

Women's Actions to Revitalize the Practice of Kaval Playing in Serbia¹

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Abstract: *The kaval (end-blown flute) deserves particular attention in research as a traditional shepherd instrument associated with the Kosovo and Metohija region (the territory of southern Serbia), whose visibility survived with efforts of only a handful of performers from the second half of the 20th century. The kaval achieved greater visibility throughout the 1990s, as this instrument became recognized as one of several symbols of the collective and national identity, thereby becoming a component of many neo-traditional ensembles in Serbia. Its newly established popularity is accompanied by the interest of performers in the workmanship, behind making the kaval which, with the exception of potential uses of the new materials, continues to be based on traditional crafting principles. The female populations' interest in playing the kaval has risen noticeably since the beginning of the 21st century. They overwhelmingly belong to younger generations of performers, who were acquiring their skills mostly within the state music school system and/or during the organized professional workshops. Given the growing role of women in sustaining the practice of kaval in our region, this paper focuses on analyzing their repertoire, the performance-style characteristics of the female performers, with higher visibility in given geocultural framework, as well as interpreting their present-day positioning in the dissemination of the kaval.*

Keywords: *kaval, female performers, repertoire, visibility and dissemination, contemporary practice.*

The process of sustaining and revitalizing traditional folk instruments in Serbia, as well as a possibility to transform their constructive features and implement them in different and new musical genres is one of the key issues in contemporary ethno-organology. Such an issue pertains to those instruments that lost their primary function of a shepherd's instrument during the second half of the 20th century, and consequently, to the visibility of performers of this music practice locally, nationally and regionally. In that regard, the

1 This chapter is based on the research conducted through the project Female leadership in music (FLIM), grant no. 6066876, supported by the Science Fund of the Republic of Serbia, PROMIS program.

kaval² as a traditional shepherd's instrument deserves special attention. Considering the endangerment of the kaval during the last decades in the folk music practice of Serbia, this paper focuses on the ways of its renewal observed through contemporary activity and the role of women in the process of revitalization of this instrument.

The kaval belongs to a group of semi-transversal, long, cylindrical, end-blown flutes, fully open at both ends, whose upper part ends in a sharp circle edge. It has eight playing holes (seven on the front and one on the backside for the thumb) and four holes (*glasnice*) on the lower part that have an acoustic function. (Figure 1) During playing, the kaval is held with both hands, at an angle of approximately 45° from the body. The chromatic scale is composed of a combination of whole tones and semitones and the range obtained by overblowing amounts to two octaves plus a sixth in total. The kaval is played solo or in a duo of two *kavals*: in unison or with the differentiation of a melodic and a supporting (drone) section.

Figure 1: Kaval from Štrpce. Photo by Miloš Nikolić, 2010.



2 The origin of the word *kaval* is generally interpreted in two ways: most often as a word of Turkish or Turkish-Turkmen origin (*kaval*, *qavâl*, *caval*), or as a word of Arabic origin whose meaning is to *say*, *talk* (see more in: Jovanović 2012:186; Zakić and Jovanović 2013:13).

Research on Kaval Music Practice and the Revivalist Initiatives

Written sources on the use of kaval among the Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija, as the originary space of kaval playing in Serbia, dating from the early decades of the 20th century, were left by folklorists and composers, geographers, ethnologists, ethnomusicologists and ethno-choreologists (see more in: Zakić and Jovanović 2013, 2014; Zakić 2014: 269–270).³ The largest number of field recordings of Serbs playing the kaval was made in Štrpce, a settlement in the Sirinić parish in Šarplanina region at various time periods, starting from the mid-20th century. The continuity of live practice on the kaval in this locality was confirmed by the recent systematic research of Serbian musical folklore in Sirinić (2002–2005), conducted by members of the Serbian Ethnomusicological Society (SED) Mirjana Zakić, Jasminka Dokmanović and Svetlana Azanjac.⁴ In the years that followed until 2010, a practice of kaval in Štrpce was confirmed by field observations and recordings made by clarinetist and kavalist Miloš Nikolić and the ethnomusicologist Mirjana Zakić (Miloš Nikolić and Borisav Miljković, interview, Belgrade, March-May 2021). The recently deceased performers Veselin Bošković (1931–2016) and Miladin Boškočević (1935–2018) contributed the most to the sustainability of kaval practice in Štrpce. Both of them were recognized by the local community as representative performers of music from the Sirinić parish. According to their testimony, women did not play the kaval, because that was the practice of men and their pastoral activities. Their performances of shepherd's melodies, solo or in a duo – in unison or with accompanying drone – as well as folk songs, especially in combination with the excellent singing of Slavica Redžić from Štrpce (Zakić 2018: 161–162), became a model for the reinterpretation of many neo-traditional groups throughout Serbia.⁵

