

Traditional Folk Art in the Northern Region from Bulgaria by Elitsa Dimitrova Zaverdzhieva

#CODANEC YOUTH COMPETITION #My Culture My Story

Part I: Bulgarian Folk dancing

Northern Ethnographic Area Bulgaria is divided into six folklore regions (Shopska, Thracian, Rhodope, Pirin, Dobrudzha, Northern folklore region) and each of them has its own specificities. As a person living in the Northern region, I decided to share a bit more about my native land.

Bulgarian folk art is the common name for the works of art and cultural achievements traditionally passed down from generation to generation of Bulgarians.

Bulgarian folk dance art is a vivid expression of our national character. The dances of the Shopians, Northerners, Rodopes, Dobrudja and Thracians are an integral part of it and reflect the creative giftedness of the Bulgarian people. The dances of the Bulgarian are one of the vivid and mass manifestations of his artistic creativity, created by his creative genius over hundreds of years. As for the folk dances of the northern region, there are many factors that have conditioned their development to reach the form in which we know them now. The path of their development has been long and complex. It is assumed that the folk dances of the north crystallised on the basis of the culture of the Thracians, Slaves and some other tribes who reached our lands at a certain historical period. North dances are characterised by wide movements, free swinging of the arms and a lot of hopping. This area is very rich in people in different rhythms and beats. There are many paidushki, grancharski, daichovi, gankini and elenini hora. Their variations are extremely varied in movement and complexity, but there is a volubility, whirl and lightness in all. Many of these dances have become popular throughout the country. Such are the Severnyashko (Turnovsko), Svishtovsko, Elenno mome, Daichovo, Gankino and others.

Part II: Traditional Folk Clothing in the Northern Folklore Region in Bulgaria

The costume in the northern region is different according to whether the population is from the mountains or the plains. It also changes during the winter and summer seasons. Each settlement has its own characteristic features in clothing, expressed in the cut, fabric, colours, embroidery used, etc. However, despite the great variety, they all boil down to the double-breasted and cloth-covered female costume and the white-clothed male costume.

The double-cloth female costume is worn mainly in summer and, in some settlements on the plain, throughout the year. It consists of a white shirt, a back ruffled woollen apron called a bruchnik, a front apron and a belt.

The veil is in most cases a white cloth. Most often the hair is braided. The head is decorated with coins, flowers, beads, multicolored threads, etc. In many places hats are worn, mostly by the brides. In general, the hairstyle, headscarf and head decoration depend on the age of the woman and her marital status.