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THE LINGUISTIC DUALITY IN THE MACEDONIAN VERNACULAR LANGUAGE (1900–1941)

ABSTRACT Through the processes of migration and colonization, historical determinism in Macedonia had a significant impact on the role and development of the Macedonian folk language. As the status of the Macedonian language was changing, the phenomenon of linguistic dualism appeared within it, which developed in specific and various ways in Aegean, Vardar and Pirin Macedonia.

Key-words: Macedonia (Aegean, Vardar, Pirin), migration, colonization, linguistic status, linguistic duality.

“I have not noticed any elements which would confirm that there exists a Macedonian– Turkish special dialect.”

Gustav Weigand, German ethnographer and linguist, 1924

The historical determinism, either positive or negative, contributes to the appearance of the so-called *linguistic duality*. The linguistic duality, under the influence of the historical determinism, arises and is expressed in three forms: a) in the circumstances of *freedom*, b) *non-freedom* and c) *non-freedom in freedom*.

When the linguistic duality occurs in circumstances of *freedom*, we are referring to people or nation which lives in a multi-ethnic state and has ethnic-linguistic liberties, develops normally and the phenomena of the language duality do not hinder the ethnic-linguistic development of the above-mentioned people. Processes like that are perceived in the period of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (the Polish, the Czechs, the

Slovaks, the Croats, the Slovenians, the Romanians), in Canada (Quebec). The politically inferior nations in the Austro-Hungarian Empire developed their own ethnic-linguistic culture and with the presence of a strong ethnic awareness promoted their mother language orally or by writing. It was a matter of time when these nations would use the historical moment and to the ethnic-linguistic liberties they would add the political ones (forming their own ethnic countries).¹

When the linguistic duality appears in circumstances of *non-freedom*, we are referring to an occupied people or nation. The above-mentioned people do not have any ethnic-linguistic liberties and the negative historical determinism conducts erosive ethnic-linguistic processes on the occupied people. Such processes are perceived in Spain (Catalonia,² Euskadi-Basque³), Great Britain (Ireland,⁴ Scotland,⁵ Wales⁶), France (Bretagne,⁷ Occitan⁸).

¹ After World War I, the Polish, the Czechs and the Slovaks formed their own national states, and the Romanians from Transylvania united themselves with the Romanian Kingdom.

² The Catalan language is spoken in Catalonia (Catalunya), the Balearic Isles, the Eastern Pyrenees and Southern France. In the 12th century, the Catalan language was the official language of the Aragon Dynasty. During the centuries, the Catalan language was under the strong influence of the Spanish language (the castellano dialect), but nevertheless kept its character as a separate language. In the period of the Franco dictatorship (1939-1975), an ethnic-linguistic pressure was exerted on the Catalonians and the Catalan language. After the democratization of Spain (1975) the Catalan language develops normally. Today, the Catalan language is the official language in Catalonia.

³ The Euskadi language (*Euskera*) is spoken in Basque (three provinces in Spain and one in Southern France) and is one of the oldest Iberian languages. The first literary works in the Euskadi language appear in the 16th, and in the 19th century numerous literary works were published. During the Franco dictatorship, The Euskadi people were ethnic-linguistically oppressed. After 1975, the Euskadi, as well as the Catalonians, have ethnic-linguistic rights. Nowadays, the Basque language is the official language in Basque. From 1966 the Basque in France were allowed to use their Basque names.

⁴ The Irish language nowadays is spoken by more than one million people. One of the richest literatures in Europe developed in the 9th century in Ireland (Eire). Adventure novels, fantasy travels (Imrama), lyric poetry, as well as works of astronomy and medicine were written in the Irish language. The long, eight-century English occupation made the Irish language lose its status as mother language for a vast part of the Irish population and was substituted by the English language. After the acknowledgement of the Irish statehood (1921), the Irish language became obligatory in Ireland and the process of restoration of the Irish language among the Irish population started. The Irish from a young age learn one life notion: "Ireland forever".

⁵ The Scottish language is the language of the Irish population which inhabited Scotland in the 5th century AD. Due to the long loss of contact with the Irish language, the Scottish language gained its own characteristics. Nowadays, approximately 150.000 people speak Scottish.

⁶ In Wales, the children who use the Welsh language were forced to wear a wooden cube around their necks on which there was an inscription: "Forbidden to speak in Welsh".

⁷ The Bretagne language is spoken by the descendants of the Celts and which, under the oppression by the Anglo-Saxons, inhabited Bretagne (France). The Bretagne language is spoken by 1.500.000 people and is under French linguistic influence.

