

Project Report of the Project  
**The Ethnonym of the Vlachs in the Written Sources and the Toponymy  
in the Historical Region of Macedonia (11th-16th Cent.)**  
(*Project No. MK 03/2016*) (State: 30 August 2018)

Project Partners:

*Austria:* Digital Cluster Project “Digitising Patterns of Power (DPP): Peripheral Mountains in the Medieval World” at the Institute for Medieval Research of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (Vienna):

Doz. Mag. Dr. Mihailo Popović (project leader); Jelena Nikić, BA; David Schmid, BA

*Macedonia:* “Ss. Cyril and Methodius” University of Skopje, Faculty of Philosophy, Institute for History (Skopje):

Prof. Dr. Toni Filiposki (project leader); Prof. Dr. Boban Petrovski; Doz. Dr. Nikola Minov; Mag. Vladimir Kuhar; Mag. Boban Gjorgjievski

Duration: 1 July 2016-30 June 2018

*1. Introduction*

The Digital Cluster Project “Digitising Patterns of Power (DPP): Peripheral Mountains in the Medieval World” (<https://dpp.oeaw.ac.at/>) at the Institute for Medieval Research of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (Vienna) and the Institute for History at the Faculty of Philosophy of the “Ss. Cyril and Methodius” University of Skopje have undertaken this joint scholarly project entitled “The Ethnonym of the Vlachs in the Written Sources and the Toponymy in the Historical Region of Macedonia (11th-16th Cent.)” in order to do research on the interplay between the resident population and the nomads (i.e. the Vlachs) in the area of research from the 11th until the 16th century.

This region at the crossroads of Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism and Islam and the question of the origin of the Vlachs, who identify themselves as a separate ethnic group until modern times, as well as the ethnonym “Vlachs” and its derivatives in the form of toponyms and personal names were at the core of the joint research.

*2. Results and Sustainability*

The project has explored manifold written sources related to the Vlachs in the historical region of Macedonia comprising mainly medieval Byzantine and Serbian charters as well as early modern Ottoman Court Registers. Hereby, special emphasis was put on four target areas, namely on the city of Skopje and its environs, on the region of Polog, on the Ohrid-Prespa region and on the valley of the river Strumica. Relevant toponyms were identified and localised based on Austro-Hungarian (on a scale of 1 : 200,000) and Yugoslav (on a scale of 1 : 100,000) maps from the 19th and 20th centuries. Moreover, the Austrian side has built upon the manifold data provided by the volume *Tabula Imperii Byzantini (TIB) 16* written by Mihailo Popović with the aim to create a historical atlas of the historical region of Macedonia (<https://tib.oeaw.ac.at/index.php?seite=status&submenu=tib16>).

In addition to identifying and evaluating the aforesaid written sources journeys to the respective country of the cooperation partner were undertaken in order to bring together the project partners, to strengthen their ties and to enable a thorough discussion of the relevant medieval sources on the Vlachs for reaching a common level of interpretation. Therefore, three journeys to the the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna were conducted, i.e. Prof. Dr. Toni Filiposki and Prof. Dr. Boban Petrovski from 28 May until 12 June 2017, Doz. Dr. Nikola Minov and Mag. Boban Gjorgjievski from 4 March until 8 March / 12 March 2018 and again Prof. Dr. Toni Filiposki and Prof. Dr. Boban Petrovski from 6 May until 13 May 2018.

During these stays in Austria the Macedonian project partners collected and analysed additional secondary literature in the libraries and collections of the Austrian Academy of Sciences as well as in the Austrian National Library. The acquired data was thoroughly discussed with the Austrian project partners and prepared for inclusion into the DPP OpenAtlas Database (i.e. into the backend of the project DPP).

From the Austrian point of view two important work packages have been successfully accomplished within the framework of the joint scholarly project in the summer of 2017 and 2018. From 17 July until 31 July 2017 Mihailo Popović as the Austrian project leader and Jelena Nikić, BA as scholarly co-worker travelled to Skopje in order to conduct research in the State Archive of the Republic of Macedonia and in the library of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts concerning the joint research question. Moreover, two surveys *in situ* were accomplished together with Prof. Dr. Toni Filiposki and Prof. Dr. Boban Petrovski, namely in the canyon of Matka to the South-West of Skopje and in the Ohrid-Prespa region, where the relevant local toponymy and respective monuments were localised and documented. From 4 June until 10 June 2018 Mihailo Popović and David Schmid, BA as scholarly co-worker travelled to Skopje to continue the aforesaid research based on archival material as well as the published bibliography in the Macedonian archives and libraries. In addition two surveys were conducted *in situ* in the valley of the river Vardar and the region of Konjuh in North-Eastern Macedonia together with Prof. Dr. Toni Filiposki and an external expert, the Archaeologist Prof. Dr. Viktor Lilčikj from the “Ss. Cyril and Methodius” University of Skopje.

