

The Festival of Velingrad “Horo at the Spring” and Safeguarding of Cultural Heritage: Attainments, Problems and Perspectives

Evgenia Grancharova
(Summary)

The subject matter of this paper is a new phenomenon in the Bulgarian contemporary urban culture – folk dance clubs and recently widely popular specialized festivals. Special attention is given to the idea and essence of the clubs for folk dancing (hora) – a specific dance phenomenon from the end of the 20th c. The author briefly presents its nature (objective, idea, motivation, leaders, participants, distinctive signs, repertoire, and expressions). The first attempts at creating a club dance format in Bulgaria were made in the mid 90s, and after 2005 there was a boom of such groups. The research points to problems of interpretation and analysis in the general rethinking of the folk dance club as a cultural phenomenon. The structure of the dance club is presented in detail as well as its distinctive features. The motivation of the founders and participants in the dance clubs is reviewed. The accent is placed on their social aspect.

In the publication a special emphasis is placed upon the discussion and analysis of the First folk dance festival “Horo at the spring” that took place on 14-15 July 2012 in Velingrad. Based on personal observation and participation at the festival the author presents its idea and specificity. For this purpose a specialized fieldwork was carried out, involving interviewing and developing questionnaires. The paper reviews the role of the Velingrad festival for safeguarding and popularizing dance traditions. Problems, accomplishments and perspectives in the task of safeguarding cultural heritage are outlined.

Keywords: folk dance clubs, Velingrad, folk dance festival, cultural heritage, choreographer

Evgenia Grancharova
Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies
with Ethnographic Museum,
Acad. Georgi Bonchev Str., bl. 6
1113 Sofia, BULGARIA
e_grancharova@yahoo.fr