

ANNOTATION OF THE MATERIALS

(pursuant to Art. 65 of the RULES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ACADEMIC STAFF)

by the Assistant Professor, PhD Zdravko Trifonov Dechev

for participation in a competition for holding the academic position of

“Associate Professor”

In the announced competition, I am participating with the following scholarly output, which has not previously been submitted to a specialized academic jury for the recognition of the educational and scientific degree of “**Doctor**”: **two monographs**—the first being a revised edition of my doctoral dissertation, defended before an academic jury on **02 December 2013**; the second being a **habilitation monograph** — as well as **15 articles** published in edited volumes and periodical journals. All articles and the habilitation text were written after the defense of my dissertation and do not duplicate works included in the previous procedure. The specific emphases and scholarly contributions will be presented individually after the title of each of the submitted works.

1. HABILITATION WORK – MONOGRAPH

1.1. Dechev, Zdravko. *Around the Dead Body (Narratives of the Bulgarian National Revival)*. Plovdiv: Zhanet 45, 2026, 176 pp.
ISBN 978-619-289-001-8

The major theme of this book is not death in its literal sense, although the focus is placed on the image of the dead body. The main research reference points around which the individual narratives gravitate are **violence / torture / suffering**. Therefore, what matters is not death as a final act, but the path leading to death, its prehistory, and – last but not least – what happens after it, and not always only to the living. In the narratives centered on the dead body, death will often not be an end. Paradoxically speaking, we will be thinking about death without dying.

It is not accidental that the conceptual framework of this book aims to “narrativize” not only on the basis of what is familiar as critical readings of the examined works. To construct research “narratives” in this case means that sometimes you are not the guiding force in the logic of writing, because being *around* one’s object of study presupposes following – not only possible but also somehow natural – deviations. For this reason, the selection of working texts is freed from genre, thematic, and artistic-functional constraints.

Within the context of the Bulgarian National Revival, it turns out that around the dead body there exist otherwise unthinkable narratives, because the dead body is also the body of the one

who loves (in) death, of the one enslaved not only in slavery, of the sacrificial victim, of the subdued “territory-like” infidel (*giaour*).

The accumulation of research narratives begins with the intention, through the image of Rada from Nayden Gerov’s poem “*Stoyan and Rada*,” to bring into visibility the body, *telos*, and flesh (“**Body – Telos – Flesh: Notes on the Dead Body (On Nayden Gerov’s poem ‘Stoyan and Rada’)**”), which will be theoretically elaborated in the subsequent studies in the book. The rereading of Petko Slaveykov’s popular love poems – in “**One Can Even Die from a Love Arrow (‘Surrender’ to Death in Petko R. Slaveykov)**” – unfolds a version of metaphorical dying from love in the context of folkloric-patriarchal thinking, while also continuing the already traced path of suffering from the fate of Stoyan and Rada. This suffering will escalate and lead to death in an increasingly literal, naturalistic, and horrifying manner in the following pages.

Thus, after rethinking reciprocity and dying, we set out on the path of enslaved suffering. Through wandering in the sufferings of Sophronius/Stoyko (“**Ante mortem. The Path of the Body among Hardships and Mortal Fears (Based on *Life and Sufferings of Sinful Sophronius*)**”), we seek the psychological reflexes of the body under the threat of death, in order to confront – “prepared” – the ritualized torture of a child’s dead body (“**The Sacrificial Child: Excess According to Vasil Drumev (*Unhappy Family*)**”).

From this point onward, the narratives around the dead body are also linked to the revelation and “domestication” of trauma. Fertile ground for conceptualizing trauma in relation to violence and death is provided by the so-called Karavelov Russian collection – *Pages from the Book of the Sufferings of the Bulgarian People* (1868, Moscow). The proposed narrative, entitled “**Among the Shadows (First Deviation Provoked by Lyuben Karavelov)**,” reveals how Karavelov’s “Russian book” from 1868 reached Bulgarian readers. This deviation from the book’s overall concept is deliberate, in order to show how, before the Russian audience, the collection presents sufferings through an attempt at their unification, subjects them to distanced perception, and presupposes empathy, whereas in Bulgaria the peculiar anthology of sufferings becomes fragmented, breaks apart again into pages that remain (in the words of Nikolay Chernokozhev) “in the shadow of the book.”

