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CULTURAL TOPOGRAPHY OF THE HUMAN BODY

Abstract: The author, based upon a rich folklore and ethnographic empirical material makes a semiological analysis of the basic codes of understanding cultural topography of the human body, trying to read the symbolic messages and meanings of certain segments.

Key words: human body, semiology, symbolical codes, mythological and religious concept, Macedonia

A number of complex contemporary investigations in the field of psychology, ethno-linguistics, ethnology and anthropology yield more and more effective and convincing proofs about the processes of personal identification and self-awareness. Man realizes them starting from him/herself, from his own position, most often in direct correlation with the awareness regarding his own being and his own body. In this sense, getting to know one's own body and its components, Man started to create a basic coordination of the Space in his own environment (Kasirer 1994 : 54; 64; 66; 104). Most of the researchers of the cultural perception of the world and the mythological notions about it, find that this type of reflexions, that are a result of the perception of the human body, should be taken as a foundation of the whole global mythological cosmography and cosmology.

The body and the parts of the human body have an important place in the cultural and mythological acknowledgement of Space, and as mythic codes they participate in the creation or the re-creation of the structure of the World.

VERTICAL DIVISION OF THE HUMAN BODY

According to its physical constitution, but even more according to the cultural perception of its parts, Man is perceiving his/her body as a system consisting of three parts. Thus, the center is located in the stomach area, that is, the center of the body is the belly-button. The belly-button is in fact the basic spot that enables the further partition of the body. The upper part of the body, in a vertical direction from the belly-bottom up, the chest, hands, neck and the head, are always marked as "up", while those parts of the body which are located from the button-belly down, like the genitals, the legs, the feet, are marked with the category "down". The upper part, having in mind the semiological, symbolical and functional characteristics, is largely related to the spiritual, the mental, the clean (with the exemption of certain segments) and with the air, while the lower part is related to the earth, to walking on the ground, the unclean (due to the presence of the organs that dispose the unclean, unnecessary materials), but also with fertility (again due to the concentration of the genitals in the lower part of the body). In this sense, the differentiation of the body space according to a vertical could be specified more concretely according the mythical and cultural features of

each of the organs, so that one could separate other specific sub-categories, as for example: the forehead - extremely up, the highest spot or the feet - extremely down, the lowest spot. However, we could start with the organs and the parts of the human body designated as a center.

The belly-button: center of the human microcosm

One of the most important ritual activities, immediately after the baby is born, is cutting the cord. This activity is accompanied by numerous magical and ritual activities - their symbolic contains a few codes that are very important for the further construction or coordination of mythical notions. The cutting of the represents the moment of cutting the relation of the child and the mother while through the act of tying the cord and forming the belly-button¹ (Filipovic., 1939: 412) a new entity is formed, whose center used to be but it is also going to be of the foremost ritual and magical meaning. Considering it as extremely important, essential, the mother of the new born takes the cord immediately after it falls and she hides it. Each misuse of the cord could be fatal for the baby.

During the period when the children are still young, precautions are being taken that they should not laugh loudly or during long periods of time, and the adults should not induce their laughter so that the belly-button of the children would not turn over. This is considered as a very serious disease that disrupts the basic structure of the body, its impact is one of disintegration. The ritual and magical healing of this disease includes a few codes which make clear that the goal of the healer is the one of "bringing the belly button back to its place", "to put the belly-button on its place". This is done through putting the right thumb on the belly-button of the child and powerfully rotating it over the baby's stomach. This principle of circular movement associates with the spiral movement from the periphery to the center, so that everything is back to its place. In other variants, the movement is done using a clay pot that is rotated according to the same principle (AZE, Mariovo 1997-1999).

In some parts of Macedonia, a protective measure was taken so that the dead man would not turn into a vampire - the dead man would be stabbed with a sharp object into his belly-button.

"Stomach", "mev"

The body area where the belly-button is situated is the first wider space that has similar symbolical connotations as the center of the human body. This is the first wider circle from the center to the periphery where the most important organs of the human body are situated, that in fact have existential meaning. Although in Macedonian

¹ The ritual tying of the cord is one of the primordial magical and ritual acts that connotes a creation of a new entity, new life, beginning. Thus, the success of this act influences the whole life of the child. On the other hand, the tying of the cord into a belly-button was done using long hairs from the mother's hair, that shows that this relation, although being cut, is still valid and powerful (Filipovic 1939 : 412).

language the terms stomach and abdomen (stomach, mev) could hardly connote any semantics, still it would be enough to go back in the ancient Slav language forms related to this term, or back to the forms of certain current languages, for example the Russian, where we find the terms **zhivôt, zhivôtik** (in English, life and life-bearer), that clearly show the relation of these organs with human life and life functions.

