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## **THE ETHNOLOGICAL - LINGUISTIC PROGRAM IN THE MACEDONIAN CENTER OF "MINIATURE DIALECTAL ATLAS OF THE BALKANIK LANGUAGES "**

*Abstract:* The paper contains the results of the field research done in 1999 in the Republic of Macedonia, according to the working program for creating the "Small dialectological atlas of Balkan languages" of the Institute for Slavistics and Balkanistics that exists in the frames of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The research shows that the ethnolinguistics material collected from these two points (the village of Teovo and the village of Peshtani) in Macedonia has: 1. A lot of mutual characteristics with many Macedonian, but as well Balkan and Slav cultural linguistic traditions in general 2. Has features that could be called "Macedonian", since in other areas of South Slav populated regions they can not be traced 3. Has features of uniqueness, like the examined village of Peshtani

*Key words:* Ethnolinguistic program, Macedonia, Macedonian language, lexicography, ritual, dialectological atlas of Balkan languages, Slav languages

The international project " The Miniature Dialectal Atlas of the Balkanik Languages " ( marked as LDABL in the following text ) together with personal language program (syntactic and lexical ) includes the ethnologic - linguistic program (Plotnikova 1996 ) oriented towards collecting data for the vocabulary and terminology of the local cultural traditions in the Balkans (Domosilecka - Plotnikova - Sobolev 1998 ). According to this ethnologic - linguistics program, the first research into the following Macedonian villages was undertaken in August 1999: Peshtani, about 13 km south of Ohrid, and Teovo, in the district Azot, near Veles. The village of Peshtani is taken as the center of part of the atlas that is being created. The dialectal research was performed by A.N.Sobolev, G.P.Klepikova, A.A.Plotnikova assisted by their Macedonian colleagues M.Markovic and D.Gegovski who worked under the supervision of academic Z.Topolinska. The ethnologic - linguistic program of the atlas was fully realized and completed, which gave us a rare opportunity for immediate, simultaneous interpretation and comparison of the material with the ethnologic - linguistic data from the other Macedonian village, Teovo<sup>1</sup> - which was not included in the LDABL, but which was researched two weeks previously according to the ethnologic questionnaire. In this way, the research of the ethnologic - linguistic program in the South - West Macedonian center introduced us, from the very beginning, to an area of familiar and in some cases predictable data. Simultaneously with this in Peshtani we witnessed two tendencies: on one hand the South - west Macedonian tradition of the language ( which includes Struga, as well as Debar ) and on the other it reflects some unique traits of the tradition of a small area South of Ohrid, which makes it an extremely interesting object for further ethnologic researches.

Further on in this article we will discuss: 1) the mutual characteristics for many Macedonian, as well as for Balkan and Slavic cultural traditions, with particular attention to the specificity of the village that was researched, put even in such broad frames; 2) the characteristics which could be called purely "Macedonian ", because they can not be found in any other regions of the South Slavic countries; here we have had in mind the characteristics mutual for the West - central part, i.e. regarding the fact that the other center for comparison, the village of Teovo, belongs more to the Western part of the "center " than to the Eastern; 3) the characteristics of the researched village Peshtani, which are unique by themselves. We should immediately note that the uniqueness results from the exclusivity of the events

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observed in Peshtani, as well as from the incomparable mixture of more general characteristics' which can be conditioned from different causes: as a result of internal actions which led to the construction of the " cultural dialect ", the geographical factors ( the distance from Lake Ohrid, the lack of communication with the other regions because of that great distance ).

As we already know, the main aim of the ethnologic - linguistic program is the ethnocultural vocabulary and terminology based on dialectal texts, reflecting in that way relevant extra linguistic characteristics of the function of those terms. Consequently the different ethnologic characteristics of the tradition of the village Peshtani regard the expression ( lexical items ) as well as the content ( ritual and mythological context of the terms ).

The first spread kind of events\* ( occurrences, happenings ) ( names and terms for rituals, customs mythology ) are Balkanik, Balkano - Slavik ( i.e. they are part of the south Slavik region including at the same time the different Serbian cultural - dialectic tradition ), south Slavic and generally Slavic phenomena, the presence of which is confirmed in the village of Peshtani.

