

**THEORETICAL CONCEPT OF POLITICAL LEADERSHIP  
OF THE FORMER PRESIDENT OF KOSOVO DR. IBRAHIM  
RUGOVA**

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***Abstract:** The first and historic President of Kosovo Dr. Ibrahim Rugova, is one of the unique politicians of the Balkan space, who as an intellectual, creator and thinker entered politics after the end of the Cold War and the beginning of the dissolution of the former Yugoslav Federation.*

*As a literary and creative critic, he entered politics in complex circumstances, at the time of the fall of communism and deep political, socio-economic but also socio-cultural transitions. His political strategy, his political concept, his unique leadership at a time when the region was embroiled in bloody inter-ethnic wars and conflicts, continue to be the focus of study to this day.*

*Often compared to Gandhi and Havel, but in much more difficult circumstances and opportunities for action, Rugova nevertheless remains unique in his concept of political action, so the purpose of this paper is to analyze the theoretical concept of political leadership of Ibrahim Rugova.*

***Key words:** Concept, theoretical, leadership, mission, transition.*

## Introduction

The distinction between a political leader and a politician is not a debatable one<sup>1</sup>. As opined by Teles<sup>2</sup>, whereas the political leader possesses both the passion and responsibility, the politician is normally associated with achieving political goals without necessarily aligning means, ends, and consequences. This distinction performs two functions, in that, on one hand, even though both personalities may hold the same or similar offices, it separates intentions of the individual from roles based on approaches to executing mandate and not on functions, and on the other hand, the superiority of leading as against accomplishing in a political setting is emphasized. The imperative role of political leadership has been re-echoed severally, and there is ample literature which supports this assertion see<sup>3</sup>. However, regardless of the inter-disciplinary nature of political leadership, conceptual and theoretical literature on political leadership which encompasses relevant disciplines remain scarce and scanty.

At the end of the 80s, in the troubled Balkan Peninsula, as well as in the rest of Europe, the walls of communism were falling and prospects for Euro-Atlantic integration were opening up. For peoples who experienced communist tyranny and oppression, this was the long-awaited day of freedom. However, for Kosovo Albanians, things took a different direction. In this mess of events and rapid global developments, they find themselves in front of the brutal regime of Serbia, where a furious nationalist hegemony erupted against the Kosovar Albanians.

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<sup>1</sup> Joensuu, M., & Niiranen, V. (2018). Political Leaders and Public Administrators: Interaction Patterns and Pictures in Finnish Local Government Decision-Making Processes. *Public Policy and Administration*, 33, 22-45.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0952076716673898> .

<sup>2</sup> Solovyov, A. I. (2017). Political Leader in the Public Administration Environment, or Who Is the Man of the House? *Political Studies*, 2, 60-81.

<sup>3</sup> Gane, N. (1997). Weber on the Ethical Irrationality of Political Leadership. *Sociology*, 31, 549-564.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038597031003010> .

The idea of freedom conceived as a cultural idea - as an idea of non-submission and rejection - culminated as a moral lesson and became a political duty. So literature didn't just sing to freedom, but it crawled through the dark labyrinths, becoming the flame of active resistance because it will be the writers, creators, publicists and intellectuals of the time who will face a subjugation of rip or me old logic and mindset that was threatening Kosovo and its people. Pa dyshim, kjo betejë, si gjitha betejat e mëdha, nisi me fjalë dhe përfundoi me luftë. In this wild clash, the tyrannical power of Belgrade spread fear, with the entire apparatus of violence that followed it, while, on the other hand, in this chaos, suddenly, literature and its superior power appeared as an alternative. Like a divine calling. And, at the head of the time, Ibrahim Rugova, the writer who entered politics, wrote: "For me, the denunciation of terror first started through discourse, literature<sup>4</sup>."

The leader of the political program of Kosovo, from the position of the president of the Association of Writers of Kosovo, where, before acting politically, he resisted with literature, came to the forefront of the political platform. Aesthetic rejection, as a category proclaimed in the field of art, for him and his people, quickly spread to other spheres, and became the consciousness of the people of Kosovo, who fought for freedom, democracy and independence.

### **Methodology**

The work methodology in this paper is made with combined methods which are applied in research in social sciences by adapting and elaborating on the main goals for the development of the hypothesis and its parts. In the framework of this analysis, the analysis method used is the main method, the descriptive, historical method, the one of comparative analysis and the synthetic method.

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<sup>4</sup> Ndue Ukaj, "Ibrahim Rugova dhe beteja e letërsisë për liri", e qasshme ne: <https://flasshqip.ca/opinione/1881-ndue-ukaj-ibrahim-rugova-dhe-beteja-e-letersise-per-liri> .

The structure and format of our research method are mainly based on thematic analysis by elaborating and analyzing the political concept, political messages, political communication style and conceptual and theoretical aspects of political leadership of Dr. Ibrahim Rugova.

