GREEK LOAN TRANSLATIONS IN SERBO-CROATIOAN: A SELF-REVISION

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Summary: After a review of rather rare recent conributions that take into account formal classifications of loaning/borrowing, I stand by the classification from my PhD. In absence of a work that could compare to the lexicographical endeavor of Vuk Karadžić, I rely on my own critical reading of many texts since the late 80' which were thematically connected to the Serbian nationalist discourses – narratives, essays and media texts. An interesting phaenomen can be noted: two main motivations for loaning and borrowing, in order to produce new specific meanings meet in these new discourses: translation from the religious thesauri of the Orthodox Greek texts, and crytpo-ludic and secret languages defining a social group. The criosity consists in repeated technique of using pseudo-calques and pseudo-translation, that is, in hyper-production of such words, not only in use that should be considered as a discursive testimony of a certain nationalist ideological orientation, but also – as a parody of such discourse. Some of the best examples of the parodic use can be found on Internet, on portals like Njuz, Zokster and others.

Povzetek: Članek predstavlja nadaljevanje raziskav, ki jih je avtorica predstavila v doktorski disertaciji o Slovarju Vuka S. Karadžića in kalkih iz grščine (1984, objavljeno leta 1987). Avtorica umešča svoje teze v obdobje zadnjih desetletij, ki so bila zaznamovana s temeljnimi posegi v nacionalno

opredelitev jezikov na področju bivše Jugoslavije. Opozarja na spremembe, ki se kažejo pri prevodih grških religioznih besedil in pri t. i,. "kripto-ludističnim" in "tajnim govoricam", kot jih je imenoval V. S. Karadžić v Slovarju. Podoben postopek ustvarjanja lažnih kalkov opaža tudi pri parodičnih diskurzih na spletu.

More than thirty years ago, I presented my PhD thesis on Vuk Karadžić's *Dictionary* and Greek loan translations, which was later published (Slapšak 1987). Lexical borrowing, as I decided on terminological choice which was appropriate for a lexicon with such an ambition and expected reactions – restoring an inexisting language into a form fit for the literate use – was certainly one of the most attractive features of this lexicon. Recent studies on *calque linguistique* show significant interest for the relation semantics – morphology:

Il s'agit de déterminer si dans le processus de nominalisation des verbes il y a un transfert des propriétés aspectuelles. Cela demande de savoir comment se manifeste l'aspect dans le domaine nominal, et de disposer de tests adéquats pour en cerner les spécifications. Plus généralement, l'étude des nominalisations de verbes permet de s'interroger sur les critères de signification communs aux catégories verbale et nominale, et sur la « porosité » sémantique de ces deux catégories. (Pauline, Huyghe, Marin 2008: 2)

In this research, the morphological aspect was not central because of the specific morphological concordances between the Greek and generally Slavic languages. My goal was to determine a lexical cluster inside one language which could be traced back to another language, serving as a model and source. The obvious cultural and social prestige of the language-model facilitated the mapping/charting of this lexical cluster. Since the morphological patterns have been repeated, my methodological interest was primarily to construct a model of translation which could be re-used, that is functional more than once and in specific cultural and societal conditions. At that time, in mid-eighties, a similar concordance between Greek and Serbo-Croatian was quite hard to imagne: but only after several years, the linguistic, cultural and societal environment changed in a significant way, giving space not only to new translations, but also neologisms based on imaginary translations, and at the ame time, the flow of population fleeing Serbia because of the war changed the previous lack of interest for Greek language, as well as the lack of interest among Greeks

for the Serbo-Croatian (or Serbian, as the political determination of the languages went on in states formed on the ruins of former Yugoslavia). And the new „transitional" projects, including spreading of the capital with obvious signs of economic colonization, certainly helped this mult-lateral interest.

Vuk Karadžić's *Dictionary*, thanks to a thorough philological „legitimation" by Jernej Kopitar, presented a number of challenging historical, anthropological, cultural, epistemological and of course linguistic problems. Among them, linguistic borrowing was offering an insight into changes and afterlife of the mediaeval language of the cultured – what actually survived in the language of lower classes – and it is certainly not much. But these traces were important as models for the everyday language to form its own calques out of the domaine of cultured, the religion and the church. Revisiting these topics could provide for a new perspective in linguistic borrowing after dynamic and humanly, socially, culturally and politically charged changes which occurred in the region in the 90': linguistics as a discipline has sufferred from massive pressure of the political sphere, namely nationalist divisions and appropriation of languages, which influenced the academic population and its utterly weak capacity of standing up to populist demands. The notion of translation changed visibly, re-arrangements in population of professional translators were massive, three or four languages with sought for differences, previously linguistically considered as one made such differences in TV presentations, movie subtitles, notary and court administration and publishing, so that at least the new notion of „differential linguistics" now demands a highest caution when used in this context. Languages in contact, a vast disciplinary field which always had to consider context, got a unique chance to explore changes caused by immediate, agressive, obligatory and exclusive political interventions in and between languages, The bearing of these changes to lexical borrowing, at least to its social-cultural functioning must have been significant. I had to compare and refine the notions in order to grasp the depth of these changes.