3 Please note that these studies contain references to the extensive literature on medieval painting, ethnographic, literary and ethnomusicological sources on the *kaval* in Serbia and Macedonia, as well as its position in the broader intercultural and multicultural context.

4 A part of the extensive collected field material (preserved at the archive of the Serbian Ethnomusicological Society) is documented with the film "Cross under Shara" ("Krst pod Šarom"), directed by Slobodan Simojlović (Belgrade, production: 2005–2008). The documentary is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pHrPD9qZBIQ>

5 The first public performances of *kaval* melodies from Štrpce, starting in 2000, took place in Belgrade at the concerts of the neo-traditional ensembles "Moba" and "Belo platno" (see more in: Jovanović 2012a).

Figure 2: Participants in the kaval playing workshop with Professor Miloš Nikolić in Štrpce. Photo by Mirjana Zakić, 2017.



Regarding the former wide presence of this instrument in the tradition of Sirinić parish, during the latest field research (conducted since the first decade of the 20th century by Mirjana Zakić and Miloš Nikolić) we have been witnessing an accelerated disappearance of kaval from folk practice in this region, which was the central area of the activity of Serbian kavalists.⁶ Regarding this instrument's precarious status, kaval playing in Sirinička župa has been registered into National List of Protection of the Endangered Element of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Serbia in 2012 (inventory number 20), due to the cooperation of the Serbian Ethnomusicological Society with the Centre for Preservation of Heritage of Kosovo and Metohija – Mnemosyne, together with local communities and cultural-artistic societies (KUD). The inscription of this element on the National list for the protection of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Serbia is certainly an important and long-term model for preserving the musical practice of Kosovo and Metohija (Zakić 2018a). As Marija Dumnić points out, in regard to the engagement of the Serbian Ethnomusicological Society in the protection of this and other intangible cultural elements, "ethnomusicological knowledge is recognized as extremely important for

6 In this regard, it should be noted that the new research in other areas of Kosovo and Metohija, the central part – from Vučitrn to Uroševac (Ranković and Zakić 2019:31), as well as the area of Kosovo Pomoravlje, conducted by ethnomusicologists Sanja Ranković and Mirjana Zakić in continuity since 2015, confirmed the absence of the practice of playing the kaval among the Serbian population, but at the same time pointed out the interest of the younger population to continue this practice.

the affirmation of Serbian cultural resources that are representative, extremely endangered or sustainable. Engagement involves investing not only knowledge and research, but also superior coordination with practitioners, whereby the ethnomusicologist becomes the representative of his contributors on the field, and later an advisor in the long-term process of heritage preservation and maintenance" (Dumnić 2012: 93–94).

The kaval-playing and singing with its accompaniment workshops, held in Štrpce since 2017, and in Gračanica since 2020, are the result of the activities of Serbian Ethnomusicological Society.⁷ The goals of the workshops have been the following: combining practical and theoretical educational activities related to the element of intangible cultural heritage – the kaval; transferring the knowledge by experts to young generations (Miloš Nikolić, Mirjana Zakić and Sanja Ranković); connecting with the local community; providing greater visibility of this endangered musical-cultural element; evaluating the immediate results of workshops and planning long-term results (as an incentive for the better sustainability of music practice).

This kind of applied engagement, based on networking of experts, local communities and carriers of practice, corresponds to the notion of the "epistemic community" (developed from Peter Haas), which "refers to a collective of people (...) who work together toward solving and analyzing a particular problem or issue-area whose terms are epistemologically defined" (Harrison 2012: 506). The immediate effects of the workshops could be seen through the public appearances of participants, their media promotion and involvement in various cultural contents, as well as through potential long-term results of interaction of motivated, involved subjects in historical and cultural circumstances, thus reflecting "how knowledge operates as a principle of social organization" (according to Steve Fuller; *ibid.*).

