

contrast symbols. In the case of such an expressive duality a certain characteristic or a meaning of one of the elements basic for the image enhances the respective opposite characteristic of the image [Шапиро, 1993:320]. The similarities of the magic-ritual, signal and utility functions of the two instruments make them suitable symbols to distinguish group identity: Bulgarians and Christians get married, wrestle, dance with bagpipes while the *Pomaks* and Muslims do this with *zurnas*. Being symbolically constructed, such an opposition has its grounds in the music traditions of the groups under study. Research on the musical culture of Bulgarian Muslims from the Chech region reveals that the bagpipe is a familiar instrument there but it is played only by *Bulgarians*, *Macedonians* and by *Bulgarian Gypsies* while *Pomaks* do not play the bagpipe [Качулев, 1962:199]. An authority's monograph on Turkish musical instruments mentions the bagpipe as a Bulgarian musical instrument characteristic of Thrace. The *zurnas*, similar to it with regard to its polyphonic drone, are supposed to have entered the peninsula in the 10<sup>th</sup> century (with the first Muslim raids of the Turks-Mongols). Probably they got into folklore after the destruction of the *mehterhane* [Picken, 1975:501-502]. The notion that the Turks do not play the bagpipe because it is a *kavur's* (*gbvur* – non-Muslim) instrument is among the most impressive amongst the folk beliefs about the bagpipe registered in the Republic of Macedonia. Scholars have come to the conclusion that the Islamic population of this country does avoid the bagpipe. The fact is explained by beliefs that the bagpipe is anathemized by the Koran. It is a sin to play an instrument made from the skin of a dead animal. Its sound resembles the shrieking of Hell. The Muslims oppose the *kaval* to the bagpipe. The *kaval* is perceived as a holy instrument approved and propagated by Allah [Цимревски, 1996:39-43].

Coming back to the words of our informant, one can see the bare need for him to assert group affiliation. Being an activist in the non-governmental sector, Sh. searching real expression for his enthusiasm for the instrument, has organized a *zurnaci* vocational school for Roma children. The *zurna* has become part of his individual identity by means of his emotional engagement in its postulation as a symbol of his group.

The cultural practice of the people of the Gotse Delchev region confirms the opinion that the *Pomaks* consider the *zurna* their own instrument. Traditionally the *zurna* is played only by Turkish Gypsies. But after 1989, with the process of activating the representative identity of the Bulgarian Muslims, they also started playing it. So that there could be music at the recently established *Kurtulish bayram* celebrations and for the *sabors* and *bayrams*, *Pomak* youths from the village of Tuhovishta learnt to play the instrument. Prior to them nobody played the *zurna*: "One of them's called Ahmed, the other Mustafa. But we're calling them Jerry and Tsetso. That's how they're known in the entire region. Dzhamal's on the *tapan*... His father used to play *pishtjalka* (a small pipe). The one over there, Sava, he also plays firmly on a feather, from a pear tree he'd take a leaf... That's the father of the other boy. And his son started right on the accordion, and after that when the *sünnets* began, he learnt to play the *zurna* too" [Б.С., p.1-2]. As seen, Bulgarian Muslims began to play *zurnas* simultaneously with the elimination of restrictions imposed on their traditional Muslim rituals. After 1989 it has mainly been the *Pomaks* who make lavish *sünnets* – village feasts. A new *Kurtulish bayram* has been established. It is held with processions led by *zurnacies*. The local *chitalshte* has organized a folk group of youths performing local traditions at *sabors* and festivals. The tendency to organize ensembles, bands and folk festivals has been covered by the press as an activation of local traditional culture, so that