

The political utilization

Being a signal instrument with a shrilling, appealing sound, the *zurna* is suitable for sounding at open places, at crowded events. Used in the past as military and ceremonial instruments, today the *zurnas* sound at political feasts – meetings, manifestations, celebrations. As a participant reminisces, *zurnaci* music used to lead the manifestations on May 1 in the town of Smyadovo, Shumen region in the 1960's [B.Ж.].

The *zurnas* are participants in many of the events of the political parties in Southwest Bulgaria. In 2001 on the eve of the Parliament elections the mayor of Blagoevgrad Kostadin Paskalev (later a vice-prime minister) used a *zurnaci* formation for pre-election agitation meetings. In 2000 at the annual celebrations of the First Congress of the Bulgarian Socialist Party held at the party's memorial on Buzludzha Peak a band of two *zurnas* and a *tapan* was a part of the festive ritual. A photograph of the band was published in the press with the information that the *tapanci* Sotir Asparuhov got his membership card then and later he and his colleagues-*zurnacies* burst into a heavy Bulgarian *horó* on the clearings [The Strouma newspaper, 3.VIII.2000]. *Zurnas* could be heard playing at the protest meetings in front of the Parliament in the centre of Sofia in the winter of 1997. At that time Roma from the Faculty quarter, sympathizing to the UDF, in carts with *zurnas* made protest processions. In 2001 Roma musicians with *zurnas* met the EuroRoma leader Tsvetelin Kanchev when he was being released from the arrest.

The *zurnas* are a part of the novel holidays, like *Kurtuluş Bayram*, which originate from political events. On December 29 Muslims belonging to the Rights and Liberty Society (RLS) celebrate this holiday with manifestations, *zurnaci* music and dances. Thus they celebrate "their liberation" (the Turkish word *kurtuluş* means liberation). A Bulgarian Muslim informant says that they celebrate the great protest meeting held in 1990: "On 29th December when we were in Sofia, when in front of the Parliament... The pressure of the street we'd put on them. Then Mladenov's tanks... And then they took the decision to pass a law for restoring the (Muslim) names. And that's a holiday for us ever since, isn't it. It's a holiday for us. They'd permitted by a law. So, ever since we've been making *Kurtuluş Byaram*. And the *zurnas*'re playing. It's a Muslim holiday definitely" [III., p.8]. Novel holidays of the kind parallel with traditional ones having political meanings include the *zurnas* as a sound marker of the ethnic and confessional identity (Muslim, Turkish, non-Bulgarian). Informants from Gotse Delchev tell of a *sünnet-sabor* organized by the local Мѣѣлык (the Office of the trustees of Muslim community) and RLS which was held with wrestling competitions and *zurnaci* music playing at the town stadium. The event was attended by important figures from the party and the party leader Ahmed Dogan [P., p.4].

Some of the *zurnacies* regard their participation in the political events as a personal involvement. For others it is just the next field where they have to show their professionalism: (Are you invited now to play at the political meetings, which meeting do you play at?) "At the meetings of different parties. But I go only to the communists' meetings. The musicians go. They're paid. You see, the cousin Selim – regularly. Wherever they call him, he goes constantly" [Д.К., 10/2001, p.8].

Sports events

As a rule *zurnaci-tapanci* formations are related to the games and competitions of the local culture accompanying with especial music the sports competitions like *gjuresh* (wrestling), *kushii* (horse races), races between men, stone throwing [Манолов, 1987:74:81].