From the area of the folk calendar, to those cultural and language appearances, we can ascribe the following:

- Balkan and Balkano-Slavik custom of baking New Year's bread with a coin which serves to foretell the happiness of the house ( it is important to mention the "common" patrimonial name for that kind of bread - *преснец, нута*, - which names comes into the scheme of spreading of similar patrimonial names for " foretelling " breads in the wider territory of the east Serbian - west Bulgarian - Macedonian area );
- Balkan and Balkano - Slavik: *амкајне* - game contest ( takes place on 12. 03 ) with an egg tied whit thread ( at the end of the game, as in the other regions of Macedonia, the south of Bulgaria and south - eastern Serbia, the thread is burnt and the ashes serve for foretelling the length of the life of the elder villagers );
- Balkan and Balkano - Slavik: *мартинка* ( the more traditional form of this name is with the suffix - *ица*, Bulgarian; Macedonian - *мартеница* ) " ornament made on the first day of the spring from colored threads ( we feel obliged to mention that in Peshtani, as well as in the other south - western Macedonian areas, it is made from: red white and black threads. The older women keep silent while making it, do not look at it, hold their hands behind their backs, and afterwards they foretell the fertility of the next season according to the quantity of the knitted threads: if the white thread prevails it means that the harvest of crops will be very successful; and the red - that a lot of wine will be made );
- Balkan and Balkano - Slavic :the folklore motivation of the name of the first (fourteenth ) day of March - *баба Марта*, connects this name with the legend of a grandmother who went to graze the goats in the mountains quite early; she insulted the month of March ( which according to the legend from that village had 28 days, the same as February ), after which March turned to April who had 33 days and asked him if he could give him 3 days in order to punish the old woman with cold.
- Balkan and Balkano - Slavic: *лазарки* "visit to the houses by girls during the week before Easter ( Lazarus Saturday ), with songs and blessings " (note: the lazar - girls are given gifts not only with of traditional eggs, but also with buns specially baked for them - *кравајчина* );
- Balkan and Balkano- Slavic: the ceremonious custom for the evocation of rain, in this part of Macedonia it is called *ој- л' илје, ој- л'ил' е* , and is followed by some characteristic rituals: the orphan - girl, dressed in green, is led by the whole village (not by a small company to the lake); there the girl is sokced with water and then they visit the houses, collecting gifts (in the traditional version of this custom in the Balkano - Slavic area: the main participant in the ritual visits the houses where the housewives soak her with water and give her presents ).

From the sphere of the family ceremonies. In the terminology of the rituals and the customs that accompany the " giving of birth ", prevails the general Slavic vocabulary ( *јалова, неплодна* " sterile woman "; *баба, бабица* "granny "; *посл' ежина, л' ежишче* " placenta ";

*vu'e* " present for the mother and the baby "; *срижене, срижејне* "clipping " etc, together with the loan words from Greek origin for example: *л' еунка* " woman in childbed " ). As far as for the extralinguistic characteristics of the terminology connected with the customs related to ( " the giving of birth ", we can find traditional Balkanik terms ( which have appropriate analogies in the Slavik archaic language, Polesje ): The name for the membrane in which the babies are carried during the pregnancy - placenta, derives from an article of clothing - shirt ( Kabakova 1998 : 108 ), i.e. a term that is spread in Serbia and part of Bulgaria is *кошул' а, кошул' ица* " placenta, which according to the beliefs of the Balkan Slaviks protects it's owner ( the baby ) from the bullet of the enemy, as well as from other accidents; terms for children that are capable of doing harm to others and casting spells; children who after the suckling period are put to suck again for some time: *пофторено дете, повратено дете* ( Tolstye 1983: 11 ), becoming after wards *дувл' ија* " envious, able to cast spells " etc.

The most versatile and well kept vocabulary and terminology in the village of Peshtani is the one connected with wedding ceremonies. Even today, in not one of the other researched centers according to the ethnologic program on the territory of Serbia or Macedonia, we have not found so many terms for the vocabulary and the appropriate context of the Balkan wedding. First of all, there is a complex structure to the pre - matrimony rituals, which here take place from Easter ( or even from Christmas ) until the autumn holiday of St. Virgin Mary ( or in some other periods from St. George until St. Virgin Mari ) ( Klichova - Georgieva 1965: 101); all the participants in these rituals are familiar with the terms: " engagement agreement " - *вршачка, вршејне*; " first ( small ) engagement " - *мал срој* ( on Christmas or Easter ); " main engagement " , which finishes with dinner the evening before the wedding in the home of the bride ( before the holiday of St. Virgin Mary ) - *гол' ем срој, сројат погол' ем*. The gift for the engaged girl, called *нишан*, has it's own ritual significance: during the last two weeks before the main engagement, all the guests from the groom' s side come into the house of the bride and put money or presents in the dish where the wedding ring is, for which in return they are given presents by the bride' s parents . According to this Macedonian center "*нишан* " means " gifts for the engaged girl " (from where "*нишани* " means "gifts") and "ritual of mutual gifts giving between the bride and the groom before the wedding", which implies idiomatic meaning: when going to the home of the bride, the groom's relatives say: *че менваме нишан*.