Previous workshops for playing the kaval and singing with the kaval, held at the gate of the church of St. Nicholas in in Štrpce and in the House of Culture in Gračanica, gathered more than 70 participants from the younger generation (Figure 2). Among the participants, the larger number were girls from primary schools, who expressed great interest in reviving this practice and a talent for producing the initial sound on the kaval, which can be very demanding in the early stages of learning. Although they didn't play on the instrument before, their desire and perseverance resulted, as professor of kaval Miloš Nikolić pointed out, in the surprisingly quick mastery of the kaval playing technique. We donated plastic kavals to a large number of participants, so that they could continue their practice after the workshops. Professional practical and theoretical training (which included mastering the technique of playing and basic elements of vocal style, popular lectures on the historical significance of kaval in folk life, its repertoire, and values of musical-cultural heritage) was coupled with the cooperation with members of cultural-artistic association "Cvetko Grbić" from Štrpce and the Ensemble of Folk Dances and Songs of Kosovo and Metohija "Venac" from Gračanica. The workshops ended with concerts where the participants presented their newly acquired skills to the audience, thus supporting their motivation for a continuous and more successful work in the field

7 Such projects, while also an important model of sustainability and revitalization of musical-cultural heritage from this area, are financially supported by the Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic of Serbia

of sustainability of kaval practice. Such motivation was especially important for girls – kaval players, who, without previous examples of female players of this instrument in the tradition, could feel visible at public presentations.

The revival of kaval across Serbia, bearing in mind the reduction of the kavalists in Sirinić, started in the 1990s and has been related to the establishing of national consciousness during the crisis as a consequence of the wars in Serbia. That was primarily a result of initially individual endeavor of a group of artists in their practical approach to folk and ecclesiastical music (Jovanović 2012). The interest aimed towards kaval was based on the fascination with its specific sound, its sonority, “the manner in which the tone is produced and coincidence of the structural elements of Byzantine chanting and Macedonian kaval *ezgijas*” (Jovanović 2012: 197). According to the words of Jelena Jovanović, a member of this revivalist movement, such joint action was a part of a larger search for religious, national, collective and personal identity in Serbia, and also an artistic expression reflecting of one’s own identity and creation of collective identities (*ibid.*).

For the media promotion of this instrument as a representative of the musical tradition of Serbia, the performance of Miloš Nikolić with a solo kaval as a part of the Serbian entry “Lane moje” (author Željko Joksimović) at the Eurovision Song Contest in Istanbul in 2004 is of the greatest importance. “The kaval symbolises pastoral sonority, which is paralleled in the styled shepherd clothing of the kavalist Miloš Nikolić. This song was envisioned by the artistic and production team of Serbian national broadcaster as a Serbian fairytale, a modern pastorelle in which the kaval is perceived through its dominantly pastoral semantic and sound value. Thus, the sound of kaval is represented as something pastoral and primordial, both in traditional culture and within modern intercultural framing, thus serving as a bridge between the two” (Zakić 2014: 273).

Thanks to the growing popularity, in the same year (2004) the kaval was introduced as one of the main study subjects at the Department of Ethnomusicology at the Music School “Mokranjac” in Belgrade, whereby Miloš Nikolić became the first kaval professor in the Serbian education system. Later on, the kaval was also introduced at the Department in the school “Mokranjac” in Kraljevo, where the professor Borisav Miljković teaches it, among other instruments. The introduction of kaval in the education system has been of great importance for the further dissemination of this instrument in Serbia.

Activities of Women Musicians in the Revitalization of the Kaval

Such projects, while also an important model of sustainability and revitalization of musical-cultural heritage from this area, are financially supported by the Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic of Serbia, resulted in the number of students interested in playing the kaval constantly growing. Their basic motive and ambition to play the kaval is the love for this instrument, encouraged primarily by its specific sound color. It is particularly noteworthy that interest for kaval is expressed (almost) equally by young men and girls, who thereby continue a tradition that was previously culturally shaped by the activity of men. Professors point out that girls/young women master the skill of playing with (almost) the same success as boys. Noting that from their experience it could be somewhat generalized that girls produce a slightly finer, gentler tone on the kaval, due to

the specifics of female nature and their breathing apparatus, my interlocutors agree that the way of playing is not gender-determined, but that individual characteristics depend on talent, dedication and experience of performers of both genders. Nikolić underlines that his previous teaching experience has shown that girls are more persistent in finalizing their primary and secondary music education.⁸ Appropriate methodical approaches which include combining learning by ear and by notation with insistence on adequate stylistic interpretation, ensure that students are capable of playing in different ensembles and perform various music genres, apart from the dominant repertoire of melodies from Kosovo and Metohija.

