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Projects

ETHNOCULTURAL RESEARCH (Ethnological and Cultural Studies Proceedings, Vol. 4)

The Workshop for Ethnological and Cultural Studies in Svrlijig, number of pages: 280

The folk way of life and culture of the southeast Serbia and neighboring areas have been studied for many years so far within the scope of activities of the Workshop for Ethnological and Cultural Studies in Svrlijig. Scientific meetings are held on the annual basis and the proceedings from the meetings are regularly published. The meetings are organized by particular topics, and the papers are published in the same manner in the Ethnological and Cultural Studies Proceedings, edited by the Workshop.

The first volume of the Proceedings includes the papers on the topic: *Traditional Culture in the Life Cycle of Customs*, the second volume is titled: *Traditional Culture in the Annual Cycle of Customs*, the third deals with: *Nature in Customs and Beliefs*.

The fourth volume of the Ethnological and Cultural Studies Proceedings (Svrlijig, 1998) represents a collection of papers read on the fourth meeting (Svrlijig, August 1998), under the general topic "*Family Feasts, Village Religious Festivals and Other Related Celebrations of the Population of East Serbia and Neighboring Regions*".

This collection reflects the main idea of the Workshop for Ethnological and Cultural Studies (pursued by the Workshop for all these years): to unite theoretical research with studies in the field and thus accomplish "a scientifically strengthened integration of theory and practice".

The collection is structured according to the program of the meeting.

The first part - *Theoretical Definition of the Concept of "the Name Day" in Serbs and Similar Celebrations in Other Balkan Nations*, consists of twelve papers dealing with the definition of the phenomenon of a patron saint's day in social and family contexts, tracing of its origin and comprehending the nature and basic functions of this complex religious custom.

The second part, titled "Name Day", Patron Saint's Day and Similar Cult Celebrations in the East Serbia and Neighboring Regions, contains eleven reports on the search for the definition of the nature and structure of this social phenomenon through an analysis of actual material related to particular celebrations characteristic for certain areas.

The third part - *Folklore Components in Celebrating Name Days and Village Religious Festivals*, is dedicated to the folklore cult components. They were investigated through the analysis of all the three layers of the folklore function - the texture (the characteristics of musical values), the text (the topic or contents) and the context (the social milieu in which the communication takes place; it is represented by the public

through their wishes, expectations and feedback responses).

The fourth and fifth parts of the Proceedings report on the results of the fieldwork studies of family feasts and village religious festivals in the East Serbia

Similar to the previous volumes, the fourth volume of the Ethnological and Cultural Studies Proceedings includes the papers in which the subjects related to the traditional culture of the East Serbia are treated by means of the material from literature (both folk and authorial) and the vernacular (primarily the dialects of the Southeast Serbia).

In this respect, valuable data were gathered, through the art as a unique system of facts, from folk songs, tales and dialectal creations, particularly those following various customs or constituting their integral parts. On the other side, the vernaculars, being reliable guardians of the folk spirit, tradition and cultural experience, memorize many facts long time after they had happened in the real history. Some abandoned customs may thus be reconstructed from the system of concepts preserved in the language. Traditional songs and traditional terminology were used in many reports to support fragile memory of the informants who had helped the investigators to better comprehend a phenomenon with numerous attributes of a patriarchal society, to define it and to locate it in the cultural milieu of the past and present times in the Southeast and East Serbia, the Timok Region, Banat, West Bulgaria and North Macedonia.

This trend shall be even more obvious in the next volume of the Ethnological and Cultural Studies Proceedings, which shall be dedicated to folk creativity (linguistic, artistic, music, architectural...) in the traditional culture (most of all in the customs) of the East Serbia.

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