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SOME ADDITIONAL FACTS
ABOUT LEXICAL CONTACTS BETWEEN THE BALKAN
LANGUAGES¹

Dialects on the periphery of a language zone do not only treasure a reservoir of conservative features relevant for the study of a certain language — being the doorway of foreign influence, they also provide a good idea of international contacts in a region. The profile of borrowed lexicon reflects much of the history and nature of those contacts.

In that respect, one of the most interesting dialects of the Serbocroatian language is the Torlak (Prizren — Timok) dialect which stretches along its southeastern border with southwest-northeastern orientation in the shape of a crescent i. e. along the valleys of the Southern Morava and the Timok rivers. In addition to all its characteristics typical of a peripheral dialect, it is particularly interesting as being that part of the Serbocroatian language through which the latter belong to the Balkan league of languages.

As regards the Balkan league, we do not intend to comment on various opinions about the position of Serbocroatian in it — rather we would say that closest to the truth on that matter stand those scholars (Sandfeld, Reichenkron, Birnbaum, Ivić) who render it as belonging only partially, i. e. with its eastern branch, to the Balkan league. Quite plausible to us appears to be the explanation long ago offered by van Wijk (based on the material provided by Belić) and later elaborated in different aspects by some other scholars (Marguliés, Birnbaum, Rosseti, Ivić) that the peculiarities of the Torlak dialect originate from the fact that its zone coincides with a supposed wedge of romanophone population which persisted, crossing the Balkans

¹ This paper was communicated on the Sixth Congress of the Balkan Studies which took place in Sophia from August 30th to September 5th 1989.

diagonally, till the 13th — 14th centuries (Rosseti, ILR 31). This accounts for a strong Balkanizing influence it had undergone at the time when in this area widespread polyglottism and intensive trading activity resulted in the formation of a series of linguistic phenomena common to all the languages within the range of that retorte — these later being understood as Balkanisms.

The structural and typological problems (comprising phonetic, morphological and syntactical Balkanisms) have long ago been recognised and well explained (from Kopitar's prime steps, via Sandfeld's first comprehensive and exhaustive monography, inclusive of all the prolific contemporary scientific production). But one aspect of Balkan mixoglotty still falls short of satisfactory documentation and interpretation, in spite of significant bibliography on the subject: lexical attestations i. e. study of the lexicon borrowed from one language into the other. As regards Serbocroatian, these topics are undersatisfactorily dealt with, inter alia, owing to the scarcity or outdatedness of dialectal sources which necessarily provide a starting point for such studies. We don't intend to suggest that the work of, say, M. Vasmer is obsolete, it is just some of his conclusions that should be modified or altered on the basis of fresh material which has appeared in new dialectal dictionaries.

Recent years have provided us with a few exhaustive dictionaries of microareas within or on the verge of the Torlak zone: Timok, Crna Reka, Aleksinac, Bučum, Leskovac, Pirot. This material is what this paper is based upon.

Our interest was focused on two aspects of lexicon presented in these dictionaries: Greek and Rumanian loan words, more precisely, those loans which neither belong to the literary language, nor were they hitherto described in etymological studies.

ARNICA n.f. "a deserted field (because it bears crops no more); a fruitless field which is only occasionally tilled" (Vranje),² diminutive *arniče*, variations *ornica*, *orniče* (these forms cannot be mistaken for meaning *oránica* "field" since the same source brings the word *óranica* with the meaning "field, arable land"); "waste land, deserted field" (Timok 17); "clearing in the forest used as a pasture" (Leskovac 14).

The noun is a deverbative of *ārnīsati* (*se*) "get rid of something, give something up, desert" (Kosovo),³ noted also by Vasmer⁴ and RSANU, which derives from Greek aorist ἀρνησα < ἀρνῶμα "deny, refuse, decline" (Andriotis 35) (following the pattern of *malaksati*, *lipsati*, *pedepsati*).

² M. Zlatanović, Nazivi geografskih termina u Vranjskoj kotlini. *Onomatološki prilozi I*, Beograd 1979, 129, 134.

³ G. Elezović, Rečnik kosovsko-metohiskog dijalekta, *Srpski dijalekto-loški zbornik IV*, Beograd 1932, 19.

⁴ M. Vasmer, GL 47.

This example is peculiar and it presents a great rarity since the ultimate loan belongs to agricultural terminology which is, almost exclusively, Slavic in origin. A conclusion could also be made that verb *aršisati* (*se*) used to be so deep rooted in Serbocroatian as to produce derivatives which today bear witness of a wider area it once occupied. We could not find traces of analogous derivation in other Balkan languages.

ARŠICA n. f. "tiny pebbles, land covered or permeated by them, especially on mountain slopes" (Crna Reka 263) < Rum. *arșiță* "great heat, sultriness, stuffiness" (DLRLC I, 132). Cioranescu brings the other meaning "a mountain slope exposed to sunshine, or a forest cleared away for pasture" (Cioranescu 40).⁵ The forms are phonetically identical, and the semantic shift from "sunny mountain slope" to "a kind of land it is covered with" took place.

