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THE BALKAN FOLKLORE TEXT ISOGLOSSES

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Study of the Balkan folklore text isoglosses opens a series of problems, butd here we will concentrate only on two of them: the problem of the selection of the folklore material and the problem of the examinees, in other words, who should be considered a 'holder' (advocate) of the Balkan folklore, bearing in mind the special characteristics of ethnolinguistic and folklore facts.

1. The small folklore forms, thanks to their cliché, are a good starting point for the comparative study of the language of the folklore. There is no need to defend the inclusion of the folklore text into the questionnaires for linguistic atlases, so Gura/Ternovska/Tolstaja 1983 in the questionnaire for the Polesje ethnolinguistic atlas, along with the children's folklore anticipate the recording of about 20 riddles[1]. The cartographic presentation of the isoglosses so arrived at was accepted long ago in the Russian ethnolinguistic school (for example Gura 1978 and Materialy 1986). In the materials for the ethnolinguistic study of the Balkan (or more precisely Balkanslavic) area the field collecting of the folklore texts is not anticipated (cf. Plotnikova 1996), although some parts of the text are anticipated in the lexical questionnaire for the Small Balkan Dialectic Atlas (cf. Domosileckaja/Žugra 1997).

The picture that should be shown as a result of an areal study of the folklore texts is not monodimensional. The synchronic fixation shows only one of the possible isoglosses of the required folklore text.[2] By overlapping the isoglosses arrived at by the way of excerpting diachronicly precise, available folklore sources (for example, last century recordings vs. modern, post-war recordings) with the results of the field survey one can get a picture of diachronic isoglosses.

If the required folklore text is a folk riddle, the possibilities of its presentation by way of isoglosses are much more complicated, first of all due to the bipartite structure of the riddle of the text and the denotatum - solution. In the first place the isoglosse of the denotatum of the riddle can be shown, by separating different solutions of the obviously same text. In the case denotatum being a synchronically unknown realia, or a realia belonging to the spiritual culture, the isoglosse of such a realia should be shown. And finally, the text of a riddle itself sometimes contains a folklore formula or it might be taken over from some other folklore form, so the isoglosse of such a text can be shown. By filling out questionnaire in the field only a starting (control) isoglosse can be obtained, and all the others are obtained by cartographing of the excerpted written material.

Among Balkan folklore texts suitable for establishing isoglosses, we have in the first place texts of the small folklore forms and the ritual texts; compare, for example, the attempts of the areal determination of the rain making texts (Sikimić 1996b) and the texts tied with the meteorological phenomenon of simultaneous rain and sunshine (Sikimić 1996c). It is possible

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[1] The results of the field survey according to this questionnaire cf. for example in: Klimčuk 1995.
[2] To what extent the isoglosses in the dialectic atlases differ from the picture which would be arrived at by way of ethnographic and lexicographic sources cf. the example of stork (Ciconia) in South Slavic languages, Sikimić 1997: 24-26.

to follow certain folklore forms, especially those with the same etymological content of the keywords (Sikimić 1997a).

The hypothesis of the separate, South Slavic - Rumanian isoglosses, independent of the wider Balkan context, has already been put forward[3]. The problem of these folklore isoglosses was noticed in the fragments of the texts of the riddles - in the fragments of a curse and folklore formula of directing a message[4].

Establishing the isoglosses of the Balkan folk riddle necessarily means the same denotatum and the same structure of the text. The text of the folk riddle itself gives material for multilayer stratification of the balkanisms: intertextual balkanisms - folklore formulas and the texts with the structure that is typical of the Balkans, then comes the syntax features[5] and the lexicon (cf. Sikimić 1995).

