

The Linear Position of Noun Phrases Dependents on Verbal Adjectives

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Abstract

This paper deals with noun phrases dependent on verbal adjectives that function as nominal modifiers. The analysis is based on a corpus consisting of 300 examples, compiled from ten Macedonian novels, with a focus on the types of linearization instantiated in the data.

1. Introduction

The noun phrases which are the subject of this paper are treated as segments of clauses that constitute predicate-argument structures at the semantic level (*cf.* Topolińska 1987). Each noun phrase (NP1) which is examined here is part of a predicate-argument structure (PAS1) containing a second noun phrase (NP2) which is dependent on an adjectival condenser, i.e. on the verbal adjective (Av). Thus, the analysed NP1 has three components: (a) a head noun, which is also an argument of PAS2 (HN), (b) an additional component, realized by means of the adjectival condensation of PAS2, i.e. through the verbal adjective, and (c) a second noun phrase (NP2) which is dependent on the adjectival condenser.

Six different structures of the target NP1 are theoretically possible. They are shown below and illustrated with examples.¹

1. Av NP HN *napišana do kraj kniga*
written.F.Sg to end book (cf. 'book written to end')
2. HN Av NP *kniga napišana do kraj*
3. NP Av HN *do kraj napišana kniga*
4. Av HN NP *napišana kniga do kraj*
5. NP HN Av *do kraj kniga napišana*
6. HN NP Av *kniga do kraj napišana*

In order to determine which of these combinations are most common in modern Macedonian, we have analysed excerpts from 10 books, or about 1500 pages of text. Around 300 examples have been collected, and these form a solid corpus on which significant conclusions can be based. In section 2 the number and types of examples in each of the six structures are discussed. In section 3 some explanations for the findings are proposed. In **section 4** general conclusions are given.

2. Types of combinations

2.1 Combination 1

The first combination (Av NP HN; *napišana do kraj kniga*) is frequent in the Slavic languages and dominant in Polish. In (1) I offer two Polish examples for that combination (from Topolińska 1987):

- (1) a. *Janusz odczuwał poniżenie ukrytego* Pol
Janusz felt.I-Part.M.Sg humiliation hidden.Gen.M.Sg

¹ The following abbreviations are used: PAS = predicate-argument structure; NP = noun phrase; Av = verbal adjective; HN = constitutive noun

w mroku przyjaciela.
 in darkness friend.Gen
 ‘Janusz felt the humiliation of his friend who was hidden in the dark.’

- b. *Zapisany do ostatniej strony zeszyt był...*
 noted.M.Sg in last.Loc page.Loc notebook.Gen been./-Part
 ‘Written to the last page notebook was’

Examining the attributive use of verbal adjectives, Koneski (1982) quotes two examples of this type of construction (from Kole Čašule’s work):

- (2) a. *vivnato od radost lice*
 soared-up from joy face
 ‘the face (that was) lit up with joy’
- b. *prokisnatiot od poprag trem*
 soaked+the.M.Sg from light snow porch
 ‘the porch that was soaked from the light snow’

In our material there were only 6 examples of this type, and all of them were ambiguous or unclear. Three of them are given below. Note that the ambiguities in the English translations reflect problems in the original Macedonian:

- (3) a. *Na desniot dzid stoeja zakačeni_{AV}*
 on right+the wall stand.3Pl.Past hung.Pl
 [*so ramki od meka plastika*]_{NP2} *sliki_{Cn}*
 with frames from soft plastic pictures
od životni što živeat v šuma. ŽK 138
 of animals that live.3Pl in forest
 ‘On the right wall were hanging pictures of animals that live in the forest, with frames made of soft plastic.’
- b. *Rastrevoženi_{AV} [od porodilnite maki na novata nacija]_{NP2}*
 Distressed.Pl from labour.Adj.Pl pains of new+the.F.Sg nation
 [*svetskite vodači*]_{HN} *pokrenaa programa za pomoš....* ON 45
 world.Adj.Pl leaders launched a programme for help
 ‘Distressed by the labour pains of the new nation, the world leaders launched a programme for help.’
- c. *Zatoplena_{AV} [od krupnata snaga na Vangela]_{NP2}*
 warmed-up.F.Sg from large+the.F.Sg bodu of Vangela
Milka_{Cn} se preseli vo eden ubav
 Milka Acc.Refl.Cl moved.3Sg.Past in a beautiful.M.Sg
son negde sosema na drugo mesto IS 43
 dream somewhere quite on other place
 ‘Warmed by the Vangel’s husky body, Milka moved into a beautiful dream somewhere in a completely different place.’

