

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC AT FUNERAL RITES IN SETTLEMENTS ALONG THE RIVER DANUBE

SUMMARY

Up until fairly recently, special instrumental melodies were performed at funerals in a group of villages in North-Eastern Bulgaria (Dobrudza). They are played by musicians from the villages on *kaval* (long sheperds' flute) or on *dop* (a type of *duduk*, a sheperd's reed or elderwood flute); and, more rarely, or on other instruments. These melodies were played in the house of the deceased, around his coffin, when carrying the coffin out of the house, and on the way to the graveyard. In some villages there are two *kavali* - players (the village of Alekovo), while in others only one.

Melodies which accompany various stages in the rites differ. The musicians believe that the melodies are of instrumental origin, although some have their origins in keening or laments.

Many songs from northern Bulgaria make mention of funerals: dying maidens, and young men on occasion, always express the wish that *kavali* or *duduk* (for two young men, two *kavali* - players) be played on traditional instruments at funerals was characteristic for the entire region of Northern Bulgaria.