

While Orientalism in Europe is in a strong dominating position with regard to the interpretation of the Orient as an image of the “Other”, the Balkans (the backyard of Europe) have been under the reign of the Orient. Balkan discourse bears the marks of dependence under the conditions of the common Ottoman past. The Ottoman Empire (for the people from the Balkans, this is their Orient) reigns over them not with the refined understanding and rare application of the Empire’s might (as Said has characterized the British reign over the Orient) but with its soldiers, the brutal tax administration, and uncontrollable force [Саид, 1999:46].

Identification of the *zurna* as a bloody memory of the Ottoman past, which is rather extreme and caused it to be banned, has roots not only in the cultural politics of a certain regime, but in the extreme social dispositions of the Bulgarians. External observations [Buchanan, 1996:212-217] have caught these negative dispositions demonstrated in expressive culture, in concepts such as Ottomanism, Islam and Orientalism, which in the consciousness of Bulgarians are generalized in the image of the Turks and of the Turkish yoke. The mono-ethnic ideology of the socialist state praises *pure Bulgarianness*. This nationalism finds expression even in studies on musical folklore whose main scopes are chiefly the music traditions of the Bulgarians which have remained untouched by Turkish influence. The Ottoman empire, Turkishness and Islam outline the Bulgarian Oriental discourse which includes also Arab, Persian and Byzantine influences. The Orient for Bulgarians is localized geographically in Turkey and is manifested by the cultural events of Muslims in Bulgaria. For Bulgarians the division of Europe into West and South-East has led to significant historical, philosophical, economical and political conclusions which reflect upon their identity and *Weltansicht*. An American scholar quoted the Bulgarian historian Maria Todorova, who stated that Bulgarians perceive the Ottoman presence as a barrier preventing the spread of the European Renaissance in the Balkans and this understanding determines their pre-modern life style.

These notions of the Orient as retrograde, religious fanatic, bloody and violent, and its relationship to the Turkish yoke are the background to events in 1984-1989. More than a century after the end of Ottoman rule, the ban on *zurnas* accompanied the so-called **regeneration process**.

Negative stereotype of the Ottoman past have been transferred to Muslim communities in many Balkan states and, provoked by educational and cultural institutions, passed on from generation to generation. Extreme situations have seen the misuse of historical and cultural facts related to the Islamic presence in the Balkans for the purposes of political expediency. These forms of discrimination reached their climax in the regeneration process in Bulgaria [Желязкова, А., 1997:53]. The processes of “uniting” the Bulgarian nation by ethnic homogenisation (as part of the national politics of the ruling communist party) to which Turks, Bulgarian Muslims and Gypsies were subjected had started much earlier than 1984 with the actions of the authorities aimed at creating a mono-national ethnically pure Bulgaria by means of “Bulgarization” of the Muslim population. Thus persons with Turkish-Arab names had to change them and have their passports reissued. They were forced to change their residence and even interned. The culmination of forced assimilation policies was the regeneration Process (1984-1989) [Poulton, 1993:129-151; Николов, 1996:16-17]. The renaming was followed by widespread measures for assimilation and to persuade society of the correctness of the official policies. The measures included a number of prohibitions: speaking Turkish in public, wearing Muslim clothes.