BRASINAR n. m. "wooden bar which connects prongs of the pitchfork on a cart" (Crna Reka 273), and *bračunar* n. m. "stick for measuring distances at vineyard planting" (RSANU II, 126 without ubication⁶) < Rum. *brăcinar* "belt; steel bar which connects prongs of the plough" (DELR 96). Cioranescu notes that Scr. *bračunar* is derived from Rumanian (Cioranescu 101). Variation *brašinár* is semantically and phonetically a complete equivalent of Rum. *brăcinar*.

DULJA(TI) vb. intr. "work too hard, overwork oneself" (Timok 69), "bear a burden, endure difficulties" (Crna Reka 300) can be derived from Gk. βουλειά "work, service" < Gk. σονλεύω "to work, operate" (Andriotis 84).

This example should be treated independently from the learned word *dulija* "honour paid to a saint" < Gk. σονλεία "servitium" noted by P. Skok.⁷

FAKA n. f. "old, bony cow" (Crna Reka 472) is derived from Rum. *vacă* "cow" (DELR 915) with a semantic evolution towards pejorativisation and the devoicing of the bilabial *v > f*.

KATAROSIM SE vb. intr. "precipitate, fall down from a certain height" (Leskovac 144) is derived from Gk. καταπέτω "fall down, precipitate" (Andriotis 150), perhaps contaminated by local Scr. *rušiti* "tear down, disrupt".

KATIZMA n. f. "punishment" (Leskovac 144), an other attestation coming from Riječka nahija, Montenegro.⁸ Skok and

⁵ Rum. *arșiță* was also borrowed into Ukrain, cf. Ukr. *aršyc'a* »a sunny slope«, Ukr. toponym *Aršyc'a* and into Polish, cf. Pol. toponym *Arszyca* (v. Niša-Armaš, S. et al. »L' influence roumaine sur le lexique des langues slaves«, *Romanoslavica* XVI, București 1968, 73).

⁶ This definition seems to be slightly incomplete since we have learned from specialists that for this purpose a forked device, akin to a pair of compasses, is usually used.

⁷ P. Skok, ERHSJ I, 455 s. v.

⁸ A. Jovičević, *Svagdašnji običaji, Zbornik za narodni život i običaje Južnih Slavena* 11, Zagreb 1906, 57.

Vasmer⁹ note this word as a Greek loan, but onlō in its regular meaning "one of the twenty parts of a psalterion (named so since bellievers are allowed to sit during that part of the service)" < Gk. κάθισμα "idem" < "sitting" < καθίζω "to sit" (Andriotis 137).

This word of evident Greek origin has no parallel for its unusual semantic development which probably took place within the Serbocroatian language itself. We can only make guesses as to what the creator(s) of this meaning had on mind: a fairly mild punishment which would consist of sitting (in a corner, for example), or a kind of Good's punishment that would be pronounced by the priest, from the holy books.

KOVIN n. m. "basket in which fruit to be stored for winter is kept" (Levač and Temnić, Studenica, as well as two other sources without ubication — all recorded by RSANU but with no etymological hints) < Gk. κοφίνι "basket, pannier" < κόφινος (Andriotis 171—2).

This example is interesting because the attestations come from central Serbia, none being identified further south or southeast where they would be more likely to appear.

LŌS n. m. 1^o "linchpin, bolt", 2^o "pole used for lifting weight, crowbar" (Leskovac 169), *lōst* "long, thick rounded piece of wood... used for carrying different things" (Jagodina, RSANU), *lōs* a) "wooden bar for lifting weight, lever, crowbar" (Levač), b) "metal tool used for crashing, a small pestle" (Niš, Momina Klisura, RSANU) < Md. Gk. λουστός "lever, crowbar" < Anc. Gk. λοῖσθος (Andriotis 188).

This is another nice example of a technical term recorded in central Serbia, and central Serbia only, and not in any of the so well-documented southeastern speeches. Thus we can freely conclude that this is an independent loan, regardless of Bulg. (BEP III, 478)¹⁰

MADERICA n. f. "chamber for memorial feast on the cemetery" (Leskovac 173) < Gk. ηαγερίτσα < ηαγερεία "kitchen" (Andriotis 191).

This form is a direct Greek loan, unlike the other similar one (Old Serbian?) *madernica* "monastery kitchen" which is a local Scr. derivation from *mader* "a cook" < κάνειπος.¹¹

SAMANI adj. "the same as, identical" (Timok 251), *σαμαγνι* "the same as, (the one) who takes after someone": *σαμαγνι baštá*

⁹ P. Skok, ERHSJ II, 63; M. Vasmer, GL 76.

¹⁰ It is clear from what we have said above that we disagree with Skok (ERHSJ II, 319) who accords with Mladenov in proposing a Slavic etymology for this word which is attested only within the range of the Balkan league proper (not even in the western parts of the Serbocroatian territory) and which does have a very good Greek etymology (cf. Andriotis 188).

