

traditional Bulgarian music is again subconscious. In playing it he “forgets about the world” and improvises. The Roma man describes his playing at Bulgarian weddings and *sabors* with great pleasure and concern. The *zurnacies* from Gotse Delchev identify as Turks and state proudly that they are the only ones who know old Turkish songs like *Kemal pasha* and *Osman pasha*, while the others do not know this magnificent music, only *horos* and *ratchenitsas* [M.M., A.M., p.29-30].

The *zurna* and *zurnaci* music is a part of the ethnic identity of the Roma in Southwest Bulgaria. Musicians consider it a “Gypsy instrument” since its origins are in India – their homeland – from where it was brought to the Balkans: “The *zurna* came from where we came from” [АИФ, I, №100, с. 9]. “I know the origin is in India... Only we Gypsies play it” [Ч., p.12]. *Zurnaci* music is the Romas’ “own” in their neighbourhoods in Razlog, Petrich, Kavrakirovo, Mikrevo, Belitsa, etc. It is the traditional music for their rituals and feasts (weddings, *sünnets*, *sabors*, *Ederlez*, Grandmother’s Day, etc.) all over the region where there are compact Roma populations. When imitating musical instruments in their vocal performances, Bulgarian Roma prefer the timbre of the *zurnaci-tapan*ci band, while it is typical of, say, the Hungarian Roma to imitate the string-bass [Kovalcsik, 1986:144]. The fact can be interpreted as a proof that *zurnaci* music is perceived as one of the symbols of Roma identity.

Elsewhere in the Balkans this music is perceived by both the Roma themselves and the rest of the population in the same way: as Roma music. This is due to the fact that its typical performers are Roma. The *zurna* and *tapan* are important instruments for the Roma community in Macedonia, needed for rituals symbolizing Roma identity. These include henna, processions at weddings and *sünnets*, *Ederlez* celebrations and political celebrations [Silverman, 1996:247]. The *zurnaci* band is among the characteristic orchestras that play music for the Roma in Kosovo [Pettan, 1992:45].

Though the *zurna* is perceived by many Roma as their “own” instrument, there are Roma who define it as “foreign”. Musicians from an amplified ensemble in Gotse Delchev, who manifest their Roma identity, taking part in the *Romfest* National Festival of Roma music and dances, stated that the *zurna* had no place at the Roma festival. They said it was a Turkish, Oriental, non-Roma instrument, although it is played by Roma, their relatives and neighbours. This opinion is shared by a Roma leader from Sofia, regardless of the fact that Roma from the Faculty neighbourhood where they live commission *zurnacies* to play at their weddings.

Perhaps the concept spread most widely in the Balkans is that of the *zurna as a “Turkish instrument”* and *zurnaci* music being “Turkish style” [Brandl, 1996:18]. This is shared by most of the audience and musicians, even by some scholars. It is noteworthy that in the polemics on the origin of *zurna* and its arrival in the Balkans, many authors devote their energy to proving the idea of it having been already on the peninsula before the arrival of the Ottoman Turks [Линин, 1986:9; Голабоски, 1974]. A study on musical folklore from the Nevrokop (Gotse Delchev) region states that the *zurna* is erroneously put in the class of the “Arab-Turkish instrumentarium” while it is of “Indo-Egyptian” origin. The *zurna* “was adopted rather late by the Arabs and even later by the Turks” [Манолов, 1977:177]. This region is populated by ethnic Turks who take part in the audience of the local *zurnacies* (some of them also identify as Turks). Observations and interviews taken there provide an answer to the question to what extent Turks regard the *zurna* as their “own” instrument.