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## Reflection of the Cyrillo-Methodian Tradition in the Contemporary Macedonian Literature

STOJMENSKA-ELZESER, S.: Reflection of the Cyrillo-Methodian Tradition in the Contemporary Macedonian Literature. *Slavica Slovaca*, 59, 2024, No 1, pp. 117-124 (Bratislava).

The paper is a brief overview of the literary works in Macedonian contemporary literature devoted to the great importance of Cyril and Methodius Brothers for the culture of all Slavic peoples, and especially for the Macedonian culture. Various literary works from different genres (poetry, prose and drama) from the second half of XX century till now, which refer to the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition are commented. In the paper, their symbolic meanings, motifs and models of literary interpretation are being discussed, such as: admiration and glorification, nationalism, patriotism, Slavdom as unity, details from the Vitae, the glagolica and the diversity within the Slavic world, the motif of the Slovak town of Nitra, ethical and spiritual questions, the phenomenon of translation, etc. Also, the paper includes some observations on the work of great educators regarding the contemporary challenges of the modern humanity.

Cyrillo-Methodian tradition, contemporary Macedonian literature, Slavdom, glagolica, phenomena of translation, cultural icons

### *Introduction*

The Cyrillo-Methodian tradition is strongly incorporated in the Macedonian culture on various levels: theological, political, educational, scientific, artistic, in the popular culture and media, as well as in the everyday life. It has been vital during the centuries long continuum and doesn't shade even nowadays; on the contrary, it gains new symbolic aspects and forms of actualization.

Although many different political constellations during the history have influenced the remembrance of the Cyrillo-Methodian cult, since the struggling and the specific process of national revival until now it has been considered as one of the basic identification codes of the Macedonian people and its Slavic origin. That is why the topic of Ss. Cyril and Methodius is very frequent in Macedonian art and literature.

In the frames of academia, there is a strong wing of Cyrilo-Methodian Studies, numbering influential language and literary scholars who have researched the Ss. Cyril and Methodius heritage and its connection with the cultural development of the Macedonian nation.<sup>1</sup> It is important that this heritage is not just a focus of scientific interest, but a very wide spread topic of artistic works, mainly narratives in literature and movies, or other visualizations in painting, sculpture and other forms of arts. It produces variations of poetic ideas and symbolic meanings in poetry,

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<sup>1</sup> In this context, we can mention Blaze Koneski, Radmila Ugrinova-Skalovska, Petar Hr. Ilievski, Vladimir Moshin, Vangelija Despodova, Gjorgi Pop-Atanasov, Krasimura Ilievska, Vera Stojcevska-Antic, Mihajlo Georgievski, Emilija Cvenkovska, Dimitar Pandev, Ilija Veleve, Maja Jakimovska-Toshikj, Maja Angelovska-Panova, etc. More information: Макаријоска, Ј.: Прилог кон кирилometодиевската библиографија во Македонија. In: Кирилometодиевистика 10. Скопје: Менора, 2016. с. 123-263. <https://www.academia.edu/30771755>.

music, theatre etc. Ss. Cyril and Methodius Brothers have the status of cultural icons for all Slavic peoples and in this context for the Macedonian people, too.

The persistence of the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition in the sphere of literature is evident in the Macedonian literary works, especially in the period of the national revival, in the XIX and the beginning of XX century. It continues to emerge in the XX century with lot of additional specific creative layers.<sup>2</sup> When we speak about contemporary Macedonian literature, we have in mind the literature written after the codification of the Macedonian contemporary language, from 1945 until today. That is a period with strong political turbulence, the change of the ideology and the attitude towards the religious and other aspects of the figures of the holly brothers. Finally, it is a period of the change of the state: until 1991 Macedonia was a republic in the Yugoslav federation and since 1991, it has been an independent state. Not all these changes affected much the glorification and the respectful remembrance of the holly brothers. The dominant humanistic issues of their enlightening efforts are admired constantly.

In this paper we will pay special attention to selected examples of creative and imaginative references to the Ss. Cyril and Methodius brothers in the Macedonian poetry, prose (prose for children, as well) and drama, without the ambition to complete the whole picture of their literary representations and mentions in contemporary literature.