“Polovina“, “krst“

The part of the human body between the lungs and the legs is called “polovina“, “polojna“, “polujna“ (in English: half), a term whose semantics can be clearly established. This term should denote the space that separates the upper from the lower parts. In this sense the waist has an important symbolical meaning as a border line in a vertical direction, but also as a space that enables the communication in that direction. This part of the body is related to the movement during work. It is also related to the possibility for bending, and thus there are number of precautions taken in order to preserve its vital functions.

The “krst“ (the “cross“) relates to the lower back part of the spine. It bears as well an important symbolic, the symbolic of the cross, that in this case is directly related to the ability of man to hold his spin in upper position and to assist in the activities related to bending and getting up. Again the logic of the cross represents its central position in the frames of the body.

The head

The head (Davidjak 1999 : 89-97) has always been taken us the highest part of the body. Thus it is always associated with the term “high“, that is, in a macrocosmic sense, with the sky and the celestial highest. According to folk beliefs most of the human values are concentrated in the head, as well as the whole life energy (Gjorgjevic 1930 : 80-99).

The head is a place where the major part of the human senses are concentrated, this is why according to folk notions, the head has an important place in the hierarchy of the micro cosmos of the body. The face is the most representative part, having in mind the fact that the major part of the sensual organs are concentrated there. “The face sells the girl“ (MNU 1972 : No.1319, p.62). Thus, the face has become a synonym and quite often even a substitute for man. In the sense of a macrocosmic experience of the World, the face, especially the female one, is equal to the Sun or the Moon (folk songs, especially ones that are sung while the bride enters the house of the groom).

The face is often related to the moral and ethical values of a person, according to the analogues “with a face“ or “faceless“. In the frames of folk tradition there are notions about people that don’t have a face, or that used to have it but they lost it due to actions that are negatively valued according to folk regulations.

The face can often be only a mask - "Each thing has two faces"(MNU 1972 : No.2193, p.92), which means that underneath the visible there is another, invisible one. This is the source of the concept related to the visible, phenomenal, representative, material and the invisible, interior, spiritual. This could be seen through the folk wisdom: "God does not see the face, but the heart"(MNU 1972 : No.476, p.29) or "Do not see his face, but his heart" (MNU 1972 : No.1633, p.71).

The eyes, the ears and the nose, besides enabling man to perceive the outside world, bear important symbolical meanings as cultural elements. In this sense, the head and the above mentioned organs present a space in which the most important media are concentrated, the ones which enable man to receive but also to transmit the necessary cultural information from himself towards the outside world and vice versa.

The eyes, that is the ability to see (Slavjanske drevnosti 1995 : 265-288) are the most important media, that according the folk notions are instruments which help in establishing the communication between the individual and the environment. Thus, the eyes are not only organs that receive information, but with their assistance one could return the information to the senders. As a result of these possibilities, the folk culture has developed a whole system of techniques when it comes to the eye behavior, and these systems have an important place in the system of non-verbal cultural communication.

In the folk tradition of Macedonians, the birth of the child, among other things is related to the notion of his arrival in "our world", seeing the "white world", "going into the white"(AZE, K-182, p.4. Strumica Region), that is the solar light. These conclusions are established by the latest field research, according to which we noticed that in the region of Strumica there is a belief that the babies until the 40th day could not see, and thus they were called "blind" (AZE, K-182, p.4. Strumica Region). Death is considered as departure, saying goodbye to the "white" (AMASA, Fund prof. B. Rusic, AE-206, p.11; AIF, Record 1789, p.57), saying goodbye to the day and departing towards the world of eternal darkness - "black darkness" (AIF, Record 1311, p.9). In this sense, according to folk notions, the dead should be continuously sent light from the world of the living, at the moment of death (lighting a candle, "so that he has light on the way"), but as well during all festivities that are related to the cult of the predecessors. As a result of the endeavors of the living, that the dead should receive the necessary light, many of the tombs and crosses in Macedonia and at the Balkans include the motif of the human eyes (Petrovic 1959 : 33-56).

