

Traditional Chants of the Bulgarian Catholics.
Between *Sacrum* and *Profanum*
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(Summary)

The religious chants comprise the main part of the traditional folklore repertoire of the Bulgarian Catholics, though principally chants do not belong to the folk vocal compo. This is due to the ways of adoption, dissemination, performance, transformation and transmission of the repertoire – it has originated during different courses of time, at different spaces and with different cultural realia, and its basic definition is of being “religious”. The functional aspects of this repertoire, and mainly its connection with the folklore ritual system and with the social and cultural identification, are also substantial. There exists a mutual dependence between the religious chant and the local traditional folk singing as it is seen from the cases of borrowing from folk melodies; the specific sound producing of folk singing and the ornamentation in religious performance; the use of traditional folk instruments in the accompaniment of religious chants; the texts written by local authors close to the style of folk poetry. The influence of folklore is mostly visible in performance. The tendency to use traditional folk singing in religious performance is manifested in two ways: either by fully accepting the folk manner of singing or by borrowing only some of its elements. The most beneficial ground for the adaptation of traditional folk melodies is the carol repertoire and it is analyzed in this text. The presented data only confirm the often stated thesis that one of the most important distinguishing features in the culture of the Bulgarian Catholics – along with their language and literature – is their vocal religious music. And though their traditional repertoire comprises both religious and secular songs, its specific character is preordained beyond doubt by the first group – by the religious chants.