

cians to play *nebet* to the closest relatives of the couple to be married. The custom is stated to be a Muslim *adet*. The *zurnacies* and *tapancies* go to the homes of the aunts and uncles on Saturday or Sunday morning and play “only old things” [P., p.3]. The music to *nebet* is usually in a slow tempo, with rich improvisations, played continuously.

The next moment of the *Pomak* wedding is the meeting of the newlyweds at the groom’s home. “When the bride enters the groom’s house, she does so with a song”, say the *zurnacies* and do not particularize the title of the special ritual melody for welcoming the bride.

The contemporary Muslim weddings in the neighbourhood Komsala have two parts: after Saturday’s wedding in the bride’s home comes the one held in the groom’s on Sunday. Moreover, on Saturday the dowry of the girl is fetched from her home to her husband’s. This procession lead by *zurnas* goes about the place so that everybody could see the dowry. There are special melodies that are played on the occasion: when the dowry is loaded, demonstrated and unloaded. On Sunday the wedding feast goes on and it is hosted by the groom’s side. It is like the one given by the bride’s side. The guests are lead with music and dances to the restaurant where the reception takes place under the accompaniment of a contemporary orchestra. Prior to the banquet the procession stops at the Ritual House where the bride and groom sign the civil marriage papers [C.M., p.14]. In the last years the people from Gotse Delchev would rather hire *zurnacies* from Petrich to play at their weddings. They “do not like their own”, looking for more technical ones with a fashionable repertoire. A *zurnaci* from Petrich tells of a rich wedding in this town where he played at two weddings – the one of the bride’s side and the one of the groom’s. On the Saturday he met the guests of the bride and took them to the restaurant where the Crystal orchestra from Montana played. And on Sunday morning he met the guests of the groom and at about 6 P.M. he took them to the restaurant where the Pautalia orchestra from Kyustendil presented a program [C.K., 10/2001, p.26].

The true wedding ritual of the *Pomaks* ends on the day after the first night. “On Monday morning we take the groom to eggs” say the *zurnacies* and explain that this playing of theirs is also called *blaga rakia* (to a sweet brandy). The groom and his relatives go to the bride’s home to greet her parents with a procession led by *zurnacies* who play along the way and in the yard where dances take place.

The custom *blaga rakia* is also called *shenlik* (merry-making) but nowadays it is done before the wedding and “briefly”. The players explain it as “something like an agreement”. The meaning of the custom is to present the virginity of the bride with sweet brandy. With music – *zurnas* or clarinets, with the *rakia* and the sheet proving her virginity, the procession goes about the neighbourhood and then to the bride’s parents. There used to be a special melody played on the occasion but now it is forgotten [C.M., p.14-15].

The *zurnacies* play a rich repertoire of dance and festive dinner melodies besides the protocol ritual ones. According to them the performance to *nebet* with two *tapans* and two *zurnas* is a typical Muslim *adet* spread chiefly among the Turks and the Roma with Turkish self-consciousness. As far as the playing at *Pomak* festive dinners is concerned, it is usually melodies of popular songs like *Dujni, mi dujni*. Old songs, like *Osman pasha* the one loved very much by Turks and Roma, are played at the wedding festive dinners.

The music and dances being the brightest signs of the celebrating of a wedding is expressed in the abundance of dance melodies. The *zurnacies* from Gotse Delchev point