Among the most prominent female performers in the chronological course of education, my interlocutors point special attention to Dragana Tomić (born in 1985, from Belgrade), Neda Nikolić (born in 1998, from Kovin, near Smederevo), Saška Stefanović (born in 2001, from Lešak, northern part of Kosovo and Metohija), with whom I conducted interviews on several occasions during 2021 in Belgrade and in Kosovska Mitrovica (Figures 3, 4, 5).⁹

According to the interviewed female musicians, their choice of kaval is inspired by the sound of this instrument, which they qualify as gentle, warm, pastoral, melancholic (also reminiscent of female voice), and at the same time seductive, rustling, mysterious. In addition to the specific and seductive sound of the kaval, my female interlocutors also state the personal need to master the extremely demanding technique of playing this instrument. They also highlight the following motivations: establishing contact with other musicians; weaker representation of this instrument in Serbia; organizing traditional playing workshops; introduction of kaval playing in primary and secondary music schools.

In terms of repertoire, the interlocutors primarily choose to listen to and interpret pastoral original kaval melodies from Kosovo and Metohija, as well as “ezgija” –improvisation on the kaval, where the naturalness and beauty of this instrument are mostly heard. Neda Nikolić is expanding her repertoire of playing the kaval, publicly performing new works composed for kaval and orchestra.¹⁰ Her interpretations of wider musical genres on the kaval are certainly related to her wider repertoire performances (traditional, popular and authorial melodies) on other instruments, primarily the *frula* (folk flute).

8 This seems to be a global reality; for example, the data of the National Center for Education Statistics in the USA (from 2003) indicate that a higher percentage of women complete undergraduate studies, and that almost the same percentage of women and men obtain degrees in most vocational schools. (Northouse 2008:187).

9 Dragana Tomić, interview, Belgrade, 17 March 2021; Neda Nikolić, interview, Belgrade, 13, 14 March and 30 May; Saška Stefanović, interview, Belgrade; 13 March 2021, and Kosovska Mitrovica, 7 May 2021.

10 It is a composition by Slobodan Trkulja, Serbian prominent musician, composer and multi-instrumentalist, titled “Eleven for My Father”. Neda Nikolić performed this piece with the pianist and composer Veljko Nenadić, *kahon* player Igor Petrović, and percussionist Denis Mahmutović, at the concert in Crocka, in 2017 (the recording is in her personal archive). This composition exemplifies how the *kaval* becomes an inspiration for new artistic music endeavors in Serbia. According to Neda’s statement, the melody is based on musical motifs from Southeastern Serbia and Northern Macedonia.

Interlocutors also agree that, based on their knowledge, generally there are no differences in female or male kaval playing, because the essence of performing is in technique and proper practicing. In other words, each individual brings sound on kaval in a different way and expresses the emotion in his/her own way. Neda Nikolić also points out that although the musical and technical performances of both genders do not have to differ, this comparison is more difficult to report, because there are not many women who play the kaval in Serbia.

Speaking of possible role models, the respondents opt for their teachers, older colleagues from schools who have already made themselves famous for kaval playing, or for the most prominent media multi-instrumentalists, like Slobodan Trkulja.

Figure 3: Dragana Tomić. Photo by Marta Janković, 2021.