Given that we still lack synthetic studies on the subject, it was not easy to get a complete picture of social and cultural relations betwen Greeks and Serbs in the period which is lexically represented in Vuk's *Dictionary*. We could safely argue that the „feeling" of the Serbs toward the Greek language was far from the feelings expressed by the monach Isaias, who in the 14th ct., having acquired the knowledge of the Greek language in his very advanced age and assuming the onerous task of translating Pseudo-Dionysios Areopagites, wrote: „The Greek language, that is one, was

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originally invented and arranged by God, and then perfected by different lovers of wisdom in different times; and our Slavonic language was well made by god, for everything that is God's creation is good." I tried to trace some diverse evaluation forms for the Greek languages in the context of the reception of Homer in the Balkans, and especially in the cultural group marked by an interesting mixoglotty, the Tsintsars[1]. The languages in contact - Greek and Serbian in contemporary period are certainly marked by more institutional and personal interests due to political stands prevailing in Greece during the Yugoslav wars, immigrant routes (mainly from Serbia to Greece), surprisingly scatterred cultural relations and academic contacts. Unfortunatelly, there are not systematic studies of contemporary bilinguism or mixoglotty which could reveal more.

At the level of grammatical classification and adaptation into systems, aspects of borrowing offer an impressive variability. Phonological and morphological adaptation, innovations in the system, syntactic models, word formation and derivation are some of the processes. It remains hard to find a more paradigmatic way to define semantic change than with loan translations and semantical borrowings in either of the languages involved. And no doubt that loanwords do incite the consideration of the word-object relation – the original sinn that provoked the birth of the whole discipline of semantics...

Is there any need for loaning/borrowing and translation? The metaphorical nature of these terms implies that something that was missing had to be borrowed, and that names were needed for things not yet named. Archaeological evidence might be interesting, but did not prove to be very assertive in this sense; Wild[2] argues that the loanword and the object are not related: why should names for parts of the human body be borrowed? Going deeper into national/historical connotations, most of considerations of borrowing end up in words as „bearers" of a foreign culture. The danger of the „need" explanation is that it implies extralinguistic normativity of controlling needs. But the question itself is not entirely illegitimate. For instance, how do we define the need for abstract terms in mediaeval Slavonic if not by the demands of the church and of individual translators that the holy texts should be presented in the most accurate and most persuasive way? The other example is a somewhat hovering convention that new terms in most disciplines should be coined from the Greek and Latin lexical thesauri – even including pseudo-calques and pseudo-translations.

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1   Cf. Slapšak 2011.
2   Cf. Wild 1970: 125.

Another echo of the „need" explanation can be traced in the widespread use of classifications of loanwrds by subject: they are based on the categories of culture-history rather than semantic fields. Furthermore, they usually lack any link with formal typologies and can be used only for lexico-statistical studies.

The evidence for the appearence of the loanword, loan-translation or semantic borrowing in a given language is provided by text translations from the lending language. Not even the fullest documentation on the text, translator, context and use can provide the terminus *ante quem non* for the word in question. Texts can be understood as phases in the process of translation and incorporation of a new linguistic material, but the periodization is usually borrowed form historiography and literary history. Thus the two types of contact involving Serbian and Greek languages can be defined: the mediaeval period, in which Greek was the language of cultural prestige and religious authority, the generator of abstract and administrative terminology. The second is a mixoglotty with elements of the class order during the Turkish rule, mostly involving loanwords. This demands a Balkan linguistic perspective, multiligniusm and specific forms of communiction, and Vuk' *Dictionary* bear a lot of signs of this linguistic situation. Very few remnants of the earlier period can be found in Vuk's *Dictionar*y. Recently, a notion of *Sprachbund*, which was important for my conceptualizing of the Balkans aspect of Vuk's work, has been somewhat challenged[3].

From the point of view of sociolinguistics, Vuk's *Dictionary* is a very important source on languages of different social groups. Children, women, sheperds and soldiers are the groups with which secret langugaes and crypto-ludic forms are related. These groups do have a lot of common with borowing in their forming of pseudo-derivations and pseudo-calques, so they have to be taken into consideration.

