

Strandzha (Burgas). Though the information concerns various regions in Bulgaria, the manifestations of *zurnaci* music mentioned are incidental and can be hardly called a resistant tradition. Today Southwest Bulgaria is the only region in the country wherein *zurnaci* music lives as a continuing and self-renovating tradition.

The tradition now is understood not only as a festive utility in the rituals and festivity of the population but as the living practice of *zurnaci* musicians or that of *zurna* manufacturers. We have registered this tradition in about twenty Southwest Bulgarian villages. Along the Struma river these are: the town of Petrich and the surrounding villages of Kavrakirovo and Yavornitsa; the town of Sandanski and the nearby villages of Valkovo, Dzhigurovo, Sklave, Mikrevo; the village of Krupnik, Simitli region; and the town of Blagoevgrad. Along the Mesta river the localities in which we registered the *zurnaci* tradition are: the town of Gotse Delchev and the surrounding villages of Garmen, Debren, Dabnitsa, Hadzhidimovo, Dolno Dryanovo, Tuhovishta, Kornitsa; the town of Razlog, the town of Belitsa, and the village of Eleshnitsa. The greatest number of *zurnacies* is in the Pirin region. Some places like Petrich, Kavrakirovo and Razlog have several *zurnaci* bands.

Who needs this book and why? The *zurnacies* need it less than us listeners and those who have not heard *zurnaci* music. Those who apply labels, and people like us who try to erase the labels need it, as well as those who experience this music and those who interpret it with their reason. Regardless of the abundance of historical and political vicissitudes, the *zurnaci* tradition that has lasted for centuries on Bulgarian lands and has never ceased. The present day dynamics of socio-cultural, technological and ethnic processes seem to be changing it more than ever. An academic interpretation of the *zurnaci* tradition today is necessary, not so much in its role of an expedition to save a practice in extinction. In fact the *zuranacilik* is not in extinction, but is changing and reducing. Therefore it is more worth investigating the music phenomena as they occur. The last decades have been changing the music in the *zurnaci* tradition, but first of all they have been affecting its images and symbols. It is enough to have a look at the context where the *zurna* is played: weddings, *sünnets* (circumcision ceremonies), wrestling competitions, *sabors*, festivals, meetings, demonstrations, images in the literature and cinema. All these make it more than just a musical instrument. The task of the contemporary researcher is to interpret *zurnaci* music both as a fact and a process as well as a musical and social phenomenon. The study on the *zurnaci* tradition involves the analyses of its organological and musical characteristics, as well as on its anthropological ethnic and symbolic aspects. The book is an attempt to answer the questions: What kind of instrument is the *zurna*? What is this music and whom does it belong to? Why does it evoke controversial attitudes ranging from love to hatred?

The tasks and aims thus marked determine the structure of the monograph. Its main part contains an Introduction and six chapters. The Appendix (which is of the same value) offers different illustrations.

The First Chapter presents the *zurna* in the world and in the Balkans as a history, distribution and a scope for study. The remaining chapters deal with the *zurna* and *zurnaci* tradition in Southwest Bulgaria. The first of these chapters is on the organologic aspects of the local *zurnas*. The scope of the following chapter is the anthropology of *zuranacilik* – the musicians – in terms of social status, professional roles and skills. It also presents the famous *zurnacies* from the region. After the emphases on the instrument and the musician, the study in the fourth chapter is directed at the music, treated as a perform-