

## **THE WOMEN'S RITUAL PROCESSIONS "LAZARKI" IN MACEDONIA**

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**Abstract.** This work reviews an interesting appearance of ritual processions on the Balkan Peninsula that has succeeded to maintain and keep the practice through vast period of transformations, changes and cultural developments. The women's processions "Lazarki" (Лазарки in original) or "Lazarici", "Lazorki", "Lazarinki", "Lazarenki", "Lazara" depending of the ethnic regions in Macedonia, appear as one of the most famous ritual practices in Macedonia that have maintained to survive their tradition even today. As a most adequate term, I will simply use the name "Lazarki". These women's ritual processions are famous in most of the countries on the Balkan such as Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, Albania etc. performed by a group of girls that use a certain text or melody, as well as dancing or theatre elements as a basic and inextricable element (Maletic, 1986). The ritual is performed in motion while the girls are singing ritual songs or doing a ritual dance while traveling throughout the village or performing in the yard of a family that they have come to bless. The basic factor for this performance is the moment through which the ritual procession contributes towards the overall goods of the fami-

ly, and as return, the group is rewarded with gifts such as food, clothing or money.

*Keywords:* lazarki, folk rituals, Macedonia

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### **The cult of St. Lazarus**

The rituals have always existed in society as an ineradicable part of the culture as well as the biggest evidence for the spirit of a given nation. Stories from even the most primitive tribes talk about worshiping heavenly bodies or faith in gods of the nature (Atanasova, 2008). The Slavs have populated the Balkan Peninsula during the 6<sup>th</sup> century, bringing their polytheistic religion with them as well, and as throughout the world, the rituals on the Balkan have played major part of the everyday life of these people. The people have looked at those events as an act through which they perform certain spiritual event and they would gain common goods for the whole community.

Within the start of the spreading of the Christian religion at the Balkan, the church as a propagandist made some efforts to stop and banish these types of rituals (Antonijevic, 1997). Because of the resistance, the church who tried to enlighten the people and stop the heresy and the polytheism, decided to adapt these rituals within the Christian religion. With the newly formed intersection, the birth of a new form of rituals arose, where the presence of the Christian belief is very noticeable, but certain pagan elements as well that are not practiced by the Church. Through this so informal war between the church and the pagan rituals, the people have satisfied their spiritual beliefs by combining the two forces into what they adapted as a religious practice. The ritual of the *Lazarki* serves as a typical example of a ritual where the mixture of Christian religion is present as well as the pagan elements that were once dominant in this area.

The cult towards St. Lazarus is the exact reason for the performance of this ritual, deriving from the word *Lazarus* which leads to a character from the Bible. I must say that all of the written sources that point out to this information can only be assumptions, since there is no data about the previous existence of the ritual before the spread of the Christianity. The earliest traces lead to the acceptance of the Christianity by the Slavs around X- XI century (Ledic, 1969), so I can only suppose that this ritual was ascribed to a different role, meaning that maybe this is the beginning when the processions started to function.

According to Ana Maletic (1986), this procession had prominent male character of performance because of the usage of swords and other similar attributes, compared to the similar women's processions called *Kraljice* in Croatia and Serbia. Through the possession of this kind of war attributes, Nikolas Chausidis talks about a phenomenon called "the eternal human figure" which will not be a topic in this work (Chausidis, 2000). On the other hand, Petko Domazetovski (1974) in his article about the *Lazarki* procession in Bidjevo mentions that the procession has appeared in the 601th year of the new era when the church has successfully transformed the pagan elements into Christian, in the time when the Slavs are already stationed at the Balkan and gradually accept the Christianity.

Over all, these are only assumptions regarding the pagan element in this procession, but because of the lack of the scholar literature I will explore the faith element that has been most commonly researched. As a typical example for the power of the church on the rituals, I will mention the *Lazarki* procession in Bidjevo, Sturga and the song *Opshte e voskresenie iz mertvih* (song about Christian resurrection from the dead) that the *Lazarki* sing during the entrance in someone's house (Antonijevic, 1997).

In the Bible, St. John mentions the story of St. Lazarus as a character that has been resurrected from the death by Jesus Christ as a story that de-

scribes the wondrous powers of the messiah. In the gospel of John, St. Lazarus is presented as a person that lived in the city of Bethany. According to the story, after four days of his death, his sisters asked Jesus to return him back to life (John, 3). Because of the majority of this event, Lazarus' sister have spread the word of their brothers resurrection, visiting the houses where they lived, making sure that the event will be never forgotten. Through this story, a perception can be made for the reason and the relationship between this event and the performance of the procession. The question remains of the character of this procession before the stories of the Bible have been introduced to the people and if this ritual has existed at all.