After a review of rather rare recent contributions that take into account formal classifications of loaning/borrowing, I stand by the classification from my PhD. The criteria used by the authors undertaking the task of classifying loan translations and semantic borrowings are diverse. Sandfeld used combined loan translation criteria (Cf. Sandfeld 1930); Weinreich derived criteria from literature and discussed also hybrid phaenomena and pseudo-loan translations (Weinreich 1963); Rammelmayer applied morphological criteria with much precision (Rammelmayer 1975); Zett followed the genetic mechanism of loan translation (Zett 1970) and

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3   Cf. Joseph 1987, Hauge 2002.

Schmidt combined formal division and semantic categories (Schmidt 1973). None of these solutions could answer the basic problem – relation between loan translation and semantic borrowing, especially the functioning of loan translations as models for further formations. Reasons for differentiation of loan translations and *composita* are weak. They can both be understood as *lexie*, and thus analyzed as sentences: *jednodušno* – all think alike, *gubodušnica* – something tht destroys the soul, *crnook* – someone that has dark eyes. A certain typology related to genres of speech could be drawn from these exemples: idiomatic loan translation (*jednodušno*), terminological loan translation (*crnook*), and crypto-ludic loan translation (*gubodušnica*). Some authors hve stressed further similarity between *composit*a and loan translation, like Muljačić (1968). The argument is that both *composita* and loan translations represent „semasiological projects". If so, then the loan translations are different from *composita* in their larger capacity to produce a synonymic chain, ending in making a semantic borrowing. The loan translation may contain more elements than the original and present different versions of the original, exploring different semantic streams. This can be done by homophony or paretymology. Therefore, if there are no clear limitations between *composita*, loan translations and semantic borrowings, the criteria cannot be exclusively phonological, morphological or syntactical. Componential analysis may be applied when such vague determinations are in play. The model of description of loan translations and semantic borrowings would then consist of: I Morpho-typology (nouns, verbs etc.), II Formators – designators (presented graphically as FD, FF, FDF, DD etc.), III Typology of classems (quantity, color, place etc.), and IV Componential analysis. This model proved to be applicable to the material of Vuk's *Dictionary*.

Only a couple of years later; I had a chance to verify the capacities of this model at the new material, offerred by the media in the years of preparation for the destruction of Yugoslavia and the re-invention of one-nation states instead[4]. In the absence of a work that could compare to the lexicographical endeavor of Vuk Karadžić, I had to rely on my own critical reading of many texts since the late 80' which were thematically connected to the Serbian nationalist discourses – narratives, essays and media texts. I came to the conclusion that the rhetoric of nationalism was in fact made of rhetorical and stylistic flaws – soloecisms, barbarisms, failed zeugmas and boule-de-neige effects (to name just a few), not to mention grammatical and logical mistakes. In the case of Serbian nationalism, there is a clear impact

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4   Cf. Slapšak 2002: 220, 221.

of Serbian surrealism, filtred through „celebrational" language of the Communist Party over years: just the fact-related notions and names were changed for the nationalist use. A Serbian nationalist psychoanalyst argued that insanity was a most important quality, embeded in the depths of the Serbian collective consciousness. „We, Serbs are insane" would therefore be a self-compliment. But the confusing diversity of flaws should not seduce us into believing that there are nationalist narratives are diverse. An interesting phaenomen can be noted: two main motivations for loaning and borrowing, in order to produce new specific meanings meet in these new discourses: translation from the religious thesauri of the Orthodox Greek texts, and crytpo-ludic and secret languages defining a social group. Exaggeration, snowball effect, *totum pro parte*, daring metaphors, strong pictures, mixture of slang and mediaeval church language, automatic writing, "paranoiac" experiments in the text – all of these surrealist stylistic procedures can be observed in the nationalist discourse in Serbia from the mid-80' on. The downplay was done by the media, which recycled the grand words over and over, till they became a common propriety, leading to desperation Western journalists and well-intended people wishing to explore the "truth" about Serbia and interviewing about that. Some of these formulae were even repeated by Slobodan Milošević at political meetings with foreign politicians and diplomats, who were usually unable to comprehend where this discourse was coming from.

