

process”⁵ when the *zurnas* were banned, the local mayors did not forbid him to play [M.K., p.25]. A *zurnaci*-maestro from Kavrakirovo is demanded by the activists from the *chitalishte*, the dancers and the organizers of the cultural life in Petrich and the villages around it. He is demanded not only to accompany the amateur ensembles when performing at local feasts and festivals, but to teach the young dancers as well.

The statement that the musicians (from traditional culture to contemporary jazz music) occupy both a high importance and a low social status has been established in ethnomusicology [Merriam, 1964:134-136]. The *zurnaci*-maestro has a double social position: on the one hand, he is acknowledged and well paid; on the other hand, he is been treated like a servant doing a non-serious job, humiliated and maltreated. The *zurnacies* from Kavrakirovo are proud of the fact that their grandfathers used to be demanded by the men of the day – *vojvodas*, *komiti*⁶ and Turkish notables: “A great master was my granddad. He played even to *vojvodas*. In those days to the *vojvodas* of the Turks” [Д.К., 10/2001, p.49]. There is, however, another story about them being treated like servants and subjected to violence: “The musicians play theirs. There is a pistol by his side – he is playing. My granddad told me. He says: “A *komita* was holding his revolver by my head here – and I am playing. Where can I go!” [C.Д., 08/2001, p.9]. An old *tapanci* remembers how in the 1930-s and 1940-s the musicians used to be waken at midnight to play to “the *komiti* from the IMRO”, often free of charge, sometimes even being beaten. The police instead of defending the *zurnacies* punished them [K.K., p.54]. Obviously at that time the Roma from Razlog did not have a high social status – an old townsman tells about “the poverty of the musician, though they used to be a bit richer than the others (Roma – n.a.)” – “Muteto takes his children to play and is happy, when they are given food and drinks in the “master’s house” [C.B., p.39]. There are many cases mentioned by the musicians when they were disgraced (cursed and offended) and maltreated by drunken wedding guests or football fans at the matches where they had been commissioned to play. Today they are also telling about it: “My colleagues have been beaten, even the *zurnas* ‘ve been broken, the *tapans*’ve been broken” [Д.К., 03/2001, p.27].

Expansion beyond region, culture and boundaries

Unlike the folklore tradition, the skill of the professional musician expands beyond the regional and sometimes beyond the ethnic aspect [Тодоров, Т, 1989:29-30].

The names of famous *zurnacies* are known not only in their villages and regions but also in settlements quite distant from Southwest Bulgaria. For example, the Kavrakirovo *zurnacies* are praised maestros and demanded in Razlog, Belitsa, Gotse Delchev, Sofia. Famous *zurnacies* from Gotse Delchev tell of being commissioned to play at weddings in Northeast Bulgaria and Thracia. Under the conditions of folklorism many *zurnacies*-maestros play with folk ensembles and participate in regional, national and international events, namely the gathering “Pirin pee” and that in Koprivshtitsa, the Masquerade Festival in Pernik, festivals and carnivals in Macedonia, France, Belgium, Finland.

Like their ancestors, the contemporary players possess the typical characteristic features of a professional: expansion of their skill over the regional boundaries. The Kurtovs, *zurnacies* from Kavrakirovo, have clan legends about the origin of their ancestors and their migrations. “It’ a bit of mixture with us. My grand-grand-granddad used to be a pure Greek” [Д.К., 10/2001, p.31] – in this statement the Greek connection of one of them is both genealogical and an explanation of similarities in the style and repertoire of the *zurnacies*