

Pomak features can be demonstrated [Георгиева, Цв., 1998:305]. Evidence of this activation of *Pomak* identity is the new practice of Bulgarian Gypsies to play the *zurna*. This is seen in the north of the Gotse Delchev region. Recently in the village of Eleshnitsa, Razlog region, a *zurnaci* band appeared serving the *Pomak* villages of Pelatik, Chereshovo, Dorkovo, Tetovo, etc.

Many **Bulgarian Christians** from Southwest Bulgaria also determine the *zurna* as their “own” instrument regardless of the above mentioned concepts of its Roma, Turkish and Muslim identity. There are many cases when Roma *zurnacies* interviewed call the instrument Bulgarian on the basis of the material it is made of: “The *zurna*’s Bulgarian, because it’s made of a Bulgarian tree” [АИФ, I, №100, с. 9]. More often the players use local geographic characteristics (Petrich, Razlog, Gotse Delchev). The *zurna* of Petrich is considered the most Bulgarian because it is not like the Turkish and Greek instruments.

The audience of local Bulgarians considers the *zurna* as their own instrument. According to a local *horos* dancer who knows the traditions well, “mostly *zurnas* play” at *horos, sabors*, rituals and feasts [Цветков, 2000:29]. It is claimed that the traditional feasts that unite the villages and the towns like the *Rusalia* plays have always been held with *zurnas*. A regular participant in the plays knows from the elders that the *zurnas* played at Bulgarian feasts in first half of the 20th century. He remembers that only in 1987 and 1988 *zurnaci* music did not sound in the town because of the regeneration process [Б.Ж., p.5-6]. Speaking of non-conducted events with *zurnaci* music in the region, a citizen of Razlog determines *zurnas* as “Turkish-Bulgarian”. But this was the culture of the local town folks. His grandmother had a command of Turkish better than that of Bulgarian. He himself grew up among Turks and Roma. The *zurna* “since the beginning of the world” has played at rich Bulgarian weddings and important celebrations like Grandmother’s Day and *Garo* [C.B., p.35].

The first amateur Bulgarian folklore ensembles in Southwest Bulgaria (Petrich, Blagoevgrad, Gotse Delchev) which spontaneously present local traditions have included *zurnaci* bands. Later amateur art became an ideologically conducted process and included the *zurnas* as an emblem of local tradition in the image of national Bulgarian tradition.

B. Yanev and K. Ruychev, in their publications in the “Tantsova samodeynost” series (Amateur Dance), the *Pirinski narodni tantsi* collections (Folk Dances of Pirin), *Foklorni hora ot Blagoevgradsko* (Folk *horos* from the region of Blagoevgrad), etc., have put special emphasis on the fact that the traditional music accompaniment of many dances should be the *zurna* and *tapan*. Discussing the stage performance of *Rusalia* plays a *zurnaci* interprets the old ritual dance patriotically and in an anti-Ottoman disposition: “They (the *Rusalia* – n.a.) were struggling with the Turks! In those years, during the Turkish times. They get out to struggle again at such a square at a *sabor*, but are defeated by the *Rusalia*... That’s the liberation struggle of the Bulgarians, you see. Like Hristo Botev with his detachment!” [Д.К., p.14]. The primary paradox, the parallel between Hristo Botev and the *zurnas*, is based on the inclusion of heroic historic episodes in stage presentations of the traditions. The *zurnaci* contaminates the *Komitas* with the *Rusalia*. It is due to the choreography of the stage performances where the heavy dances from the Lower Struma come next to the *Komitski hora* and the costumes and motions are modified. We have seen a stage presentation of a dance accompanied by *zurnacies*. It had the following plot: Turks kidnap a young girl. *Komitas* with scimitars and pistols fight with them. They save the girl and then dance the victorious dance. When presented at village