Some of the formulae invented by known intellectuals had a long history during the Yugoslav war. For instance, Dobrica Ćosić felt secure enough to repeat, even in the USA, his formula that Serbs in their past were generally gaining in wars, and losing in peace. Another one, also originating from him, is that Serbs are a democratic nation "by nature". A developed formula presents Serbs being "naively" in favor of Yugoslavia, while all the other nations were manipulating Serbian good will, ungratefully abandoning the Serbs as they were gaining self-confidence. Lately, this formula is further developed in the narrative of Serbs as idealistic losers, who are forced to calm down and contain themselves from seeking justice under the pressure of the ignorant and unjust, but powerful world community…Matija Bećković, the most prominent Serbian nationalist poet, invented a formula of Serbs as a "half-slaughtered" nation. He also proposed, back in 1990, to build a huge monument of glass, which would contain "all Serbian bones", in order to present Serbian sufferings in recent history for the world to see. The range of the formulae is very large, over some thirteen years of span, although the population that was producing is relatively small. To give the idea of the lower part of that range, I will quote a popular formula invented

by a satirist Brana Crnčević, who swore that he would "not kiss the swine's ass, even if he could not eat pork lard-bits ever again in his lifetime". One should really know very well the everyday language, the anthropology of the region, including cuisine, in order to understand that the issue was Serbian dignity and a need to refuse any political compromising with other nations, namely Slovenians and Muslims in this case …

The channels to transfer this kind of discourse into the media could have been direct, due to the popularity of nationalist intellectuals and their relation to journalists, but it could also be indirect, via the *festival* discourse learnt in schools and other educational and informational institutions. I will give few examples of such formulae from my research of the rubric "Echoes and reactions", which started in 1990 in the state-controlled daily *Politika* in Beograd, and in only six months, from January till July, showed how powerful nationalist and populist propaganda can be. Although the contributors were expressing feelings against Slovenians and Albanians at that time, the effect was such that the rubric was not necessary any more when the conflict with Croatia occurred in all its graveness, so the rubric died out by the end of 1991. Needless to say, the identity of the contributors to this rubric was often doubtful, there were signs that people were paid to write these "spontaneous" reactions, and so on. A university teacher defined the Serbian situation in this way: "This people paid dearly its tribute to Europe and to its civilization, right here in Kosovo. The Serbian people will not pay anymore, to anyone and for anything. This people is just liberating itself from the historic doom that burdened it for centuries - get killed to make others' lives better. The bone sanctuaries certainly are glory for past centuries, but also a reminder of one's own future." Some examples of the stylistics of the rubric: The situation of Serbs and their history in Kosovo is simultaneously "a drama," "a tragedy," "an overgrown ancient tragedy". The case of the mass poisoning of Kosovo Albanian teenagers is "staged," "a farce," "a burlesque," "a circus." For Serbia, Kosovo is "a cancerous wound", "a Golgoth," "Gordian knot," "exodus," "the spiritual threshold," "the center of spirituality and/or statehood," "heart and soul," "the epics of the Serbian soul." Serbia itself is "without a basement and a roof"; her territories have been "amputated"; Serbia lives trough "a true birth process"; Serbia "forgives eternally." On the other hand, Albanians shed "crocodile tears"; they spread "a bolshevik - catholic - muslim propaganda" (several times), and they raise their hands (in the V sign for "victory"), "as a sign of blasphemy of this ancient symbol of justice." Maybe the most fascinating example of this instability of concrete and metaphorical meaning is the one concerning news of shooting in Kosovo. In the first case, on February.4,

"everything that is Serbian is shot at," and on March 3, the rumors of shooting by Serbs is "a shot at the whole people". In the first case, the metaphorical meaning is read as a concrete one, to simulate an event that obviously did not occur; in the second case, the concrete meaning, a piece of information, is replaced by the metaphorical meaning, in order to cover up a fact that Serbs shoot too. This leads to the conclusion that a certain animism, yet another feature of the collective unconscious, has been used to establish the new stereotypes. The racist intention is clearly visible. Albanians are generally "like animals," "bestial," "monstrous."

There is also a group of formulae that derive from the running political vocabulary, and they can be divided into groups by use. These are the topoi concerning Albanians: "deserbization"; "the fall of medical ethics" (in reaction to the mass poisoning); "an Albanotrope poison"; "a monstruous and morbid role"; "rapes arising from the hate towards the Federation of Socialist Yugoslav Republics; "a hell raising international conspiracy against Serbia"; "separatists and terrorists"; "enemies of all colors"; "decent Albanians"; "the fanatic protesters"; "intifada"; "an escalation of Albanian terrorism"; "the actors in a farce"; "a poison that affects only Albanian genes"; "the national separatists", "the armed gangs of Arnauts"; "immigrants with dishonest intentions", "the Kosovo dahi" (Turkish word for unruly soldiers) ; "militant Sigurimi members"; "heralds"; "the exclusiveness and selfishness of Kosovo muslims"; "naive, and at the same time so unscrupulous"; "a virus of insanity"; and so on.