In (3a) the sequence “stood hanged” is a complex predicate. In this example, the use of the preposition *so* ‘with’ is confusing and the construction *zakačeni so ramki* ‘hanged with frames’ is ambiguous because it is composed of two elements belonging to different constituents.

The above examples cannot be actually included in the first combination either. If they are treated as appositional modifiers and if the constitutive/head noun is placed before the adjectival condenser and NP2, the meaning does not change. However, some of the examples follow this order due to the occurrence of conjunctions:

(4.) *Popladneto, oti posleden den od nedelata, a i potplašena od temniot molk vo liceto na Pelagija, Persa ja nagovori da ...* CB 135

That afternoon, being the last day of the week, and because she was somewhat frightened by the dark silence on Pelagija's face, Persa convinced her to...

(5.) *Oti pri kraj ručekot, a posle zafatena so raskrevañe i mieñe sadovi, Pelagija ne obrna vnanie na Persinite razmislivaña i sluteña.*

Because she was finishing with the lunch, and later she would be busy **with** tidying up and washing the dishes, Pelagija did not pay attention to Persa's thoughts and forebodings.

The following examples contain constructions with an omitted constitutive/head noun referring to a person already mentioned in the text in question. These constructions would be more acceptable if the constitutive/head noun were placed before the adjectival condenser and NP2:

(6.) *... i oti zafaten so deteto na Baovkata ne stigma....* TG1 157

... and because he was busy with the child of Baofka, he didn't make it...

(7.) *Stutulena taka pod velenceto šara so očiñata niz razbistreniot mrak,* IS 65

Wrapped up like that in the light blanket, her little eyes peered into the clearing darkness

2.2 Combination 2

The second combination (HN Av NP) as in 'book written to end' is also common in Slavic languages. According to Topolinjska, it represents the basic combination in Serbian/Croatian, but peripheral in Polish. Below are several Serbian examples (from Topolinjska 1987)

Januš je osećao poniženje prijatelja skrivenog u mraku.

Janus was feeling the humiliation of his friend hidden in the dark.

Pesma pevana sa zanosom pomagala im je da održe ritam.

The song sung with enthusiasm helped them to keep the rhythm.

This combination was discussed by Minova in Macedonian textbook (1998 p.170) where she says: "Regarding the word order, in our language most common is the one when the adjective appears in the initial position, preceding the noun, for example: a great miracle. ... Nevertheless, there are cases in our language when it is correct to use the attribute predicatively, after the noun. We are talking about *developed*

attributes, in whose frames the adjective does not appear unaccompanied, but with a noun followed by a preposition, for example:

kamion natovaren so buriña; prozorci izlepeni so hartija,
a truck loaded with barrels; windows pasted over with paper,
deca napušteni od roditelice itn.
children abandoned by their parents etc."

Having in mind the prescriptive character of such recommendations it is only natural to presume that they may have contributed to the spread of this pattern in Macedonian. Namely, the vast majority of the corpus examples represent the above pattern (255 out of 300). However, in the following discussion I will try to explain that other factors have played an important role in the reinforcement of this pattern in Macedonian. As mentioned, the pattern HN Av NP (book written to end) is represented in more than 85% examples both in original and translated literature. It is particularly common in constructions with descriptive function where the verbal adjective can be understood as an apposition or as a remainder from a reduced nominal predicate. For example:

(8.) *Devojčence kraj morskot breg, magjepsano od svojot prv kontakt so okeanot.* AS 46
A little girl next to the sea shore, enchanted by her first contact with the ocean.

(9.) *Orel vramen od neboto, so rašireni krilja, sončevite zraci mu prodiraat niz perduvite.* AS 46
An eagle is framed by the sky with outspread wings, and sunbeams penetrate through its feathers.

(10.) *Žena sklopčena vo grmuška, vo isčekuvanje kraj kućata na mažit od kogo e ostavena...* AS 46
A woman bent over in the bush, waiting next to the house of the man by whom she has been abandoned...

