

Gjorgji Zdravev
(Skopje, Republic of Macedonia)

TPOLOGY AND CLASSIFICATION OF THE MACEDONIAN FOLK COSTUMES

Abstract: Based on previous research, the performed analysis, the comparisons of the numerous clothing parts and decorations, as well as their diffusion on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia, the Macedonian folk costumes can be divided into two basic types: I - Western-Macedonian type and II - Eastern-Macedonian type. This basic typology greatly coincides with the already performed division of the Republic of Macedonia into two ethnographic regions: *western ethnographic region* and *eastern ethnographic region*.

Key words: Macedonian folk costumes, Balkan culture, town craftsmen, flax, hemp, cotton, type of Dinara shirt, Western-Macedonian type, Eastern-Macedonian type, Macedonian sub-type of costumes, white linen shirts, male waist-belts, female waist-belts, aprons (female), female head covers, hats, female jewelry, Gornovardar, Debar-Mijac, Brsjac, ethnographic whole.

The great variety of the Macedonian folk costumes is a particularly difficult problem in terms of typology and classification. They all demonstrate great differences, not only on a regional basis, but on an area basis as well. However, they are also interwoven with many common elements of the common Balkan culture, as a result of the complex cultural-historical and ethnic processes which have occurred over the centuries. The common thing is that they, or most of them, have some similar or identical clothes, but many of them are different in regards to the cut, colouring and the decorating style.

Some costumes are quite differentiated, others present variations of them, while yet in others clothes and clothing elements from two or more costumes are mixed; there are also those which are dominated by clothes characteristic of other non-Macedonian ethnic groups, from Macedonia or outside Macedonia. The costumes in the isolated and closed village communities, as well as those with a particularly outstanding ethnic toughness and group consciousness, stand out the most with their differentiated local characteristic. However, the former migrations, the openness and the communication lines with a particular area or a region, as well as the influence of the culture, more exactly the clothing style of the ruling ethnic group, all had an important input in the costumes which, parallel with the local, are interwoven with clothing elements from neighboring and more distant areas and regions. All of this does not exclude the importance of certain differentiated village and town craftsmen, tradesmen and all the spheres of influence which had an input in the forming of the physiognomy of a particular costume.

Based on previous research, the performed analysis, the comparisons of the numerous clothing parts and decorations, as well as their diffusion on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia, the Macedonian folk costumes can be divided into two basic types:

- I. *Western-Macedonian type*
- II. *Eastern-Macedonian type*

This basic typology greatly coincides with the already established division of the Republic of Macedonia into two ethnographic regions: *western ethnographic region* and *eastern ethnographic region*. A certain deviation from this division is present in a group of costumes from the Western-Macedonian type, which, as will be seen later, are treated as *Western-Macedonian sub-type* of costumes.

Within the two basic types, the groups of costumes in the ethnographic wholes are considered as a special *variety* in the further classification. Considering the fact that each one of these varieties has more or less differentiated costumes, each one of them is treated as a *special* or *transitional* variant.

Western-Macedonian type

This type consists of the greater part of the costumes in the Gornovardar, Debar-Mijac and Brsjac ethnographic whole. Their basic characteristics are:

- upper white heavy cloth clothes, rarely black or red, most often decorated with black, red, sterling silver or other type of braided applications; some decorated with a silver sterling embroidery, with applications of a fine woollen fabric that is bought, with woollen aments etc.
- white linen shirts (from flax, hemp, cotton), from the type of *Dinara shirt*, richly decorated (especially female ones) with a specific polychromium embroidered decoration in a geometric spirit and with specific embroidery techniques; some with white embroidery;
- male waist-belts, woven in one colour, with straight decorative lines or diamond combinations, all on a red, dark red or a special shade of violet-blue (morova) basis;
- female waist-belts; knitted in a braided style; woven as long, narrow belts, with simple, straight decorative lines or richly ornamented; others wider; some of them richly decorated with aments;
- aprons (female) in different dimensions; ornamented from the simplest straight decorative lines to perfect ornamental wholes; a big number of them richly decorated with aments;
- specific female head covers, with rich embroidery decorations and long aments; red, black, white;
- hats: white valanki (shallow hats with flat or round bottom), fes (Turkish hats), etc.
- rich and massive female jewelry and many other specific forms of decorating.

These types of costumes are dominated by older types of clothing elements, interwoven with traces and influences from a number of cultures, such as the Old Slavonic, Old Balcanic, Bysantine and Turkish-Oriental.