At the very beginning, it is important to emphasize that the most exposed figure from the Slavic medieval past in Macedonian literature is unquestionably St. Clement of Ohrid, and after him we can name St. Naum and other saints from the group of the Seven Saints, among which St. Cyril is evidently more popular than his brother St. Methodius.

### *Poetry*

The most frequent references to Ss. Cyril and Methodius are found in the literary genre of poetry. It is in accordance with the fact that poetry is a dominant literary genre in Macedonian contemporary literature.

It is interesting to get an insight in the variations of the lyric treatment of the Slavic educators in poetry.<sup>3</sup> Most often, the poems are composed as direct addressing to the brothers together, or to the St. Cyril-Constantine alone, with a great **admiration and glorification** for their/his wisdom and work. For example, the verses by the poet Kiril Bujukliev: „Солунски браќа од древното време, / низ вашите коски сега вечност свири, / огнови растат од вашето семе, / во недоглед зад вас морето се шири“ (Brothers of Thessalonica from ancient times, / through your bones now eternity plays, / fires grow from your seed, / out of sight behind you the sea expands”).<sup>4</sup>

The figures of Ss. Brothers in the Macedonian poetry are mostly mention in context of **national sentiments and patriotism**. As educators and enlighteners, of all Slavic peoples, they are celebrated as persons who have fundamental importance for the national identification of the Macedonian people (same as for the other Slavic peoples). For example, the poet Rade Siljan in

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<sup>2</sup> There are many studies on this topic, such as Стојчевска-Антиќ, В.: Кирилметодијевската традиција во Македонија. Slovo: časopis Staroslavenskoga instituta u Zagrebu, 1986, sv. 36, s. 161-170. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/file/22391>; Пандев, Д. – Ѓорго Димоски, С. (прир.): Книга за светите браќа Кирил и Методиј. Охрид: Општина Охрид, 2022, and Аврамовска, Н.: Ликовите на апостолите на словенската писменост во современата македонска книжевност. In: За песните и приказните. Скопје: Институт за македонска литература, 2020, с. 5-30.

<sup>3</sup> Verses and quotations will be in Macedonian language with descriptive translation in English by the author of this paper.

<sup>4</sup> Бужуќлиев, К.: Во недоглед зад вас морето се шири (Out of sight behind you the sea expands), 1975. In Пандев, Д. – Ѓорго Димоски, С. (прир.): Книга за светите браќа Кирил и Методиј. Охрид: Општина Охрид, 2022, с. 229-230.

his poem “Key for those who are in love with the motherland”<sup>5</sup> addressing the saints brothers, asks them to provide a key for the enigma of his motherland, which symbolically refers to the complex history and current position of the state of North Macedonia. „Браќа / Свети браќа /... / Откопајте амајлија / Со векови криена / Во срцето на мојот народ / Најдете клуч / За вљубените во убавината / И во татковината / Отклучете тешки порти / Да влезе сонце / Во одаите трошни / Браќа / Свети браќа / Најдете клуч / За мојата земја / За Македонија“ (Brothers / Holy brothers /... / Dig out an amulet / For centuries hidden / In the heart of my people / Find a key / For lovers of beauty / And in the homeland / Unlock the heavy gates / Let the sun enter / Into the dilapidated chambers / Brothers / Holy brothers / Find a key / For my country / For Macedonia).

The poetry about the Saints Cyril and Methodius combines the deep national feeling with the idea of mutual respect for the Slavic nations and their unity. The **concept of Slavdom** is attached to the universal need for knowledge and to the symbolic layers of books and letters. For example, the poem devoted to Cyril from Thessaloniki “The spring of the estuary, To Cyril from Thessaloniki” by the poet Todor Calovski<sup>6</sup> is inspired by the lightness of the Slavic literacy “from Thessaloniki to Moravia and from Pannonia to behind the Carpathians”. The poet in his verses admires the knowledge and wisdom spread by the great enlighteners and recognizes their strong cosmopolitan spirit.