¹¹ P. Skok, ERHSJ II, 350 s v. *mader*.

“he takes after his father” (Bučum 161). It is derived from Rum. *semăna*, vb. “resemble, be similar to” (DELR 848), *seamăn*, n. m. “the one similar to, couple” (DELR 844).

The probability of Rumanian origin of the word is substantially reinforced by the geographical facts, although we cannot completely ignore the possibility of contamination by Scr. adj. *sâm* “alone” whose extended form *saman* is recorded, albeit in poetry only (RJAZU 14, 558).

The Rumanian verb is also borrowed into Ukr. *саманати*, vb. “to resemble”,¹² which has already been recognized by Cioranescu (Cioranescu 747).

SKARA n. f. “device for separating whey in the process of coagulation or cheese making” (Pirot 144) < Gk. *σάρα*, *ἑσχάρα* “grill, gridiron, grid” (Andriotis 327, 108).

This example should be noted for its interesting and unique semantic development which has obviously departed from the basic “grill, gridiron” known to respective loans in other Balkan languages: Churchsl. *cxara*, Bulg. *ckápa*, Alb. *skarë*.¹³

SOKOČALO n. n. “a nondefined, complicated device of no great value” (Timok 265). Further attestations are found in the archives of RSANU: *sokôčalo* “a being; thing; tools, equipment” (Ristić and Kangrga, *Srpskohrvatsko-nemački rečnik*); “a device, jokingly” (Zorunovac); “an apparatus that can be conveniently used for some purpose” (Pirot); “penis” (Srem), *sokučalo* “a little thing, device, penis” (Niš and environs). It also appears in slang: *sokôčalo* “wireless; automobile”.¹⁴ Attested Serbocroatian variants of this word found in eastern Serbia are derived from Rum. *socoteală* which has numerous meanings. Scr. loan probably comes from the colloquial one “occupation, work” (DELR 874)¹⁵ and in an already altered phonetical form from a vernacular speech which later underwent an imaginative semantic widening.¹⁶

Our objective was not only to discuss this new material, but also to check how it accords with the categorisation previously defined for Greek loans as belonging primarily to the religious and administrative terminology (this conclusion of Vasmer’s has already been substantially altered by new material provided

¹² Желеховский II, 848, 1.

¹³ P. Skok, ERHSJ III, 399 s. v. *škar*.

¹⁴ D. Andrić, *Rečnik žargona*, Beograd 1976, 159.

¹⁵ We were informed by a native speaker of Rumanian that the meaning “penis” is in common use in Rum. slang, unfortunately not recorded in dictionaries. Starting from this meaning we would have a much better motivational basis for the semantic development it has undergone in Scr.

¹⁶ This loan was first and only recognized by Gamulescu who recorded the form *sokotela* in Macedonian argot of masons from Kriva Palanka deriving it from Rum. *socoteală* but without any semantic explanation for either language (Gămulescu 69).

by Popović). With the sole exception of *katizma*, originally a religious term which underwent the process of profanation, all the Greek loans discussed above fall into everyday life lexicon.

Rumanian loans, likewise, do not only belong to the pastoral transhumance terminology which is generally considered a common truth about them, but also to different aspects of everyday life and activities of non-migratory population.

As to the chronology, there are no clear arguments in favour of any particular solution. Most of the lexemes cited could be relatively recent loans, as well as fairly old ones.

22. february, 1990.

ЈОШ НЕКЕ ЧИЊЕНИЦЕ О ЛЕКСИЧКИМ ВЕЗАМА МЕЂУ БАЛКАНСКИМ ЈЕЗИЦИМА

Резиме

Ово је чланак практичних, а не теоријских претензија. Аутори се, користећи материјал неколико недавно објављених дијалекатских речника и збирки речи, баве румунским и грчким позајмљеницама у дијалектима југоисточне Србије.

Румунске позајмљенице као што су *аршица* „зрнасти каменчићи који-ма је покривено и прожето неко земљиште (махом на планинским страна-ма)“, *брашиндр* „дрвена пречага која спаја кракове писка“, *фака* „стара кош-чата крива“, *самани* „исти као“, *сокоћало* „неодређена, често сложена справа без неке вредности“ мењају традиционално веровање да је предмет позајмљивања из румунског у српскохрватски била само пастирска терминологија. Исто тако грчке позајмљенице као *аршица* „напуштена њива (зато што више није плодна); неплодна њива која се само по-времено обрађује“, *дуља(ти)* „ринта, ради преко мере“, *катарбишим се* „паднем са неке висине“, *катизма* „казна“, *кдовин* „корпа, кошара ис-плетена од прућа, у којој се чува воће за зиму“, *лос* „чивија; мотка за подизање терета“, *маћерица* „оаја за подушје на гробљу“, *скара* „справа за цеђење сурутке приликом прављења качкаваља“ представ-љају нове потврде грчких позајмљеница у свакодневној лексици, а не у црквеној или административној терминологији.

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