

The *zurnaci* practice in the Petrich region was least affected by the ban during the regeneration process. As the informants from the region remember, playing the *zurna* in public was forbidden for only two years in 1987 and 1988 when *zurnas* were banned “by the Party”. Then the tradition to celebrate *Surva* with *zurnas* was broken. According to the musicians, *zurnaci* music was banned between 1981 and 1986. Then they were not allowed to play in public. The possibility to play only for themselves demotivated many of *zurnacies*, who stopped playing: “We stopped playing for a bit. Since we were told that the music with the *zurnas* was Turkish. Just a sound and the police would confiscate the instrument. We’d have to pay fines. Then among us, we began playing to ourselves at home. I gave up. And a lot of others did as well” [Б.Ж.; Д.К., 03/2001, p.23; АИФ, I, № 100, с. 4].

Today the political ban on *zurnaci* music is just a memory, but its negative consequences had a serious impact on the practice of the musicians. It also affected the rituals and festive traditions of the communities in the region. Many prominent musicians who were at their peak at that time, who had a reputation, a large repertoire, acquired performing skills and an audience were morally and economically demotivated and forced to stop playing. It is hard to estimate the losses of *zurnaci* music. However, it is not hard to say that the ban caused a decrease in interest in the instrument. Both the audience and the young players have less interest in this music: “Today in Gotse Delchev young people don’t want to play *zurnas*. Since they banned them. For 15 years they haven’t played *zurnas*. Here our youngsters began always modern music and the *zurnas* are left behind” [АИФ, I, №100, с. 44]. The ban on *zurnas* and the ethnic rituals accompanied by them left a hiatus in the natural course of the tradition. As a result, destruction and modernization processes have been enhanced: ritual activities, music, dances and costumes were left in the past. A Bulgarian Muslim from the Gotse Delchev region asserts that last time he saw a traditional *Pomak* wedding with a *silver folio* decorated bride and old *zurnaci* performances was before the ban on the *zurna* [Ш., p.7-8]. The Turkish folk ensemble in the village of Dabnitsa was not disbanded, but the authorities made them dance with the accompaniment of the clarinet instead of *zurnas*. After 1989, fruitless efforts were made to restore the old local repertoire of the ensemble [А.Л., p.3].

Naturally the destruction of *zurnaci* tradition as well as its related rituals and festivity, the changes in style and repertoire are a fact that cannot be explained only by the negative consequences of the ban on *zurnas*. Modernization is a tendency with a strong effect on all traditional music practices in Bulgaria. To a certain extent, *zurnaci* music manages to resist and even defeat repressive authority. Today, the forcible acts of the authorities in the past are reactivating ethnoconsolidation and identification through cultural symbols like *zurnaci* music. Even during the years of repression the *zurnacies* did not stop playing, ignoring the prohibitions. Though prosecuted by the police, *zurnacies* went on playing at the clearing of Predela while the Pirin Pee folk *sabor* was held in 1985, one of the hardest years for the *zurna* [Silverman, 1996:238].

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Zurnacies play for every ethno-confessional community in Southwest Bulgaria. Regardless of classifications imposed by others, people from this region accepted and loved *zurnaci* music even when they were forbidden to do so. The symbols and ideologemes loaded into this music amount to an intellectual game played by its re-