It is interesting to mention that many details from the canonical texts for the holy brothers and their missions are motifs for modern poets from XX and XXI century. Therefore, we can find some **elements from the Vitae** of the saints as the basics and the inspiration for some poems. For example, there are several poems about the discovery of the relics of St. Clement from Rome in Kherson (Crimea). Such is the poem „Constantine the Philosopher brings the relics of Pope Clement to Rome“ by Petre Bakevski.<sup>7</sup> The moment of miracle is described in Macedonian modern verses in an epic manner. The heroic act is prepared by all the nature (the winds slow down, the sea is calm) and especially by the star from the sky, which detects the relics in the depths of the sea. Bakevski’s verses also describe the death of the Philosopher in Rome as a kind of transcendence into the world of lightness. In this poem, the building of the San Clement chapel is also mentioned. Most of the poems about the Saint Brothers are written in an apologetic manner, with a strong emotion of glorification and gratitude. Many of them are closely connected to the celebrations in honor of the Ss. Cyril and Methodius, which are organized annually in Rome on May 24, in the San Clement chapel.

In the corpus of poems, referring to the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition there is a special interest for the **Glagolitic alphabet**, for the letters themselves, for their deep meaning and hidden symbolism. Ante Popovski is a prominent Macedonian poet who has written the anthological poem “glagolica”<sup>8</sup> which reflects on the position of a poet in a modern world in resonance with the great intellectual effort that was made by the Thessalonian brothers. In his verses, the poet is presented like a solitary monk in a cave, writing in letters, which are “black”, which are still treated as a kind of mystery, a kind of secret code of spirituality. However, their nature is undoubtedly divine, Christian. Popovski devoted to the Cyrillic alphabet his book of verses

<sup>5</sup> Силјан, Р.: „Клуч на вљубените во татковината“ (Key for those who are in love with the motherland), 1950. In Пандев, Д. – Ѓорго Димоски, С. (прир.): Книга за светите браќа Кирил и Методиј. Охрид: Општина Охрид, 2022, с. 240.

<sup>6</sup> Чаловски, Т.: Свезда на човека. Битола, 1983, с. 17.

<sup>7</sup> Бакевски, П.: Константин Филозоф ги носи моштите на Папата Климент во Рим. In Пандев, Д. – Ѓорго Димоски, С. (прир.): Книга за светите браќа Кирил и Методиј. Охрид: Општина Охрид, 2022, с. 237-238.

<sup>8</sup> Поповски, А.: Глаголица, <https://majkatitatkoti.com/objavi/glagolica-ante-popovski/>

titled with a neologism in which words “secret” and “writing” are connected into one word – *Secretwriting*.<sup>9</sup>

Moreover, several other Macedonian poets have tried to write verses according to the Old Slavic language, searching for the acoustic and the intonation of the old Slavic words (Sande Stojcevski, Milosh Lindro etc.). In 2016 one of the most complex poetic experiments inspired by Old Slavonic alphabet was published, a book of verses by Dimitar Pandev titled *Глагољубни песновиденија*,<sup>10</sup> which combines the visual effects of glagolitic letters with their hysterical and symbolic background. The title and the verses are in style of the old Slavic written monuments, which is a result of a lifetime interest of the author for the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition on a scientific and an artistic level. There are poems about the fundamental symbols of glagolica: cross, circle and triangle, and poems about every single letter of the alphabet. Of course, the names of Cyril and Methodius have a central position, for example in the poem “Letters and Words in the Space”: „Од кај ли ги изнедри Кириле / И ти Методиј како нè сплоти / Во црква наша со слова нови / Седмочисленички заучени в свет“ (How did you give birth to them, Cyril / And you, Methodius, how did you bring us together / In our church with new words / learned in the world by the seven saints). The poems collection is printed with Old Slavic stylized letters, emphasizing their visual effect. Every letter is printed in glagolica and afterward the verses inspired by it are added on the page.