For Albanian helpers, namely Slovenians: "breeders of deception"; "the nonexistent Northwest"; "fed on Serbophobia"; "they removed all the masks"; "the godfathers"; "they run toward their goal over dead bodies"; "a black and yellow natiocracy"; "the mentors"; "the sponsors"; "the mercenaries of the narco-mafia"; "the so-called democrats"; "the yes-men and the amen-men"; "the separatists of all colors"; "it is too weak to say they are converted"; "the false Samaritans"; "the masters".

To underline the connection with the *festival* Communist discourse, just a few examples:

"In the whole world, from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego (note that this is in fact only Americas, S.S.), there is not one church now in ruins that we {Serbs} destroyed or burned down, there is no sanctuary that we touched upon, there is no grave where we stamped on one single flower..."; "... the valley of Morava, the richest after the Nile valley as a treasury of world culture i.e., cultural achievements of the Serbian people..."; "The only Balkan people that fought uncompromisingly with the Allies in both world

wars..."; "Serbia was always an oasis of religious and national tolerance...";
"Here we had, from ancient times, the state of Nemanjići 18 spreading on
all sides, a legal state, with legislation..."; "Belgrade, one of the oldest cities
on earth..."; "Čegar 19 is at the same time an inspiration for all nations and
for all seasons..."; In some cases, we deal with common ignorance, as in this
example: "They should beware of Eleatians, even when they bring the
presents..."; "The glory of Serbia started at Kosovo, after the victory over
Byzance..."; "Just as Goebbels used to do, making the V sign, a sign of
victory of insanity..."; If we are looking for a general view of history, this
example could be indicative: "History would hardly deserve its name if it
did not make possible dialectic changes and if a man would not evermore be
becoming its immediate creator.".

Some examples of provincial exaggeration:
"Njegoš ...is the greatest poet of chivalry, justice, personal and national
dignity in the whole world literature"; "One nation's culture is a collective
act, a collective enthusiasm"; "Do not forget that every Serb knows a little
French and is proud of it";."Our debt toward our people's tradition,
especially toward the killed and wounded..."; "My dear professors, there is
no need for much theory here to see who is oppressing whom"; "The
Serbian intelligentsia is such an intellectual force that very few European
nations could boast of a comparable one"; "Without the instinct of collective
enthusiasm a man is emotionally crippled; nothing can lift him up"; "Why
should anybody be angry because the Serbian people happens to have its
glorious Kosovo field, and others do not have any, not even the size of a
small, dry Herzegovinian garden!"; "Serbs are people of wide-open heart
and of a noble nature"; "In the line of respecting traditions, all spitting is
reserved for Serbs". In the same text, a composer tells a story of a
Hungarian, a Serb-hater, who enjoyed a theater performance of a satirical
play written by the greatest Serbian comedy writer, Branislav Nušić (he
flourished at the beginning of the century), and was heard to say that he
would have liked to watch such a performance every evening. Another
anecdote in the composer's text is about a Bulgarian satirist who was
eventually killed by a revolutionary national-anarchist organization, and the
author concludes: "I don't want to scare anybody..." A university professor,
visiting for a long time in France, tells *Politika* readership how he offered
his French students a reward of 5.000 FF (about $ 1.000), if any of them
knew which Serbian church festival was on that day. Nobody did, so the
professor put the money back in his pocket. This obviously was done during
a regular university course.

Intellectuals were appearing in this rubric, supporting the forming

of the nationalist stereotypes, and contributing to the invention of the new ones: "The opposition should display more patience now, in such a situation."; "...but they willingly stretch out their necks under untimely forced police sticks, just to prove (to whom?) that democrats suffer under the authorities in Serbia, and at the same time they do not even remember the universal interests of Serbs and Serbia"; "They put their cuckoo's egg of socialist realism under Slobodan Milošević, pressing him to keep it inside".

This preparatory blooming of the invention of the propaganda discourse showed a huge variety of proceedings in making the dictionary of nationalism extremely rich in new meanings, ranging from loan translations from the Orthodox vocabulary to surrealist playing with words. The curiosity consists in repeated technique of using pseudo-calques and pseudo-translation, that is, in hyper-production of such words, which should be considered as a discursive testimony of a certain nationalist ideological orientation. Some twenty years later, the same technique is used to produce parody of such discourses ... Some of the best examples of the parodic use can be found on Internet, on portals like *Njuz*, *Zokster* and others. The circle of production is thus closed, but the model for another wave of discursive production is still available.

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