In the sense of female leaders transferring the know-how of kaval playing who exemplify the model of informal leadership (Northouse 2008: 4–10), Katarina (Filipov) Lukman, with whom I also conducted an online interview, singles out Dragana Tomić, as the first female performer on the kaval with a formal music education (Katarina (Filipov) Lukman, interview, online, May 15 2021). As an excellent singer and kavalist, Dragana Tomić has had public performances with *Pjevačka družina* (Singers' Group) of Svetlana Spajić in the country and abroad, participated in projects with world artists and actors, performed at foreign festivals, and was active as a lecturer and moderator of workshops for Serbian traditional singing and kaval playing – she also made plastic kavals for the

workshop during 2016.¹¹ When asked to identify female kaval players being seen as leaders, the younger kavalist Saška Stefanović chose Neda Nikolić, a multi-instrumentalist (a performer of *frula* /folk flute/, kaval, bagpipes, flute, saxophone), who has been very active in the media in recent years and gained popularity in the Serbian music scene, in the region and around the world, by performing different musical genres.¹² For the interlocutors, a leader is a person who has great talent, many years of experience, strong character, integrity, self-confidence, desire for innovation, willingness to cooperate, who is communicative, authoritative and publicly visible, and who, due to his/her technical and musical qualities, is a role model for younger generations. Unlike Dragana Tomić, who does not talk about herself as 'a female kaval player' although she is being called "a lady kavalist" / "kavaldžinika", "kavaldžinica" in her performances, Neda Nikolić gave the following answer on seeing herself in the role of the leader:

Ever since primary school, I have liked to 'manage' various things, projects and groups. So it remained the same in secondary school, as well as at the college now. With my attitude and public appearance (probably without even being aware of it) I demonstrate my dominance and a wish for 'control'. So, many people openly call me lady-boss, lady-professor in the context of managing certain projects [...] As a *frula* soloist, I have been organizing my own performances for several years now, i.e. participating in the organization, delivery and performance itself. I facilitate *frula* workshops, spread the sound of the *frula* and words about this instrument, as ways to preserve it. I pass on knowledge to younger generations and improve my work, and thus the name of the *frula* in our area. I have realized that in addition to love, desire, effort and work, all the opportunities that the environment provides are needed. These things are crucial, but if you do not find the necessary support and some kind of help from other people and institutions, this job is difficult [...] I personally schedule all my public appearances, because I am most confident in myself. My expectations from the performance are reduced to the implemented agreement, but there are also situations when it is not respected. In these cases, any inconvenience is avoided, but the course of the situation and problem solving is discussed with the organizer (transcript of the interview with Neda Nikolić, Belgrade, 14 March 2021).

Neda's words point to the important role of women's entrepreneurship, as one of the most significant changes and features of today's general framework in which women initiate work, manage it tactically and independently, guided by intuition, perception and skill in interpersonal relationships that greatly contribute to their professional achievements.¹³

11 The following links document Tomić's music activities: <https://dortjolfestival.com/dragana-tomic/> and http://www.nymbusagencija.co.rs/ser_vesti_2016.html (accessed 8 August 2022).

12 <https://nedanikolic.rs/#biography> (accessed 8 August 2022).

13 Regarding the development of women's entrepreneurship globally, the theoretical approach to it in various business domains, with a special focus on the characteristics of successful women in the creative and cultural industry in the Republic of Croatia, see: Martić Kuran and Mečev 2018.

Figure 4: Neda Nikolić. Photo by Marta Janković, 2021.



Being asked whether and to what extent their families and local communities accept them as performers on the traditional “male” instrument, all interlocutors answered that their families supported them from the very beginning, and that local communities are very proud of their public appearances. Such a positive and supportive attitude is especially pronounced in connection to their media presence. Achieving ever-increasing results over time implies an increase in their expectations. They become new personalities on the scene, their name becomes a “brand” and thus it gains importance. The path to success of female musicians on traditional instruments is accompanied by various sacrifices and concessions that change the usual functioning and presentation of the instrument itself. However, just understanding that they are representing a certain genre, instrument, direction, grows into a wonderful feeling that prevails over all possible “difficult” moments in the process of maturing of a musical personality. In addition, as they jointly point out, people also cherish female kaval performers as they see them actively supporting the traditional culture, instead of taking part in the kitschy mainstream music that “rules” within the contemporary popular music scene.

