

ORGANOLOGY

The zurna is the richest instrument of all.

Demcho Kurtov

Not any tree will give a sound.

Yusuf Limanov

SYSTEMATIZATION

The *zurna* known in the Bulgarian land is a wooden wind instrument, that according to the Hornbostel and Sachs could be related to the group of airphones /4/, namely wind instruments /42/ of the shalmay (oboe) type with a bilamellate reed, /422.1/ separate oboe /422.11/, with conic cannell and finger holes N422.112 of the systematic table [Хорнбостель&Закс, 1987:254-259]. The Bulgarian *zurna* similar to that in Turkey is put into the group of reed-pipes with a bilamelatte concussion reed (*piska*) having a conic, stepped or stepped and conical bore /422.112.2/ [Picken, 1975:458].

Vergiliy Atanasov's systematization of Bulgarian folk music instruments (made according to the principal of the nature of vibrating matter and according to the historic data about the occurrence of the types of the music instruments) includes the *zurna* in the major group of airphones from the subclass with finger holes and resonatory tube [Атанасов, 1977:135].

The wooden wind instruments with a bilamelatte concussion reed are among the most ancient ones and are spread worldwide. Since the remote past they have been known everywhere but in America and Central Africa [Reck, 1997:118]. According to Sachs the instrument of the shalmay type did exist during the Neolithic Age [Атанасов, 1977:39]. Instruments like the *zurna* were a part of the music culture of Ancient Egypt, Assiro-Babylonia, Ancient Greece, China and India during the Bronze Age.

Comparing the ancient Greek *avlos* and the Indian *sahnai* with the Balkan *zurna* of nowadays one finds the similarity between the various bilamelatte concussion reed wind instruments. This similarity is in the common process of sound producing. The similarity is first of all in the inner space of the instrument wherein the sound vibrates, not that much in its outer form. The sound produced by the bilamelatte concussion reed instruments has common characteristics – it is nasal, shrilling, and strong. Due to these features the instruments find use in identical situations in the different cultures. The conic Turkish *zurna* and its music “brothers and cousins” from North Africa, the Middle East, Asia is being utilized at weddings, funerals, family feasts, festivals, celebrations; the *rgya-glin* in Tibet, the Korean *sona* and the Japanese instrument with a cylindrical shape *hichiriki* sound at the religious and court ceremonies [Reck, 1977:119]. All these instruments are played in the open air for large audiences and that is the greatest similarity between the *zurna* and its close and distant “relatives” over the world.

DENOMINATIONS

Nayden Gerov in his Dictionary of the Bulgarian Language has given a parallel usage of the names “*zurna*”, “*zurla*” and “*surna*” explaining that the story goes about “a pipe, it