
SUMMARY

TRADITIONAL VOCAL MUSIC IN ISTRIA AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 21ST CENTURY: CHARACTERISTICS OF FOUR INDIGENOUS ETHNIC COMMUNITIES

Istria has always been a multi-ethnic turning point. Various peoples fought for it, dwelling on its land. In the distant past, men inhabited its caves, so the Istri began to build forts on top of the hills; this territory was then conquered by the Romans and life was brought back to the sea, where people were manufacturing and spending time in rustic villas on the west coast; a period of turbulent alternation of authorities and peoples followed (Byzantines, Franks, Counts of Gorizia, Patriarchs of Aquileia and others). The last to conquer Istria were the Venetians and the Hapsburgs. At the same time, Istria as a region is situated at the turning point of the paths of major and minor powers, away from Ottoman raids, so that many different cultures have found shelter here at many different stages. The characteristic coexistence encouraged the development of multiculturalism and multilingualism, which have over time evolved into diverse cultural exchanges and interweaving.

Music and singing have always played a very important role in social life; they were and still are a part of everyday life, even though in different ways and to a lesser extent. People sang in squares, at home, at table, among family members, especially during festivals, parties, celebrations and holidays. People also sang in company, thus expressing their origin, their identity, but also their feelings.

Today, however, singing and traditional music no longer have the deep civilizational and connecting role they once had. Over time, these have been lost, the customs and needs of society have changed, but the ones who considered singing important, and wanted to preserve their own and collective roots of society, have organised themselves through folklore societies and still continue to represent what they are and what they feel. Completely forgetting traditional music and folklore and the well-known songs of the native land would mean forgetting yourself.

Traditional music is part of the development of society; it makes society recognizable and unique, it forms the core of its existence; therefore, folklore stage programmes are today set up to present everything unique to a particular culture, that is, its cultural expression.

The field work took place from November 5, 2011 till June 4, 2013, and consisted of collecting materials (audio materials, books and/or monographs, information about four ethnic groups) and interviews with each of these groups. The interviews were recorded as audio material, and photographic documentation was made.

In this paper four ethnic groups are presented, including their music programmes, a classification of the ways of singing songs as well as a list of songs they sing that have survived to this day.

Keywords: preservation and valorisation, musical revival, ethnic groups, regions in a multicultural context, linguistic-geographical-musical stratification of Istria.