The open eyes are the most important sign of life. If the newborn opens its eyes immediately after it is born it is believed that it would be "achik-gjozli", that is, very bright (Tanovic 1927 : 106). On the contrary, the closed eyes symbolize death. Thus, immediately after dying the eyes of the deceased are being closed, since it is considered that a dead man with open eyes could provoke a future death. As a result of such notions, the diseased were put metal coins on their eyes, so that the eyes would be definitely closed. The gaze of the deceased could be harmful for the living - this is why

all mirrors in the house were covered, so that “the diseased would not look his own face in it“.

open eyes = light = life

closed eyes = darkness = death

“We can not see, we are blind. Everyone is blind! Only God is taking care of us“(AISK, K-63/1995, Struga Region).

The ones than can see - get out of the way, the blind are coming!(AIF, Record 1998)

In the folk tradition there is one phenomenon, which is not specific only for the culture of Macedonians, but that can be related to the wider Balkan and Slavic folk tradition, and it refers to the motif of “seeing“. Namely, in the folk notions there is an absolutely clear differentiation on what is seen and what can be seen. Everyone can see, or at least has the possibility to see, but they could not always see what surrounds them. It is a matter of the other side of mythical reality. All the time and everywhere around us there could be creatures of the “other world“, from the other reality, but the ordinary people could not see them. This is why, although they are not doing any harm to the mythical creatures, they suffer from them. On the other side, traditional culture knows about another category of people that according to strictly prescribed ritual conditions have the ability to see what the “ordinary“ can not. Most often this applies to the creatures that belong to the other world, as for example the vampire, the healer, the psychic etc.

The folk tradition of Macedonians knows a number of beliefs, notions and ritual activities related to an important feature of the eyes, the power to influence upon another person by the gaze. This is where the mythical code on the powerful eyes, that can cast a spell (Djordjevic 1938). The gaze can act, show but also hid. During the first marital night, the bride should look the groom straight in the eyes so that he “has her as he has his eyes“(Petreska 2002 : 177), that clearly connotes the meaning of the magical influence of the eyes and the gaze towards others. There are number of measures that protect from the gazes of the others. “When one goes somewhere with a small child, the child is swept with a towel that is used to clean the chimney on the face, so that its face would be all black“(Filipovic 1939 : 413). The eyes and the faces of the persons that are considered vulnerable when it comes to other people’s gaze are covered (of children and of brides), using different covers for the head (Slavjanskije drevnosti 1995 : 506-508), or they are advised that their gaze should not meet anyone else’s. In fact, some of the investigators think that the primary function of different covers for the head was one of magic and protection from influences “from above“ or from “bad eyes“.

“...Don’t uncover your eyes

don’t let your uncle see you

/.../

She uncovered her eyes

He uncle saw her...“(Miladinovci 1983 : song 4, 15-18)

The “shy look“, “the look towards the ground“ or “guveenje“ is a usual ritual behavior of marginalised persons, who are not allowed, besides all protective measures taken, to meet someone else’s gaze.

“The groom goes timidly
Do not look, oh groom, up or down
Do not look at the rafter,
do not count the karpuli
The one who has cut them, has counted them as well“ (Petreska 2002 : 111)

(A song that was sung to the groom during the ritual of “guveenje“ or kissing hands)
e: The reaction of the eyes could be a relevant prophecy sign for the future. If someone’s left eye is reacting (“playing“), in a form of a tick, something wrong will happen. If it is a matter of the left eye, then something positive will happen (Tanovic 1927 : 247).

Mouth, ears, nose

The mouth is a part of the human body, an organ that is related to a few important biological functions that bear symbolical meanings and are part of the system of spatial organization of the body. However, this microcosmic system is related to the perception of the macro-system, that is, the cultural structuring of the world.

Through the mouth one intakes all alimentary material that make the person alive. Thus, it is related to the motif of live, but through a binary opposition entrance: exit

Apart from the intake or receiving, the mouth bares the symbolic of exit. The spatial association of the mouth and the bottom is therefore interesting, since everything that is considered evil can be delivered through both the mouth and the bottom. “The mouth is following his ass (He speaks dirty things)“ (Cepenkov 1995 : 89)

In the region of Ohrid, the mother in law was expecting for the bride to arrive standing in front of the horse and giving her a metal coin (Petreska 2002 : 209), from her lips to the lips of the bride, which clearly indicates the semiology of the code upon the whole procedure is based, the procedure of giving : taking, mother in law : daughter in law, or the transferring of the values from the old to the new housewife.

