

Annual Carnival Bell Ringers? Pageant from the Kastav Area

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During the Carnival period (between the 17th of January and Ash Wednesday), about ten groups of men in the Kastav area march through their own and surrounding villages in processions via traditional routes, several kilometers long.



Some wear masks and others different headgear symbolizing vegetation and fertility. They all have sheepskin throws turned inside-out and bells, after which they were named. They ring with the bells by moving in different ways, which requires certain skill and physical endurance. Therefore it is considered that not just anyone can become a bell ringer. Although, on one hand, visibly embodying the ancient magical meaning of a ritual, which should invite fertility at the end of winter, this custom is still very much alive even today. By enabling interaction of a group of bell ringers (and the people following them in their procession) with the inhabitants of the villages they pass on their way, the ritual maintains and stresses the social significance and function of mutual relationships between villages in the Kastav region, which is extremely important for the cohesion of the villages in which the ritual takes place. Bell ringers are from Bregi, Brgud, Halubje, Mu?i?i, Mune, Rukavac, Zvone?a, ?ejane, Frlanija, Vlahov Breg, Korensko.

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