

possible at the square. A circle is made. The musicians and the *stanchinari* are in its centre while the *lasses* and the *frangalia* dance *horos*. In the recent years due to the increased number of participants (11 groups are said to be active in Petrich), the groups present the ritual one after another on a stage and are being judged by a jury. The feast ends with the groups going back to their neighbourhoods where they make large *horos* at the local squares and dance till dark [ЦВЕТКОВ, 2000:16-27].

According to Valery Zhganev, a leader of a dance ensemble, the masks and the procession are the determining factors in the *Surva* rituals: "We go from a neighbourhood to neighbourhood, visiting the houses and greeting the people with the New Year. In our neighbourhood, then we go to the other. Finally all the groups in Petrich, since they gather about 7-8 from the whole town, meet at the town square. And I on the tribune dance – present the same program... It's about 10 A.M., but the groups go out earlier. In the early morning. We visit the houses starting at 6 AM till about ten". Asked about the music and musical instruments, the informant replied simply: "With *zurnas*. *Rusalia* music" [Б.Ж., p.4-5].

Selim Demirov the *zurnaci* from Kavrakirovo – one of the oldest and most refined musicians, accompanying the *Rusalia* games, says that he has learnt the melodies and their order from Ilia Vretenarov: "Bay⁷ Ilia the Small Spindle, he died. The old man, he's who gave the dances about us here, from Petrich. These dances are from him. All are from Bay Ilia". Selim gives the Roma musician's view upon the *Rusalia* ritual tradition: "The *Rusalia* are seven melodies. First it is *Turkish march*. The *First Rusalia*, the *Second Rusalia*. And there is a *Third* one. Then there is time when they fight with knives. There is *Patruno*. And there is one more... The most important, I'll give you at the end *Körolu* – that means a blind boy, the way they fight. There are knives here and there are scimitars here, and there are pistols here. That's called *Körolu*. We make it about 36 times... The boy that fights was injured blind in the war. And the *Rusalia* fight with knives. But this is a nice dance" [С.Д., 08/2001, p.3-4].

The *zurnaci* musicians have their own explanation of the *Rusalia* dances. For them those dances are not mystic but *komitski*⁸, connected with the historicism of the liberation struggle. Selim by association attaches one of the heavy male *horos* played with knives in Petrich (*Körolu*) to the *Rusalia* cycle. For another *zurnaci* – Demcho Kurtov (whose repertoire consists mainly of old Bulgarian melodies) – the "true *Rusalia*" are those which he has played on stage in Sofia, Blagoevgrad and Plovdiv. In a conversation about the old traditions the *zurnaci* says: "There is no one to present the old *Rusalia*. Only the dance ensembles perform them... I am a performer there. My father, my brother Shain has also played. The *Rusalia*, you see, they are in white short skirts. They get themselves out of our place the Pirin region. Wait a bit. Bay Ilia (Vretenarov) used to say to me, God save his soul, that the *Rusalia* go out of Prosenik, from Greek Macedonia, or from Yugoslavian, who knows, Gorni Poroy and so on, in Greece... They fought with the Turks, with the Turks they fought! Those days, in Turkish times! They go out to fight again on such a square, for a fair, but the *Rusalia* defeat them, they begin a knife fight... That's a struggle for liberation of the Bulgarians, in fact. Like Hristo Botev with his band got out!" [Д.К., 10/2001, p.14].

Selim and his group, as well as Demcho, are musicians preferred to play for the *Rusalia* games and the heavy male *horos* – unique Petrich tradition, still existing within the frames of the *Surva* festival and the presentations at the folklore fairs, concerts and festi-