Western-Macedonian sub-type

This sub-type consists of a group of costumes in parts of the Gornovardar (UpperVardar) and Mijac-Debar ethnographic whole, most of them female costumes in the areas: goren Polog, Gorna Reka and Mavrovsko Pole. The basic characteristics of this sub-type are:

- the presence of two aprons: *front opregach* and *back opregach*, the front one decorated with embroidered vegetable-floral motives, while the back one - black or white, folded and shorter than the first one;
- the shirt from the *kenarlija* linen, with a cut slightly different than the *Dinara type* of shirts; quite simple in regards to the decorations - no embroidery ornamental decoration;
- the specific clothing *navirachka*, with richly embroidered *sindjirlii sleeves*, with a one of a kind decoration (Goren Polog);
- The upper clothes from dark red heavy cloth or a fine woollen fabric that is bought

VARIETIES OF WESTERN-MACEDONIAN TYPE

Gornovardarski variety

	Special variants		Transitional variants		Transitional towards:
	Female costume in Kumanovo region (Zegligovo, Sredorek and western part of Slavishte)	a)	Female and male costume in Skopska Blatija	a)	Karshijak, Ovche Pole etc.
	Female costume in Skopska Crna Gora	b)	Male costume in Kumanovo region (Zegligovo, Sredorek and the western part of Slavishte)	b)	Eastern part of Slavishte, Ovche Pole, Skopska Blatija, etc.
	Female costume in Dolen Polog	c)	Male costume in Skopska Crna Gora	c)	Skopska Blatija, etc.
	Female costume in the villages under Suva	d)	Male costume in Dolen Polog	d)	Goren Polog, etc.

	Gora				
		e)	Male costume in the villages under Suva Gora	e)	Dolen Polog, Goren Polog, etc.

VILLAGES UNDER SUVA GORA

Debar-Mijac variety

Female costume in Reka - Mijacs	a)	Female and male costume in Golo Brdo and Debarski Drimkol	a)	Debarsko Pole, Strushki Drimkol, etc.
Female costume in Debarsko Pole	b)	Male costume in Reka - Mijacs	b)	Golo Brdo, Debarsko Pole
	c)	Male costume in Debarsko Pole	c)	Golo Brdo, Debarski Drimkol, etc.

Brsjac variety

Female costume in Strushki Drimkol and Strushko Pole	a)	Female and male costume in Ohridsko Pole	a)	Strushki Drimkol, Malesija, Prespa
Female and male costume in Prespa	b)	Female and male costume in Malesija	b)	Debar-Mijac variety, Strushki Drimkol and Strushko Pole
Female costume in Prilepsko-Bitolsko Pole	c)	Male costume in Strushki Drimkol and Strushko Pole	c)	Debar-Mijac variety
Female costume in Mariovo	d)	Female and male costume in the Kichevo region and Poreche	d)	Debar-Mijac variety, Malesija, Debarca, Zeleznik
	e)	Female and male costume in Debarca	e)	Malesija, Kichevo region, Zeleznik
	f)	Female and male costume in Zeleznik	f)	Debarca, Kichevo region, Prilepsko-Bitolsko Pole
	g)	Female and male costume in Gorni (upper) Bitola villages	g)	Prespa, Lerin region (Eagean Macedonia), etc.
	h)	Male costume in Prilepsko-Bitolsko Pole	h)	Gorni Bitola villages, Mariovo, etc.
	i)	Male costume in Mariovo	i)	Gorni Bitola villages, Prilepsko Pole, etc.

VARIETIES OF EASTERN-MACEDONIAN TYPE

Srednovardarski (MiddleVardar) variety

Special variants		Transitional variants		Transitional towards:
Female and male costume in Ovche Pole	a)	Female and male costume in Azot and Babuna (Veles region)	a)	Ovche Pole, Skopska Blatija, etc.
Female costume in Radovishko-Strumichko Pole	b)	Female and male costume in Shtip region	b)	Ovche Pole
Female costume in	c)	Female and male	c)	Ovche Pole

	Bojmija (Gevgelija region)		costume in Kochansko Pole		
		d)	Male costume in Radovishko-Strumichko Pole	d)	Shtip region, Ovche Pole
		e)	Male costume in Bojmija (Gevgelija region)	e)	Eagean Macedonia, Radovishko-Strumichko Pole
		f)	Female and male costume in the villages around Gevgelija	f)	Northern Veles villages, Tikvesh, Solun region
		g)	Female and male costume in Tikvesh	g)	Gevgelija region
		h)	Northern Veles villages	h)	Gevgelija region, Tikvesh

Shop-Macedonian variety

Special variants		Transitional variants		Transitional towards:
Female costume in the eastern part of Slavishte	a)	Female and male costume in Durachka Reka	a)	Ovche Pole, villages in the Osogovija, eastern part of Slavishte
Female costume in Radovishki Shopluk	b)	Female and male costume in Kratovo region	b)	Ovche Pole, villages in the Osogovija, western part of Slavishte
	c)	Female and male costume in Pijanec	c)	Maleshevo, eastern part of Slavishte
	d)	Female and male costume in maleshevo	d)	Pijanec, Bulgaria
	e)	Male costume in Radovishki Shopluk	e)	Durachka Reka, villages from the Osogovija