

on end medleys composed of fast *horos*, immediately reacting to the dancers' orders (sometimes given only by a gesture made with the fingers). These specific musician skills, manifested in dance accompaniment, attest to the unique qualities of the *zurnacies* – high professionalism, acquired in tuition and practice, and psychological disposition to follow and react to the wish of the audience.

The practical knowledge of the *zurnacies* about the local dances is also illustrated by the information about their grouping together that can be found in their speech. According to the *zurnacies* there are *old* and *new* dances. When they speak about the old ones, they usually associate them with heavy *horos*, locked *horos*, *komitski horos*. In the Petrich region these definitions are ascribed to the following *horos*: *Bichak*, *Eski Drama*, *Danki*, *Boyna*, *Arnaut*, *Aznatar*, *Ispaiche*, *Arap* and *Rusalia plays*. In the Razlog region these are the *Chorbadzhiysko* and *Shumarsko*. In the Gotse Delchev region they are *Uch ayak*, *Drama*, *Kasnak* and *Kushak*. Usually the players speak of “male” *horos* but they also mention female ones, accompanied by *zurnas*: *Aci belik* and *Selenik* from the Petrich region, *Aydar* from the Gotse Delchev region. When they speak of the rest of the *horos* from the traditional repertoire, some *zurnacies* place them lower in the hierarchy of the dances: “These are children’s plays. *Sharen chorap* – this is not a dance” [C.Д., 08/2001, p.4]. Still, most of the *maestri* playing at *sabors* and knowing well the most often ordered today *horos* of the *sabor* (mixed) type, appreciate highly this part of their repertoire. When describing playing at a wedding in a village in the Ograzhden mountain, a *zurnaci* characterizes the *horo* as “big, 150 men do a *horo*” and beautiful – “*horo* – partridges, they dance a lot!” [Д.К. 10/2001, p.27].

In the dance repertoire of the *zurnaci* formations the role of the *tapanci* is important. The *zurnacies* interviewed were confident that if the *tapanci* “doesn’t know how to knock”, they cannot play *horos* at *sabors* or weddings. Drum players from modern orchestras claim that very few people, only the *tapancies* from *zurnaci* formations, can perform the rhythm of the old traditional dances. There are cases when the *tapancies* become dancers, too. We have recorded two samples from the Gotse Delchev region in which the *tapancies* both play and dance – *Kasnak* and *Taushan avasi*.

Our observations show that there are several tendencies in the contemporary state of the dance practice with *zurnaci* accompaniment, based upon local *horos*. A great part of the old heavy *horos* are not actively danced in situations of spontaneous dancing. Some (like *Bergama*) have been forgotten, while others are presented only on stage by amateur or professional dance ensembles. The *zurnacies* come to be one of the last people who know and carry them (both as music and dance movements). There are cases in which sex dimorphism as a norm in tradition is broken, and women join the heavy male *horos*. In today’s dance practice of the population from the Pirin region the local *horos* are only part of the repertoire; the mixed, *saborski horos* predominate.

Despite the reduction of the local *horos* in the active dance repertoire in South-west Bulgaria, the memory of the inherited traditional dances goes on living through the *zurnaci* musicians.

#### Common Bulgarian dances

As professionals performing beyond-regional repertoire, the *zurnaci* maestri also accompany folklore dances typical of other regions of Bulgaria. Some of them have entered the traditional *zurnaci* repertoire determined by the local dance practice: *Ratchenitsa* in the