(11.) *Goli mažit i žena obvitkani eden okolu drug.* AS 48
A naked man and woman wrapped around each other

(12.) *Preminot megju dvata koloseka natrupan od lugje, od deca najmnogu,* IS 27
The passage between two tracks overcrowded (with people), mostly with children...

With the constitutive/head noun in the subject position, PAS2 frequently functions as an appositional determination. It has great consequences: any expansion of the noun phrase results in its conversion from a predicate into an attributive modifier. Apposition represents the first step in this process. The high quantity of the examples with apposition is indicative of a relative novelty of this phenomenon. Appositions can be very easily transformed into relative clauses even when there no commas.

Examples:

(13.) *Dvata stola i masata, raspukana nasrede i so potkršena nogarka, bea od drvo, isušeno i odamna nepominato so boja.* ŽK 33

The two chairs and the table that was cracked in the middle and had a broken leg were made of wood that was dried out and had not been painted for a long time.

(14) .. *mnogu od niv, iscrpeni od igrata, celosno prestanale da se dvižat.* ON 122
... many of them, exhausted by the game, stopped moving completely.

(15.) *Kusite pantolonki, isparani na nekolku mesta odzadi od naponot na snagata što rasteše, gi krepea dve preramki.* CB 87

The short trousers, split on several spots behind from the tension of the body that was growing, were supported by a pair of suspenders.

(16.) *Persa, trognata od sudbinata na Rosa, se iskradna na kaj kujničeto,* CB 60
Persa, touched by Rosa's fate, quietly sneaked towards the small kitchen,

Constitutive/head nouns in the indirect object position are not found frequently due to their narrow referential scope (persons only). However, the constitutive/head noun appears very often in direct and prepositional object positions. Hence, the empty prenominal slot can be occupied by other modifiers and new condensations as well.

Examples: (direct object)

(17.) *...i vleguva vo odajčeto so promeneto lice, najduvajki ja majka Persa zadremena kraj malečkata Pelagija.* CB 70

... and enters the small room with a changed expression on her face, finding her mother Persa dozing beside little Pelagija.

(18.) *...se javi vo poštata i tamu i go vratija paketot namenat za Dimostena.* CB23
...she called the post office and there they returned the package for Demosten to her.

(19.) *...stoeše pomlad maž so bled ten, oblečen vo košula raskopčana tri četvrti ozgora i dolgi pantaloni podviени do pod kolenici.* ŽK 57

... a younger man was standing with a pale complexion, dressed in a shirt unbuttoned three quarters from the top and long trousers rolled up to the knees.

(Prepositional object):

(20.) *..., za da me natovari so golem težok jorgan, opljačkan od zapalenoto selo.* MG 61
..., so as to burden me with a big heavy quilt, stolen from the burnt village.

(21.) *Dobre doagjaše so Lenče stisnato vo pregratkata.* TG2 249
Dobre was coming with Lence squeezed in his arms.

(22.) *Ležat vo gustata treva i odgovaraat na prašanata postaveni od poetite i slikarite od celiot svet.* AS 70

They lie in the thick grass and answer questions asked by poets and painters from all over the world.

(23.) ...*i spaseni tokmu od grupata na Demostena, potpomognata od vooruženi milicioneri, ...*

TG2 180

...and saved precisely by Demosten's group, who were helped by armed militiamen,...

(24.) ...*gazat po iljadnicite liri istreseni od stogodišniot brest onde od tovarnata platforma,*

CB 29

... they walk on thousands of liras shaken from the hundred-year-old elm there near the freight platform,

(25.) *Petra ja počuvstvuva toplinata na vnučiñata pritisnati vo nea kako da i bea najtopla roba.*

IS 35

Petra feels the warmth of her grandchildren hugged in her arms as if they were the warmest clothing.

(26.) ...*,otvorot što ušte me potsetuva na gimnaziskite pravoagolnici ispišani so nesmeli tragi od kreda.*

PU 5

..., the hole still reminds me of the high school rectangles written with insecure traces of chalk.

2.3 Combinations 3 and 5

The patterns 3 (NP Av HN) and 5 (NP HN Av) as in 'to end written book' and 'to end book written' are not represented in the materials with examples because of the presence of prepositions. The Macedonian analytic system does not allow combinations where two prepositions may appear side by side.