⁸ The Occitan language is spoken in the Southern France. Its formation as an individual language was based on the dialect "langue d'oc". It was promoted in the field of literature in the 12th and 13th century. After the occupation by France, the French language gradually substituted the Occitan language. Today, the Occitan language has a status more of a *langue de famille* (family language).

When the phenomena of the linguistic duality appears in circumstances of *non-freedom in freedom*, we are referring to people who live within a federation and only seemingly have the ethnic-linguistic liberties, but at the same time strong ethnic-linguistic erosive and assimilative processes are taking place.

What kind of linguistic duality phenomena are perceived in Macedonia? In Macedonia, the phenomena of the linguistic duality appear in circumstances of *freedom in non-freedom* (1371-1912), *non-freedom* (1913-1941) and *non-freedom in freedom*. In the period of Ottoman rule, i.e. the period of *freedom in non-freedom*, the Turkish linguistic duality in the Macedonian vernacular language did not expand. That process was stopped by the ethnic-linguistic reality which existed in Macedonia at the beginning of the 20th century and the tolerance by the Ottomans towards the language, religious and cultural traditions of the non-Ottoman people in Macedonia.⁹

In Macedonia, the ethnic-linguistic reality was not dominantly ethnic-linguistically Turkish. In the beginning of the 20th century, according to Vasil K'nchov, in Macedonia lived 1.181.336 Bulgarians (52%), Turkish 499.204 (22,1%), Greeks 228.702 (10%), Albanians 128.711 (5,7%) and others of the total population of 2.258.224 inhabitants.¹⁰

This ethnic reality imposed ethnic-linguistic processes. The Slavic population in Macedonia had a status of a *majority population* and then, through the Exarchate, expressed its ethnic-linguistic nationality. With that, the Macedonian vernacular language, aside from the status of *mother language*, had the status of *the most frequently language* in Macedonia. The Macedonian vernacular language, in fact, had the role of an "*official language*" for the total population which lived in Macedonia: Turks, Jews, Wallachians, Romani, and less for the Greeks.

The Turkish population in Macedonia did not have the status of a *majority population*. It had the status of an *ethnic minority* and the Turkish language had the status of a *minority language* beside its character of an *official language*.

The Turkish rural population mainly lived in clear ethnic-linguistic environments.¹¹ When the Turkish population left its ethnic-linguistic space, it collided with another, dominant, Slavic ethnic-linguistic reality. They were forced to learn the language of the dominant ethnic-linguistic population and did not represent means to spread the Turkish language and the Turkish language duality among the Macedonian Slavic population.

In the Ottoman period, the Macedonian vernacular language was not banned, but the Turkish historical determinism allowed free ethnic-linguistic development. The

⁹ In the period of the Ottoman rule there was a political and social oppression.

¹⁰ В. Кънчов, *Македония. Етнография и статистика*, София 1900, p. 289. Of total of 47 kazas, according to Vasil Künchov, the Bulgarian population was present in 34, the Turk 13, the Greek 8, the Albanian 4, the Walla 3 and the Jewish in 1 kaza.

¹¹ The Turkish population was a majority population in 8 kazas, and in 32 kazas they lived among the Macedonian Slavic population. Look for details in: В. Кънчов, *Македония...*, pp. 291-292.

Ottoman Turkish authorities, acknowledged millet-people¹², education¹³, free church life and free linguistic ethnic communication.

The appearance of the Turkish linguistic duality in the Macedonian vernacular language in the period of the Ottoman rule was not compulsive, institutional, but a natural appearance, which occurred normally as a result of the long Ottoman-Turkish rule in Macedonia. Turkish words, naturally and not forcefully, integrated themselves in the Macedonian vernacular language and, with time, acquired the status of a *mother word*. However, their presence in the Macedonian vernacular language, G. Weigand stated, were not so present so I could notice that “[...] there is a Macedonian-Turkish special dialect”.¹⁴

THE LINGUISTIC DUALITY IN THE MACEDONIAN VERNACULAR LANGUAGE (1913–1941)

“На кол вода пиєвме” [We got the sharp end of the stick]

– popular saying in Aegean Macedonia after 1913

“Од трн на глог паднавме” [Out of the frying pan and into the fire]

– popular saying in Vardar Macedonia after 1913

a) **The linguistic duality in the Aegean Macedonia:** with the Bucharest Peace Treaty (1913), Greece annexed 34.356 km or 51% of the Macedonian territory. After the occupation of the southern part of Macedonia and the exarchate's ethnic denomination of the population, the Greek state aspired to change the ethnic composition of the population and the province to get a Greek ethnic character.

