

the 1980s the masquerade plays are reestablished as an Easter feast for the whole village [Д.Д., p.73]. The carnival in Eleshnitsa similarly to those in the other places proceeds like a competition – each of the neighbourhoods has its own group. Each masked set plays in its neighbourhoods on the Holy Sunday morning and at about noon joins the other in the centre of the village. Having in mind the competitive character of carnival in Eleshnitsa, one can understand why the local *zurnaci* cannot meet the requirements of their fellow townsmen who would rather hire famous musicians from Razlog and Petrich.

#### Gergjovden (The Day of St. George)

The Day of St. George is celebrated by both Bulgarians and Christian Roma, as well as by Muslim Roma and Turks.

Being an official holiday of the town of Petrich, it is celebrated with large *horos* and wrestlings, and is always accompanied by *zurnaci* playing. There is not special music for this ritual. The musicians play the most beloved local *horos* and the melodies for wrestling. During the recent twenty-thirty years the neighbourhoods of Petrich have established special grounds – *horishta* where on the Day of St. George the *zurnaci* play and the *horos* are danced [ЦВЕТКОВ, 2000:28]. A citizen of Petrich, a well-known horo dancer, describes the feast as follows: “On the day of St. George, May 6, we gather on three clearings over the town. It is an official holiday then – nobody works in town. There are *zurnas* here and there are *zurnas* on the other clearing, over there, too. Everybody goes, everybody’s free to dance *horo*. We have learnt to dance there (How do you celebrate – Bulgarians and Gypsies together or separately? In your neighbourhoods?) All together. There is not segregation here. In alliance, together. (Is there wrestling on the Day of St. George?) There is. There is a church in Dalboshtnitsa, St. George it is called. The *horos* are danced there and the wrestling is there. *Kurban*<sup>12</sup> is made and served to the people. May 6, it is an official holiday in this town” [Б.Ж., p.6].

#### Parish holidays

The tradition in Petrich requires celebrating the parish holidays with *zurnas* and *horos* in the church yards. Each parish holiday of the five parish churches in the town (St. George, St. Nicolaus, Holy Mother, St. Elias, and St. Parasqueva) end with *horos* and common merrymaking. The Day of St. Mary’s birth (September 8) or *Rogen* is the patron’s holiday of the Holy Mother church. Then the trustees of the church commission the *tapans* and *zurnas*. On the eve of the holiday and on the following day big *horos* are danced. The guests from the villages in the Orgrazhden and Maleshevska mountains join the citizens of Petrich in their dances. D. Bozhanin (a citizen of Petrich) tells about the celebrations in the 1940s and 1950s: “Music used to play at several places on *Rogen* – a bagpipe, *kemane*, but mostly *zurnas*... And when the *zurna* played, male *horos* used to start – everybody watched – now they do not play it the same way in the ensemble – they cut with the legs this way, stretch them, squat like a thread” [ЦВЕТКОВ, 2000:29].

#### Village Fairs

As a tradition, the *zurnaci* play at the village fairs in the region of Petrich held on the great Christian holidays – the Days of St. George, Holy Mother, Elias, Parasquevy, etc. The fair in Kamalovo is on the day of St. Heremia (may 2), in Muletarovo and Churichane on Holy Mother’s Day (August 15) while the one in Kavrakirovo is on the day of St.