Something similar happens with the Polish combination/pattern 1 :

Janusz odczuwał poniżenie ukrytego w mroku przyjaciela.

Januš go čuvstvuvaše ponižuvañeto na skrieniot vo mrak prijatel

*Janush was feeling the humiliation **of the hidden** in the dark friend.

'Janush was feeling the humiliation of his friend hidden in the dark.'

The use of two prepositions side by side in Macedonian affects the acceptability of the following examples:

pattern 3 (NP Av HN)

**Toj dojde do od slama izgradenata kuća.*

*He came **near to of** straw built house.

'He came near to the house built of straw.'

pattern 5 (NP HN Av)

**Januš mu ja zede vaznata na vo mrakot prijatelot skrien.*

*Janush took the vase **from in** the dark his friend hidden.

'Janush took the vase from his friend hidden in the dark.'

2.4 Combination 4

The combination/pattern 4 (Av HN NP) “written book to end” is represented by 22 examples, but there seem to be some limitations. Some of the examples belong to idiomatic expressions; others have double meaning due to their structural ambiguity as the NP2 can be dependent both on the verbal adjective and on the constitutive/head noun.

Examples:

(27.) .., *vo nezatopleni sobi vo zimskite meseci*, MG 42

= *sobi vo zimski meseci / nezatopleni vo zimski meseci*

..., in cold rooms in winter months,

= *rooms in winter months / unheated in winter months*

(28.) *Mu dadoa ostrov i voda, i sonce se razbira, zakovano sonce srede nebo*. TG1 46

= *zakovano srede nebo / sonce srede nebo*

They gave him an island and water, and sun of course, a sun nailed to the middle of the sky.

= *nailed in the middle of the sky/ sun in the middle of the sky*

The application of the second pattern to these examples results in a noun-preposition-noun linearization that has a nonsensical interpretation. The formation of combinations according to the third pattern is blocked by the presence of the preposition *so* (*with*).

Examples:

(29.) *Dodeka ova go kažuva edna žena so sviena kosa gore nad temeto, Čana si ja stiskaše ustata so golemata dlanka*. CB 18

While a woman with her hair tied in a bun at the top of her head was saying this, Chana covered her mouth with the palm of her large hand.

(30.) *Ja najdoa patekata so presno vtisnati stapalki vo snegot*. CB 65

They found the path with freshly pressed footprints in the snow.

(31.) *Pelagija kleči pred Persa so nurnati oči vo kolenata*. CB 71

Pelagija is kneeling in front of Persa with her eyes fixed on her knees.

2.5 Combination 6

The combination 6 (HN NP Av) “book to end written” is marginally represented in the corpus. All 4 examples are stylistically marked:

(32.) *Prozorecot gol, so vesnici do polovina nareden*. TG1136

The bare window, pasted up halfway with newspapers.

(33.) *Crna i vo crno oblečena, lična kako od kadro izvadena*. TG1 179

Black and dressed in black, she was as beautiful as if she had been taken out of a photograph.

2.6 Concluding remarks

The preceding examples support our conclusion that all languages try to build a model with the fewest obstacles in communication. For this reason semantics in general and the semantics of the word formation processes in particular, should be taken into consideration. But some typological characteristics as analyticity of case relations and the use of prepositions block the realization of empty positions in the above patterns.

Some diachronic changes that affected verbal grammatical categories (e.g. the loss of passive meaning of the *n/t* participle) have contributed to the opening of new positions on the right of the verbal adjective.

In addition, the emergence of the constructions with *have/be + n/t* participle and their penetration into the verbal system has reinforced the verbal meaning of the verbal adjective.

In the process of structural change the language has favoured constructions which were communicatively most salient and absolutely clear. It could be hypothesized that this was the reason why the construction of the type *book written to end* has ousted other rival isofunctional constructions.

For all this to happen, a very large number of changes occurred in the language itself, led by the tendency for condensation, and by the tendencies characteristic of some verbal categories registered and left open by Koneski (1982). The limitations set by the analytical form of expressing grammatical relations have played a significant role as well.

In the next section I will try to explain some of the processes that contributed to the reinforcement of the construction HN Av NP (*kniga napišana do kraj*) 'book written to end' in Macedonian.