Overall, the main moments from the story have been preserved such as the procession through the village from house to house carrying some type of news (in the Macedonian examples expressed through songs), and the main theme- the resurrection of Lazarus, symbolically present through the chorus of the songs- *Lazare, Lazare* which remained as the only connection between the story from the Bible and the ritual. On the other hand, at the field, none of the female informants cannot explain the meaning of the cult, even though they personally have participated in the procession. There has been some data according to the informants on the field that after the war in 1949, that the church has forbidden the ritual and every performance has been punished by the police (Stefanija, 1989). The reason remains unknown.

As I have already mentioned, the data, as well as the motif about the reason for the performance of the ritual today have been lost. The practice has been maintained because of the tradition that the performers have adopted through their mothers or grandmother who were also Lazarki. If asked the question "Why have you performed this ritual" they respond "For the good of the people."<sup>1)</sup>

## Ritual practice

The festival *Lazarova Sabota* (*Lazar's Saturday*) or *Lazarica* is an event without a permanent day of celebration. Depending on the Christian festival Easter, *Lazarica* is celebrated exactly one week before Easter. There is no data that proves that the festival is purely Christian, since the dramatic happenings in the XIV century that left traces on the Lazar ritual. Based on the scholarly data and personal field research, I will make an attempt to make a generalized idea of how the ritual looked like in the majority of the ethnic regions in Macedonia.



Stage adaptation Lazarice, Slavishko Pole, Department for traditional music and dance, The national centre for music and ballet Ilija Nikolovski- Luj, Skopje, 2005

On the field, the people differentiate different types of *Lazar- Gjupski Lazar* (Gypsy Lazar), *Siromashen Lazar* (Poor Lazar), *Bogat Lazar* (Rich Lazar), *Zhenski Lazar* (Female Lazar), *Mashki Lazar* (Male Lazar) etc. The

preparation for the processions always started at Thursday. The participants were girls, mostly between the ages of twelve to seventeen years old, at that time, girls that were ready to get married (certain authors write that there are examples where the Lazarki were older girls) (Matijashevik, 1989). The girls gathered for a meeting in groups of four to eight, so they can make a plan of which role will each girl possess. The most beautiful, or the oldest girl was most commonly known as *Tancharka* (Dancer), *Nevesta*, *Nesta* (Bride), *Matica* (Matrix), *Prednjica*, *Navrhnicica*, *Zaveljvach* etc. This girl had the role of the leader of the group and she would always be the one that will greet the hosts.



Lazarki, Ensemble Orce Nikolov, v. Injevo - Radovish, Skopje 2005

Another important division is the one between Male and Female Lazar. The girls that would carry any type of object, such as a wooden stick, hat, umbrella, sword etc. which was considered to be of a male character, were

most commonly known as *Mashki Lazar* (Male Lazar). The reasoning behind the motif is unknown but it is best depicted in a chorus of a song that says *Igraj, igraj Lazare, mushka ruba iznosi se* (Dance Lazar, enjoy your male clothes). Depending on the number of the participants, the girls would make another division. Most commonly the first two girls in the procession were called *Prednjici, Chelnici* (Leaders) or Male Lazar. The second two girls in the procession were called *Srednjici, Sreden, Zabavach, Nadchelnici* (Middle) and the rest of the girls in the group were called *Dosrednjici, Shetachki* (Followers) etc. In certain ethnic region the whole group was divided in *Gornja Grupa* (Upper group) and *Dolna Grupa* (Lower group) (Matijashevik, 1989).

After they would decide the roles, at the given Thursday during the week, the girls would gather to start preparing their props such as the baskets, sticks, wreaths etc., paying close attention to the costumes that they were going to wear as well, that needed to be new and clean. Friday was the day when the girls would gather to learn or repeat the songs that they were singing during the procession. The songs were taught by their grandmothers or mothers that also were Lazarki when they were younger. The Lazarki put a lot of emphasis on properly learning and singing the songs since they were the actual carriers of the ritual.