Neda Nikolić explains about the former and current social path of women who play traditional instruments in the following way:

There were situations in which being a woman as a player on traditional instruments was poorly accepted or belittled. There are differences due to the influence of society, economy and many other things that have changed over time. The music scene has always been, in a way, 'a sponge' that is actually a reflection of everything that is happening around us. That is how the performers used to perform differently on the stage than today. What is noticeable today is that the performers have more media attention and visual advantages with the audience. (Neda Nikolić, interview, Belgrade, 14 March 2021)

In this sense, I also refer to the words of Karin Klenke and Peter Northouse, that since each context has its own recognizable characteristics, they are often in interaction with assumptions related to female competences and stereotypes about gender roles (Klenke 2018: 6–34¹⁴; Northouse 2008: 188–196). Or, to quote Ellen Koskoff, “Recent suspicions of female folklore and culture suggest that in many societies women and men seem to occupy separate and independent musical cultures, rather than two differentiated but complementary and overlapping halves of culture” (Koskoff 2014: 32). In that context, it should be pointed out that the respondents are fully aware of the facts about the former poor visibility or (almost) invisibility of women performers on traditional folk instruments in our area. Iva Nenić’s extensive scientific study is dedicated to this problem, as well as to other issues discussed in a wide range of topics, from the status of female performance in cultural and scientific discourses, through the genealogy of female instrumental performance in Serbia (and the Balkans), to contemporary music practices of female players (Nenić 2019). In this first and long-awaited study in Serbian ethnomusicology, which deals with the issue of gender and music in regard to traditional folk instruments, specifically historical and contemporary women’s playing activities, Iva Nenić analyses two social practices: singing with the bowed lute (*gusle*) and tradition of playing the folk flute (*frula*), in which the participation of female musicians has managed to remain relatively visible in various scientific and ideological discourses, arguing that the participation of women is also important for the sustainability of these practices both in history and modern times. Consideration of this issue involved a well elaborated apparatus of analysis and critique, raised in order to deconstruct the dichotomous models of gender-specific behaviors in traditional instrumental music – the latter until recently understood and presented as part of almost exclusively male performance (ibid.). It can be argued that the same model could be applied to the role of women in kaval practice as well – although there weren’t many historical cases, the contemporary female participation in kaval playing challenges the discourses of male supremacy in the representational discourses of this music culture, by actively taking part in learning, carrying the tradition further, introducing the instrument to new contexts and forging the new model of female musical entrepreneurship.

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

Figure 5: Saška Stefanović. Photo by Marta Janković, 2021.



Conclusion

Based on written sources, recorded material and narratives of insiders in Kosovo and Metohija, dating from the early decades of the 20th century, it is clear that the kaval in folk practice, with its predominant role of shepherd's instrument, belonged exclusively to the population of male musicians. However, it should be noted that the performance of the melodies of the songs on one (or more often on two kaval) was accompanied by female singing (which is still the case in Štrpce / Sirinička župa). The reduction and subsequent almost complete disappearance of Serbian performers on the kaval in this territory resulted in the need for its revitalization, that had started in the 1990s, first by neo-traditional music ensembles in Belgrade, and then later on by soloists and groups from other parts of Serbia. The popularity of kaval among the girls and women during the last decade has been contributed to by their participation in organized workshops in Kosovo and Metohija, as well as the introduction of this instrument in the school education system. According to the female respondents, their motivation to play the kaval is crucial in relation to the specific sound of the kaval (timbre), as an iconic sign, presentation of the traditional Kosovo-Metohija repertoire as indexical sign relations, and preservation of cultural and national identity through symbolic signification of this instrumental practice.¹⁵ By acting primarily within the field of culture, women's kaval players also act in the social sphere, raising awareness of the importance of social engagement in nurturing traditional music and in introducing the instrument in new music settings and scene.

15 The concepts – *icon*, *index*, and *symbol* – originate from the semiotic trichotomous setting of the American philosopher and scientist Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914), and refer to the different manner by which a sign is related to its object (see more in: Turino 2008: 5–12). The complete triad conception of the sign of Charles S. Peirce was first applied to Serbian ethnomusicology in the study of Mirjana Zakić (2009).

Given the possibilities and ways of preserving the kaval playing, through its revitalization by a small, but significant number of female performers visible on public stages in this historical moment, both at the informal (through workshops) and formal (institutional and professional music-making) level, it is clear that education and presentation, coupled with the gender awareness, are an integral part of sustainability of this practice, as an important segment of the intangible cultural heritage of Serbia.

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