The mouth is directly related to the possibility of man to produce a voice, that is to the talking, but also to the letting go of the soul (i.e. to dying). When someone is complaining that he does not feel well, the answer is “Keep your teeth griped“, so that your soul would not go away (Tanovic 1927 : 248).

In communicational sense, understood as a medium, entrance : exit of information between the individual and the environment, one can interpret the symbolical meanings of the nose and the ears. Often, the departure of the soul during the sleep is related to

the nose. Thus, it is also a part of the mythical system of symbols related to life, that is, to the soul. Besides that, the nose bears another cultural code of what can be and what can not be smelled, as well as the ears, audible : non audible.

The nose, besides the previously mentioned communication principles, in the frames of the folk notions has direct magical analogies with the male genitals. "I will shit on the penis that is between your eyes" (Cepenkovic 1996 : 18)

Hair and nails

Since the hair (Slavjanske drevnosti 1995 : 615-618; Gjorgjevic 1930 : 80-99) and the nails are related to the continuous growth and renewal, they present the symbolical code of perpetuation and growth.

In a spatial sense, the hair and the nails are symbolically burdened with the mythical code of the periphery and the protective. They are located at the extreme end of the human body, and since they are at the periphery, they are in direct contact with the environment, with the strange and the dangerous, so that they often have the function of mediators between the interior and the exterior, between the individual and the community. The hair and the nails are used in the ritual and magical activities, playing a function of replacing the whole with a part of the whole, according to the principle *pars pro toto* (Radenkovic 1996 : 25-26). This principle is present especially in frames of the ritual that belong to the life cycle - birth, wedding and death.

In the frames of the wedding customs, there are separate ritual activities, undertaken during the ritual shaving of the groom, when precautions are taken so that the hair of the groom's beard do not fall on the ground, or to be taken by some of the participants.

"Ivan was shaving
Mother god was collecting the hair
Ivan was pleading her
Mother god, oh honorable
please collect the hair carefully
and do not through it just anywhere
so that someone does magic to me
but through it in the garden
so that basil would grow
out of it"(Petreska 2002 : 265) (Zelevnik Region)

Milenko S. Filipovic gives one interesting data from the village of Brazda, Skopje region, related to the folk notions on the physical growth of the girls and their hair. When women would come back from the graves carrying wheat, some of the young girls from the house would wait for them and would take a few grains of the wheat and toss it down the duct of a water-mill. She would then take a grain of wheat and rub it on her hair, hoping that her hair would grow. Then she would pull her hair, touching the ground with three fingers, and saying: "A girl is up, the hair is down" (Filipovic 1939 :

465). The way the female hair is brushed has a special social meaning related to the function of prescribing the status in the frames of the community (young : adult, married : not married etc.). In the frames of the wedding ritual the hair of the bride was unraveled and then re-raveled, which was accompanied by a song, and that symbolizes the spatial separation of the bride from her previous home, that is, her family. "The hair would separate you from your brothers, from your sisters, from the wives of your brothers, from your mother and your father, and your most loyal friend" (Petreska 2000 : 345).

The eye-brows have an important place in the category of hair. There are interesting analogies that relate the eye-brows and the human environment (the eye-brows as sea leeches, as hedges etc.).

The moustache as a part of the human body are related to the symbolic of masculinity and fertility. They are inevitable status symbols of a mature or married man in many folk cultures. This mythical code is stressed especially in the frames of the rituals associated with the initiation, the passage of the bachelors into mature man, that are able to get married. they are also widely present as ritual instruments in the masked rituals (old man with moustache).

In the frames of the wedding rituals, this code is present when the participants go to fetch the bride, when the relatives of the bride, through a system of mocking the groom because he has no moustache or eye-brows, suspect his masculinity. The spatial and magical relations present in the song are very interesting.

"The groom did not have eye-brows or moustache
You have passed through a huge field
Why you have not found a shepherd fire-place
And why you have not put him eye-brows and moustache?" (Petreska 2000 : 357) (Prilep region)

Genitals

The part of the human body from the waist down to the knees, according to the cultural perception of many people, including the Macedonians, is a secret and most often hidden part, which implies an existence of a functional system of behavior filled with a number of ritual and strict ways of behavior, taboos that are valid on a non-verbal but also on verbal level. Surely, this system of secrecy, hiding and taboo relation towards this part of the human body is usual when it comes to the ideal type of behavior, that is the reglamentary type of behavior.