After all of the preparations were finished, the girls started their procession early on the Saturday morning, dressed in their bridal costumes,<sup>2)</sup> gathering at the center of the village. They would start singing immediately, even during walking around the village, and if they would meet a person on the street, they would sing a proper song for him/her as well. A proper song was sang for every person they would meet but also for the fields, meadows, wheat fields etc. When the Lazarki entered someone's yard, they started singing a welcoming song for the house, and after they would be greeted, the hosts would ask for songs for every member of the family. At the end of the singing (or while singing), the Lazarki did the *oro* dance, and at the end of the whole

performance, the leader of the procession would kiss the hands of the hosts for which she would receive gifts from the host, that would later be divided by the whole group. When leaving the house, the Lazarki sang a proper “Goodbye” song for the family.

This principal of performing was repeated for every house that the Lazarki would visit, with an exception for the houses where someone has recently died. The duration of the procession was influenced by the size of the village and the number of house in the village. At the end of the procession, as part of a newer context, the Lazarki would enter the church and light a candle and pray for good health concluding as the end of the whole ritual procession. During the evening, the Lazarki gathered in the house of the leader to divide the gifts that they have been given, and at a certain occasion, made a celebration, where all the villagers would come and celebrate the coming of Easter. This scenario of performance of the ritual has derived from many of the ways that this procession has been done, so this explanation was only an understanding of how this procession generally looked like.

### **The traditional costume of the Lazarki**

The traditional costume of the Lazarki appears as an important element of the whole procession. The costume itself presents a status through which one can differentiate the Lazarki from the other girls in the village, since often, they were wearing clothing elements that are only worn at this day, or through the carrying of ritual props. For the day of the procession, the Lazarki needed to wear a costume that is clean, new and never worn before, because *“It is a shame for the Lazarki to sing in old clothes”* (Tanovic, 1927). Through wearing these costumes, the Lazarki participate in an act of initiation, since this day was the first time these girls would wear clothing attributes that were part of the bridal costume. Regardless of the clothing element such as the chemise, the apron, the jewelry or the head scarf or any new bridal ele-

ment that the Lazarka girl would wear for the first time, it is important to mention that this moment presented transition to a different social status - a girl (a bride) that is ready to get married.



Lazarki- performing group from Ovche Pole, Skopje 2005

According to Gjorgji Zdravev (2000) “every ritual is opposed to the cosmos,” meaning that every ritual is performed to achieve some regulation of the personal emotion during this girl’s life. From here I can connect the motif for wearing the most beautiful clothes the Lazarki girl had, so they can achieve certain contrast towards the act they are performing, meaning that, through their beautiful clothes, they are expressing their appreciation towards the procession, the church etc. The costumes of the Lazarki fits in the category of “ritual costumes”, not because of the completely different look of the eve-

ryday costumes, but because of the day- the ritual for which this costume was worn (Zdravev, 2000).



Stage adaptation Lazarice, Slavishko Pole, Department for traditional music and dance, The National Centre for Music and Ballet Ilija Nikolovski- Luj, Skopje, 2005

For this costume to get the ascription of “ritual costume” it is necessary that a certain element is present that will make this costume different than the everyday costume, where in this case this is achieved through the ritual props. As the most common prop, one can see the basket in which the Lazarki gathered their gifts that were hand made by the participants in the procession (Avramovski, 1992). In the region Bojmija in Macedonia, the Lazarki wore white *interija* (chemise) instead of the red one, but maintaining the other elements of the festive costumes (Tanovic, 1927). An interesting example of Lazar costume is also found in the regions Sredorek, Zhegligovo and Slavishte in Northern Macedonia where the Lazar costume is almost the same as the

bridal one, with the exception of the *Kapa Shehirlika* (knitted had) and the umbrellas as the main ritual props. These props were only worn by the first two girls in the procession called *Prednjici*, and they were worn only on this day and never again (Mladenovski, 1973).

In the region Prespa in South-Western Macedonia, a very important prop was the willow wooden stick that the first Lazarka used for knocking on the people's doors (Domazetovski, 1974). The previously mentioned usage of the umbrella still remains mysterious, but as a relating information, Simo Mladenovski (1973) mentions that according to his field research in the region Kozjak, very long ago, the main Lazarka wore male clothes as well as weapon- most commonly that weapon was a sword. This mysterious information leaves many view points for the ritual costume as well as the ritual itself, which will not be the topic of this paper.