Within this division of the vocabulary related to weddings the very day of the wedding is called " *свадба* ". The typical name *срој* - wedding, for the whole Macedonian tradition ( Groen 1977 :284; Hendriks 1976 :289; Klickova - Georgieva 1965 : 138 ) in the tradition of this village refers to the beginning of the wedding which takes place on Saturday evening in the bride's home, which is also often referred as to " the first day of the wedding ".

During the research, it was also noticed that there are terms which are used for the tools equipment used during the wedding ceremonies; some of them are: *бајрак* "wedding flag " ( decorated with clothes; it is carried by the *старосватот* - friend or relative of the groom, whose main role is to carry the flag ); *трендавил со три јаболки* "wedding tree " ( the mother in law gives it to the beginning she hits her slowly with it; then she gives it to the bride who throws apples across the roof of the house; the children catch these apples ); *сваќа, сважќа* " wedding bread " ( also in Macedonian *кравај* - a term which is characteristic for the Macedonian tradition according to the research of E.S.Uzeneva; compared to *сваќа* ( Teovo ), Klickova - Georgieva 1965: 118 - 119, 139,147.

There are also differences in the terms which refer to the things which the bride gets from her father' s house, i.e. difference parts: *мирас* " beg vethed land, vineyards and other real estate ", *приќа* " clothes brought from her father' s house " ( there is also an old archaic word for this - *пуво* ). Here we met for the first time an expression, that was not found in any other Balkan village, which is connected with the money that the father of the groom pays for the bride: *да го купиме пилето, купил го* ( let' s buy the chick ) and other humorous, but necessary terms in the ritual. The symbolical pay for the bride here is called " *агерлок, плајќене* "

The same basic tendencies that mutually connect the Slavic vocabulary with the Turkish and Greek language ( with dominance of the Slavic idioms and terminology ) are

reflected in the ceremonies connected with the burial of the dead. Here are listed a few examples : *душа берет* "agony, pre - death sufferings "; *умрени, ојдени* " dead people "; *тој свет, вијал' ет*<sup>2</sup> " life after death "; *задуша* " memories devoted to the dead person during a year after his death "; *задушници* " calendar holidays dedicated to the dead ".

