EDITORIAL

Music, Matchmaking and Monuments

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The third volume of *Kosova Anthropologica* brings together three research articles, representing ethnomusicology, social anthropology, and archaeology, alongside a book review. As a volume, it reflect the journal's anthropological and interdisciplinary orientation, but also its commitment to exploring social, cultural, and historical processes in the wider region, from antiquity to the contemporary moment.

The first article, by Mikeala Minga, grounded in ethnomusicology, explores the relationship between migration, music-making, and lived experience among the Vlach–Aromanian minority in the village of Drenova, southeastern Albania. Focusing on a group of male singers, the study examines how migration has shaped both individual life trajectories and collective musical practices. Based on ethnographic fieldwork connected to the recording of the album on Aromanian Songs from Drenova, the author demonstrates how traditional multipart singing functions as a space of memory, emotional expression, and social bonding. Migration emerges not only as a lyrical theme but also as an embodied and performative experience, enacted through "singing in company" during informal gatherings. Songs articulate loss, longing, return, and belonging. By focusing on performance, place, and subjectivity, Minga shows how music sustains cultural continuity while triggering creative responses to changing migratory realities.

The second article, by Carolin Leutloffs-Grandits, examines digital ethnic entrepreneurship through the case of Dua.com, a matchmaking application designed specifically for Albanians living across national borders. Founded by a Kosova-Albanian entrepreneur raised in Switzerland, the platform presents itself as both a tool for finding romantic partners and a guardian of Albanian cultural values. The article analyzes how Dua.com markets intra-ethnic dating by mobilizing shared language, traditions, and family norms to foster connections among Albanians in the diaspora and in their countries of origin. By replacing kin- and community-based matchmaking with algorithmic mediation, the app preserves ethnic endogamy while simultaneously

individualizing partner choice. Features that compress geographic distance facilitate transnational relationships beyond seasonal visits or family mediation. The study argues that Dua.com illustrates how digital platforms actively co-produce ethnic identity, reshape kinship practices, and reframe family formation within a digitally embedded transnational landscape.

The third article, by Belisa Muka, provides an archaeological perspective by examining the urban development of the ancient city of Phoinike from the Hellenistic through the Roman periods. Drawing on new archaeological evidence gathered since 2000 through syste-matic Albanian–Italian excavations, the study reconstructs the city's architectural layout, public monuments, residential areas, and funerary spaces. It highlights Phoinike's role as the political and urban center of ancient Kaonia, emphasizing its strategic location, fortifications, agorae, theater, and complex water infrastructure. Tracing continuities and transformations in urban planning, the article shows how Hellenistic structures were adapted, expanded, or repurposed under Roman rule. Special attention is given to monumental ensembles, domestic architecture, and religious practices, illustrating how social, political, and cultural dynamics shaped the city over time. Overall, the article positions Phoinike as a key provincial center whose long-term urban development reflects broader historical processes in the region.

The volume concludes with Eralda Lameborshi's book review of *Encountering Race in Albania: An Ethnography of the Communist Afterlife* by American anthropologist Chelsi West Ohueri. The review highlights the book's significant contribution to race and post-socialist studies, emphasizing its challenge to the assumption that race is solely a Western phenomenon. Through the analytical lens of the "communist afterlife," the book traces how socialist-era ideologies of internationalism and anti-racism continue to shape contemporary racial formations in Albania. The reviewer underscores the role of hospitality and *besa* as cultural frameworks that simultaneously obscure and reproduce racial inequalities, particularly affecting Roma and Balkan Egyptian communities. The review praises the book's nuanced ethnography and its relevance for understanding race in SouthEastern Europe and beyond.

The papers in this volume offer a refreshing and timely set of perspectives that fore-ground cultural diversity in the region across different historical moments. By engaging with Vlach–Aromanian musical traditions in Albania, Albanian diasporic identity formation through digital technologies, and the urban life of ancient cities in Albania, this volume highlights the plurality of cultural expressions, social formations, and historical trajectories that have shaped the region. The interdisciplinary dialogue between ethnomusicology, social anthropology, and archaeology, complemented by a critical engagement with contemporary debates on race, underscores *Kosova Anthropologica*'s role as a forum for innovative scholarship attending to both local particularities and transnational processes.