Besides this function, the genitals, in a factual but as well in a symbolical way, are carriers of the functions of fertility and reproductively. Thus, they have an important part in rituality. I would just mention some examples which include the spatial aspect. Starting from the erective ability of the male genital organ, a huge corpus of folk notions is related to the codes which have binary oppositions: soft : hard, small : big, lying

down : erected, dry : wet. The most important logical and magical analogues when it comes to the male organ is the rooster and the stick/bat (Loma 1999 : 131 : 144). Even today the colloquial speech refers to the phallus as to a rooster. "I swear into my rooster" - is a usual statement when one does not want to admit the guilt, when certain act is not justified and when a sarcastic remark is made. "If you see this birdie, you will run as hell (the cock)" (Cepenkov 1996 : 69)

The phallus is often related to the stick/bat. "I would just put inside you this stick, and everything else can stay outside" (Cepenkov 1996 : 69) or "I swear in my truncheon, in my baton in my cane" (Cepenkov 1996 : 40).

The vagina is perceived as a hole, inner space where one enters and exits. It is associated with a frog: "The frog of the bride is between her legs" (Cepenkov 1996 : 39).

During the "ritual use" of the genitals, the mythical code of passage is the one which is most characteristic. Namely, in Mariovo, the folklorist M. Risteski has noted an interesting ritual that is performed during the wedding customs, where the bride and the groom should pass under the legs of the oldest women in the village, who would climb with one leg on a chair and with the other on some barrel. While they passed under her, the grandmother would say the magic words: "When I blossom, then you should be affected by magic, when I bare fruit, then you should be affected by magic, when I would become a girl, then you should be affected by magic" (Risteski 1962 : 38). Petreska has noted a similar custom in the are of Kumanovo, where the bride and the groom were passing under the legs and genitals of the mother and the mother in law (Petreska 2002 : 364).

This is why the major part of the magical acts or rituals include activities that are done contrary to the established order of social behavior, that refer to the parts of the human body. As a protective measures when it comes to casting spells on children a verbal magical formulae was used: "The one who puts a spell on you should have a penis in his eyes, a vagina on his forehead" (AISK, K-46/1995, p. 11. Region of Mariovo).

This kind of use is sometimes hidden even in the frames of the rituals, it remains in the sphere of the mystery ritual behavior, the one that is known only to the "consecrated" ones, those who are directly involved in ritual activities, and sometimes even if this becomes public it is still outside what has been publicly approved or outside the positive behavior of the individuals. Thus, the actors have often been publicly condemned or punished (witches).

However, when the community is in an extremely bad condition, when it is necessary to undertake ritual activities for radically changing the structure, certain mythical and cultural codes related to the genitals and the genital fluids are used, so that the condition should be marginalized though things that are in normal circumstances considered as the most negative (simulation of incest, ritual dance of women in order to take away milk, urine as a medicine, ass directed towards a heavy cloud, eating feces).

According to the rich wedding rituality and the attributes of the magical acts related to the establishing of the “honesty“ of the bride, one can establish another important code that concerns the notion of the wholeness or the incompleteness of the bride. If it is established that the bride is not honest, different ritual activities are undertaken that should show that the bride is not “whole“ (Radenkovic 1996 : 39), but that she is “hollowed out“, “full of holes as a bucket“ (Petreska 2002 : 278), “damaged“ etc.

e:

Legs

The symbolical function of the legs (Agapkina 1999 : 84-85), according to folk notions, is related to the possibility to hold the human body upright and to enable man to move in space. Thus, the most important mythical code of the legs regarding the spatial structure of the world or regarding the possibilities for ritual space re-structuring of the World is based exactly upon this movement principle.

In the sense of the global structure of the human body, the legs belong to the sphere marked by “down“. However, all parts of the body are not equal when it comes to the intensity of the category “down“. Namely, the more one goes towards the ground, the more the symbolical meaning of “down“ or “extreme down“ is emphasized. In this sense, the lower parts of the legs are marked also as peripheral. This is where the mythical, magical and ritual codes of the heels come from , as well of the clothes relate to them - the socks, the shoes etc. These parts of the human body are in direct contact with the ground at times when it is allowed but also at times when this is not allowed for humans. In Mariovo, for example, when the groom and the bride would enter the church for the wedding, a women would go behind them so that she would sweep away the traces of their footsteps, so that no one could take this soil and damage them in a magical way (Petreska 2002 : 390).