For in Bulgaria, sufferings are not merely a residual trauma that represents us; they must also be an impulse and a justification for our existence beyond suffering. The subsequent section – “**Violence and Trauma. The ‘Handwriting’ of Trauma (A Second, Even More Serious Deviation Provoked by Lyuben Karavelov)**” – attempts to decipher the mutually attuning modes of perceiving suffering that Karavelov offers through the texts in his collection. Our research intentions here are provoked by the assumption that Karavelov’s narration of Bulgarian sufferings, their recognition as traumas, stems from the voice (whether written down or sounding) – as an authentic address to anyone capable of “hearing,” that is, understanding and empathizing with what is shared.

For the voice of suffering, the “notes” (“**Turkish Pasha. Notes of a Nun**”) prove to be a natural narrative medium, because the form of notes resembles the uniqueness of the voice, following the branching paths of *skaz*-type narration. The “handwriting” of traumas from enslaved suffering asserts its legitimacy in Karavelov’s collection through the literal highlighting of the voice as silenced, narrating, shouting, singing (“**Bozhko**,” “**Neda**”).

In the subsequent narratives – “**Around the Dead Body (Approach to the Culmination)**” and “**Post mortem**” – the naturalism of the dismembered enslaved body metaphorically reflects the disintegration of Karavelov’s book of sufferings into pages. The “body” of the book cannot remain unaffected in a Bulgarian world fractured by the traumas of slavery.

With the final three parts of the book, we overcome the horror of the desecrated dead body so that the chords of that celebrated death may sound – a death in which there is no dying. The research inquiries are also concerned with how, in death, a person remains human precisely through the shirt/garment (“**The Shirt and Death**”). Particularly revealing is the care for the shirt/garment, as well as its peculiar fusion with the body and its perception by our people as a “second skin.” This notion is connected to violence against the enslaved body and the stripping away of its natural protective barrier. This unimaginable nakedness of the dead enslaved body is an example of how the enslaved body, even in death, is deprived of any protection. Yet in the narrative of the shirt and death, the garment remains above all a link between the world of the living and the world of the dead.

A logical conclusion of the book is the narrative centered on the smile of Death (“**To (Fall in) Love with Death after Botev (‘To My First Love’ and ‘The Betrothed Girl’)**”), which – more in the spirit of Botev – may be loved more than life itself, because the value of a person is expressed not only in how one lives, but also in the name of what one dies for. However, the end of the book proves to be deferred – with the “**Confession before Levski**,” provoked by the plot of a contemporary Bulgarian novel – *The First after God: The Love and Death of Vasil Levski* by Neda Antonova. The abrupt shift in the research pursuit opens yet another path along which, it must be acknowledged here, the journey is still ongoing. The brief confessional pages on Levski after Yordan Radichkov (“**The Inn at Kakrina after the Capture of the Bulgarian Apostle**” from *Noah’s Ark*) and a handful of folk songs about Ginin’s son remained around the body of this book. For now.

Finally – and not merely in passing – it should be noted that in the Revival-era narratives surrounding the dead body, the voice of the people (the folkloric-mythological) inevitably emerged, because it is precisely from the world of those seemingly poor in spirit (in the words of Professor Ivan Shishmanov) that even today grows the garden not of death, but of life despite death (as Georgi Gospodinov would put it, of course).

2. MONOGRAPH BASED ON A DEFENDED DISSERTATION

2.1. Dechev, Zdravko. Orality – Literacy in Bulgarian Revival Culture (A Phenomenology of the Bulgarian Voice). Plovdiv: Zhanet 45, 2015, 232 pp.

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Scholarly observability of oral-written verbal manifestations cannot be reduced solely to the well-known observations of thematic and stylistic-linguistic interactions (most often those of folklore in relation to literature). The fixed communicative statuses of the spoken and the (hand)written prove to be only apparent, and in this sense sufficiently productive for interpreting the now unfamiliar ways in which a Revival-era individual experienced orality and literacy. This prompts the aim of the study to interpret manifestations of the oral and the written within the sphere of communicative – receptive attitudes, as well as the capacities of the Revival-era subject.

In this sense, the expectation of encountering orality – literacy (respectively folklore and literature) in their customary intertextual correlation, together with all its presumed analytical perspectives, is not fulfilled. Orality does not appear in this study as a corpus of recorded exemplary texts; rather, it is treated as a medium of aesthetic communication. It is not a matter of comprehensive visibility, but rather a possibility of contact; not a source of firmly established representations, but a Revival-era enigma.

