

Two Masters, One Style: An Ethnomusicological Reading of Authorship Conflicts among Drummers in Bulgarian Wedding Bands

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This article examines the problem of authorship in Bulgarian wedding drumming styles through the lens of ethnomusicological concepts of collective creativity, musical transmission, and processes of cultural legitimisation. The study is based on fieldwork conducted between 2022 and 2025, including interviews, participant observation, and audiovisual documentation involving professional wedding drummers from different generations. Through an analysis of the dispute between Paicho Ivanov and Salif Ali concerning authorship claims over specific stylistic innovations, the article demonstrates that wedding drumming styles are shaped through collective musical interaction, improvisation, imitation, and competition, with individual contributions acquiring significance through recognition by the professional community. The study argues that authorship in this musical practice functions not as ownership of particular performance models but as a dynamic process of constructing musical authority, prestige, the symbolic representation of stylistic traditions constructed within a context of collective creativity.

Keywords: *ethnomusicology, wedding music, drumming styles, authorship*

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