This trend of interest for an esthetic and a symbolic content of the letters of glagolica is especially intensified by the publishing of the book *Македонска глаголица* by Georgi Pop-Atanasov in 2015,<sup>11</sup> printed by the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts. The book is divided into two parts: descriptions and data for each grapheme from glagolica as well as a presentation of all the manuscripts in glagolica written and/or found on the ground of North Macedonia. The fact that the most of the remained manuscripts coming from the Ohrid literary school are written in round glagolica, gives an argument for treating it as a special form of the old Slavic alphabet that is characteristic for the old literacy and spiritual life in the Western Balkan region. This impulse increased the fascination for the glagolica as an artefact in the Macedonian contemporary culture. Thus, several exhibitions were organized and many actions in the decorative and applied arts were introduced, especially in the area of printing, topography and improvement of existing computer fonts, as well as in the educational process (for example the poster by Laze Trpkov was awarded at several international exhibitions).<sup>11</sup>

The contemporary Macedonian poetry demonstrates a strong memory of Ss. Cyril and Methodius as common Slavic enlighteners and evangelizers, but always emphasizes their principle of mutual respect for **the diversity in the Slavic world**. The detail that distinguishes the Macedonian from other Slavic alphabets, however keeping the connection with the old Slavic glagolica, is the letter DZ. Only the Macedonian language still operates with this voice and the letter known from the glagolica as “dzelo” in words like this: *своно, звезда, свекот, свеп, сид, сирне, суница, севрап...* That’s why there is a poem by the Macedonian poet Bratislav Tashkovski ”Praise”<sup>12</sup> in which he adores and blesses this letter. He says: „Да ни

<sup>9</sup> Поповски, А.: Тајнопис. Скопје: Македонска книга, 1975.

<sup>10</sup> The title is very difficult to translate in English because it playfully recreates the Church Slavonic vocabulary. Literally, it means “Poems-visions which love to speak”. Пандев, Д.: Глагољубни песновиденија. Скопје: Матица македонска, 2016.

<sup>11</sup> Поп-Атанасов, Ѓ.: Македонската глаголица. Скопје: Македонска академија на науките и уметностите, 2015. <https://okno.mk/sites/default/files/MAKEDONSKATA%20GLAGOLICA.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> <https://novamakedonija.com.mk/zivot/kultura/%D0%BF%D0%BB%D0%B0%D0%BA%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%BE%D1%82-%D0%B3%D0%BB%D0%B0%D0%B3%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%B8%D1%86%D0%B0>

е жива Азбуката, / да ни е живо нашето звучно S!“ (Long live our Alphabet, long live our sound-full dz!).

It is interesting that in the variety of motifs connected with the Old Slavic heritage in Macedonian poetry we can also find **the Slovak town of Nitra**, which had a significant role in the Slavic enlightenment. Such an example is the poem titled “Nitra. The power of the word” by Risto Lazarov.<sup>13</sup> „Влеговме во Нитра / како што се влегува свечено / во стара буква скриена во книга / со дрвени корици“ – says the poet. (We entered Nitra / as one solemnly enters / in an old letter hidden in a book / with wooden covers). The lyrical subject has the emotion of ambiguity: he is delighted by the great achievement of the brothers Saints who had an enormous vision and a dream for all Slavic peoples, but, on the other hand, he is disappointed from the current state of the Slavic world, including the difficulties of the Macedonian people to gain complete recognition and respect from some other Slavic peoples. The poet alludes to the obstacles for North Macedonia in reaching EU membership: „...и кога од Нитра се упативме / кон нашите пасишта и езера / расклетшени дека сме излегле од темнината / си ги скршивме нозете од препки“. He says symbolically that on the way back from Nitra to the pastures and lakes (emblematic for the Macedonian landscape), Macedonians have broken their legs from many obstacles. It is an interesting example of incorporating the current issues from the modern reality in the motif from the Ss. Cyril and Methodius tradition.

Poetry dealing with motifs from the old Slavic tradition in Macedonian literature is continually present during the modern period. Firstly, it shows emotional attitude to the great figures of Thessaloniki’s brothers and confirms the status of Cyril and Methodius as cultural icons, deeply incorporated in the Macedonian culture and its identification code. Sometimes these motifs are used as admiration and glorification, but sometimes they are used for unmasking some current issues that the Macedonian nation is faced with. Special attention through the verses is given to the Glagolitic alphabet as a priceless cultural value.