3. Factors that influenced the establishment of the dominant linearization model

3.1 Prepositions

Prepositions block a different word order in order to preserve the original meaning:

(a.) *Najposle pomina načalnikot pridružuvan od poručnikot.*

At last passed by the chief accompanied by the lieutenant.

'At last the chief passed by accompanied by the lieutenant.'

*(b.) *Najposle pomina pridružuvan od poručnikot načalnikot.*

At last passed by accompanied by the lieutenant the chief.

*(c.) *Najposle pomina pridružuvan načalnikot od poručnikot.*

At last passed by accompanied the chief by the lieutenant.

Ljupco Stefanovski (1985) discusses the meaning of the phrase Na Olga prodadenite sliki/ [literaly] ‘The to Olga sold pictures’ in the following examples:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| (a) <i>Toj gi donese slikite prodadeni na Olga.</i> | Komu? - dativ |
| He brought the pictures sold to Olga. | To whom? – dative |
| (b) <i>Toj gi donese prodadenite sliki na Olga.</i> | Čii? Komu?- genitiv/dativ |
| He brought the sold pictures of Olga. | Whose? To whom? – genitive/dative |

Similar behaviour characterizes the phrase “tepihot *isčisten od volna*”

- (a) *Toj go donese tepihot isčisten od volna.*
He brought the carpet cleaned of wool.
- (b) *Toj go donese isčisteniot tepih od volna.*
He brought the cleaned carpet made of wool.
- (c) *Gi izvadi parite od tepihot isčisten od volna.*
He took out the money from the carpet cleaned of wool.

Other examples:

- Dojdov doma so vaznata podarena so ljubov*
I came home with the vase given with love
- Dojdov doma so vaznata podarena na more*
I came home with the vase given on the sea
- Dojdov doma so podarenata vazna na more*
*I came home with the given vase on sea

Significant problems arise in phrases with the most frequently used prepositions, including grammaticalized prepositions such as *na* ‘on’ and *so* ‘with’:

- Toj i ja gali kosata ispletena so češel.*
He is caressing her hair braided with a comb.
- Toj i ja gali ispletinata kosa so češel.*
He is caressing the braided hair with a comb.

The above examples yield three possible interpretations:

- Braided with a comb
- Caressing with a comb
- Hair with a comb

The meaning of a particular combination is extremely sensitive to its linearization:

- Vo nejzinite uši probodeni so igli navleze poznatiot zvuk.*
Into her ears pierced with needles came the familiar sound.
- Vo nejzinite probodeni uši so igli navleze poznatiot zvuk.*
Into her pierced ears with needles came the familiar sound.

Again, there are three possible interpretations:

- Pierced with needles
- Ears with needles
- *With needles came the sound

Dojdov doma so vaznata podarena od Marko.

I came home with the vase given by Marko.

Dojdov doma so podarenata vazna od Marko

I came home with the given vase by Marko.

'I came home with Marko's vase, which was a gift (from him/to him)'

In passive constructions the meaning of a given combination is generally preserved. The preposition *od* 'by' has a limited use in non-passive constructions.

When *od* 'from' is used in non-passive constructions, only pattern number 2 ('a book written to end') is possible.

Zede pari od ženata dojdena od Skopje.

He took money **from** the woman who had arrived **from** Skopje.

It is not possible to say:

Zede pari od dojdenata žena od Skopje.

He took money from the arrived woman from Skopje.

Passive participle forms cannot be derived from the majority of the intransitive imperfective verbs.

	(lit.)
*oden čovek	Walked man
*spieno dete	Slept child
*sedena žena	Sat woman
*jaden čovek	Eaten man
?šetan čovek	Strolled man

3.2 The verbal system

The Passive

There is a small number of passive subordinated nominal constructions headed by verbal adjectives. It is important to point out that the inherent passive meaning of the verbal adjective with its inherited transitivity, has given way to other meanings thereby enabling the reinforcement of this combination. Moreover, this meaning shift has caused verbal adjectives to become closer to verbs than to nouns. Thus, in many examples with omitted auxiliary verbs, the meaning of the construction is purely verbal. This gives us grounds to suggest that today verbal adjectives are neutral with respect to the category of diathesis.

Examples:

(34.) ... *zagleduvajki se po krošnate na drvjata od kade letnuvaa **kup ptici preplašeni od mavtañeto na stapot,*** CB 82

Gazing at the crowns of the trees where a flock of birds flew off in the air, frightened by the waving of the stick...

