Macedonian Toponomastics
Popular Etymologies and Etymological Popularities

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In a world in which attempts are being made to eradicate obscene toponyms, e.g. the efforts in Turkey and the Soviet Union, it is comforting to discover a region in which the opposite process can be observed, i.e. the folk-etymologizing of originally innocent place names into obscene ones. In the Ohrid-Prespa basin of southwestern Macedonia, there are no less than three toponyms which have been re-etymologized, viz. Dupeni, Podmočani, and Laikurec. The name Dupeni comes from dup(a) “hole”, but a variant, dupe, has come to mean “ass.” Since there are now two villages in the same administrative district with this name, they are distinguished as Gorno Dupeni and Dolno Dupeni, “Upper Ass” and “Lower Ass” in the popular mind. The name of the village Podmočani comes from the archaic verb moči “soak.” It is said that a Turk drowned near the village, hence its name. In modern Macedonian, however, moča means “piss”, so the name of the village sounds like a verbal adjective meaning “pissed-under”, “piddled-on”, or “piss-soaked”, depending on the interpretation of the prefix pod-. In this region there is also a fountain called Lajkurec, from lae “howl” + kurt “wolf” (Turkish). In modern Macedonian, the Turkish word kurt has been forgotten, while the ancient Slavic word kur has come to mean “cock” in the penile sense of the word. Hence the name is now taken to mean “Howl(ing) Cock.”

There are a number of other toponyms in this region which were originally obscene and remain so today. Those involving prdi “fart” and gaz “ass” generally denote fields, hills, and rocks, while those using kur “prick” and pička “cunt” are usually for fountains, springs, and wells. A list using the original dialectal forms is supplied below:

Dugić Blow-Ass
Krugče Break-Ass
Pučišt Stick-Out-Ass
Zejgazik Gape-Ass
Zejgazica Gape-Ass
Belo Gaoč White Ass
Prideça Farteress
Pradeškov Rit Farter’s Hill
Pr地中海 Bear-Farter’s
Pralja Farter
Praljo Trlo Farter’s Sheep Pen
Prédova Farter’s

*Note: krasta also means “scab, mange, scabies.”

Reference

[Editor’s Note: In the clean USA, almost all “offensive” place names have been changed by governmental (busy-) bodies or by the local folks. See Lester F. Dingman, “Naughty Names: Geographic Names — Colorful or Offensive?” in Naughty Names, ed. Fred Tarpley (South-Central Names Institute, Publication 4, Commerce, Texas 1975), pp. 1-4. Among the ones cleaned up were Nellies Nipples, Squaw Tit, Nipple Peak, Whorehouse Meadows, S.O.B. Rapids, B.S. [bullshit] Gap, S.H. [shit house] Butte. But we still have Coon Butt, Bald Peter, Smackass Gap, Bloody Dick Creek, Wee Wee Hill and French Broad, as well as Blue Balls and Intercourse, not mentioned in this study.

In a humorous toponymic word list I published in Unterrichts-praxis, VI, No. 1 (1973), 121-23, “Wer wohnt woe in Deutschland?” the editor considered it wise to delete the following German place names: Außernbrünóst Outside-Lust, Bussfaßtordt Bordello-Town, Dirneict Whore-Oak, Geilenkircher Horn-Churches, Hodenbagen Balls-Woods, Hurlach Whore-Laugh, Schambaupten Pubic Head, Scheidegg Vulva-Testicle, Vegesack Screw-Serotum, and Vöcklbruck Fuckers’ Bridge.]