### Prose

If the poetry is mainly concerned with the ideas and the sentiments towards the two legendary brothers, the prose-writings build the narrative about their biography, draw their portraits and, in certain, way discuss their significance for the current moment. Although the basic literary sources from the past about the life of the two saints are very popular among readers and the Pannonian legends are part of the required readings in different stages of education, special artistic biographies are not written, except on an educational level in the literature for children. There is no biographical novel strictly devoted to the Brothers Saints, but there are popular historical fictions about St. Clement and St. Naum from Ohrid by the Macedonian prose writer Lazo Karovski.<sup>14</sup> These are two short novels, *Clement from Ohrid* (first published in 1969) and *Naum from Ohrid* (first published in 1971). In the novels, the character of Constantin is drawn too. For example, in the fourth chapter of the novel *Naum from Ohrid*, the narrator, the literary character of Naum describes the arrival of the Brothers Saints and their disciples in Great Moravia. His description is completely analog to the well-known manuscripts about him. The admiration of his intellectual and his persuasive capabilities are emphasized: „До кнезот застава филозофот

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%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D0%B1%D0%B8%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B0%D0%BB%D0%B8%D1%9A%D0%B0-%D0%B2/

<sup>13</sup> Ташковски, Б.: „Пофалба“. In Пандев, Д. – Ѓорго Димоски, С. (прир.): Книга за светите браќа Кирил и Методиј. Охрид: Општина Охрид, 2022, с. 242.

<sup>14</sup> Лазаров, Р.: Ситночекорка. Скопје: Дијалог, 2012, с. 60-61.

Кирил. И, како што ја согре ереста и кај Сарацените, и кај Хазарите, и кај други отпадници од правиот пат, со силата на својот разум и длабоката вистинољубивост на своите зборови, ги плени срцата на сите присутни“ (The philosopher Cyril stood next to the prince. Moreover, as he destroyed the heresy among the Saracens, among the Khazars, and among other apostates from the right path, with the strength of his reason and the deep truthfulness of his words, he captivated the hearts of present).

The one of the most fruitful Macedonian writers for children – Vidoe Podgorec, writes the most popular novel-biography of the Cyril and Methodius brothers.<sup>15</sup> The title of this novel is *Az, buki, vedi...*, first published in 1969, and re-published recently, in 2021. The novel consists of eleven chapters, which can function as separate stories, too. Every one of them begins with verses connected to the chosen segment of the biography of the saints. The novel is written for educational purposes, so it systematizes the main facts known from relevant literature, but also includes some legends and apocrypha and incorporates free imagination of the author and many comments that bring close to the present the material from the distant past. The style is very simple and understandable, and the narration is colored with emotions. For example, the character of Angelarij, one of the Ss. Cyril and Methodius' disciples, is presented as a Slavic slave who was born in Tiveria (the old name of the town of Strumica in today North Macedonia). Constantin as a child meets him on the slave-bazaar in Thessaloniki and a lifetime friendship is being born between them. His resistance to slavery and barbarism is explained as motivated by these events from the early childhood and special emphasis is put on his connections with the Slavic culture before the well-known Moravian mission.

The Macedonian storyteller, novelist, playwright, and literary critic, theorist and columnist, Venko Andonovski, write two novels, which refer to the Cyrilo-Methodian tradition in a post-modernist manner.<sup>16</sup> The novels, written in a highly developed artistic style, are titled *Азбука за непослушните* (*Alphabet for the disobedient*, 1994, four editions) and *Папокот на светот* (*Navel of the world*, 2000, twelve editions, also published in Greek, Bulgarian, Serbian, Croatian, Slovenian, Russian and English and used as a screenplay for the film *Upside Down*).

The plot of the novel *Alphabet for the disobedient* is situated in the monastery Polihron on Olimp in Asia Minor, during the time when it is supposed that the preparations for the great Moravian mission were being made (year 863). The characters of Constantine the Philosopher and others are plastic and suggestive, but it is indicative that Saint Methodius is not even mentioned in the novel. These two novels by Andonovski are in part inspired by the strong wave of interest towards the medieval world that Umberto Eco has promoted in the European postmodern literature – through stories from the past to speak about the most provocative questions of the contemporary society. Therefore, the reference to the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition in his novels aims to revise many **ethical and spiritual questions** relevant for the present moment. Furthermore, the glagolica, as the first Slavic alphabet, is again in the focus of interest, but this time not in the formation of the verses, but in the structure of the novel and in its plot. „The alphabet as the standard order of letters in the Slavic Glagolitic and Cyrillic occupies a central place in this novel by Andonovski (*Alphabet of the Disobedient*). The author's idea is to show that the Glagolitic alphabet is a key which can unlock the secret of the universe,” – writes Namita Subioto, a scholar who deals with the Macedonian culture from Slovenia.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Каровски, Ј.: Климент Охридски. Скопје: Мисла, 1969; Каровски, Ј.: Наум Охридски. Скопје: Мисла, 1971.

