important to also investigate the Muslim and Croatian populations to gain a better understanding of the socio-historical and socio-cultural context of this region. It is important to note the ethnic and religious constellation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in historical context. In contemporary Bosnia and Herzegovina, three main ethnicities exist: Serbs (Srbi/Срби), who practice the Serbian-Orthodoxy, Croats

(Hrvati/Хрвати) who are Roman Catholic, and Bosniaks (Bošnjaci/Бошњаци) who are (mostly Sunni) Muslims. The problematic history in the establishment of a newer ethnic group surrounds the contemporary "Bosniaks" which came about through the "Islamization" of Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the occupational rule of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans. The process of Islamization in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Serb.: Islamizacija/Исламизација), or often known by the term "Turkification" (Serbo-Croat.: Poturčivanje/Потурчивање), was the centuries long religious and identificatory conversion of Serbian-Orthodox Serbs into Muslims who would, at the same time, be forced to rename themselves with Turkish names and would adopt the Ottoman culture. Jovan Hadži Vasiljević writes in this context:

The Turkification of our world was two-fold from the beginning: violently and voluntarily, and, as will be seen later, it was carried out in masses and individually. Although we are interested here in the Muslims of our blood in Southern Serbia, who have preserved our national characteristics in the Islamic faith to this day: language, customs, etc., we will first briefly explain how the Turkification of our world was carried out violently and in large numbers. According to what the Turks did later, and throughout the entire period of their rule, it can be safely assumed that they started enslaving a lot of our main people from Kosovo [and Metohija] in 1389, right from the first invasion of our lands, with the first war. (Васиљевић, 1924, pp. 3–4, translated by Nikola Petrović).

This Islamization resulted in a new (national) identity of Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which led to the establishment of the ethnic group "Bosniaks," and was especially vivid during the war in the 1990s. This was followed by many other Muslims in the federal republics of former Yugoslavia, who shifted their national identity towards Bosnia and Herzegovina since it was the first Muslim-led state, meaning that Muslims from Serbia, North Macedonia, Montenegro, etc. would more

often ethnically identify as “Bosniaks.”¹ While conducting my research, I faced numerous challenges due to the tensions between these ethnic groups, which impeded my ability to collect comprehensive information on the topic of traditional folk dances, songs, music, customs, etc. in this particular region. As such, this paper is a reflection of my experiences in the field in this area. To maintain a politically neutral and objective stance towards all ethnic groups and to have a presentation free of prejudice of these ethnicities, I will refrain from extensively presenting the brutal history and the atrocities committed by any ethnic group in the region as each “participant, each witness to violence, brings his or her own perspective.” (Robben & Nordstrom, 1996, p. 5, as cited in Clark, 2012, p. 830). This approach also ensures that I avoid any emotional factors and bias that may arise from reading about specific negative events in history and politics, while also ensuring safe ethical treatment of the people in the field. This aspect is crucial to a neutral view on the ethnicities in this area, so that emotions do not conflict one’s ethical sense of mind and treatment of the people in the field. These challenges are also reflected by others who conducted their research in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Hronešová (2017) states in her article that any “student that has embarked upon fieldwork in Bosnia and Herzegovina has probably faced the question of how to reconcile the objectives of his or her research project and the expectations and needs of his or her respondents.” Therefore, only critical and tense situations during this fieldwork will be described and revisited to lay focus on the paper’s topic.

1. The term “Muslims” has been used for centuries to define the third ethnic entity, or more precisely ethnoreligious group, in the area of Bosnia and Herzegovina. To date, the population refers to themselves still as Muslims in the context of ethnic identity. On the other hand, the term “Bosniak” was established during and after the Yugoslav wars in the 1990s, therefore becoming a highly politicized and sensitive term, which was mostly used to separate the Muslim population in Bosnia and Herzegovina from the other Yugoslav Slavs in all republics and justify both a new national identity and the resulting committed acts during the Bosnian war. To date, this term remains disputable even in anthropological and ethnological academia. In the table, Mihić purposely used this term, as was the case in almost all statistics and censuses of the Yugoslav era and before. In this case, I will remain with the term “Muslims” and refrain from the use of “Bosniaks.”