### **Ritual songs (periodization, themes and melody)**

The ritual songs are the most important part of the ritual procession as a medium through which the Lazarki transmit their blessings towards the people in the village. The songs of the Lazarki have always been the broadest theme for scholarly research, because through them, one can understand the whole purpose of the ritual. In Macedonia, the singing and the songs as well appear as the most popular theme on which the Macedonian authors wrote about. Yet, the Macedonian ethnologist Ljupco Ristovski (1973) would say “after all, we still do not have any more exhaustive study that would treat this interesting and important problematic”. For better understanding he divides the problematic into: (i) periodization; (ii) theme; (iii) melody.

The periodization is a category that is concerned with the period in which the songs are created. He divides the periodization in four phases: pre-Christian, Christian, Epic and songs from the new period.

The pre-Christian period is hard to notice in the songs because of the church who almost succeeded to remove all the pagan elements from the songs and replace them with more adequate lyrics. As an example, Ristovski (1973) points out to a song from the city of Krushevo, where the city Ohrid is mentioned as Tsarigrad, and through the terminology of the city, one can realize that the song dates from an older period. In the village Lukje in the ethnic region of Slavishte, the Lazarki girls sing about the Tsar Kostadin, but even through the field research, there is no data of who the Tsar Kostadin was, so this song fits in the pre-Christian category as well. In the village Bidjevo which is close to the city of Struga in South-Western Macedonia, the scholars have noticed a lot of songs where the Lazarki sing about the sun, which in the pre-Christian period was the theme for many different rituals as one of the main sources for life. Dragi Stefanija (1989) writes that this segment presents an ancient celebration of the sun for its warmth and light that was praised by the people.

The Christian period begins with the acceptance of the Christian religion. The process of the Christianization of these songs began in the period of VII century until the middle of the IX century (Ristovski, 1973). The church, as the biggest influence in the villages, has left its mark on these songs, both intentionally and unintentionally, which is proven by many examples on the field. In Prespa, the people consider that it is sin for these songs to be sang any other day than Lazarovden (Brzanov, 1973). The connotation of “sin” leads to a religion- in this case the Christian religion and the codex of the Church. As the best example, I will point out Petar Avramovski (1992) who writes about the Lazarki in the village of Tashmarunishta near Struga, where the Lazarki sing a song called “Jesus Christ is risen from the death” as they are entering certain household. Yet, as previously mentioned, it becomes unclear whether this has been intentional influence by the church or unintentional practice by the people. The word “amen” is also another factor to consider, given that this

was the response for every blessing that the Lazarki would receive, as well as the mentioning of God and the mother of God as unavoidable lyrics in the songs.

The epic period is considered to be the period of the Ottoman occupation of Macedonia and the Balkan. In these songs, one can notice stories about heroes, for their heroic battles and many Turkish hierarchical expressions such as *beg*, *aga* etc. Since the suffering and the trouble became inevitable part of the life of the Macedonian people, they decided to sing about it in their Lazar songs with the hope that their pain will disappear. In the villages around the city of Ohrid, the most famous Lazar songs are the ones about *Katlan Pasha*, *Doblet Aga*, *Yunache Smilyanche* etc. (Stefanija, 1989). As in most of the epic songs in Macedonia, the most famous theme at this songs as well are the songs that tell stories about *Krali Marko* (The king Marko) (Ikonov, 1988). These songs are mostly popular in the plains of Debar in Western Macedonia.

The newer period is considered to be the period after the Second World War. The people have started to adapt the songs to their new beliefs, and to popularize them according to the new period. These songs deal with stories about soldiers, events from the near history, and very often, songs that mention the former Yugoslavian leader Tito (Ristovski, 1973). This example leads to the notion that every important person or event became a theme for a song, even in the lyrics of the Lazar songs.

The theme in the Lazar song is various, but regardless of what the lyrics were, the songs were always meant to wish someone a good health and prospect. The theme is mostly depended of whom the Lazarki are singing to—that person can be a father, a mother, a bride, the sons and daughters etc. – literally encompassing every social status in the society and the household. The Lazarki also sang songs to the fields, the animals, the sun, the church, social events etc., in general, every aspect of the life of the people in the village. The textual subject of the songs is mainly oriented towards wishes for good

health, marriage, and the overall good of the society. The most popular are the songs with love themes that are mainly meant for the younger members of the household. Songs with more serious theme were sang to the poor people, to the widows, for the men going to the army etc.<sup>3)</sup> The social need of the society for these songs was unavoidable. For *Lazarovden*, every household insisted for the Lazarki to visit them, and at least, sing a song to every member of the family.