The study advances observations based on the assumption that the Bulgarian nineteenth century formed a definitively unstable communicative situation in which the (hand)written does not always function as a visual system, while orality operates with the claim that it possesses its own script – one that does not replace the status of utterance, but rather postpones it in time. For this reason, although we are dealing with phenomena of different social origins, the dissertation does not approach them as inherently incompatible.

On the other hand, if we adopt the premise that oral practice accepts a given verbal manifestation as an extension of reality, while written practice seeks to duplicate – or even possess – it, then the process by which literature necessarily replaces folklore becomes to be expected. A substantial argument for this lies in the graphocentric orientation of the Revival era and its desire to fix what has been lost or forgotten, what is absent or imagined. In the course of this replacement, the differentiation of verbal manifestations is inevitable, but only insofar as it registers influences on the poetics of one or the other verbal presence. The perspective of the present study, however, leaves such influences at its periphery – not in an attempt to diminish them, but in order to seek the interaction between orality and literacy as an encounter of communicative strategies.

The conclusions reached in the study are as follows: from the Revival period onward, Bulgarian culture remains open to the parallel order of oral verbal expression. The tension created between orality and literacy is a consequence of the Revival era's priority to establish

written culture, which, however, only seemingly recalibrates the syncretic perspective of the folkloric Revival-era individual toward verbal manifestations. Thus, “uttering” and “writing,” although conceived as alternatives, signify an essentially identical communicative act within the context of Revival culture. It is permissible to speak of an isomorphism of oral and written manifestations, but only insofar as they do not overcome their compensatory diffusion.

The process of mediation between the oral and written behavior of the Revival-era subject passes precisely through this peculiar phase of “performance” by means of the voice, which is capable of mimicking itself as a communicative factor. In this sense, writing in the Revival era can never fully detach itself from orality, and the letter functions as a secondary modeling component dependent on the primary vocal utterance. Under these conditions, each communicative environment absorbs the other, subordinating it to its own essence and aims.

It is necessary to reiterate emphatically the assumption that such polyphony (a consonance of the “indoor voice” and the “individual voice”) constitutes the distinctive condition of Revival-era culture. Its legitimacy does not rest solely on the compensatory diffusion between the two modes, but also on their impending – yet unrealized at the time – communicative differentiation. The written word (whether manuscript or printed) is compelled to renew itself continuously by finding its realization in the presence of a real environment and a real human community through oral performance, while refraining from regarding its graphic existence as a state of completion.

This allows us to conclude that the (hand)written in the culture of the Bulgarian National Revival is not merely a communicative model, but also a specific metamorphosis that renders visible the oral-written relationships of the period. The audio formats entering contemporary cultural communication (most notably audiobooks) resonate in a particular way with the Revival-era consciousness, according to which orality and literacy remain two sides of the phenomenologically encompassing voice. It is precisely through this voice that their communicative self-awareness achieves its possible spectrum of perceptions.

3. SCIENTIFIC ARTICLES:

3.1. Dechev, Zdravko. Bulgarian Lyric Poetry in 2008. In: “Stranitsa” Journal, Vol. 10, No. 1 (2009). Plovdiv, pp. 147–153.

ISSN 1310-9081

The article offers an overview of the lyrical voices that stood out for 2008. Texts have been selected that not only favor lyrical writing, but also reflect inappropriate manifestations in the understanding of poetry. The conclusion is reached for a maximally complicated rehabilitation of personal existence in terms of realization and suggestion, especially in a situation of increasingly unlimited self-disclosure of the Self.

Confessionalism has reached the lack of a sense of reality for many. This even leads to the deliberate elaboration of the Self role. Thus, the lyrical figure present is often not self-

revealing, but self-composing. A process that marks a kind of dissolution of the lyrical subject.

3.2. Dechev, Zdravko. On Bulgarian Fiction in the Literary Year 2012: Highlights and Critical Postscripts. In: "Stranitsa" Journal, Vol. 13, No. 4 (2012). Plovdiv, pp. 139–149.

ISSN 1310-9081

The article disrupts the chronological division of literature by year, because in the past year 2012, interest in titles that were circulated in 2011 has remained. One of them is the new novel appearance of Georgi Gospodinov. His novel "The Physics of Sorrow" sharpened the critical eye and to a large extent exalted the reader's attitude. His novel world does not reject convertible models, but remains curious with the attitude that the sad person is the thinking person.