One needs to know the history shortly before, while, and after the establishment of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (Социјалистичка Федеративна Република Југославија), also known as SFRY, as well as the geography of this area to understand the complicated contemporary situations that I encountered. The area of Kozara and Potkozarja is located in the northwest of the Republic of Srpska (Dinaric ethnochoreological zone, region of Bosanska Krajina) on the border with Croatia (Pannonian ethnochoreological zone, Banija region). In the context of ethnochoreology and ethnomusicology, ethnochoreological zones and areas describe a division of a territorial space by analyzing and differentiating various characteristics of tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the people that live in the region (traditional folk dances, songs, music, instruments, costumes, linguistics, etc.). The Croatian ethnochoreologist and ethnologist Ivan Ivančan (1927–2006) introduced the first division of such zones as “Dance Zones” (Serb.-Croat.: Plesne zone/Плесне зоне), later “Ethnochoreological Zones” (Serb.-Croat.: Etnokoreološke zone/Етнокорееолошке зоне), based on the territory of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. He classified them into the following zones: Alpine (Alpska zona), Pannonian (Panonska zona), Dinaric (Dinarska zona), Adriatic (Jadranska zona), Moravian (Moravska zona), and Vardar (Vardarska zona) (Ivančan, 1971). After the dissolvment of the SFRY and the establishment of independent states, researchers would classify their territories into “Ethnochoreological Areas” (Serb.: Etnokoreološke celine/Етнокорееолошке целине) while basing their division on the theory of Ivan Ivančan’s work (Zebec, 1996, p. 96). Administratively, this area belongs to the municipalities: Prijedor (Приједор), Novi Grad (Нови Град), Kozarska Dubica (Козарска Дубица), Gradiška (Градишка), Kostajnica (Костајница) and, partially, Banja Luka (Бања Лука) and Laktaši (Лакташи). While Kozara (the highest peak is Lisina at 978 m above sea level) refers to a mountain that is 70 km long and 20 to 30 km wide, Potkozarje refers to the area below the Kozara mountain. Kozara and Potkozarje are limited by the river valleys Sava (Сава), Una (Уна), Sana (Сана) and Vrbas (Врбас).



Figure 2: Map of the Area of Kozara and Potkozarje in the Northwestern Part of the Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Geographical map of Kozara and Potkozarje with major and minor localities. Note. From (<https://npkozara.com/polozaj/>, accessed: 26/01/2024), by Kozara National Park. Copyright 2022 by Kozara National Park.

In the area, the majority of the population is made up of Serbs, followed by a smaller number of Bosnian Muslims. Croats represent a smaller portion of the population. These statistics are similar to those recorded in the 1931 census:

Table 1 Number of Inhabitants in Kozara and Potkozarje, 1931.

NATIONALITIES	NUMBER OF INHABITANTS (%)
Serbs	137,719 (69.1%)
Muslims	32,613 (16.4%)
Croats	26,651 (13.4%)
Others	2,206 (1.1%)
Total	199,289 (100%)

Note. From “Kozara: priroda, čovjek, istorija” by Mihić, 1987, p. 316. Copyright 1987 by Dnevnik.

Before the formation of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, people of various nationalities connected with each other through work, shopping, and other aspects of daily life. However, a close association between these nationalities only started during the time of the SFRY from 1945–1991. Unfortunately, after the war in the 1990s, that association was almost destroyed, and to this day, as I have encountered during my fieldwork, people still try to avoid interacting with those of different ethnic or religious affiliations. Although there is less hatred between people, they still cannot live together. The war of the 1990s left behind post-traumatic stress and memories that people have not been able to forget or overcome. Many people lost their lives in this region during the Second World War, particularly Serbs, as well as during the war in the 1990s (Bašić, 1957; Milašinović 2023). The people of this region played a crucial role in the national liberation struggle of Yugoslavia, which earned them immense respect from the five other communities of the former SFRY and the international community (Mihić, 1987, p. 316). This respect was often exhibited by high-ranking officials such as Josip Broz Tito in their political speeches. The suffering endured by the inhabitants of this region has not gone unnoticed and their contributions to the country's history are greatly appreciated:

Kozara survived one of the most difficult, and at the same time, one of the most famous epics in the history of our nations. Among all our regions, Kozara ranks first in the number of sacrifices it made for the liberation of our country, and in its rich contribution to the general efforts of all peoples who fought against fascism. Kozara is known all over the world [...] Many victims fell in this struggle [the national liberation struggle of Yugoslavia] at Kozara. That was the beginning of the broadest struggle for brotherhood and unity in our country. Josip Broz Tito, Prijedor, 1972. (Mihić, 1987, p. 3, translated by Nikola Petrović)

Due to the current economic climate, as I have been told by numerous participants and locals, people are increasingly leaving for regions with better prospects for life. This is generally in regard to city migration,

such as moving to Banja Luka, rather than immigration. My fieldwork began in the city of Prijedor, where I encountered locals and (former) members of Artistic Society Groups (Културно-уметничко друштво – КУД/Kulturno-umetničko društvo). While walking down the main street of Prijedor, I came across the Čaršija Mosque (Čaršijska džamija/Чаршијска џамија), which is now a national monument of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The mosque had been burned and demolished in 1992 during ethnic tensions, but it still stood as a beautiful reminder of the country's cultural heritage (Karčić, 2022, p. 142).

