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The sacrifice for creation in the south and north-danubian ballad lore – The integral ballads and legends of the sacrifice for creation in the slavic south-danubian space

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SUMMARY

The integral ballads of the sacrifice for creation in the Slavic south-Danube space intends to fill a gap in our specialised literature, representing a first step towards a more thorough research of the ballad and the legend of the sacrifice for creation in the area south of the Danube.

Bulgarian and Macedonian versions of the ballad and the legend of the sacrifice for creation, only barely taken notice of in our literature, have not been translated into Romanian yet. Consequently, a comparative study of the Romanian and south-Danube (Bulgarian-Macedonian) ballad has not been done either, the small number of Romanian and Bulgarian studies on the topic having been carried out on the basis of a few versions of the ballad of the sacrifice for creation – known through an international language, which will lead to a series of disputes between Romanian and Bulgarian researchers.

The aim of the present Romanian research is to study 248 Bulgarian and Macedonian versions of the ballad and the legend of the sacrifice for creation constituted in a *Corpus of the ballad and the legend of the sacrifice for the creation in the south of the Danube*, translated into Romanian by the author of the present study (parallel text in Bulgarian and Romanian) and annexed to the doctoral thesis.

Unlike the Serbian ballad, which enjoyed special attention among our folklorists, men of letters and translators from Slavic languages, especially in the interwar period, there are virtually no studies about the Bulgarian ballad in Romania, the few researchers who undertook it (Lazăr Țăineanu, Polihronie Sârcu, Valeriu Șt. Ciobanu, Petru Caraman, Anton Balotă) mentioning it mostly in the larger context of the Balkanic ballad and legend.

Being unaware of studies on the ballad of the sacrifice for creation in the south-Danube space and the versions of this fundamental folkloric creation specific to the Balkans and Romania, may undoubtedly be considered a huge void for Romanian literature and ethnology, the Romanian researcher being thus deprived of an important part of the Balkan's cultural heritage.

By becoming acquainted with the versions of the ballad of the sacrifice for creation, the research on this topic published in our neighbouring country and Macedonia and adopting a method of comparative research, our specialised literature will undeniably take a step forward, as the

informative methods based on a few studies and translations of the ballad to which our researchers have so far had access through Western languages, were not capable to adequately outline a profound cultural space which, a century and a half ago, the Romanian culture will ignore either by choice or will end up disregarding almost involuntarily, in the much too swift process of modernisation and occidentalisation.

An unbiased study of the motifs occurring in the ballad of the sacrifice for creation (the pre-construction, the sacrifice, the motif of the ring, the motif of the child raised in the middle of nature), based on all its versions, from the north and the south of the Danube, a side of the theme almost ignored by previous research, will certainly lead to new results compared to the perspectives expressed so far upon the theme under investigation.

The intention behind the parallel arrangement of the text in *The South-Danube corpus of the legend of the sacrifice for creation* – in Romanian and Bulgarian – is to identify certain elements in their original womb, to convert the ballad from Bulgarian into Romanian, from one cultural system into another (Slavic language/ Romance language; Turkish law codes/ local law codes; Islamic and Pavlichean influence/ Romanian popular Christianity, etc.), which is not a simple enterprise, popular Bulgarian possessing a vocabulary steeped in numerous archaisms and regional terms (mainly Turkish), which created a series of difficulties when translated into Romanian.

The archive, library and field research performed in the recent years in the south of the Danube with the view of compiling and translating into Romanian *The integral ballads and the legend of the sacrifice for creation in the Bulgarian-Macedonian space*, to be then made available for Romanian researchers, as well as the circumscription of all the monuments and foundations connected to the sacrifice for creation in the south-Danube space have found materialisation in this study. A first step towards appreciating an essential myth of the human race: *the sacrifice for creation*.

In compiling the whole of the ballad of the sacrifice for creation to the south of the Danube we first relied on one of the most important Bulgarian folkloric periodicals, "Sbornik za narodni umotvorenia, nauka i knjijina" (SbNU), which has been published for more than a century (1889-2002) under the guidance of prestigious Bulgarian researchers, including collections and commentaries of the south-Danube versions of the ballad of the sacrifice for creation, on the access to the archive of the Ethnographic Institute at the Bulgarian Academy of Science ("Etnografskiat institut s muzei pri Bălgarska Academia na Naukite" - **IM-BAN**) and the archive of the Department

of Bulgarian within the University of Veliko Târnovo (**KBL-VTU**), whose specialists performed in the recent decades frequent field research, gathering new versions of the ballad of the sacrifice for creation, on the studies and folklore collections of prominent Bulgarian ethnologists (Mihail Arnudov, Todor Mollov, Hristo Vakarelski, etc.)