Lazarenki - choreography by Simeon Chulev, The National Ensemble of Folk Music and Dance- Tanec, Bitola 2009

The melody of the Lazar song is not very diverse. In general, the songs are mostly monophonic and in rare cases polyphonic. Unfortunately, only few ethnomusicologists have researched this subject, but as most important I will mention the study by Vasil Hadzhimanov for the ethnomusicological characteristics of the Macedonian traditional songs (Hadzhimanov, 1960). Harmonization, in the type of main melody and a drone is mostly popular in the fields

of Radovish, Slavishte and Lower Polog area where he noticed *pesni na slag-anje*, where one of the Lazarki starts the songs and the rest *slagaat* (drone) (Matijashevik, 1989). The monophonic type of singing is more present and it is considered to be more archaic. The most popular example of monophonic singing is also the antiphon singing in *cheti* (groups) where the one group sings a certain melody and the second group just repeats the same melody and lyrics. The Lazar songs have a firm rhythmic organization where most of the songs are in 2/4 or 7/8 meter.

### **Ritual dance**

The dance is considered to be the integral part of the ritual. Depending on the region, the dances are not necessarily always present, or not yet researched enough, which presents a puzzle with this problematic. In general, the most typical is a simple walking-like movement that is most commonly accompanied with singing such as walking, braiding steps, and small leaps and hops. In the village Tashmarunishta near Struga, the girls would immediately start dancing the *oro* dance after singing the song *Kito Mito Nevesto*, and the *oro* needed to be led by the girl that is somehow related to the family to whom the Lazarki were singing (Avramovski, 1992). In this region, the dance is considered to be a constant element of the singing, which makes the region interesting for research. Mihajlo Dimovski (1973), a well-known Macedonian ethnochoreologist, has been researching the dances in this region and wrote about the interesting aspects about the ritual dance. As mentioned before, if the ritual costume has been the only element for the act of initiation, in this region, Dimovski explains that the dance is considered to be the carrier of that element. Namely, as an act of initiation, the girl - Lazarka that was ready to be married, would dance last in the chain dance and this would be her last time of dancing this dance in her life. This region offers a lot of Lazar chain dances such as *Vijur Vijur Gajdanot*, *Brala moma zelenika*, *Kito Mito Nevesto*

etc. where the Lazarki are joined by their hands and move in a counter-clockwise direction (Dimovski, 1973).

In the fields of Radovish, the dance *Vijena Loza Vijena* is presented as an interesting example that is performed three times in the front of the house that the Lazarki visited (Delinikolova, 1960). On the field, the informants still remember that after singing the songs, the Lazarki would perform the *oro* dance accompanied by *gajda* (bagpipe) and *tapan* (drum).<sup>4)</sup> A different way of dancing is present in the ritual in the regions Sredorek, Zhegligovo and Slav-ishte in Northern Macedonia. During their entrance in the house, the Lazarki do a crossing movement while waving their hands according to the rhythm of the song (Mladenovski, 1973). The dance is very present in the ritual in these regions, so the songs are divided *na pojanje* (while singing), *na stojanje* (while standing) and *na igranje* (while dancing).

According to a field research in the village of Konopnica in this region, I have noticed a couple of types of dances.<sup>5)</sup> Namely, the songs performed while dancing are always done in a walking-braiding step, moving in a half circle, while slightly bending the body forwards. When the Lazarki would enter the house, they sang the songs *na stojanje*- the Lazarki divide in two groups and form two lines across each other, and they switch their places while singing and doing small hops. An interesting moment is found in the village Lukje in the same region, where the *prednjici* girls step out of the line and bow down on a certain verse during the song *Tsar Kostadin sedeshe*. The bows and turns are elements that are also the case of many examples through the whole the territory of Macedonia, which are witnesses for the archaic aspect of this ritual.

