

Work-in-Progress: Identifying Bistritsa recordings

A blog is supposed to be a place where you can write to help yourself think things through, so here goes. (When I can take the time to figure out how to do it, I could keep such things in a section accessible through the menu, e.g., “Martha’s working notes” — but trying to do that right now would take time from my primary task, so you’ll have to put up with “a useless interruption”!)

In trying to make life simpler, I think I made it more complicated for myself! Here’s why:

In 1990 I have no less than THREE sets of recordings:

- August, when I was in Bulgaria for a short time to arrange for the visit of the Bistritsa Babi to the US;
- October when the Babi were **in** the US; and
- 1990-91 when I went back to Bulgaria for about 6 weeks.

On that winter trip, I went to Bulgaria specifically to work intensively with baba Linka, who was from the village of Bistritsa. I kept my recordings of ALL of our sessions (made in Sofia, where she was living with her daughter) on a set of 15 cassette tapes that I labelled “Linka”. So far, so good.

BUT. On that 1990-91 trip I also recorded a number of times in the village of Bistritsa itself — people *other than Linka*. I also recorded in several other villages: Plana, Govedartsi, and Madžare. All of THAT material (both Bistritsa and not-Bistritsa) went on a set of five “not-Linka” tapes. I have been identifying those tapes (clumsily!) as “not-Linka” material. And now, I have to figure out how to identify them ALL as Bistritsa tapes, while still preserving a distinction! (Why ever? Well....first, because it’s just easier to have all the Linka material in one place, not interspersed with the other material. There is so much of that, and relatively so little of “everything else” — I’m not trying to create a travelogue of “Martha’s minute-by-minute journey through Bulgaria in the winter of 1990-91” — I am focusing on *the material*, how to find what you need in it easily.)

How about, to distinguish the two tapes from 1990-91 numbered 3:

- “1990-91 Bistr-L 3b” (Linka tape #3b, specifically side B)
- “1990-91 Bistr-xL 3b Danče’s nameday” (not-Linka tape #3, sp. side B)

This might work. I will still keep them in separate folders: 1990-91 Linka, and 1990-91 not-Linka.

Thanks for listening — now back to work! There are a few “real” posts simmering...

Eureka! (Or whatever the word is.) I think I’ve solved it. Writing this did really help, but sitting down with old files names in one (text) column and new files names in a second column was what really worked: I could change them as much as I liked until I was satisfied with the result. At this point, if I wanted to, I could even mix together the Linka and the xLinka material, because the file names would keep it nicely sorted out. I’d take a screenshot for you, but I can imagine anything much less interesting!