The existence of the Balkan group of riddles is perceived: "grapevine, grapes and vine", "turtle", "pothook", "egg", "smoke", "swallow" (Sikimić 1995), "cock" (Sikimić 1995a), "wiping the nose", "navel", "broom", "cradle with a baby", "snake" (Sikimić 1996: 75-78, 89-91, 96-98, 168-170, 207-210), "bunch of grapes", "paprika" (Sikimić 1996a: 58-60, 61). This enable us to ask a question from a denotatum to the text of a riddle, for example: "How do you pose a riddle for an egg?". However, bearing in mind that solutions, due to the ambivalence of the text of the riddle, sometimes do not overlap, a possibility of asking a question from the text to a denotation should be created, which is a usual way of posing a riddle. The text of a riddle would be paraphrased, for example: "Is there a riddle about a man dressed in many layers of clothing", by which original text and a solution would be asked for. In this case they are "cabbage", "onion", "hen" or something else (cf. Sikimić 1996: 120-121, 163-164).

1.1. A denotatum in a riddle. The use of slavisms in the concrete Rumanian folklore text, beside the fact that the same text model can be found in the Southslavic folklore, does not necessarily mean that the two texts are directly connected. The problem of such Slavic etymological traces in the Rumanian folklore can be illustrated by the integral text of a riddle confirmed both in Rumanian and in Serbo-Croatian folklore[6]. Denotatum of a riddle "fighting rams" is not typical for the Slavic folklore as a whole, the variants of a riddle are recorded in the south - the Serbo-Croatian one and the Slovak one. The Serbo-Croatian area in which the riddle is confirmed is as follows: Bosnia, Herzegovina, Dobrič - vicinity of Niš Pirot.

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[3] The hypothesis of the Rumanian - Serbo-Croatian folklore isoglosses has been established on the basis of the material of the small folklore forms: if the specific folklore and linguistic features do not appear in the Greek, Albanian or Turkish language (if the texts limited to the South Slavic and the Rumanian languages are identified, then the corresponding models of the folklore texts in the Serbo-Croatian language have the wider area of diffusion from the zone of the folklore balkanizims (ie. they are not confined to the central and south-east Serbia), see Sikimić 1995. Those Southslavic - Rumanian isoglosses diachronicly differ from the typical Balkan folklore isoglosses, so it is possible, thanks to the historical facts of both languages, to make an attempt to date them.

[4] The Serbo-Croatian *crevo ti se zgrčilo*, vs. Rumanian: *matile ti s-or zgîrci*; and Serbo-Croat: *poručila donja neva gornjoj nevi* vs. Rumanian: *m-a trimes doamna de sus la cea de jos* (Sikimić 1995: 185-187).

[5] In the Balkan variants of the riddle for "egg" (described as a house without doors or windows) the construction of a tautological kind has been noticed: noun + participle derived from the same noun: S-Cr. *zid zidosan, var varosan*, Bul. *zid zidosano, var varosano,* Rum. *var varuit, zid zidit*, in which even the etymological context is the same. However, the same syntax construction, but with the different etymological context we can find in the Ukrainian riddle for "an egg and a chicken", with the different structure of the whole text: *Mur murovanij, sklep sklepovanij, šče ne vmerlo, a v grobi lezit'.* (Gaevs'ka 1994:47). In the Ukraine folklore an egg, among other things, can be a "dish without any holes" (cf. Gaevs'ka 1994:45-46).

[6] Slavic-Rumanian folklore parallelisms in the field of paremiology require separate research, because even a hasty look over the material points to their vastness. Radu Flora pointed to some of these slavisms in the Rumanian riddles in the comments of his anthology of the Rumanian riddles (Flora 1981: 215-225).

1.2. Denotatum as a realia. Descriptions of an ox fight are numerous in the Serbo-Croatian ethnographic material, but the ram fight has also been recorded in several examples and it confirms the reality of such a denotatum of a riddle, cf. for example: "It's a great joy for each shepherd to have the strongest ram in the village. The rams fight themselves or the shepherds stir them into fight by tapping them on their foreheads, saying at the same time: *Tuk, tuk, beli luk!"* or *"Šin tak, tak, beli luk!"* Then they let rams fight. Sometimes the rams hit one another into their foreheads so hard that both drop dead." (Gruža, Petrovic 1948: 465), or "A shepherd takes his ram by the horns, or he takes him by the tongue of a bell and leads him towards his opponent, so that they clash. When the rams "crush" forehead to forehead, the shepherds start saying the word that should provoke them and make ready for the fight, *"šingiligic"* This word is repeated over and over again, in a very fast and temperamental manner, and rams' foreheads clash harder and harder. When the fight starts it is considered wise not to say a word because "when the rams fight the sun itself stops" (Pešter and Bihor, Sijarić 1953: 372-373).