In the frames of the wedding customs in Debarca and Ohrid area, during Saturday night the ritual washing and combing of the bride was done. An important ritual activity was warming the bride using socks for that purpose. This custom of putting socks on the feet of the bride could be interpreted as a protective measure (Petreska 2002 : 140).

As a result of such situations, there are a number of ritual activities for eventual protection of the integrity of human entity in situation when it is not desirable that the man would be in direct contact with the ground. Protective measures are taken when the bride is transferred from her father’s house to the one of her husband, when measures are taken that she does not touch the ground (Petreska 2002 : 153). For the same reason, in Zeleznik a towel was put under the groom’s legs during shaving, so that he does not directly touch the ground (Petreska 2002 : 273).

DIVISION OF THE HUMAN BODY IN HORIZONTAL DIRECTION

The symmetrical structure of the major part of the human organs enables a mental realization of another mythical code when it comes to the perception of the structure of the body. If one perceives the body in horizontal direction, from the forehead along the nose, the neck, the chests, the belly-button, the genitals, one can note that the body is divided into two halves, that are at first site identical. This perception of the body reflects the binary opposition of left : right.

According to the cultural perception of the left and the right side of the human body, as well as the organs on one or the other side, they don't have an equal importance, that is, they have a different mythical and symbolical connotation. "He got up on his left foot" - this is said for The person who is not in the best mood. "You work as if you were left-handed" - it is said to the persons who have done their work badly. The corpus of examples can be even bigger, and from them one can conclude that the left side is considered as a weaker one, as something bad, non-advantageous, while the right side is stronger, good, advantageous. The first breast-feeding is usually done with the right breast, at the same time wishing that this spatial positioning of the breast-feeder will be transferred to the child "so that it works with his right hand" (Kumanovo region) (Petreska 2000 : 323). This means that starting from the mythical codes that bear the symbolic of the left and the right side of the human body one could follow an extremely complex system of spatial semantics on a wider scale, when it comes to human environment (Tolstoj 1995 : 101-119; Burkhart 1999 : 168-183). This binary opposition is one of the most important in the frames of the system that forms the cultural space of the habitat, the wider community, as well as the World in general.

As we have already seen in the above made analysis, the face is the area where the most important perceptors can be found, one that enable the person to have a formal contact with the outside environment. A basic factor in the formation of the following binary opposition is the functioning of the eyes as senses. The possibility of man to see is limited only to the space that is in front of him. Consequently, what is on the opposite side of the eyes can not be seen. If "something is in front of our nose" it means that we can always see it, so that the sentence "When I will see my forehead" means something contrary to the above mentioned. Something that will never happen, since a person is not able to see his forehead.

This could be the example wherefrom the category binary opposition in front: behind can be deduced, which as a mythical code has an important role in the perception of the space structure. The mythical structure, the code, embraces the forehead, the neck, the chests, the back, the "cross"; the bottom and the rear parts of the legs. It is interesting that the bottom, the ass, is related in the folk notions with the fart (Burkhart 1999 : 168-183), that is again connoted in terms of entrance : exit, at the same time baring the connotation of bad smell and uncleanness. The fart, considered as something unnecessary, is thrown out in the open, but at the same time it destroys the structure of the environment, and in the frames of the folk notions is taken as extremely destructive. The public farting is damaging the socially established rules of behavior. "The spoiled

priest farts in the church“ - it is said of the one that does not respect to the socially accepted behavior.

In the frames of the wedding customs, there is often a ritual beating of the bride on the back, so that the fertility of the bride is initiated. This was done in Ohrid area by the groom who would beat her with a rose branch on which there were apples (Petreska 2002 : 184). This is also a type of spatial consideration of the type extremely up*, at the highest point, extremely down and at the lowest point. A especially important ritual role is dedicated to the bottom, the ass, that according the above mentioned semantic codes is related to the unclean.

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* The usage of the terms extremely down, extremely up is intentional, and aims to present as well the term “peripheral up“. Thus, semantically speaking it connotes that it is a matter of a term which is described not only as the one of “the hugest point“, but as well as the one of “periphery“, that renders additional meanings and usages.

Gurevic 1994

Гуревич Арон, *Категорије средњовековне културе*, Матица српска, Београд 1994, 54; 64; 66; 104.

Davidjak 1999

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