

*parmak*, he answered: “He has the gift to do it. Everybody wants it but can’t have it. Three men only have that finger position, Shein’s [Д.К., 10/2001, p.54]. Samir himself explains: “Well, it’s a gift. I saw I could do it and I tried his finger... I listened when he checked the *zurna*. And when I check it myself, I do the same thing. It comes to me. I have a gift for it, somehow” [C.K., 10/2001, p.54].

An important element of the *zurnaci* manner of playing is the mouth and breathing technique, which the musicians call *jaw* and *blowing*. The breathing, the bite and the combination of these with the finger technique are developed together in the individual style of every separate player, but the level of development, agility and combination determine the quality of the individual style. The musicians stress upon the role of breathing in sound production. According to them, if there is one thing that tells one player from another, it is not the finger position but the *blow*. The breathing techniques are acquired in the course of learning, in practice, intuitively, but they can also be learned from other *maestri*.

The musicians from Kavrakirovo add another component of the individual style of the *maestro*, namely the skill to play in fast tempos. The combination of clearly articulated and fast and technical performance is valued.

The various individual styles are unique versions of the local instrumental folklore style [Касанская, 1988:87]. The fieldwork with *zurnaci* musicians confirms this claim. Of course, the mechanical sum of various individual styles of performance does not give the local folklore *zurnaci* style. It often happens that famous musicians having impressive individual styles are demanded in a certain region even though they come from another. The young representative of the Kurtovs from Kavrakirovo, Samir, is often hired to play in settlements of the Razlog and Gotse Delchev regions where the style is different from that typical of Kavrakirovo.

In interviews, the musicians associate change in style predominantly with the individual peculiarities of the talented player.

The local audience of today definitely prefers players who demonstrate speed, technical virtuosity and impressive interpretation of modern repertoire. Unlike the mass audience, the musicians place holding to the specific regional style high in their evaluation scale. In a conversation about famous and demanded players from the town of Gotse Delchev we gained the following information: “If we speak about technique, about speed, you know – take those from Kavrakirovo. But we don’t care for it, don’t care about speed... When it comes to modern music, he’s better. Can you see, not that he’s a better musician... We here want the music to sound luxurious” [A.M., p.29]. Such a view is characteristic of the values of traditional music, which place the respect for what has been inherited above innovation, the local above the foreign and in this particular case the local above the individual.

Unlike this case, however, in other “rang lists” of musicians from Gotse Delchev the performers of the native local style are placed below the *zurnacies* from Petrich. The former are less demanded (mainly for *old rites*); usually the latter are hired. “Petrich, we know them. Shein and that young boy, Samir. Well, they are more skilful and modern than our *zurnas*. Yes, that boy, Samir, is great. They even invite them here and it’s mainly them who play here. When the elders do their rites, they hire our *zurnacies*. But if there’s wedding, like, with young people, we go for them ‘cause they are skilful” [C.M., p.22].