### **Ibrahim Rugova, the intellectual in politics, the features of his political communication**

The power of speech is undeniable. In every period of crisis in the history of peoples have emerged orators and speeches that have decided the future of these peoples. They have been a source of inspiration to fight to the point of selflessness injustice, discrimination and dictatorship. Have eternally sculpted events that have marked world history. With the power that the word has given them, they have entered the minds and hearts of people and have changed in us not infrequently the very meaning of life.

Many people are born with the ability to speak in public, many others want to have this ability. Rhetoric tends to influence, with the force of logic, argument and fact, with the emotionality of pronunciation and the art of attractive speech, orienting the mood of the audience towards a certain goal<sup>5</sup>.

The importance of orality, creativity and analysis of speeches in the civilized world today were the main reasons for this analysis - a study of the chapter that deals with the special style of political communication that President Rugova made with public opinion.

The real object of study in this paper is the political communication of the President of Kosovo dr. Ibrahim Rugova and rare but traceable public communications with the public, either directly or through the media. Speeches and communications are studied in general, functional, analytical and interpretive terms

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<sup>5</sup> Xhevat Lloshi. (2001) Albanian language stylistics and pragmatics. SHBLU, Tirana.

and the general guiding effect on the masses that has attacked, which serves to understand, analyze and use it more effectively.

Speaking about the famous speeches in the political field in the XX-XXI century, Ibrahim Rugova, as the first President in the history of the Republic of Kosovo, made speeches that are remembered, which means he gave rare speeches, but that served as a guiding platform of state-building and awareness-raising policies for the international community, but also friendly countries and strategic partners in the world and with emphasis on international decision-making institutions, during his political career leading the people of Kosovo towards independence and state building, and can be among the most influential people with his public speeches. Therefore, it seems necessary to make an analysis of his political communication, for the fact that it contains unique and multilateral values of public expression.

As a very influential former president of the Republic of Kosovo, who combined calmness, modesty, talent and eloquence, Rugova is known as a unique and incomparable case in his communication style, so his speeches will undoubtedly be in the future. Research objectives of many linguistic scholars in various fields. Rugova was incomparable to express his opinion or attitude effectively and gain the support of the audience through a moderate tone, words that did not impair understanding by mass, language and expressions that matched the language of the needs of its citizens and with vocabulary that etymologically coincides with their character, life culture and behavior according to living tradition, post festum analytical effect, personal pronoun and appreciation. In addition, in this way, he can also inspire the audience to build trust in him and strive for the realization of their dreams.

He was characterized by gentleness in communication or building trust only through direct communication with even the most radical skeptics and dissenters.

(examples such as the stories of Tony Blair and Bill Clinton etc ...). Although President Rugova's political speeches and political communication with the general public were brief, they in themselves contained powerful messages that had a tremendous impact on the audience and the public sphere in general.

President Rugova's style of political communication was truly unique, characteristic, often enigmatic, and with clear messages. Unique was also his style of policy-making and political leadership. So, his leadership style has inspired the masses to do more for the cause they had set for themselves, thus to increase the readiness for organized and self-sacrificing action. He gave initiatives, ideas, influenced the activities of the masses, shifting the movements of citizens or groups towards his goals or the cause he was building and leading, but also controlled.

The drama of Rugova's passage from intellectual to a political leader was twofold: internal and external drama. The inner quarrel between the dream and the real creature becomes uneasy. The external quarrel, with the circle and with the opponents, becomes fierce, dangerous. This has to do with the sedentary and inactive colleagues, a condition which Rugova defined by figure: With a hot stone hangar. The confrontation with external violence was dangerous and unbalanced; condition which Rugova often repeated: We have the words, they have the bullets<sup>6</sup>.

Rugova's stance as the head of the AAC against the tendencies of Serbian academics that "we know our way" was accepted as a message at home and abroad, as this stance also revealed the possibility of political commitment to the realization of the rights of Albanians in Kosovo.

The grievances of the majority Albanian people in Kosovo began to appear openly and were natural, because Serbia's wishes were completely unmasked. Dissatisfaction with the initiation of constitutional changes began with the mass protests of citizens in 1988, while the culmination of dissatisfaction was with the

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<sup>6</sup> Sabri Hamiti, "Memento për Rugovën", Fondacioni Ibrahim Rugova, Prishtinë, 2017, f. 88.

strike of the Miners of Trepça, on February 20-28, 1989, to continue with the protests of students of the University of Prishtina<sup>7</sup>.

Ibrahim Rugova's opposition, along with other Albanian intellectuals belonging to the Kosovo Writers' League, to Serbian academics behind whom stood a whole state apparatus and who openly threatened Albanian intellectuals with the repercussions they might suffer as a result of In retrospect, it can be judged as a very courageous action both intellectually and politically, since under the pressure that Serbia was under as a result of the beginnings of the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the tendency for Kosovo to remain within Serbia at all costs, Such a reaction from Rugova was like a sudden blow that Serbs had not been accustomed to hearing much from Kosovo Albanian communist intellectuals so far, at least not directly and openly, warning them of subsequent actions as in the political and academic aspect of Kosovo's young intellectual elite.

