CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES TO NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN DIALECTOLOGY

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If the futurological predictions about the “extinction” of dialects were true, this issue of Balgarski ezik would not have existed. It is further proof that even in the 21st century, dialects continue to perform their function as a means of communication both in smaller and in larger communities, who – according to the conclusions of renowned Bulgarian and international sociolinguists and dialectologists – not only do not disappear in the globalisation era, but quite on the contrary, consolidate and preserve their language and culture as symbols of a shared identity. This opens up new perspectives and sets new challenges for dialectology and linguistic geography.

Most of the papers by Bulgarian and foreign scholars featured in this issue are dedicated to dialectology and present studies which are predominantly based on authentic dialectal material collected during field studies in recent years and sometimes even months, not only from Bulgarian dialects, but also from other Slavic or unrelated dialects.

This issue will provoke great interest due to the fact that the studies in it cover all language levels: phonetics and phonology, morphology, word formation and lexis. In many cases, using the methods of linguistic geography dialect features are considered not only with respect to the Bulgarian territory but also with respect to the European language area.

The Romanian colleagues Nicolae Saramandu and Manuela Nevaci present A Linguistic Motivational Analysis of Balkan and Romance Features in Atlas Lingua-rum Europae illustrating their observations by pointing out the motivational features in the various names for notebook, dandelion, days of the week and leech found across Bulgarian and Romance dialects.

Luchia Antonova-Vasileva also uses material from the European Linguistic Atlas in order to study The Names for a Scarecrow in the Bulgarian Dialects, but extends her data with material from maps in the Slavic Linguistic Atlas. Her study is further supported and enriched with lexical material from the Archive of the Bulgarian Dialect Dictionary as well as with data collected by herself.

Georgi Mitrinov studies Bulgarian Language Traces in the Greek Dialect of Souflı (Western Thrace) in material of Bulgarian origin found in a dictionary published by a Greek website (one of the modern manifestations of the use of dialects). He proves that nearly 100 years after Bulgarians were banished from this area du-
ring the first half of the 20th century Bulgarian language features are still preserved in the dialect of this town.

I am pleased that the issue features a paper dealing with dialect phonology, which has become a rare topic for study in recent years. In her study *Phonetic and Phonological Characteristics of the Dialect of Gorno Draglishte, Razlog Region*, the young scholar Katerina Usheva, who has experience in the field, presents an accurate description of the mixed phonological system of this interesting and preserved dialect, which combines an Eastern-Bulgarian vowel system and a Western-Bulgarian consonant system.

The paper titled *The Dialect Dictionary as a Manifestation of the Preservation of Folk Culture* by the Polish scholar Jerzy Sierociuk presents two largely recognised concepts in dictionary crafting and their methodological assumptions which have been employed by Polish dialect lexicographers in the creation of regional dictionaries of smaller and larger communities.

Basing her study on rich, dialect material collected by herself, Elena KanevskaNikolova analyses *Turkish-Bulgarian Hybrid Nouns for Persons with Pejorative Meaning in the Smolyan Dialect* from a word-formation and lexico-semantic point of view, pointing out the morphological differences between the general Bulgarian and Slavic *nomina augmentativa et pejorativa*, on the one hand, and those in the Smolyan dialect, on the other.

By analysing several dialect names of different plants and interpreting them from a word-formation and semantic perspective, Ana Kocheva presents a study *On Semantic Collapse in Folk Botanical (Tree) Taxonomy*. She considers the examples revealing a true semantic collapse to be most numerous in the analysed material and thus motivates the adoption of this term in Bulgarian linguistics.

The doctoral student Aliza Halil proposes a *Nominal Characterisation of Concepts for Traditional Alcoholic Drinks in the Bulgarian Social Dialects*. The author analyses interesting examples mainly from the richest masons’ vocabulary, but includes also terms from the social dialects of violinists and shoemakers, among others. The material is studied in a synchronic and diachronic perspective.

This issue features the second part of Ignacy Doliński’s *Categories and Word Formation Paraphrases of Derivatives Referring to Means of Activity (NInstr): the Example of Bulgarian Words Formed with the -а/-я Suffix*. By studying rich material from Bulgarian, the erudite scholar proposes a motivational analysis of a selected group of derivatives, paying particular attention to the connection between motivation and derivation.

The brief mentioning of the papers featured in this issue manages just to mark in passing their contributions in diverse areas, thus suggesting that contemporary national and European dialectology face many more scientific challenges.