As I continued my research, I met with DK, a local Serb, who shared with me the changing wedding customs of the area over time. After the interview, I walked around the city to collect ethnographic and anthropogeographic material. I noticed that most of the buildings had flags of the Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the European Union hanging on them. It was a time of extensive



Figure 3: The Čaršija Mosque in Prijedor, Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina, June 2019.

The Čaršija Mosque in Prijedor which serves as a cultural and national monument in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This mosque was built around 1839 by Salih Beg, according to Alija Bejtić. In 1992, it was burned and torn down. Rebuilt and reconstructed between 2003 and 2008, the mosque now has its place back in Prijedor. Author's personal archive.

political campaigning due to the upcoming local elections, which were scheduled to take place at some point after my departure.

DK informed me that I could potentially find someone with knowledge of the Croatian population and their cultural heritage in the local Catholic church, which is mainly attended by Croats. However, he also stated that there may be complications and reservations on their part, as I am a foreigner and a Serb from Germany. Although they might be willing to talk to me, they will try to stay distant even with a regular handshake. DK warned and told me that mostly priests would give someone non-Croatian only the tips of their fingers and not the complete hand for a firm handshake, due to their hate and prejudice against non-Croats and their willing distance towards them, according to him.

Upon arriving at the church, I was welcomed with a handshake by a local. However, the local only offered his fingertips. I did not ask why the interlocutor would greet me in such a way, especially after being warned by the Serbian interlocutor, but I continued to ask if they might have some information on the Croatian culture in this area. The response I received was rather puzzling and left me feeling uncertain: "Where do you come from and what are you [in terms of nationality/ethnicity]?" At that moment, I found myself wrestling with an ethical dilemma — should I lie and say that I am from Germany while omitting my Serbian heritage, or should I be truthful and disclose my full background? As a scientist conducting research, I questioned why these were my initial impulses. Was it to protect myself or to avoid a contentious conversation? Ultimately, I opted for transparency and revealed that I am a Serbian individual residing in Germany, eager to learn about and document the diverse cultures within the region. Sadly, the potential interlocutor simply turned their back and departed without a word. Shortly after, I was unable to meet other potential participants, who might be willing to talk to me about the Croatian cultural heritage of the area, which left me with insufficient materials for a general overview on the topic. Clark (2012) writes that she encountered this sort of isolation as well in her research of Bosnia and Herzegovina:

In Gornji Vakuf, the exclusively Bosnian Muslim part of the town, people were willing to be interviewed. Almost without exception, they revealed that they had little or no contact with the town's Bosnian Croats and that they seldom or never went into Uskoplje (the Croat part of the town). They also claimed that the Bosnian Croats would be unwilling to agree to an interview, and indeed this largely proved to be correct; only two Bosnian Croats were willing to be interviewed during the visit, compared to seven Bosnian Muslims (p. 827).

This specific encounter was the first to challenge the objectivity of my research. I was not confident enough whether I could stay neutral and depict all ethnicities fairly while having a Serbian/Yugoslav-German background, after encountering obvious prejudice against me or my ethnic background. Would such encounters and obvious chauvinistic treatments hurt my cultural background, or, shall I say, my identity? How could I avoid these? How can I not take it as an insult? How can I stay emotionally and politically neutral in such a moment? How should I act while encountering such moments? How should I interpret such behaviors? Obviously, such moments are deeply enrooted in the individual experiences of the people who witnessed and/or participated in the Yugoslav Wars. Every side would blame the other, but every ethnicity took an immense part in these wars. Everyone lost someone, whom they dearly loved. There is no ethnic differentiation in the tears of a mother, who had to bury her own child because of war and violence.