In the field of folk mythology there are words ( vocabulary ) that can be called "Balkanic ", because they are characteristic and spreads only in the Balkans. This category also includes names for witches - *маѓешница, маѓешничка*, mostly used in Bulgaria, Macedonia, eastern and south - eastern Serbia ; *самовили* - names for female mythological creatures, noticed consecutively in east and south - west Serbia, Western Bulgaria, Macedonia, where beside this there are legends about the invisible dinners, about the feasts of these creatures which were accidentally visited by passers, who become very ill. In the village of Peshtani these legends live even today and have not changed over the years: that kind of story we heard from the mother of the local teacher, whose father supposedly found himself near a stream at a faïres dinner, and became paralyzed ( during our conversation and work with Ratka Medaroska, he was a dumb participant in his wife's tales, who took great care of him in the mean time ). In Peshtani we also heard the stories about a creature called *ламја* "dragon " which: 1) lives in Lake Ohrid, has two heads, comes out on the shore and eats people; 2) flies in front of the clouds during storms before thunder . A wider spectrum of meanings are noticed for the word *толосум* (probably from the Turkish word TESLEM "amulet, magic item" ), in other areas marked as a protector of homes, buildings having its origin in the legends of a walled in man, animal, or their shadows on the buildings, in Peshtani, can be: 1) the protector of the fields and vineyards in the form of a snake; 2) a snake as a protector of the house and the people living in it; 3) a big strong dragon, keeper of a treasure; 4) a big snake; 5) a lazy person (who only sits at home ). If one meets the *толосум* in the house he should not kill it in order to protect the host from trouble (*Во кујкава да било не си смеало да го бијеш, толосум, чоек. Не си смеало ако домаќин бил во кујката* ); a dragon which resembles a human ( *Глаа имат голема ко чоек...има некако, коса имат и к'рс* ). While we are dealing with folk mythology, we should pay attention to the order of the words from Slavic origin. Firstly, it is the word that refers to the semantics of death and the dead unchristened children (or their ghosts who attack people, bring evil and diseases, as in Pestani ): we are talking about the derivatives from - *нав* -, present in Ukraine, especially in the area of the Carpatian Mountains, in the Polish border region<sup>3</sup>, in the east part of Serbia, Western Bulgaria, often in Slovenia and all over Macedonia. In Peshtani the name of this creature has had certain phonological changes: *унафи, унафје, унави*, and the semantical meaning that predominates, about this term is " illness of the young mother " ( *фашчеја унафи* - the disease attacks ), which is also typical for the other Macedonian villages from the central and the west part; compare: *нави* "illness of a woman in childbed "; *ванали навите, фатаат навите*; in the Ohrid region there are other altered names, for ghosts that attack the mother and the child: *хунани, унај* (Vrazinovski 1995 :83, kitevski 1996 : 167 )etc. Secondly, a term which is also wide spread is *волколак* " avampire after the 40 days of the man's death ", "dead and yet alive like a living human being ", as well as the stories that he can have a sexual intercourse with his wife and concieve a child - *од волколак син, волколаче, ( Од волколак син. М'жев со женава спал, и та породила, а м 'жет умрен, и то т'си претворило како волколак* ). We need to make a note that the given term is typical for the village of Peshtani as a center of the furthest south - western part of the Macedonian ethnical region, a characteristic that has its counterparts in the Albanian cultural dialects (where VURKOLAK, VURVOLLAK -is a loan word from the Slavic languages ) as well as along the Adriatic coast (south Hercegovina, Dalmatia ), Bosnia and Croatia. On the territory of Macedonia the most common word for this is: *вампир ( вопер, вопир ), сенка, сениште*,

<sup>2</sup> According to the research this term is of Turkish origin meaning a "province, area, native part " i.e. it refers to the semantic field of " space, territory ", having a meaning of " private " as opposed to " someone else's ";

<sup>3</sup> See the map in the article for Agapkina;

гробник (Struga and Ohrid ) with the meaning " vampire " ( Vrazinovski 1995:93 ). In Peshtani the terms : *вопер,вонур, вонри* are used to denote the soul of the dead person or the vampire until 40 days after death, which wanders around the house in form of a shadow (from here comes the use of the expression - *ко вонер шетал* - he walks as a vampire).

It becomes more and more clear, according to previous data and records, that a lot of cultural and language characteristics can be called Macedonian bearing in mind the fact that they are typical for this region of south Slavic countries ( the name for the wedding - *строј, крој*, the names of the mythological creatures - *самовила, нави, ламја*, the name for the wedding bread - *свака*, etc ). Besides these, there are also other typical Macedonian phenomena, noticed during the research in Peshtani, which should be listed.

In the area of the folk calendar: the lighting of fires *кол'еда* on the night of 6 th of January and before New Year by a group of people - *коледари*, a ritual which differs in Teovo and Peshtani ( in Peshtani each group of people has its own fire ); the visit to the houses by these people on St. Ignat (2. 01 ), Christmas or New Year's Eve as well as on the so called *Л' етник* (1 or 14 March, accordingly to the old and new calendar ), when the man who first enters the house takes a burning tree ( *дрфче, пил'ина* ) and spots the fire saying blessings - is characteristic connected with the magic ceremonies from the first day of the spring (in Peshtani this is performed by the invitation of the wind and an allegorical closing of the wolf's mouth )and typical for the south-west region of Macedonia ( Struga, Debar ,Ohrid).