(35.) *Nekoj od školnicite donese **rakatka sveki** što bolsnaa kraj kandilceto **zapaleni od prisutnite** i zabucani vo dva grsta zemja stavena vo zaboravena činija.* IS 116

One of the seminary pupils brought in a handful of candles that had been lit by those present and stuck into two fistfuls of dirt placed in a forgotten plate, and they glittered beside the lamp.

Transitivity

The spread of constructions with *have* and *be* + verbal adjective not only has contributed to the weakening of the opposition transitive-intransitive as in *Imam raboteno* 'I have worked' (*imam dojdeno, imam jaden, imam noseno, imam kupeno/kupuvano*; -, I have arrived, I have eaten, I have worn, I have bought; *sum jaden, sum pien, sum javen, sum viden, sum dojden* [all examples have active meaning in Macedonian] - *I am eaten, *I am drunk, *I am called, *I am seen, *I am came), but has also reinforced the verbal meaning of the verbal adjective. In some cases, even when the auxiliary *have/be* is omitted, the presence of the underlying *have/be*-construction is felt.

Example:

Televizorot kupen vo Amerika. **Sonceto zajdeno** pred dva časa.
The TV (was) bought in America. The sun went down two hours ago.

The meaning of the opposition of transitive/intransitive is clearly explained and illustrated with numerous examples by Koneski (1982: pp.354-360), to which the reader is referred for further details.

The category of aspect

Since Macedonian verbal adjectives are usually formed from perfective verbs, only a few constructions using imperfective verbal adjectives were found in the corpus. It seems that prefixes also have some influence on word order in PA constructions.

In the majority of examples with "perfective" verbal adjectives, the resultative meaning has several implications: immediate relevance, result of the previous action, and a momentary state caused by a previous action. Koneski (1982:pp.434-448) also describes other cases with the meaning of simultaneity, see examples (6, 17, 21, 31) above.

3.3 Other adjectives

The presence of even one adjective before the head noun provides an opportunity for the use of pattern 2 - HN Av NP (*kniga napišana do kraj*), i.e. for placing the verbal adjective after the constitutive/head noun.

- Idiomatic expressions

široko otvoreni oči kon neboto
eyes wide open towards the sky

podzamižani oči
squinted eyes

vtisnati stapalki vo snegot
imprinted footprints in the snow

zabraneta ljubov
forbidden love

nasmeana učitelka
smiling teacher

nezavršena zgrada so godini

a building unfinished for years
povišen glas
 raised voice
rastreperen glas
 trembling voice
otvorena rana od nož/ so nož/
 wound opened with a knife
skriena misla vo glavata
 thought hidden in the head
prečkrtana adresa na zatvorot
 scribbled address of the prison
poluzaspani zmii (kolku poveke prefiksi, tolku polesno pred imenka)
 half awake snakes (the more prefixes, the easier before noun)

4. Conclusion

The analysis of noun phrases subordinated to verbal adjectives has determined that type 2 (Cn Av NP) “a book written to end” is becoming dominant in Macedonian. This combination is present in more than 80% of the examples. Both semantic and formal factors influenced the spread of this pattern. Among them are the analytic manner of expressing case relations and the frequent use of grammaticalized prepositions in Macedonian. Furthermore, the Balkan model of verbal categories characterized by the weakening of transitivity, the active-passive opposition, and the emergence of *imam/sum* + verbal adjective constructions played an important role in establishing the dominance of this linearization pattern in Macedonian subordinate noun phrases.

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- CB – Taško Georgievski. *Crna bilka* [Black Plant]
- IS – Taško Georgievski. *Isčeznuвање* [Disappearing]
- MG – Milan Ćurčinov. *Osvojuвање na realnosta* [Conquering Reality]
- MJ – Meto Jovanovski. *Orlovata dolina* [The Eagle's Valley]
- ON – Onion, satirical stories (translated from English)
- PU – Dimitar Solev. *Pod usvitenost* [Under Heat]
- TG1 – Taško Georgievski. – *Vreme na molčeње* [Time of Silence]
- TG2 – Taško Georgievski. – *Ramna zemja* [Flat Ground]
- ŽK – Žarko Kujundžiski. – *Spectator*