

as an all-village celebration usually after the circumcision of certain children: "It is made for several children. It may be for one boy but it happens very seldom – in those the richest families" [K.T., p.4].

There is not a fixed calendar moment for a *sünnet* – the informants say that it usually takes place "whenever one would like". The choice falls upon days allowing outdoor celebrations: "It isn't held in winter, only on such warm days" [K.T., p.4]. The days should not coincide with other holidays: "Free dates – there shouldn't be weddings or alike" [C.M., p.4]. According to another *zurnaci* from Gotse Delchev the spring and the autumn are preferable seasons, sometimes the winter but never the summer since there is much work then [A.A., АИФ, I, № 100, c. 43].

The celebration starts in the morning with the *zurnaci* music playing at the most significant ritual moments. The *zurnas* play when the guests are being invited and welcomed. The music sounds during the very circumcision – around the mosque and the house of the child. While the child circumcised is lying on an especially laid bed and is being brought presents, the *zurnacies* play for a festive dinner. Often the all-village feast does not coincide with the act of the very circumcision. The feast may be organized days or months later and is called *sünnet banquet* or a *sünnet-svatba* and includes processions and competition shows. The traditional practice is to organize an *alay* with *zurnacies* if the board of the mosque, the neighbourhood or village decide to do so. In this case it joins the processions after the circumcisions of several boys. The circumcised children dressed in their best are riding horses in festive ammunitions. The boys are the heroes of the procession of many relatives and guests lead by the *hodzha* (priest) and the *zurnacies*. The procession goes around the settlement or the neighbourhood, then it stops at the square or another special place where the festive wrestling (*gjuresh*) and horse races (*kushii*) take place. The competitions are also accompanied by the *zurnaci* music. There is information on recent celebrations of *sünnet-sabors*, i.e. joint feasts on the occasion of the circumcision of 150-200 boys attended by the political leaders and held at the town stadium where wrestling competitions took place [P., p.4-6].

The *zurnaci* musicians and the music they play have a special social role in the ritual and in the festive structuring of the *sünnet*, as well as in its course. The *zurnacies* say: "The thin music can't play the *sünnets*", clarifying that their music is preferred even today despite the invasion of instrumental formations with fashionable instruments. "The thin music", which the informant says to be played by orchestras consisting of a clarinet, synthesizer, guitars, percussion instruments, is rarely performed at *sünnets*. Moreover, it does not accompany the ritual processions and games, but the reception in the evening [M.M., p.42].

The *zurnacies* from Gotse Delchev are on the same opinion that the *sünnets* of Bulgarian Muslims (*Pomaks*) are the most lavish, crowded and the longest celebrations. "The *Pomak sünnets* when we play them – a whole week. Each day is a particular ritual. They invite you for a week to a *sünnet* – we have here 72 *Pomak* villages. And they invite all the villages from the district" [M.M., p.14-15].

The *zurnaci* music puts the frames on the *sünnet*'s celebration – it is used to invite the guests from the other villages. "We go to invite them. And on foot we go from village to village. We invite them from house to house" [A.C., p.14-15]. The *zurnacies* from Gotse Delchev reminisce about the 1970s and 1960s when there used to be about 20 *zurnacies* and *tapancies* who needed two days to go all over the *Pomak* villages. "But we divide. I