

course of the ritual the following melodies are played. *Hod (Alaj Bej)* – played on the road, but in Manolov's opinion it is a true dance, performed after two melodies: an original *Rusalia* one and a second one resembling a Turkish march. *Hod avasi* ends by the tremolo of the drum corresponding to the ritual inspection of the set done by the axe man. The melody that follows is "the first true *Rusalia* dance" – in a slow tempo, which accelerates step by step. The *Rusalia* spin with arms bent in elbows and kept close to the body, and with raised scimitars. The melody of the second *Rusalia* dance contrasts with the first one. It has a slow and a fast movement. The third *Rusalia* melody is known as *Patruno* – which is an instrumental version of a local song. The fourth *Rusalia* melody is called *Boyna* probably after the name of the district Bojmia west of Kukush. This melody is popular also outside the *Rusalia* cycle as an accompaniment of the heavy *horos*, wherein the dancers are holding their arms instead of holding scimitars [Манолов, 1987:98-108]. Latter the same author defines *Boyna* as the second *Rusalia* in CD albums with *zurna* music compiled by him [D.11, D.13].

Nowadays the *Rusalia* can be seen only in their folklorized variant performed at folklore fairs and concerts. The *Rusalia* dances in Petrich mix with the masquerade ones. The set of the *frangalia* intermingle with those of *stanchinari* both in the dances and feasts between Christmas and Epiphany, whose culmination is *Surva*⁶ on the New Year day with a carnival procession in the centre of the town.

A study on the local customs and habits describes the celebration of this ritual during the recent years. Each neighbourhood in Petrich forms its own group of 30 to 80 people. Fifteen years ago the group used to be composed of youths and men only, but nowadays it may also include girls dressed in folk costumes. Among the main personages in the group are: two *zurnaci*, one *tapanci*, about twenty *frangalia*, about 20 *stanchinari*, 10-15 *lasses*, a *bride*, *devils*, *Araps*, an *ashman*, *bear-tamers* and a *bear*, an *old man* with his *old wife*, a *donkey* or a *camel*, *priests*, *doctors*, etc. The *stanchinari* are dressed in skins with the fur out, with belts carrying large bells holding rods or wooden scimitars. The *frangalia* are in white shirts, white tight trousers, a red waistband, *chepen* (a sleeveless jacket with wings richly embroidered) and a white pleated skirt called *fustanela/franga*. The preparation for *Surva* begins a month before the festival. Both *stanchinari* and *frangalia* gather every day to practice the *horos* and the games to be performed as well as to prepare their costumes. On January 1, the axe man gets out on the neighbourhood square accompanied by the *zurnaci* and *tapanci* who play the *Rusalia* signal till the whole set of *Rusalia* and *stanchinari* has gathered. They form three columns: the *tapanci* is marching ahead the middle column with *zurnaci* walking on both his sides. Behind the *tapanci* march the *lasses* and behind the *zurnaci* come the *frangalia*, followed by the *stanchinari* and *devils*; by their side walk the *Araps*. In this order the group goes around the houses in the neighbourhood. Along the way the *lasses* and the *frangalia* dance to the melody of *Alaj* and *First Rusalia Horo*. The masters of the houses give presents to the set. Sometimes they pay the axe man and order a *horo* to be played for them, most often it is *Gaida avasi*, the younger people order *Shirto*, *Kavraki Leno*, etc. The set stops at every crossroads and the *frangalia* and *lasses* dance *horos*. Having gone around the neighbourhood, the set makes its way to the centre of the town. Then a kind of a competition begins between the groups representing the different neighbourhoods. All of them make efforts to kidnap the *bride* of the other set. The culmination of the feast is at the town square. In order to produce the best presentation as the most beautiful, largest, dancing *horos* most skillfully, each group tries to occupy as more room as