During my research, I shifted my focus towards the Muslim population in the region to ensure all ethnic groups were covered. One of my Serbian contacts, PJ, introduced me to his Muslim colleague, who was willing to help me. However, he did not have any information on the research topic, nor did he know where to find other contacts. One notable incident that occurred was when the Serbian contact advised me to distance myself from the Muslim colleague. Even though they were colleagues, he did not want to be associated with him due to his ethnicity. If I was to continue to interview the Serbian interlocutor, I was told to cut off all contact with the Muslim interlocutor and all Muslims in

general. Also, the Serbian interlocutor noted that I should generally be only among my own (surrounded by Serbs only). This scenario brought further ethical dilemmas into my research as well as to my view of the general population. At the same time, I questioned my own identity as a Serb from Germany, my stance as such in the surroundings of other Serbs, my own surroundings that I grew up in, and my moral understanding of things. How come I am Serbian, but I do not feel like it in this area? Why do I feel more German and outsider-ish? Is it due to my moral principles and my restraining from hateful and prejudiced speech? Why are my closest friends and family Muslim, Serbian, Croatian, German, Albanian, Turkish, Arab, Greek, Russian, Romanian, etc., if I am supposed to be only among Serbs? In these types of situations, it is uncertain whether a balanced perspective can be achieved. In general:

Remaining completely objective while in the field can be extremely difficult. One reason is that it might be far easier to gain access to one side than to the other. Having more contact and interaction with one particular group may, in turn, test and challenge the researcher's objectivity (Clark, 2012, p. 826).

This one-sided interaction is best presented in the following audio clip, after which the recording transcript will be shared. During my research, my Serbian informant, PJ, introduced me to RP, a local from the Prijedor-surrounding area. RP had extensive knowledge of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of all ethnic groups around Kozara and Potkozarje, making him a valuable and living witness to these practices. During the interview, RP's wife (VP), relative (RL), and PJ were present. I introduced myself to RP and thanked him for his time. However, I quickly noticed that the language used by the participants was filled with the local dialect and vulgarity. As a native Serbian speaker from Germany with a mother hailing from Novi Sad (Нови Сад) in the province of Vojvodina (Војводина), Serbia; and a father from Teslić (Теслић), Republic of Srpska, and Zenica (Зеница), Bosnia and Herzegovina — or shall I say, parents from Yugoslavia (Југославија) — my accent and dialect were different from those of RP and the others present. Before

the interview, PJ warned me that RP would likely end the interview abruptly if he detected my accent and dialect. PJ suggested that I lie about my origins and affiliation. Specifically, I was to tell RP that I was a student in school from Novi Sad in Serbia, where my mother is from, who had lived in Germany for a while before moving back to Serbia with my parents. Unfortunately, there was no alternative to this approach, as RP had refused to be interviewed for around 15 to 20 years prior to our meeting. This made the situation even more delicate and again brought me into an ethical dilemma. Although I thought my fluency in the language would help build secure relationships with interviewees, it had the opposite effect. My language was now inspected and evaluated. Nevertheless, this obstacle would not last for long.

I still conducted the interview as RP was a cultural survivor “of an older, rural way of life” who “learned by primary orality and would not, for the most part, have been formally trained” (Foley, 2014, p. 233). This was crucial to my research since there were no or very few written or recorded materials on the topic, and RP, in this context, as a cultural survivor would certainly have the knowledge of the intangible and tangible cultural heritage of the area. Generally, the main source in fieldworks for researchers, be that ethnological, ethnochoreological, ethnomusicological or anthropological, are locals who either witnessed the cultural heritage or gained their insight by their predecessors, who passed their knowledge down from generation to generation. Due to the time restrictions placed on conducting research, I had to quickly “secure relationships, establish trust, [and] evaluate informant’s utility” (Paulsen, 2009, p. 516), given the fragile circumstances of the interview. During the conversation, the interlocutors discussed the cultural heritage of the Serbs in the area. When it came to the demonstration of specific dances, songs, or melodies, I had to ask structural and contrasting questions to gain knowledge on descriptions and differences of parts of the repertoire (Spradley, 1979, p. 60). As someone with the necessary training in ethnology, ethnochoreology, and ethnomusicology of the region, I inquired about the influence of other major ethnic groups on Serbian traditional folk dances, songs,

costumes, and vice versa. It was evident that the cultural influences of the neighboring Croatian and Muslim cultures, as well as the Dinaric and Panonian ethnochoreological zones, had a deep impact on the dances, songs, music, and traditional folk costumes. Some of the dances, such as *Ančica* (Анчица), *Trojanac* (Тројанац), *Sremica* (Сремица), and *Taraban* (Тарабан), had their origins in different parts of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia, which were then adopted by the Serbian population after the beginning of migrations towards Kozara and Potkozarje. This could refer to either the name of the dance or their basic dance step patterns, which had their origins from other dances and were adopted by the locals due to migration. During and after World War Two (WWII), the Yugoslav Partisans in this area primarily danced the renamed *Kozaračko kolo*, which became widespread and was claimed by all ethnic groups in the area as their own (Младеновић 1960; Младеновић, 1973, pp. 177–180; Допуђа, 1960). RP told me that the only “real” Serbian dance was the *Kozarsko pleteno kolo* (Козарско плетено коло) — one version in which the participants in the dance are interconnected in a circle by hands that are frontally crossed, which was the earlier name for the previously mentioned dance.

