

**The National Festival of Folklore in Koprivshtitsa  
within the Context of a Local Community**

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(Summary)

The article represents the National Festival of Folklore in Koprivshtitsa in the context of a particular local community of the village of Bistritsa, Sofia Region. The work is based on an investigation done in January 2015 in the local *chitalishte* (community cultural centre) by way of semi-structured interview method. The general idea was to offer to the local people the possibility to express their own understandings and interpretations of folk heritage. The authors also pay detailed attention to the processes of transformation in the village tradition easily observable in the 1930s and in the 1940s when they substantially contributed to the processes of transformation of some elements of the local culture into heritage. The text outlines the processes in the local community, the ways by means of which the community presents its culture and understands the necessity of its contemporary safeguarding as a living practice. The influence of the local and national cultural institutions is duly marked, including the influence of the local *chitalishte* and the National Festival of Folklore in Koprivshtitsa. Special attention is also paid to the contribution of these institutions for the conceptualization of the different elements of the interviewees' local culture as a resource for the construction of different nets of identities – cultural, local and national. The text also highlights the basic accents and interpretations in the narratives of the interviewees who discuss the National Festival – its importance as a place for the representation of the elements of their traditional village culture, its role for their preservation, the scenic nature of the Festival and the changes through the years, as well as their personal experiences during the Festival.

**Keywords:** Bistritsa grannies and their grand-daughters group, local community, National Festival of Folklore, *chitalishte*, identity

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