After the signing of the Neuilly-Sur-Seine (so-called voluntary emigration of the population living in Bulgaria and Greece) and the Lausanne Peace Treaty (obligatory exile of the population living in Greece and Turkey), 127.374 Macedonian-Slavic and Muslim population, as well as 300.000 ethnic Turks of the Muslim faith were exiled from Aegean Macedonia.¹⁵

Whilst exiling the indigenous non-Greek population, the Greek state conducted a policy of colonization in Aegean Macedonia with the purpose of forming a single state with a single language. Based on the Greek *internal* colonization (with people coming from Ancient Greece) and *external* colonization (with people coming all over the world), the Greek state succeeded in colonizing Aegean Macedonia with total of

¹² In Macedonia, the Ottoman authorities acknowledged many millet-people (Bulgarian, Greek, Serbian, Wallachian and Jewish).

¹³ The education was conducted, aside from the Turkish language, in Bulgarian, Greek, Serbian and Romanian language.

¹⁴ Г. Вайганд, *Етнографија на Македонија*, София 1998, p. 62.

¹⁵ В. Руменов, ‘Българите въ Македония подъ гръцка власт’, *Македонски преглед*, No. 4 (2002), p. 90.

618.000 people of Christian background: Greeks, Armenians, Karamanlis¹⁶ and other Christian people.¹⁷

After the significant ethnic changes which took place in Aegean Macedonia (1919-1928), the Macedonian and the Greek population swapped their ethnic-linguistic status.

The Macedonian Slavic people from *majority population* became *ethnic minority*. At the same time the Greek minority, from an insignificant size of an ethnic minority in Macedonia of (9,8%),¹⁸ received the status of *majority population*. This change seriously influenced the fate of the Greek and Macedonian vernacular language. The Macedonian vernacular language from *the most frequently used one* became a *language of a minority* or *family language*. At the same time, the Greek language from *a minority language* or *family language*, received the status of *a most frequently used language*, aside from the status of *an official language*.

The new ethnic-linguistic changes, as well as the policy of denationalization and assimilation, contributed towards the appearance and development of the linguistic duality in the Macedonian vernacular language.¹⁹ The Greek linguistic duality in the Macedonian vernacular language did not take such vast proportions and it mainly was due to the collective resistance expressed by the Macedonian people towards the Greek state and the Greek language.

The Macedonian people had a strong and collective national solidarity concerning the preservation of their mother language. The Macedonian family protected and nourished the Macedonian vernacular language and because of that, the Macedonian vernacular language had the status of a *mother (primary) language*. The young generations learned the Macedonian vernacular language from their earliest years and expressed themselves naturally.²⁰ They learned the Greek language later on, and this language for the Macedonian people had a status of a *foreign language*. They pronounced

¹⁶ The Karamanlis: people with Turkish ethnic origin, but with Christian religion.

¹⁷ Based on the Greek internal colonization, in Aegean Macedonia 53.056 Greeks were colonized in total, and based on the external colonization 565.143 people were colonized. See: Statistika apotelezmata tis apografis tu plitizmu tis Elados tis 15-16 maiu 1928, Topos genisios, Hriskia le glosa, Ipiotis, Athena 1935.

¹⁸ Before the Balkan Wars, the Greek people were a majority population only in three kazas, represented a real ethnic minority in thirteen, and in twenty-nine kazas the Greek were not ethnically present. В. Кънчов, *Македонија...*, p. 299.

¹⁹ The first words that entered the Macedonian language, were mainly from the repressive policy sphere. Those were *анисихи* (anxiety), *дикастирјото* (court), *дикигорос* (judge), *астиномото* (police-officer), *фимерида* (newspaper), *карекла* (chair), *зилепсва* (envy) etc. Here are several examples with Greek duality in the Macedonian vernacular language from the period between the two World Wars: "Леофориото кинисва од статмото во девет саето" [The bus leaves from the station in nine o'clock]; "Аеропланото лита на хиљометри високо" [The plane flies at a few metres altitude]; "Ја пеам фимеридата" [I am reading the newspaper]; "То пеам пимата" [I am reciting a poem]. National History Institute (АОИНИ), Documentary Section, X. Ловач (Ловачев), *Спомени*, p. 23.

²⁰ The Macedonian people pronounced naturally the phonemes *sh* (ш), *ch* (ч) etc.

the Greek language in an unnatural way and it was obvious that the Greek language had a status of a *foreign*, and not a status of a *mother language*.²¹

All these changes were conducted with the application of state terror which was unbearable for the Macedonian people. “На кол вода пиевме” [We got the sharp end of the stick] – the Macedonian people used to say.²²

b) The language duality in Vardar Macedonia: After the Balkan Wars (1912-1913), Serbia annexed 25.713 km or 39% of the Macedonia's territory.

