

THE IMPORTANCE OF EASTERN RELIGIONS'
CALENDARS FOR THE RHYTHM
OF ANNUAL FOLK SONGS
IN SLAVIC COUNTRIES

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In case of the considered herein problem the base for conclusions is formed by the results of research in the sphere of narrow-range melodies in Slavic¹ countries. This material turns out to have been determined by a series of eastern religions' calendars and the agricultural and horticultural rhythm.

According to the obtained data the narrow-range material is marked by several types of functional determinations. Especially typical for the Ukrainians and southern Slavs are the relations with the annual repertoire. They are particularly characteristic of the songs with a very narrow ambitus. Strong relations with the calendar cycle (annual feast days) are very typical of the Slavs following the eastern ritual. This is best reflected in the convention adopted by the Russians and Bulgarians: namely, the one of arranging annual songs according to the cycle of calendar feast days. This cycle starts from Christmas including Advent period (i. e. from the beginning of the old church year) and lasts till the end of June, i. e. till St. Peter's day. The church calendar songs are put in the first place in the Bulgarien, and in some of the other collections, which — as can be assumed — points out the importance of this repertoire, at least in the opinion of their author. The collections of Vasil Stoin reveal the presence of 16 types of calendar songs², corresponding to the cycle of the church year. They are as follows: Christmas songs (carols), St. Vasil's day songs of all-the-best-wishes (St. Basil's day — New Year), St. Lazarus' day songs (Example 1), 40 Martyrs' day songs, songs on the occasions of the last Sunday of Carnival, Easter, the first and second Sundays of Lent, the eve of St. Jeremy's day, the eve of St. George's day (Example 2), Whitsuntide, the eve of St. John's and St. Peter's day. In the Russian reper-

¹ A. Czekanowska: *Melodie wskiego zakresu w krajach słowiańskich*. Kraków 1972.

² V. Stoin: *Narodni Pesni ot Timok do Vita*. Sofia 1928. Also *Bylgarski Narodni Pesni ot Istočna i zapadna Trakija*. Sofija 1929; and others.