Fieldwork Recording 1



An excerpt from the interview with RP in which he entailed a detailed exposition on the subject of traditional folk dances prevalent in the local area. For the full audio, visit the online journal at <https://journals.publishing.umich.edu/conversations/>.

However, the other interview participants mostly interrupted when I asked about the other dances that were part of the Serbian dance repertoire, as they considered them to be Croatian. During the interview, PJ warned me that if I continued to ask about “non-Serbian” relations, they would terminate the interview.

Fieldwork Recording 2



Whilst being interviewed, PJ issued a warning regarding the potential termination of the interview. For the full audio, visit the online journal at <https://journals.publishing.umich.edu/conversations/>.

After the warning, PJ shifted the discussion to the hardships and sacrifices that the Serbian people had to endure in the region as justification for the change of topic. In this particular case, which I had never encountered before and afterwards, I felt overwhelmed, anxious and threatened. As a researcher, I found myself in a situation where my human and survival instincts were coming to the forefront while the rest was completely blurred out. All I could think of at that moment was that I needed to end the interview as soon as possible and get out of there safely. I was afraid that any wrong answer might provoke a negative reaction. However, I tried to remain calm and answer the questions to the best of my ability while omitting certain inquiries to ensure my safety. My main priority was to gather the necessary material and retreat to a secure location, in this case, my apartment that I rented for the time of my stay in the region.

Thinking about what I had heard during the interview later, I noticed how the events after the 1990s led to the fusion of traditional folk singing practice with nationalistic ideologies when the interviewee and the other participants began singing about the Republic of Srpska in the local style of *Ojkanje – na bas* (Ојкање – на бас), or, as the song-form is now referred to, *Ojkača* (Ојкача). Even PJ participated in the singing and knew every word of the song, even though the area was not his original birth and living place.

The current social milieu in the region poses several challenges to researchers, both internal and external, owing to multifarious political circumstances and the historical events that transpired mainly in the past century. These obstacles have impeded progress in various aspects of research, creating a complex research landscape.

In conclusion, although tensions were present, I understood that ethnographic research involves immersing oneself in the situation and observing how people react to events as they unfold. This helps in experiencing the circumstances that lead to such events, as explained by Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (2011, p. 3). However, this fieldwork research brought the question “What is the extent of involvement required by a scientist or academic in research when faced with endangerment or ill-treatment, in order to attain knowledge and data in the name of science?” to my attention. Unfortunately, to date, I am not able to answer this question confidently, nor do I think that someone else can, especially, if he or she never encountered such tense complications. The only answer I have, although it does not particularly refer to the question, is: Prioritize your safety! At the same time, I needed to reevaluate the classical academic traditions of conducting fieldwork in a practical manner. Most often, the methodology behind fieldwork research is presented in a theoretical manner in academic institutions or practically through an arranged fieldwork for students by professors. However, critical and delicate encounters like the ones I have personally encountered during my fieldwork, are not discussed enough in scholarly circles or lectures. It could be argued that the methodology of fieldwork research in academia is based on “ideal”

circumstances in a “perfect and ideological” world. I believe that this paper and my personal encounters should be used for future discussions among scholars in which critical encounters in fieldwork should be looked at through a practical and realistic point of view. This would be immensely beneficial for future researchers, especially for those who have yet to gain their first experiences in the field.

Author Biography

B.A. Nikola Petrović (01.03.2000 in Heilbronn, Germany) finished his undergraduate studies in Stage Folk Dance and Music at the Belgrade Dance Institute - IUI in Belgrade, Serbia in 2023. He currently attends his postgraduate studies in Ethnochoreology at the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance in Limerick, Ireland. Since 2016, he works with traditional folk dance ensembles from Serbia and Germany, acting as choreographer, artistic director, and lecturer on Ethnochoreology, Ethnomusicology and Ethnology regarding Theories and the Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritages of different ethnic groups from the Balkans, Anatolia and Levant. Starting in 2017, he collaborates with the Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade in the fields of Ethnochoreology, Ethnomusicology and Ethnology with the Sector of Documentation. Since 2020 he is a member of the International Dance Council – CID and since 2022 a member of the International Council for Traditions of Music and Dance – ICTMD (Member of the German National Committee and the Study Group on Ethnochoreology). His main research focuses on the concept of Stage Traditional Folk Dance and Music, as well as Ottoman and, in general, Oriental influences in the tangible and intangible cultural heritages of different ethnic groups from the Balkans.

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