

MUSICAL TRADITIONS AT FUNERALS AND MEMORIAL SERVICES OF THE VLACH AND GAGAUZ PEOPLES IN BULGARIA

SUMMARY

The autor considers musical components which accompany death and memorial services for the departed among the Vlachs (who live on the banks of the Danube in North - Western Bulgaria); and among the Gagauz peoples (settled along the Danube in North - Eastern Bulgaria). A review is made of the rich still-preserved funeral tradition of the Vlachs. Parallels are drawn between the special songs sung by the Vlachs on the occasion of death and their epic songs, between these songs and old epic songs of the Islamised population of the Mid-Balkans, and the Islamised inhabitants of the region around the town of Goce Delčev. It is considered that the most popular epic songs today from Šopluk are not closely allied with the often-mentioned epic "nest". Attention is paid to the characteristic customs associated with Vlachian memorial services for the souls of the dead, when the kolo-dance is performed and gifts are given in their memory during the mayor Christian feasts - Easter, the Feast of the Holy Mother and others.

Laments of the Gagauz people (who speak a language of Turkish origin and are of the Eastern Orthodox faith) are linked by the author with the rich musical tradition of North-Eastern Bulgaria with songs sung around the dining-table and at spinning bees.

D. Kaufman is of the opinion that the mourning traditions of these two ethnic groups, despite language differences, can be included in the folklore tradition of the common music - dialect to which they belong.