THE STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

The first chapter of the study – *The geography of the sacrifice for creation motif in the south-Danube space. Bulgarian communities outside the borders* – based on the Finnish school's method of ethnologic research, covers the distribution of the myth of the sacrifice for creation in the Bulgarian-Macedonian space, embodied, over time, in a series of sacred or profane creations. Following a thorough analysis of ballad versions of the sacrifice for creation, gathered in the south of the Danube for almost a century and a half, one can conclude that more folk creations connected to this myth are present mainly in the northern and central part of Bulgaria – especially in the area of the great constructions (Veliko-Târnovo, Svištov, the south-Danube Deliorman - Pliska, Preslav, Daosdava), in an ethno-folkloric area situated in close proximity of the Romanian border.

The second chapter of the study – *South-Danube versions (Bulgarian-Macedonian) of the ballad and legend of the sacrifice for creation* – illustrates a first overall picture of the gathering of versions of the ballad and the legend of the sacrifice for creation in the south-Danube space (Bulgaria-Macedonia/ Bulgarian communities outside the borders).

The five sub-chapters of the second chapter chiefly present the sites of the sacrifice for creation in the south of the Danube, according to the region and locality where the ballads and legends of the sacrifice for creation were gathered – specifying each site in turn.

The circumscription of the places and the sites connected to the myth of the sacrifice for creation in the south of the Danube aims at obtaining a comprehensive picture of the ballad of the sacrifice for creation in the south of the Danube, as an integral part of the overall picture of the myth of the sacrifice for creation in the Balkans, knowing that the environment where the ballad was gathered has an overwhelming influence over this folk creation.

The present undertaking will emphasise the two main “poles” around which the ballad and legend of the sacrifice for creation in the south of the Danube revolve: the Adrianopole area (today’s Edirne) and the northern part of Bulgaria (the area of the great capitals and the great constructions), one of the conclusions being that a region of interference between the Bulgarian and the Romanian ballad was shaped in the northern and central areas of this country, close to the border with Romania, hence we can speak about a “Danubian type” of the ballad of the sacrifice for creation, which incorporates a much larger cultural area, encompassed between the Carpathians and the Balkans.

CONCLUSIONS

The enunciation of conclusions regarding the integral ballads and legends of the sacrifice for creation in the north and south Danube ballad corpus can find a starting point in precisely the reason for the commencement of the present undertaking: filling a gap in our specialized literature by compiling and translating into Romanian the corpus of the versions of the ballad illustrating the sacrifice for creation in the Bulgarian and Macedonian space – with a view to producing a first comparative study between the Romanian and the Bulgarian ballad of the sacrifice for creation.

While in the south-western part of Bulgaria there is a powerful Greek and Serbian influence over a significant part of the gathered versions, in the south and south-east there is a powerful influence of the ballad motifs from the north of the Balkans (“the Danubian type”), in north-eastern Bulgaria the Slavic ballad making room for Romanian versions (the Vidin area, mainly) connected to the myth of the sacrifice for creation.

Following the attempt of locating the sites of the sacrifice for creation in the south-Danube area, with all the dissipation of the sites occurring in the ballad (bridges, fortresses, towers, etc.), one can ascertain the existence of two concentration poles of these sites: the first, situated in the Adrianopole area, at the intersection of three big rivers – the Arda, the Tungea and the Marita; and a second pole, situated in the north of the Balkan Peninsula bearing different names or a symbolic name (“the Budima citadel”), yet impossible to locate.

Reaching the end, we can conclude that the aim of our study – to make a first examination of the ballad of the sacrifice for creation in the south-Danube area by translating into Romanian the corpus of the Bulgarian ballad versions (in order to be henceforth made available for our researchers,

which represents in itself an important benefit for the Romanian ethnological field), on the basis of certain scientific investigations of the theme of the sacrifice for creation which have been published so far in Romania and Bulgaria and also field research performed by the author of the study herself, in recent years, to the south of the Danube – has been reached.