

Светиева Анета (ур.), *Етнoгpафија и антропoлoшкa тoпoгpафија на Скопско во XX век*, Музеј на град Скопје, Скопје 2011, ISBN 987-608-233-004-4

“Ethnography and Anthropological Topography of the Skopje region in the 20th century”, an anthology of essays edited by Aneta Svetieva (PhD), was published by the Museum of the city of Skopje, in Skopje, 2011. Included in the anthology are papers by 5 authors-researchers.

This collection of essays is the result of research within the initially titled project “Aspects of the material culture in the Skopje region”, begun with the goal of giving an image of happenings in the Skopje region in the 20th century, as a result of ethnologists’ and anthropologists’ interests towards improved research of the present. However, during the research process the thematic structure changed under the influence of obtained results on the changes brought about through the dynamics of the 20th century.

The 20th century in Macedonia is an exceptionally dynamic period. Because of that, the 5 authors-researchers who participated in the project established several topics that were to function as “litmuses of changes” in the period during which Macedonia transformed from a feudalistic system to capitalism. As a result, the initial project title was changed to the final title “Ethnography and anthropological topography in the Skopje region in the 20th century.” The final anthology is a reflection of societal changes, processes of cultural changes, as well the causes and effects of those events in the Skopje region during the 20th century.

Participants with their papers are Aneta Svetia (PhD), Ljupcho Risteski (PhD), Alla Kacheva, Slavica Hristova (MA) and Tatjana Gjorgjiovсka (MA). Each of these authors presents wide insights and views on the state of societal dynamics in the area of the Skopje region in the period of the last century. The concluding text, by Bone Velichkovski (PhD), is a review of the bibliography of articles, monographs and other types of texts published from the end of the 19th century and during the 20th century.

Svetieva’s text, “The Skopje region in the 20th century”, is an attempt to define the ethnographic areas in the Skopje region and their cultural characteristics. Svetieva examines the ethnographic-territorial changes in the Skopje region, in other words the ethnographic areas of the Skopje region and the dynamic changes of their borders and ethnic culture, seen through verbal and nonverbal ethnic symbols. The first part of the text consists of short ethnographic information on the Skopje region. The administrative organization in the late 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century is also mentioned: the region was divided into 6 “kolovi”, smaller territorial wholes as remnants of the ‘timars’ during the period of feudalism. These kolovi were determined by Jovan Hadzi Vasilevic and are known as: Crna Gora (Karadag), Gorno Blato, Dolno Blato – Chairlija, Vranishta (Kargal’k), Karshiyaka and Derven. Svetieva uses information on ethnic symbols and linguistic characteristics in her examination of the ethnic processes in the Skopje region. In the second part of the text, the ethnographic areas of the Skopje region are examined with greater detail: Skopska Crna Gora, Skopska Blatija, Karshiyak with Skopska Torbeshi-

ya, Kuchkovo and Skopski Derven. This examination of the areas is followed by various opinions by authors in terms of the regional, cultural, administrative, structural and socio-economic belonging of several villages. Svetieva points out to a large lack of Macedonian ethnographic and ethnological research. However, she manages to give a reflection of the socio-territorial state of the Skopje region through the use of fragmented information of various origins, and follows the flow of changes in the ethnography and anthropological topographies of the region.

Ljupcho S. Risteski is the second author whose paper compliments the anthology. In his text, “Mythological, religious, social and economic aspects of the cultural topography of the traditional village through examples of the Skopje region”, Risteski attempts to discover the mythological-religious and socio-economic aspects of the perception of the village area, referring to the characteristics of the “sretselo” (village center), the village area and the village border. The text concerns the mutual dependence of the mythological-religious and socio-economic aspects on the emergence, existence and loss of several religious forms of thinking and acting. Among the processes and spaces the author examines, are the founding of the village, as one of the most important processes in the mythological-religious and socio-economic life of the community; the sretselo, as a synonym of the village concerning the fact that the main public life of the community takes places there; marking of borders (sinors or megyi, megi), as an important aspect for the functioning of the village entity by differentiation of the space of the Others; the neighborhood system of organization of space, as a determining factor in the structure of the village community; and the graveyard, which according to folk accounts always holds a central place in the organization of the village space.