The article also offers a commentary on Milen Ruskov's novel "Elevation". The year of publication of the book is again 2011, but the echo is still a fact. The article emphasizes the way in which the author uses quotes from the literature of the Bulgarian Renaissance, shaping a seemingly authentic artistic world in which fiction and fact, the historically significant and the everyday imperceptible coexist without necessarily one dominating the other. A necessary balance through which, once again in our literary tradition (in this respect since Vazova) the "most Bulgarian time" will be humanly "condensed", without unnecessary pathos and deliberate documentary sterility. The result is a reading that reminds us of another reading of the Bulgarian Renaissance. In the array of critical writing of this article, dozens of other titles follow, which not only complement the picture of contemporary Bulgarian prose, but also consider its developmental trends.

3.3. Dechev, Zdravko. Bulgarian Fiction in 2013 – Additional Strokes. In: "Stranitsa" Journal, Vol. 15, No. 2 (2014). Plovdiv, pp. 155–163.

ISSN 1310-9081

The article attempts to form a literary-historical view of fiction in 2013. A commentary is made on the promising debut of Vesela Lyahova with the novel "Refugees". The critical field of view of the article also includes the new works of Alek Popov - "The Pallaveev Sisters in the Storm of History", Lyudmil Todorov - "Barge in the Desert", Kerana Angelova - "Sunflowers for Mary", Teodora Dimova - "The Train to Emmaus", Deyan Enev - "Hemingway's Grandson" and a number of other Bulgarian authors who set trends in prose writing. The aim of the article is to create a relatively complete picture of contemporary Bulgarian prose within the framework of a literary year through specific critical readings. The thematic searches in the literary year under consideration are traced.

3.4. Dechev, Zdravko. The Path to the Word and the Path of the Word in the Literary Expression of Father Petar-Kamen Garena. In: Kamen Garenov (Father Petar Garena). Bio-bibliography. Sofia: Gutenberg Publishing House, 2016, pp. 47–63.

ISBN 978-619-176-078-7

The article provides an overview of the literary activities of a Father Petar-Kamen Garenov. For him, the word is one of several means to express his worldview. The aim of the article is to offer the first comprehensive presentation of his fiction writing and to highlight its thematic focus. It traces the beginning of his path as a storyteller and follows the development of his more mature literary works.

3.5. Dechev, Zdravko. Narration and Intuition in the Notes of a Nun – Sketches on Lyuben Karavelov’s Novella “Turkish Pasha”. In: Intuition and Competence in Language, Literature, and Education. Plovdiv: Horizonti, 2017, pp. 122–131.

ISBN 978-619-7187-11-3

The article examines Karavelov's story "Turkish Pasha. Notes of a Nun", which requires being perceived as a special personal act, in which writing does not imagine, but above all shares. For the nun's notes, we have reason to claim that the narrative voice breaks literary centrism, that is, the strategy of narration is subordinated to orality. Karavelov's work returns us to the familiar notion that the culture of listening precedes the culture of visual perception. This likens writing to the model of oral type variability and contributes to the interpretive attitude that writing is not simply another possible narrative model, but a degree of orality.

3.6. Dechev, Zdravko. The Revival-Era Act of Recording Folk Oral Literature – Intuition and/or Pragmatics. In: Scientific Works of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria – Plovdiv, Series A: Social Sciences, Arts and Culture, Vol. III, 2017, pp. 102–109.

ISSN 1311-9400 (Print); ISSN 2534-9368 (Online)

The article offers a different approach to the Bulgarian literary and cultural history of the 19th century. The relationship orality – writing is studied in the light of communicative acts and receptions, as well as through the prism of Bulgarian possibilities in the cultural and historical conditions of the century. Thus, writing is not just another possible communicative act, but a level of orality; Renaissance literature is not only a mediator or bearer of orality, but also a medium for its graphocentric graspability. These conclusions are realized interpretively by presenting the functions of recorded folklore materials. The act of recording oral folk art is also seen as related to the manifestation of intuition.

3.7. Dechev, Zdravko. The Mimicking Written Word: A Perspective on Paisius’ History. – In: Scientific Researches of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria-Plovdiv, series B. Natural Sciences and the Humanities, Vol. 18, ISSN 1311-9192 (Print), ISSN 2534-9376 (On-line), 2018. Scientific researches of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria-Plovdiv,

series B. Natural Sciences and the Humanities, Vol. 18, ISSN 1311-9192 (Print), ISSN 2534-9376 (On-line), 2018, pp. 237 – 242.