In the village of Peshtani we witnessed various ceremonies and appropriate terminology connected with the cycle of giving birth, most of which are performed on the holiday of st. John the Baptist- in Macedonia Known as *водици*: in Peshtani this holiday lasts for two days (6. 01 & 7. 01 )and are called "*машки водици*" - male holiday and "*женски водици*" - female holiday. Also, in contrast to the other Macedonian traditions, on both of these days processions of girls( *војарки* ) pass through the village singing songs - blessings for the men and on the second - for the women and the girls. An interesting characteristic from the area of the family ceremonies, which has examples in Teovo (information from the people there and from the emigrants ), is the holiday dedicated to all dead people in the village. It happens on *Дуовден - Св. Троица*, (the holiday of the Holy Trinity ), when the relatives of the dead people visit their graves and leave food and branches of walnut, presuming that the green leaves of the branches will provide shadows for the souls of the dead people, which on that day come out of the graves: *На Дуовден кеј нас исто одет и со орешл'нка. Ореешл'нка то од ореф л'ишка кинеш, и тоа, вел'еф, по обичаеј тија со орешл'инката ги маме'л тија мртвите, да дојдет да ручае дека секој на гробот носи по нешто дар за јаден'е, за пиен'е, па млеко кисело носет, па некој колачи работи, и да дојде л'и да јаде ли дека тој ден викае тој ден бил'и слободни мртвите се пуштат од градината отад и мамет со орешлинка да дојдет овде за да јадејт(On this day we pick branches with leaves from walnut and we carry them to the graveyards. We think that with this we will wake the dead. We do this in order to feed them; therefore we bring different dishes: food and drink, different kinds of cookies etc. On that day the dead people are released from their world ) . Compare records from Teovo: *На Дуова сабота кришме ореј - гранки. На дуовден во саботата си спремаме кора си спремаме, јајца вапцуеме, спремаме на л'еп, блази работи си праиме...а рано на Дуовден прет сонце да босне на гробишта одиме, на гробл'е, те оревите и орешинките ги носиме, и китки носиме, и вода носиме* ( On the holiday of the Holy Trinity we break branches of walnut. On the very day - Saturday, we make sweet and savours dishes... Early in the morning, before sunrise, we go to the graveyards and we take branches, flowers, and water ).*

*Ор: Дуовден на сабајле ке си појдеме ке однесеме гранки, лишча, бардак ке однесеме, ке му туриме на кивурот...И тука ке му туриш и тоа дрфцето од орегот за сенка да му држело цело лето, на умрениот, и бардаче ке му истуриш вода и ке го дадеш на некој* ( In the morning we go and take branches, leaves, and vessels with water to the dead person. We place the branches so that they will provide shadow for the dead, we spill the water and give the vessel to someone else ).

From the typically Macedonian characteristic term we should also mention the mythological term *нарочница, нарчница* " female demons who predict the destiny of the

baby " ( also наречница - Vrazinovski 1995 : 51 : 61), which is in fact characteristic for the whole Balkans ( three female demons come at night to foretell, the youngest has the last word, the people hidie and listen to them.. ).

Special attention should be devoted to one really unique ritual, which does not have analogies in the other Macedonian or Slavic regions. We are talking about a ritual which can be called *кол*, because when we asked the villagers ( What is *кол*? ), they talked about the calendar rituals performed on the day of St. John the **Baptist** ( *водици* ) and we noticed a lead to different holidays in the same village celebrated by certain patrimonies or families. The term *кол* can not be connected with Slavic words like: generation, ( *колeно, поколение, Russian - поколение* <sup>4</sup> ); the order of performances and the contents of the rituals remind of a holiday dedicated to the patron and protector of the family. In this village we witnessed three variants, because the village itself is divided in to three parts, and each of them has a different saint - protector. We distinguished the following groups of people in Peshtani: *светатројчевци, светанетковци, светиниколовци* according to the holidays: The Holy Trinity, St. Petka the Martyr, and St. Nicolas. The group of families that celebrate the holiday are called *кол*. In each group the ritual has its own characteristics, but there are general ones also: in all the variants the holiday is held around the holiday of St. John - which tells the importance of this holiday; in all the variants people make a trip to the lake; in all the variants there is a ritual of electing a "Godfather" - of the whole patrimony, for one year, a ritual which by itself has its own characteristics: either through giving a holy item, or by foretelling with a covered plate, where the previous Godfather puts the ring or the special bread baked for this occasion (this item is approved by the whole patrimony ); also there is an obligatory dinner in honor of the new Godfather.

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<sup>4</sup> Secondary meaning, related with part of the body from the east - European \* **kuel** "turns ", "it is born, it grows ", see in Bjeletic 1999 : 57 - 59;

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