In her article, “Energy sources in households in the Skopje region of the 20th century”, Alla Kacheva presents the results of research of habits and changes concerning the sources of energy in village and neighborhood households of the Skopje area during the 20th century. The subject of interest is the way of life of the villages Gorno and Dolno Lisiče, the neighborhood Pintija, the village/neighborhood Dračevo, and the village Bardovci. The text concerns the use energy in the home followed by memorized data from the elementary ways of providing energy to the installation of electricity, seen as key factors in the dynamic changes in the culture of housing. Kacheva initially examines the development of the building of houses in accordance to the fireplace, giving important notes on the fireplace, of the open and semi-open type, in old village houses. Kacheva also writes on the emergence of the fire and fireplace as non-verbal symbols of the eternity of the agricultural village population in the agricultural-labor social group. The social factor, as well as the influence of the fast development of industrial production, brought about the use of various methods of heating in houses: black and white ovens, chimneys, solid fuel – wood, animal dung, coal, ash, mangal, furnaces and others. The author proceeds with the installation of electrical power in the Skopje region and the commencement of the use of electrical energy as heating, in the form of an electrical oven. In the concluding part, she gives information of the development of artificial lighting and the methods of lighting in houses in the 20th century.

Tatjana Gjorgjiovska participates with her paper “Skope sub-urban neighborhoods and villages in the light of social, economic and demographic dynamics in the 19th and 20th century.” The research topic is an attempt to study the cultural influences in connection to the origins of the population in the sub-urban Skopje neighborhoods and villages

and their reflection on the material culture of the population. The paper includes examinations of villages and neighborhoods in immediate vicinity to Skopje: the villages Gorno Lisiche, Dolno Lisiche, Drachevo, Bardovci and the neighborhood Pintiya. Gjorgjiovska begins with short cultural-historic and demographic data on Skopje and the Skopje region, including settlements and first written sources of villages, neighborhoods and the population in the Ottoman period, the demographic movements in the beginning of the 20th century up to the Second World War, and the migration processes in several villages from 1948 to today. In the second part the author gives a picture of the contemporary state of the ethnic characteristics of the population in the sub-urban neighborhoods and villages, where she includes aspects of the material culture, economy, food and the intensity of settlements in the villages. The author gives detailed ethnographic data on the settlers, on the communication of the settlers with their place of origin and the reflection of the origins of the Macedonian population on the material culture of the sub-urban neighborhoods and villages.

Slavica Hristova, in her text “The social aspect of the folk costume in four neighborhoods in the vicinity of Skopje” notes the large importance of the folk costume as a nonverbal ethnic symbol in the Skopje ethnic community until the middle of the 20th century. Her text is based on research of the folk costume, decorations and folk textile production in the sub-urban neighborhoods and villages in the Skopje region: Drachevo, Gorno Lisiche, Dolno Lisiche, and Bardovci in the period between 2001 and 2004. Hristova initially gives basic information on the folk costume in the Skopje areas, social aspects of the costume, ritual elements, symbols, status signifiers and symbols which transform the costume to an indicator of societal hierarchy. Further on, she differentiates the factors of influence, changes and loss of traditional costume, and the final keeping up of traditions, such as the nurturing of family and ethnic consciousness. Hristova follows the process of loss of costume and the emergence of awareness among people of the costume as a visible symbol of identity which initiated a reaffirmation of the costume as a local social and larger national sign in certain precisely determined holidays.

In the end, a bibliography of texts published in the 20th century on the ethnology and folklore in Skopje and the Skopje regions, prepared by Bone Velichkovski, is presented. The collection represents a review of the variety of articles, monographs and other types of texts published in the last decade of the 19th century and during the 20th century.

The anthology “Ethnography and anthropological topography of the Skopje region in the 20th century” provides a large number of important views on the societal changes in the Skopje region during the 20th century seen through the prism of the 21st century. The texts included in the collection successfully realize the determined goal of the authors to recognize the processes connected to the cultural changes and to connect the causes and effects of those events and the reflections that are important today. With the invested labors of the authors on researching the social, economic and ritual aspects of the traditional culture, this anthology presents a solid beginning point and motive for further research of the cultural phenomena of the Skopje region in the 20th century and today.

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