This article offers observations on the communicative side of Paisius' history. Paisius' text combines its oral and written reception in a special way and leads to the idea of the mimicry of the word. Through mimicry, Paisius' words are simultaneously indisputable, a sign of Bulgarianness and an expression of the omnipotent voice of God who creates worlds. Therefore, Paisius' text is not communicatively disciplined, but consistent with perceptual versatility.

3.8. Dechev, Zdravko. The (I)possible Tale of a People (Critical Sketches on Paisius' History). – In: Scientific Works of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria – Plovdiv. Series A. Public Sciences, Art and Culture. Volume V, ISSN 1311-9400 (Print); ISSN 2534- 9368 (Online), 2019, Scientific works of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria – Plovdiv. Series A. Public sciences, art and culture. Vol. V, ISSN 1311-9400 (Print); ISSN 2534-9368 (Online), 2019, pp. 21 – 27.

The article addresses and analyzes the issues related to reading and listening to Paisius' History, focusing on the complex genre interweavings present in early Revival historiography. It highlights the layers of fairy-tale-like narration, the status of the Voice and its modulations, dissemination, and influence, as well as the possibilities for interpreting the Slav-Bulgarian History through the lens of narrative techniques characteristic of storytelling.

3.9. Dechev, Zdravko. Morbid Love – Morbid Love – Revival-Era Thematizations. – In: Scientific Works of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria – Plovdiv. Series A. Social Sciences, Art and Culture. Volume VI, ISSN 1311-9400 (Print); ISSN 2534-9368 (Online), 2020, pp. 204 – 209.

The article presents observations on the possible thematization of the painful love experience in Revival poetry. The love experience rehabilitated the significance of the personal during the period of the Bulgarian Revival. In the course of the upcoming reflections, it is also necessary to clarify that it is precisely the morbid (painful) that allows us to simultaneously contemplate the dark, painful, escalating to agony, sometimes even pathological and ultimately death-related experiences of love. The observations are based on works by Nayden Gerov, Petko R. Slaveykov, and Hristo Botev.

3.10. Dechev, Zdravko. On “Notes from the Provincial City of Philippopolis 1878 – 1879” by Emil Stoitsov. – In: “Stranitsa” Journal (Vol. 22, No. 2/ 2021). Plovdiv, pp. 116 – 121, ISSN 1310-9081

The article is provoked by the plan of expression and the genre boundary in the narrative of Emil Stoitsov, who in an educational way combines literary, journalistic and moralizing philosophizing, following the strategy of “notes”. The Notes presented by Emil Stoitsov reveal a historically outlined year and as a segment of personal biographical time. The

recorder will present what is not included in the officialized collective idea of the given historical time. In this aspect, his notes can fit into the paradigm of Western European genre preferences from the 18th century (diaries, letters, dialogues, philosophical treatises). Emil Stoitsov's work attempts to bring out a different focus on historical events. On the one hand, the notes are a first-person form of expression that provides ample opportunities for subjectivizing the narrative. On the other hand, in the notes there is a reflex for relaxation in details. The article attempts, by deriving quite a few meaningful accents from Emil Stoitsov's text, to consider the notes as a storytelling strategy.

3.11. Dechev, Zdravko. Seen and Heard through Karavelov: Sketches on “Notes on Bulgaria and the Bulgarians.” In: Time and Continuity – Jubilee Collection in Honor of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Yulia Nikolova, Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv, 2021, pp. 250–259.

ISBN 978-619-202-679-0

The article examines how the Notes combine what is seen and heard. The Notes emerge as a narrative medium with extensive communicative exchange. It can be argued that this form of writing provides a suitable narrative framework for mastering the potential of both vision and orality.

3.12. Dechev, Zdravko. The Dead Body (From “Pages from the Book of the Sufferings of the Bulgarian People” by Lyuben Karavelov). – In: Scientific Researches of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria-Plovdiv, series B. Natural Sciences and the Humanities, Vol. XXVI, ISSN 1311-9192 (Print), ISSN 2534-9376 (On-line), 2025. Scientific researches of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria-Plovdiv, series B. Natural Sciences and the Humanities, Vol. XXVI, ISSN 1311-9192 (Print), ISSN 2534-9376 (On-line), 2025, pp. 117 – 121.