He was certainly the most credible leader who presented the popular demands and the fundamental right to freedom, democracy and self-determination, after all that we had suffered historically and currently. His deep and vital conviction that Albanians are on the side of good, right and truth, so we have arguments both historical and current, or as I had formulated: we Albanians figuratively say we have good goods, but we are weak traders, which Ibrahim Rugova liked very much, he pushed him to internationalize and raise awareness of the Kosovo issue, because he knew very well that the world would be with us, not because we are Albanians, or against Serbs, but for the sake of of right and truth, of course, if we know how to present and defend it worldwide. To these three truths had to be added two important pillars: our national consciousness and our peaceful and non-violent determination to the end, without ever giving up ourselves and the

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<sup>7</sup> Osman Ismaili – Partitë Politike Shqiptare dhe Çështja e Kosovës (1989-1998), Prishtinë, 2001, fq.60.

truth, antiquity, tradition, culture and our ancient civilization Illyrian-Albanian. This audio-visual media "war" of the media, political and diplomatic circles, seemed like the biblical one between David and Goliath, because the Serbs had everything in hand. But President Ibrahim Rugova often said: "On our side is the truth, the history, the land of Kosovo."<sup>8</sup>.

The genuine study of the researcher already known and affirmed among us and beyond Enver Bytyçi "Political and national philosophy of Ibrahim Rugova" - makes an extraordinary analysis of the personality of Dr. Rugova, because he treats the figure of the historic President of Kosovo, Dr. Ibrahim Rugova from several different views and perspectives and in the context of Albanian events, then Yugoslav, Balkan, to some extent European and world, considering him as the main address and personality not only of Albanians but also a reliable address of EU countries and especially the US in the Western Balkans <sup>9</sup>.

This spirit created by Rugova's political strategy was not seen in the Western Balkans, the messages of peace, non-violence, interethnic and inter-religious tolerance, the resolution of disputes and conflicts through dialogue, was Rugova's strongest weapon, atypical for the region. it was a hotbed of conflict. Rugova will surpass the "Balkan framework and logic" of policy-making, as a unique leader of the time will gain great sympathy and respect in the international arena by internationalizing the Kosovo conflict at the highest level.

In that difficult period and atmosphere of war of tragic proportions such as the conflict in the former Yugoslavia, was the topic in all relevant regional and international media, the reception in private audience at the Holy See in the Vatican by Pope John Paul II of a leader of a small people with a Muslim religious majority as Ibrahim Rugova was expected in the Holy See in 1991. That meeting caused a

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<sup>8</sup> ASSEMBLY SUPPORT INITIATIVE: Dr.Ibrahim Rugova-A man with the power to unite, 2006.  
<sup>9</sup>Bytyqi, Enver: Ibrahim Rugova's national political philosophy, Faik Konica, Prishtina, Koha-Tirana 2010 p. 81-83.

great commotion. According to the well-known Kosovar cleric dr. Lush Gjergji, who had been present at the meeting with Pope John Paul II, together with Don Lucian Avgustini and don Dodë Gjergji, where after the conversation the Pope had stated: “We must all together do something for the Albanian people, for Albania and for Kosovo”<sup>10</sup>. In this aspect, the political concept and philosophy of political thought of Rugova remains incomparable not only in the regional and European dimensions but also more widely.

### **Conclusions**

- Ibrahim Rugova had a historical role in the independence and state building of Kosovo, either as a political leader or as the head of state, from where he received the epithet Historic President, since only death could divide the people with him, and only physically, for Rugovian ideology or rugovism is still in the minds of the people and will serve as the political legacy that future generations will inherit.

- The form of applied leadership, the ideology and the political platform he practiced, in order to keep the people united, to always encourage cooperation with collaborators, to bring together people who wanted the good of the nation and the state, to sacrifice for the good of the country, the wisdom of the word, tolerance in relation to others, as well as on the other hand the persistence and stubbornness to not tolerate anything that goes to the detriment of the state and the nation, with the greatness of his life work made him known not only as Historic President spiritual leader of the people of Kosovo.

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<sup>10</sup> Dr. Don Lush Gjergji, Philosophy and politics according to Dr. Ibrahim Rugova, accessible to: <http://www.illyria.com/filozofia-dhe-politika-sipas-dr-ibrahim-rugoves/> .

- His political and diplomatic philosophy regarding the path followed, for the realization of the long-standing aspiration of the Albanian people of Kosovo, was conceived on the basis of morality, culture and tradition and through these attributes that our nation had, he gave a modern orientation, emphasizing all the time that we are part of Europe, our orientation is there and the fact that we have identity values that make us fit to be where we belong, given that we are a people with a pure history and heritage.

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