

Introduction

Božidar Vidoeski (born 8 November 1920 in Zvečan, Poreče region, Republic of Macedonia) was the father of Modern Macedonian dialectology. Not only did he publish numerous studies of individual dialects but also broader syntheses that superseded all previous attempts and that remain to this day the foundations of Slavic dialectology on Macedonian linguistic territory. The present collection contains translations of eight of Vidoeski's most important general Macedonian dialectological works, as well as his complete bibliography. It can thus serve as a basic textbook for any course that deals with Macedonian dialects but is also a fund of information and analysis for any scholar interested in the Macedonian language.

Vidoeski was educated in both Yugoslavia and Macedonia. He received his BA in 1949 and was immediately appointed to an instructorship in what was then the Department of South Slavic Languages of the Philosophical Faculty of the University of Skopje. His BA thesis, on the dialect of his native Poreče region, published in 1950, was the first BA thesis published by his Department. He received his doctorate in 1957 and was promoted to assistant professor in 1958. In 1964 he was promoted to associate professor and to full professor in 1967. He was elected to the Macedonian Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1969. From 1971–77 he directed the Seminar for Macedonian language, literature, and culture, and in 1974 he initiated the Scholarly Colloquium (*Naučna diskusija*) as part of the activities of the Seminar. He was chairman of the Macedonian Department at the University of Skopje for many years and served as the general editor of the journal *Makedonski jazik*, published by the Institute for Macedonian Language, from 1973 until his death.

Vidoeski received numerous medals, awards, and honors including an honorary doctorate from the Silesian University in Katowice (1990) and memberships in the Yugoslav (now Croatian), Polish, and Serbian Academies of Arts and Sciences (1986, 1994, and 1997, respectively). He was the author, co-author, or general editor of approximately 300 publications, including the Macedonian section of the *General Slavic Linguistic Atlas* (OLA). In addition to his seminal dialectological work, Vidoeski was ac-

tively engaged in the standardization of literary Macedonian—his earliest articles were all concerned with questions of the emerging linguistic norm—and he served as one of Horace Lunt’s chief informants for Horace G. Lunt’s *Grammar of the Macedonian Literary Language* (1952), the first book on literary Macedonian grammar published in a foreign language. It is worthy of note that Vidoeski’s willingness to work with Lunt was an act of singular courage, since it was politically dangerous for Yugoslav citizens to associate with western scholars at that time.

Vidoeski was especially active in collaboration with colleagues from Poland, having studied and taught at the University of Warsaw in 1959, and he helped establish a joint Yugoslav-Polish journal as well as co-authoring (with Z. Topolińska and V. Pianka) the first Macedonian-Polish/Polish-Macedonian dictionary (20,000 entries). He was also visiting professor at the University of Cologne in 1967-68.

The articles translated for the present collection span the period from his classic article on Macedonian linguistic geography (“The Dialects of Macedonian in Light of Linguistic Geography”, 1962) up to the fruits of a lifetime of studying and thinking about Macedonian dialects: A general overview of Macedonian dialectal differentiation (“The Dialectal Differentiation of the Macedonian Language”, 1996) and a study of Macedonian vocalic systems (“The Vocalic Systems of Standard Macedonian and the Dialects of Macedonian”, 1997). Since the vocalic system is the locus of the most salient features of Macedonian dialectal developments, two additional studies focus on stress and quantity (“The Accentual Systems of the Dialects of Macedonian”, 1993 and “Is there Phonological Quantity in the Dialects of Macedonian?” 1993). Vidoeski was aware of the fact that language is embedded in its social and historical context, and three of the works translated here reflect that awareness. The study of social factors (“Social Factors in the Differentiation of the Dialects of Macedonian”, 1968) focuses on the two most significant cultural components in Macedonian dialectal differentiation: Distinctions between urban and rural dialects and features characteristic of Muslims or of Christians within the Macedonian-speaking world. Vidoeski’s studies of the formation of Macedonian dialects (“The Formation of the Dialects of Macedonian”, 1970) and developmental tendencies of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (“Tendencies in the Development of the Dialects of Macedonian in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries”, 1977) give us the historical background that contextualizes the Macedonian dialects of today. Taken together,

these eight articles give a masterful overview of Macedonian dialectology by the master of the field.

Another aspect of Vidoeski's work is as important as his many publications: He was a friend, mentor, and colleague to many generations of scholars from both Macedonia and abroad. His significance to the field is thus felt not only in his many publications and formal scholarly activities, an excellent representative sample of which is presented in this volume, but in the kindness, guidance, and inspiration that he gave so generously to so many of us. Božo died unexpectedly of a heart attack on 16 May 1998. He is sorely missed by all who knew him, but his work lives on as a permanent contribution to the advancement of human knowledge. Thanks to this book, that work will now be more readily available to a wider audience.

Victor Friedman