### **The importance of the Lazarki processions in Macedonia**

The Lazarki processions take a very important place in the cult life of the Macedonians as being one of the most popular rituals on the Balkan. What

influenced the frequency of this ritual is still not clear, but presence of the so-called religious *dromena* is clearly recognizable (Antonijevic, 1997). The Lazarki procession are mostly present at the Christian population of the Balkan, but the history highlights both the Christian and the pagan character of the ritual. Disregarding the origins, this festival still remains very popular and well respected between the Macedonian people as a herald for Easter. According to information from the field, the Lazarki were welcomed at every house they visited and it was a great taboo for a household not to greet their guests. The gift giving is considered as a “favor in return” aspect of the ritual, as an informal way of thanking for the blessings the family received from the Lazarki. This ritual was kept and practiced not only because of the common good for the household, but because of the awareness of keeping a tradition alive. The people were well aware that this ritual “is something their mothers did” and on the question “since when” they would respond “since forever”<sup>6</sup>). It was a great pride and honor for a girl to be Lazarka. Through the ritual, the Lazarka girl gained a different social status in the society, through the already mentioned initiation act.

### **The Lazarki today**

The situation of the Lazarki today has changed since they have lost their original meaning. The existence of the ritual today has greatly changed and it is not as common as it once had been. Certain regions lost the practice of the ritual, whereas in other regions it is still kept but in a different context. The current situation of the ritual is present at the field but only as a remembering for a time that has already passed. Since the processions once presented a powerful ritual for the society, it is hard for the villagers to completely forget the whole notion of the processions, so I cannot say that the ritual is completely vanished. For certain villages, the ritual became a social habit and was preserved from extinction. An interesting example is found in the villages of

the plains of Radovish, such as the villages Injevo, Dedino and Gabrovo where the processions are still practiced and well preserved. The condition for this preserving is the social awareness of the villagers for their spiritual life, which presents a rarity in today's society.

As an example, I will point out a modified variant as a new form of the ritual, present in certain regions such as the villages Zubovo, Monospitovo, Robovo etc. in the fields of Strumica. Generally, the procession is performed by girls dressed in today's variant of bridal (white) dress, as the today's form of a ritual costume, and its important aspect of the ritual. Through examples like this one, the modified performance of the ritual is evident, as well as the modern elements that are unintentionally adopted by the society.

The most popular modern form of this procession was adopted by the Gypsies that live in the country. Namely, the ritual is now performed by an older woman that plays the *dajre* (tambourine) and sings, and a younger girl that performs a dance, both dressed in the traditional Gypsy costume *shalvari*. The dance is consisted of a popular form of dancing by the Gypsies *chochek*, by performing a form of belly dancing, commonly known in Macedonia as *meshanje*. The Gypsies unfortunately are not very welcomed by the household since their main intention for the performance of the procession is the receiving of money as gifts. Through such examples that are even found in the bigger cities in Macedonia such as Skopje, one can see the modified form of the ritual that was mentioned before. If this procession was once performed as an act through which the Lazarki were common good doers, today's version is purely because of the possible financial gift that the Gypsy Lazarki may get in return. Such examples are found in most of the rituals that are preserved today, even practiced by the Macedonian people such as *koledari* that is also actively performed today. The insufficient understanding of the ritual resulted in this modified performances and expectations by the performers who perform these rituals out of habit, disregarding the original intention.

## **Conclusion**

The women's processions Lazarki are one of the most famous processions in Macedonia. Derived from a story from the Bible, the festival of St. Lazar appeared to the population of the Southern Slavs at the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> century. Through the time, these processions were the subject of unintentional change, for today to be accepted as a Christian festival. The ritual act that contains certain rules of performance is performed by girls dressed in a bridal costume, carrying certain ritual props. Traveling from one house to another in the village, the Lazarki perform ritual songs and dances, meant for each member of a certain household they visit. The ritual is concluded by a visit to the church. This paper presented a brief history of the performance aspect as well as the meaning of the ritual that was greatly changed through time, and adapted to the popular belief of today's society.

## NOTES

1. Field research in the village Leshok - Lower Polog area, 2008. Informant: Verica Ristevska.
2. On the territory of Macedonia, the bridal costumes was usually picked as the most beautiful festive costumes, that contained more embroidery than the rest of the costumes, as well as different wedding garments such as veils, coats, jewelry etc.
3. Field research in the village Leshok-Lower Polog area, 2008. Informant: Verica Ristevska.
4. Field research in the village Injevo - the plains of Radovish, 2008. Informant: Slobodka Miteva.
5. Field research in the village Konopnica, Slavishte, 2005. Informant: Dragica Dimitrova.
6. Field research in the village Gradishte, Ovche Pole, 2008. Informant: Ratka Ristova.

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