Denotatum "the fighting rams" appears in the text of the riddle, for example in the Ukrainian riddle for "bell"[7]: *Meže dvoma gorami b'jucca barani zolotimi rogami.* (Nomis 1993: 636).

1.3. A riddle as a folklore text. The external effect of a Serbo-Croatian riddle is derived in the fitonimic code: we have a picture of a forest which shakes when two twigs or two trees hit one another[8]. The key numbers are two (rams) and four (horns). The substitute for the denotatum "horns" are: *grane, prutovi, vrhovi planine,* and the substitute for the denotatum "rams" are: *dva bora bjelobora, dva bora janbora, dva bora, dva brata, dva binja, dva pruta, dva vrha planine, dva orla* [9].

"The fighting rams" as a denotatum of a riddle is known in the Rumanian folklore[10], but substitutions of the denotatum's are covered with numbers: "eight" is the number of legs of two rams, "four" are horns, and "thousand" is the indication of the countless hairs in the ram's fleece. The Serbo-Croatian variants, in which the denotatum horns is qualified by number four (*četiri se pruta udariše; četiri ne mogose)* point to the numerical base of the conceivable prototext. In one of the variants we have the optional number "nine": *devet se braće...tuku[11].* The action code in riddles is seen as a key code for putting the equation mark between the variants in different, genetically unrelated languages. Thus the action in the Serbo-Croatian variants is covered by the verbs of hitting[12]: *udariti, pobiti se, tući se, šibati se, šinuti se: (za, po) tresti se, zaneti se*, and also the optional locus: *na sred polja.*

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[7] In this model of a riddle the rams (*barani*) are optional, replaceable with other zoonyms, cf. the Ukrainian riddle for "window": *Pomiž dvoma dubami b'jucca koti lobami.* (Nomis 1993: 652).

[8] Some of the variants of this model of a riddle in the Serbo-Croatian folklore show the secondary transformation (probably as a result of the Turkish *anterija* or a Greek *mantija*) only in the case of substitution of a denotatum "fleece" - 'part of clothing': *zentarija, suruntija, siminsija, bomanija, tenterija, samantija, mantija, anterija* (Sikimić 1996: 198), but also fytonymicaly: *gora, bibinj gora.*

[9] Examples of the Serbian variants: *Dva se binja bibnjaju, a vis njih se bibinj gora trese. Pobila se dva bora janbora na njim se tresu zentarije. Pobila se dva bora bjelobora, na njima se suruntija trese. Pobila se dva vrha planine, na njima se siminsije tresu. Na polju se pobila dva orla, i na njima se mantije tresu. Dva se brata na sred polja biju i na njim' se tenterija trese. Pobiše se dva bora bjelobora, sve se grane potresoše, a četiri ne mogoše. Četiri se pruta udariše, sva gora zatrese. Dva se pruta šibaše, sva se gora zatrese. Dva se pruta sinuse, sva se gora zanela.* The sources for the quoted riddles are given in: Sikimić 1996: 198.

[10] For the motif of two opposing rams in the Dacian mythology cf. Vulcanescu 1985: 110-111.

[11] Numerical code that covers the denotatum, beside the Rumanian, exists also in the Slovak riddle for the two fighting rams: *Osem skáče, čtyry kláče, dva tlkáče a dva pomrdkáče.* (Dobsinsky 1993: 63).

