

music is played and the feast may last all night long. On Wednesday – “the day before the wedding” – the groom goes with the matchmakers to ask for the bride and takes her home. The procession is again lead by the *zurnacies* and *tapancies*. Then come horse riders with banners and guns, criers, the *koums*¹, the banner carrier and the matchmakers. In the evening the future in-laws are at the festive table laid in the groom’s house, enjoying themselves to the sound of *zurnaci* music again. The next day the procession goes to the church. The matrimonial ceremony is followed by the ritual of the bride’s introduction to the house of her husband. It is *zurnaci* music that marks the beginning of the festive wedding dinner. The *zurnacies*, who have been playing in the yard up to that moment, are now invited inside while the wine and the dishes are served. The feast lasts till dawn when the newly wed wife goes again with a ritual procession and music “to bring water”. The feasts, with music and receptions, move to the house of the bride’s parents and are transformed by the end of the week into a common village carnival. In the case with the common village weddings in Galichnik, taking place from Monday to Sunday about St. Peter’s Day (29 June)), the *zurnaci* music acts like a marker of the beginning, the end and a number of very important events of the actual wedding rituals [Kyба, 1992:213-226; Църнушанов, 1956:355].

The musicians (*zurnaci* and *tapanci*) play a similar ritualistic part at the traditional wedding in the district of Debar. At the first night of the wedding the bride brings water to her parents’ home for the last time, accompanied by the *zurnaci* and *tapanci* who have been sent by the groom. On the next day, with *zurnas*, *tapans* and gunshots, a procession led by the groom takes the bride from her home. On the day of the matrimonial ceremony *zurnaci* music plays at the festive table and dances (*horos*) at the home of the groom. On the morning following the first night of the newly-married couple the *zurnas* mark the event: the *zurnacies* play for the young husband while the girls sing to the young wife. *Zurnaci* music also marks the expansion of the family feast into a common village one: “At about noon’d every wedding get to the village’s middle; they’d hang cross-like banners and wuld burst from all sides *tapans* and *surnas* and so till dark there’d be *ora* drawing and mocking, a whole fair’d be midvillage” [Цепенков, 1998:85].

According to the tradition in the Razlog district the weddings are held only in winter. The actual wedding rituals begin on the Thursday preceeding the wedding with inviting the *koums* and then the family friends and relatives. The feasts at both houses, the groom’s and the bride’s, are on Saturday night. Accompanied by music – *zurnas* and *tapans* or bagpipes and tambourines – the wedding-guests go to the girl’s house to fetch gifts and play *horo* in the yard of the girl’s house. Then, to the sound of music and carrying the gifts, they go to the groom’s house where the musicians play for the ritual dinner and *horo*. On Sunday morning, the groom having shaved, the wedding participants form a festive procession lead by pipes to the bride’s home. She is taken out of her home again to the sound of music. Then the procession makes its way to the church with *zurnas* and *tapans* ahead. The musicians also lead the procession to the home of the *koums* and after the matrimonial ritual when the wedding-guests return to the groom’s house. The bride’s dowry is brought to her husband’s house once more to the sound of *zurnas* and *tapans*. The music plays during the festive dinner, then for the afternoon *horos* and finally after sunset when the *koums* are accompanied to their home with the gifts received from the bride and her mother-in-law. On Monday afternoon the wedding-guests gathered at the girl’s home are taken to the groom’s house and music is being played. Then comes the last