<sup>16</sup> Подгорец, В.: Аз, буки, веди...: повест за животот на солунските браќа Кирил и Методиј. Скопје: Арс Ламина - публикации, Либи, 2021.

A prototype for the literary character of The Philosopher in the novel *Navel of the world* in its first chapter is obviously the historic personality of Constantine the Philosopher. According to many literary critics the postmodern strategy of double layered narration which combines one historically known and one completely fictive character (in this case The Philosopher and Jan Ludvic, one from the past and the other from the present) enables the author to commemorate and to reflect on the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition from the present day perspective. The very important conclusion of Natasha Avramovska goes in this line claiming that Venko Andonovski “inaugurates in Macedonian literature a new trend of ‘non-historical’ and ‘out-of-time’ illumination of the significance of all-Slavic teachers from the perspective of today and their acceptance on the level of cultural icons...”<sup>17</sup>

### *Drama*

A compression of a twelve-century-long history and persistence of fundamental human problems are central in the dramatic piece by the playwright Goran Stefanovski titled *Огнени јазуци* (*Tongues of Fire*). The first performance of this play was on November 2, 2013 in the Drama Theatre Skopje, and the printed version of the text was published two years later.<sup>18</sup> In the play, the figures of Saint Brothers are only mentioned (their names and quotations are in the air all the time), but there are no actors who represent them. The main characters are the disciples who run away to the Balkans after the collapse of the Moravian mission and their opponents, Latin and German clergymen. The author also involves in the story the mythic characters from Macedonian folklore – Болен Дојчин (Ill Dojchin) and Итрап Пејо (Clever Peio). This enables him to express the contrast between the Cyrillic and the Latin worlds, and to comment on the recent problems of the Macedonian people and the state in the efforts to join the European Union. In this play, Saint Cyril and Methodius are seen as martyrs of translation, and **the translation as a phenomenon** is rethought. The play evokes the story of the *Tongues of Fire* in the *New Testament*, which promises that translation and universal understanding are possible. In this context is the explanation of the author himself who stated, “I always knew that Cyril and Methodius dedicated their lives to the translation and dissemination of the Holy Scriptures in the Slavic language, but I slowly began to realize that they are the great saints and great martyrs of translation in general. They devoted their whole lives to efforts to better understand the world, and the problems they tried to solve in the ninth century are still open today. It is not just a coincidence that they are the patron saints of Europe”.<sup>19</sup> In the piece by Stefanovski the figures of Slavic enlighteners get dimension of symbols of the humanistic idea of understanding between peoples, communication and making cultural bridges.

Another dramatic piece based on the figures of the holy brothers is the performance *Cyril and Methodius, who are you?* by Jordan Plevnesh, plaid in 2015 in Ohrid, and afterwards on other

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<sup>17</sup> „инаугурира во македонската литература нов тренд на ‘вонисториско’ и ‘вонвременско’ осветлување на значењето на селовенските учители од аспект на денешницата и нивно проследување на рамништето на културни икони...” Аврамовска, Н.: Ликовите на апостолите на словенската писменост во современата македонска книжевност. In: За песните и приказните. Скопје: Институт за македонска литература, 2020, с. 23.

<sup>18</sup> Стефановски, Г.: Собрани драми, книга четврта. Скопје: Табернакул, 2015.

