

Music and Dance Folklore in Gabrovsko and Sevlievsko

Nikolay Kauffmann

(Summary)

Nikolay Kauffmann presents the music folklore of two neighbouring communities, Gabrovsko and Sevlievsko, in a comparative and diachronic perspective. The author grew up in Gabrovo, and since his early teen years (14-15) Kauffmann had played as a fligornist in various music bands at weddings, gatherings and other celebrations in the two neighbouring communities. In this way he not only observed, but also participated in the cultural tradition of the studied region.

The interesting cultural differences, emphasized by the author, result from the geographic conditions (the mountain terrain in Gabrovsko and the half-plane terrain of Sevlievsko) predetermining the economic distinctions as well. As a result the two neighbouring regions were developed in time – one as an industrial zone with a booming urban culture (Gabrovo and Gabrovsko), while the other region (Sevlievsko) has preserved the rural culture and consequently – the village music folklore.

Slicing the music folklore is supported by several pillars – the materials from the collection work by Vassil Stoin, recorded during the 20s of the XX century, the author's personal participation in the tradition during the 30s, 40s and 50s of the XX century and the expeditions, in which Kauffmann took part in the 50s until 1997.

His research ended with a nostalgic remark: “The village aroma gradually vanished from the villages and huts, in the town – even more so. It was preserved in the memory and souls of the elder population as a romantic remembrance of a time which I consider to be if not better, than more Bulgarian in comparison to the present...” These words represent the nostalgia for those years in which the Bulgarian ethno-musicologists and ethno-choreologists spent most of their time during the year in villages collecting our priceless cultural heritage – now sleeping in the archives of BAS.