The project “The Ethnonym of the Vlachs in the Written Sources and the Toponymy in the Historical Region of Macedonia (11th-16th Cent.)” has been integrated as a new case study into DPP (<https://dpp.oeaw.ac.at/index.php?seite=CaseStudies&submenu=skopje>) and the acquired data has been processed with tools deriving from Digital Humanities. Jelena Nikić, BA and David Schmid, BA have input the source based data and the localised toponymy, which was researched both by the Macedonian and the Austrian project partners, into the DPP OpenAtlas Database. These data sets have also been extracted into a Demo-Version, which can be accessed freely online following this link: <https://demo-dev.openatlas.eu/>

Thus, the academia and the interested public can follow up the project’s results and their digital processing in the backend of DPP at any time and discern interdependences between the entities of source, event, actor, place and reference in the database.

The input of the data and its visualisation (i.e. digital mapping) has yielded new results to the DPP OpenAtlas Database and has helped the scholars involved in the project to discern the patterns of distribution of the Vlachs in the historical region of Macedonia through time and space, on which further research has been conducted and published (cf. below 3. *Outreach and Publications*).

### 3. Outreach and Publications

The project's results or significant aspects of it have been communicated and presented to the international scholarly community as well as to the interested public via several talks and papers.

The respective **scholarly talks** took place:

.) on 19 May 2017 by Mihailo Popović entitled "Landscapes, Settlements and Historical Geography – A Case Study on Byzantine Macedonia" (International Conference "From the Human Body to the Universe ... Spatialities of Byzantine Culture", Uppsala, Sweden)

.) on 8 June 2017 as part of the *3rd DPP Lecture* in Vienna (<https://lectures.histgeo.oeaw.ac.at/index.php?site=past>) by Prof. Dr. Toni Filiposki entitled "Vlachs from Macedonia in the Medieval Written Sources: Ethnicity and / or Social Category", followed by Prof. Dr. Boban Petrovski with a paper on "The Vlachs between Settlements and Mountains in Medieval Polog"

.) on 3 October 2017 by Mihailo Popović entitled "Digitising Patterns of Power (DPP) – über die Anwendung digitaler Software-Applikationen auf das Byzantinische Mazedonien (12.-14. Jh.)" (Deutscher Kongreß für Geographie 2017. Eine Welt in Bewegung. Erforschen – Verstehen – Gestalten, Tübingen, Germany)

.) on 26 June 2018 by Mihailo Popović entitled "Das ÖAW Projekt „Digitising Patterns of Power (DPP)“: ein Brückenschlag zwischen Quellen zur historischen Geographie Europas und den Digitalen Geisteswissenschaften" (Goethe-Universität Frankfurt, Historisches Seminar – Mittelalter-Kolloquium, Frankfurt am Main, Germany)

Moreover, Mihailo Popović will present the project as part of his paper "The Digital Cluster Project "Digitising Patterns of Power (DPP)" – Uniting History, Archaeology, Geography and Cartography with Tools from Digital Humanities" at the concluding conference of DPP, which will take place on 18-19 October 2018 at the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna.

Two **scholarly papers** based on results of the project are in preparation at the moment and will be published in the spring of 2019:

.) Toni Filiposki, Boban Petrovski, Vlachs from Macedonia in the Medieval Written Sources: Case Study on Polog, in: Edited Volume of the Project DPP entitled "Power in Landscape – Geographic and Digital Approaches on Historical Research" (Eudora publishing house, Leipzig)

.) Mihailo Popović, Jelena Nikić, Byzantinistik, historische Geographie und Ethnographie im Königreich Jugoslawien am Beispiel des Professors Milenko S. Filipović und der Philosophischen Fakultät in Skoplje (1930-1937). *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta* 55 (Belgrade 2018)

Finally, it has to be stressed that the project "The Ethnonym of the Vlachs in the Written Sources and the Toponymy in the Historical Region of Macedonia (11th-16th Cent.)" has been implemented as the Case Study "The Ethnonym of the Vlachs" into the map-based online application (DPP Mapviewer, i.e. the frontend of DPP), which will be put online at the end of DPP in January 2019 and which will enable the users to query freely the data of this project.