<sup>19</sup> „Отсекогаш знаев дека Кирил и Методиј го посветиле својот живот на преведување и ширење на светото писмо на словенски јазик, но полека почнав да сфаќам дека тие се големите светци и великомаченици на преводот воопшто. Целиот живот го посветиле во напори светот подобро да се разбере, а проблемите кои се обидуваат да ги решат во деветтиот век се отворени и ден денес. Не случајно тие се светци заштитници на Европа.“ Јолевски, Јб.: Огнени јазуци – драма за преводот и сеопштото разбирање меѓу луѓето (интервју со Горан Стефановски). Радио слободна Европа. Октомври 31, 2013. <https://www.slobodnaevropa.mk/a/25154375.html>.

world stages, such as Bucharest, Ljubljana, and Paris. The figures of Cyril and Methodius in this play are seen as an open mystery. Plevnesh tries to explain the values of their spiritual influence by his imaginative concept of “civilization of love and nostalgia for unity”.

The dramatic texts of Macedonian authors from the XXI century refresh the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition in a very subtle and innovative way. They connect centuries-old heritage with today’s problems, with the questions about the effects of globalization, the world piece, environmental and other issues related to the provocations of the modern world. The leading concept of unity in diversity and united Europe includes the layers of the deep and fruitful tradition of mediaeval Slavic educators Cyril and Methodius.

### *Conclusion*

The brief overview of the literary works that deal with the topic of Ss. Cyril and Methodius leads to the conclusion that in the Macedonian contemporary literature the interest for their life, work and importance (on global and local level), increased rapidly especially in the last two decades. We can summarize the models of reference noticed in this paper: admiration and glorification, nationalism, patriotism, Slavdom as unity, details from the Vitae, the glagolica and the diversity in the frames of Slavic world, the motif of the Slovak town Nitra, ethical and spiritual questions, the phenomenon of translation, etc. We can conclude that the Cyrillo-Methodian heritage is a very important part of the cultural history of the Macedonian people, also relevant and meaningful for its present and for its future, as well.

## **Le reflet de la tradition de Saints Cyrille et Méthode dans la littérature macédonienne contemporaine**

Sonja Stoymenska-Elzeser

Le texte présente un aperçu d’une sélection d’œuvres littéraires de la littérature macédonienne contemporaine, liées au sujet de la tradition de Saints Cyrille et Méthode. Des œuvres de trois catégories de genre ont été suivies : poésie, prose et théâtre. Dans le domaine de la poésie, une série de noyaux motiviques et symboliques ont été détectés, nés du reflet de la tradition cyrillométhodienne. Surtout, il y a la glorification et l’admiration pour l’exploit épique des frères Cyrille et Méthode. Souvent dans la poésie macédonienne, leurs caractères sont utilisés comme codes d’identité indiquant les racines slaves du peuple macédonien. Ces deux personnages se situent naturellement dans le contexte du patriotisme, et parfois dans celui de l’acceptation du monde slave comme unité. Les vers sur les frères thessaloniens se concentrent parfois sur des segments spécifiques des biographies des saints et acquièrent des traits épiques distincts. Une place particulière dans ce corpus poétique est occupée par les vers consacrés à l’alphabet slave lui-même, à l’alphabet glagolitique, ainsi qu’à la singularité des cultures slaves et à leur proximité ou éloignement. Un fait intéressant est que dans la poésie macédonienne, il y a aussi des vers consacrés à la mission morave et, en relation avec celle-ci, à la ville slovaque de Nitra, qui dans sa signification correspond au centre spirituel macédonien le plus exposé, la ville d’Ohrid. Dans l’article sur le domaine de la prose, plusieurs romans sont présentés, regroupés en deux catégories : l’une est constituée de biographies pédagogiques et populaires des saints frères, et l’autre est constituée d’œuvres en prose post-modernes qui incorporent les motifs de l’étude cyrillométhodienne dans une manière particulièrement originale. Dans les romans, et en particulier dans les pièces de théâtre liées à Cyrille et Méthode, on a tendance à relier le récit des anciens éclairés slaves aux défis actuels de l’humanité, qui incluent un éventail de dilemmes éthiques et de problèmes spirituels. Parmi eux, se distingue le phénomène de traduction et de communication, c’est-à-dire la connexion des personnes et des nations. Parmi les auteurs inclus dans cet article, une attention particulière est attirée sur : Goran Stefanovski, Venko Andonovski, Jordan Plevnesh, Ante Popovski, Dimitar Pandev, Todor Chalovsk, Risto Lazarov, Bratislav Tashkovski et d’autres.