

settlement, where the collective celebrating could be also referred to as a sign of the collective identity, as a factor preserving and distinguishing the ethnos.

In the region of research there are several types of Muslim communities with different self-identity.

The ethnic Turks are a small part of the local Muslims and inhabit a small number of villages – Hvosjtane, Dabnitsa, Kamena, Blatska, etc.).

The Bulgarian Muslims and Roma Muslims are the larger groups. The former ethnonym requires precision. Further in the text we will use the ethnonyms Bulgarian Muslims and *Pomaks* for denominating a compact Bulgarian-speaking but Muslim population. They are called Bulgarian Mohammedans in scientific literature. The dialect term *Ahreni* is also used. The representatives of this population self-identify themselves not only as part of a religious minority but as an ethno-confessional community and do not accept the biased terms, most of them being exonyms given to them by the others ethnoses. According to our musicians-informants the Bulgarian Muslims call themselves *Pomaks* and inhabit the Mesta river valley (along Checha as they say) [A.M., p.48].

The Roma Muslims in this region have differentiated into two groups whose tastes to *zurnaci* music are not the same. The former, living along the Struma river are known by the exonyms *Turkish Gypsies* and *Egiuptsi* while they call themselves *Erlia* and *horohane*. The latter, living in the Mesta river valley call themselves *Turks*. The authorities in Gypsy studies have determined them as “having a Turkish self identification” [Марушиакова, 1992:116; Попов, 1992:23]. For the rest they are *millet* as the Turks call them. All the Turks do not accept them as belonging to their ethnic group, while for the Bulgarians they are simply *Gypsies*. The endonyms used by the musicians interviewed for those people from Southwest Bulgaria are *Turks* and *Muslims*. The musicians from the suburb Komsala of Gotse Delchev usually identify themselves like this: “They considered us *Gypsies* but we are not. If I do not speak a certain language... What am I – I identify myself as a *Turk*. You see now, there are very few *Gypsies* in our neighbourhood. They have migrated, they were not real natives... Theirs used to speak Gypsy language” [A.M., p.28-29]. We should note the dual identity of these people – often the members of the group call themselves *Turks* to put themselves apart from the Roma, but sometimes they do confess of being *Turkish Gypsies*. When asked: “What are you?”, the musicians from Gotse Delchev reply: “Some of us are Christians, there are Muslims, too. They call us the neighbourhood. Roma, Turkish Gypsies. On the other hand we don’t call each other *Gypsies*, we have no problem” [C.M., p.18]. When asked: “What are they”, the musicians from Kavrakirovo determine the audience from the Komsala in Gotse Delchev this way: “they are *Turks* there” [Д.К., 10/2001, p.25], adding “well, they are like us – *Turkish Gypsies*” [C.K., 10/2001, p.26].

The *zurnaci* music is part of the rituals and feasts of all the Muslim communities mentioned. There are certain situations when the performance of this music bears specific ethnic features. For example, a greater part of the repertoire played at *Pomak* weddings is typical of these occasions only. In other cases the *zurnaci* music is a common sign marking the festivity of all Muslim communities in the region. A typical one is the festive and ritual playing at a *sünnet* as well as the performances on new holidays of political origin and context like *Kurtuluş Bayram*.