Serbia, aside from the Exarchate's ethnic denomination of the people, also conducted a policy of colonization of the Serbian people in Vardar Macedonia. The goal was to change the ethnic-linguistic composition of the people in Vardar Macedonia and the territory to get a Serbian ethnic-linguistic character. Based on the so-called *rural* and the so-called *administrative colonization*, in Vardar Macedonia 100.000 ethnic Serbs were colonized who represented almost 10% of the population.²³ The Kingdom of Yugoslavia conducted this policy with state terror. “Од трн на глог паднавме”²⁴ [Out of the frying pan and into the fire], the Macedonian people used to say, comparing the Turkish rule to the Serbian one in Macedonia.

The Serbian colonization did not succeed to change the ethnic-linguistic map of Vardar Macedonia. The Macedonian people retained the status of an *ethnic majority*. This ethnic reality seriously affected the status of the Macedonian and Serbian language in Vardar Macedonia. The Macedonian vernacular language, aside from the status of a *mother language*, also played the role of *the most frequently used language* in Vardar Macedonia. The Macedonian vernacular language, aside from the Macedonian people, was used also by the traditional historical minorities that lived in Macedonia: Turks, Albanians, Jews, Roma, etc.

The Serbian language, besides its character of an *official language*, did not have the role of a *most frequently used language*. The Serbian language, within the Serbian colonies and the administration, was used only by the ethnic-linguistic Serbs and pro-Serbian individuals known among the people as “Srbomani” (20.000 individuals).

The Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (VMRO), as a Bulgarian ethno-linguistic movement, defied relentlessly the Serbian assimilative and colonizing

²¹ The Macedonian population pronounced unnaturally the letters which did not exist in the Macedonian vernacular language (tita, gama, delta). For example, the Macedonian people, called the sea *talasa*, instead of *thalasa*.

²² Б. Шклифов, *На кол вода пиехме*, София 2011.

²³ Based on the rural colonization in Vardar Macedonia, 3.670 families or 18.384 people were colonized, and based on the so-called administrative colonization brought in 18.384 individuals who supported 49.394 people. Архива на Македонската Академија на Науките и Уметностите [Archive of the Macedonian Academy for Sciences and Arts], Извештај на Врховното поверенство за аграрна реформа [Report by the Supreme Commission for Agricultural Reform], commission 60 from 11.2.1941, book 3, and Дефинитивни резултати на пописот на населението [Definite Results of the Directory of the Population] from 31 March 1931, Belgrade, 1937, book 1, pp. 10-11.

²⁴ О. Тренчева, *Македонија – незгасната желба во време без надеж. Животот и делото на Д-р Константин Тренчев*, Скопје 2012. Глог – a type of a tree with spikes.

policy, backing the Macedonian Slavic population in its ethno-linguistic resistance and advised the population not to learn the Serbian language, not to use it when communicating and to talk only in their own mother language.²⁵

These objective ethnic-linguistic realities contributed to a halt in the spreading to bigger dimensions of the phenomena of duality in the Macedonian vernacular language in Aegean and Vardar Macedonia. The Greek or the Serbian language duality in the period between the two World Wars did not endanger the linguistic integrity of the Macedonian vernacular language and no *Greek-Macedonian* or *Macedonian-Serbian spoken language* was created.

c) The language duality in Pirin Macedonia: In the Petrich region no ethnic-linguistic changes were noted. This region was mainly inhabited by the Macedonian population which was exiled from Aegean and Vardar Macedonia and nourished the exarchal ethnic-linguistic traditions. In the Petrich region lived 6.533 families (30.000 individuals) out of which 5.933 hailing from Aegean Macedonia, 564 from Vardar Macedonia and 6 families from South Dobruzda and Eastern Thrace.²⁶ The population accepted and adopted the Bulgarian literary language and through it, the Russian loan words which were adopted and codified in the Bulgarian literary language and were less known for the new population that inhabited this region.²⁷

The phenomena of linguistic duality over the Macedonian vernacular language took bigger proportions after the Second World War in Socialistic Macedonia. In this period, the Asnom ethnic stand Macedonia=Macedonians and Macedonians=Macedonia started to materialize. With this, the doors of the Serbian linguistic influence over the Macedonian literary and vernacular language were wide open.

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²⁶ С. Трифунов et al., *Нови очерци по българска история, 1918–1948*, София 1955, pp. 61-62.

²⁷ This refers to words such as “касае” (behave), “вход” (entrance), “котка” (cat), “которак” (tomcat), “охрана” (defence) etc.

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