The article presents how the lifeless flesh in Karavelov's plots becomes the basis for the “ritualization” of suffering. Suffering beyond the end of life must be so ceremonially ostentatious that the memory of it is irresistibly traumatic. The body remains most visibly vulnerable post mortem, as it is rendered unimaginably dehumanized in its anatomy (burned, cut, torn).

3.13. Dechev, Zdravko. The Tram's Transfer. Three Stories from "Pages from the Books of the Suffering Bulgarian Tribe. Stories and Tales by Lyubena Karavelov" (Moscow, 1868). – In: Journal "Linguistics, Interpretation, Concepts" (Vol. II, No. 1/ 2025). Plovdiv: Plovdiv University Publishing House, pp. 27 – 44, ISSN: 3033-0599 (Online), ISSN 3033-0181 (Print).

The understanding of trauma in the context of Karavelov's Russian collection of stories about the slave suffering of the Bulgarians has various grounds. The opening story offered to your attention, entitled "Among the Shadows", reveals how Karavelov's "Russian Book" of 1868

reaches Bulgarian readers. If for the Russian audience the collection presents suffering through the experience of their gathering, subjects them to a distanced perception and presupposes empathy, then in our country the peculiar anthology of suffering is fragmented, falling apart again on the pages that remain (in the words of Nikolay Chernokozhev) in the “shadow of the book”.

The following part – “The ‘Handwriting’ of Trauma” – attempts to interpret the mutually adjusting possibilities for perceiving suffering that Karavelov offers through his texts from the collection. Our research intentions in this direction are provoked by the attitude that Karavelov’s narration of the suffering of the Bulgarians, their recognition as traumas, stems from the voice (regardless of whether it is recorded or audible). The “handwriting” of the traumas of slave suffering declares its legitimacy in Karavelov’s collection and in the literal highlighting of the voice as silent, telling, shouting, singing (“Bozhko”, “Neda”). In the final plot – “Around the Dead Body” – the naturalism in the image of the dismembered slave body is metaphorically linked to the decay of Caravel's book of suffering in pages.

3.14. Dechev, Zdravko. Body – Telos – Flesh: Notes on the Dead Body (Based on Nayden Gerov’s Poem “Stoyan and Rada”). – In: Worlds – stories – storytellers. Collection in honor of Prof. Dr. Ivan Ruskov, Plovdiv: Plovdiv University Publishing House, pp. 251 – 263.

ISBN 978-619-7768-51-0

The poem “Stoyan and Rada” by Nayden Gerov shapes not only the views on the poetic possibilities of the Bulgarian language from the mid-1840s onwards, but also the notion that the love experience in the world of our ancestors unfolds between the dictates of the patriarchal marriage norm and the impulse of free love will. The physical presence/absence of Rada (and in particular the focus on Rada's dead body) provokes the understanding that the Hero's poem develops the concept of the human body, whose psycho-physiological dimensions are influenced by the socio-domestic and cultural-historical conditions of the Bulgarian Renaissance. In this aspect, the image of Rada simultaneously expands and merges into the dimensions of the body, telos, and flesh.

3.15. Dechev, Zdravko. The Shirt and Death. – In: Journal “Bulgarian Language and Literature”, issue 2/2025, year LXVII, Sofia, pp. 180 – 189, ISSN: 0323–9519 (Print), 1314–8516 (Online), (Web of Science)

The pre-funeral care of the dead in Bulgarian folk culture has been used as a starting point in considering the relationship between the shirt/clothing and the public presence of the human body. As an attribute of ritualized activity, the shirt can be perceived not only as a boundary, but also as a connection between the world of the living and the world of the dead. Research interests are interested in how in death a person remains a person precisely through the shirt/clothing. Particularly indicative for the current context is the care for the shirt/clothing. For our people, the shirt becomes symbolic as soon as it becomes white with purity. "White"

and "pure" in this case transcend physical laws and become a moral and spiritual reference point for the relationship between the shirt and the human body – both alive and dead. The peculiar fusion of the shirt with the body and its perception by our people as a "second skin" also stands out. This notion is tied to the violence against the slave body and the removal of its natural protective barrier. And this unimaginable nakedness of the dead slave body is an example that the slave body, even in its death, is deprived of any protection.