[12] The motif of a fight is seen in the South Slavic children's counting rhymes where, which is very indicative, the variants separate the South Slavic area into "catholic" and "orthodox" area, according to whether the actors are friars or priests, cf. : *Dva se petla pobiše na popovom ognjištu* (Kragujevačka Jasenica, Temnić, Niš, Pirot), *dva petla na popovom bunjištu* (Donji Milanovac, Levač, Temnić, Leskovačka Morava), *dva petla na popovim vratima* (Sofija), *dva petla na ciganskom ognjištu* (Leskovac), *Vrapci na popovom ognjištu* (Belobreška,

The possible picture of "two actors are fighting, while their clothes are shaking" is not accidental and it represents the folklore formula, because the fragment with this structure has been confirmed in the Russian children's carol from the region of Kostromska: *dve monaški derutsja, u nih sumočki trjasutsja* (Žekulina/Rozova 1989:73).

The corresponding Rumanian riddle with the denotatum "the fighting rams", beside the verb "to hit" (horns: *patru bat*) and "to move" (legs: *opt alerga*), covers the action code by the slavism: *a clati*[13] in the segment *mii si sute se clatesc* which describes the swaying of the rams fleece[14].

2. The second circle of the problem is opened by including the folklore material of the non-Balkan population on the Balkans and the Balkan population in Diaspora.

The Gypsy spiritual culture is often different from its Balkan surroundings. The Gypsies in Gorazde call the meteorological phenomenon of simultaneous rain and sunshine the "dead sun" (*mulikano kham*) and they believe that sun will warm them when they die (Uhlik/Beljkašić 1958:208). The same belief has been confirmed with the Gypsies in Pristina and Montenegro, but also with the Georgian people and the Pontic Greeks (Sikimić 1996c:95). The Slavic people in the same area (Montenegro, Kosovo, Eastern Bosnia) connect the same phenomenon with the short texts containig the motif of bathing or birth of a devil/Gypsy. The same is true of the Albanian people around Gnjilane: *Kur bjen shi e dilli nxen, maxhupet lahen* ("Gypsies bathing", Kuusi 1957: 172). At the same time, the Bulgarians in Banat have the belief that during rain and sunshine "the devil beats his wife" (Telbizov/Vekova-Telbizova 1963:177), which coincides with the beliefs of different nations north of the Danube (Sikimić 1996c:96-97), but differs from the recorded Bulgarian texts, south of the Danube, with the motif of the animal wedding, in other words, appropriate obscene texts (Sikimić 1996c:92-93).

The inclusion of the newer classes of the Balkan population, and those who are of Balkan descent, into the research is of a great importance because of the possibility of the chronological stratification of the examined folklore phenomena, and because of the far-reaching conclusions of a linguistic nature, and it can also be of some help in solving various ethno-anthropological problems. The folklore isoglosses could show to what extent the language facts of the neighbouring Slavic (Ukraine, Slovaks) and non-Slavic (Hungarians) people should be included into the Balkan linguistics.

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Serbian Diaspora in Rumania), *orlovi na Staroj planini* (Macedonian), *dva se popa glede preko krive grede* (Negotin). In Slavonia and Zagorje the text of the counting rhymes contains the fight of the friars: *Pobili se fratri pred crkvenim/kućnim vratima.*

[13] Cf. Cioranescu s.v. *clati*. The etymological proofs, as are the slavisms in the Rumanian variants of the folklore text, can point to the new Rumanian text, but they do not necessarily mean that the whole folklore model of the text has been taken over from the Slavs, or, even less probable, they do not pinpoint the time or the place when it could have happened..

[14] The example of the Rumanian variants: Opt opintele si patru patru isbele. Patru bat, opt opintesc, mii si sute se clatesc. Patru bat laturile, opt se opintesc, miile clatesc. Opt se duc, patru se-ntîlnesc, miile clatesc. Opt alerga, patru se palesc, mii de mii se clatesc. Opt se pornesc, patru se-ntîlnesc, mii si mii se clatina (Gorovei 1898: 21-22).

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