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SARMATO-ALANICA (ETYMOLOGICAL NOTES)

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The paper deals with the important problem of Iranian comparative-historical linguistics and etymology, namely – singling out Sarmato-Alanian heritage in Slavonic hydronymy. Toponymy is the special lexical class, preserving the ancient traces of native speakers of one language in the continuous area of other language. The object of the analysis are a few hydronyms (water names), the formal (phonetic, morphological) features of which give cause for their consideration as the elements of Sarmatian / Alanian stratum in the local Slavonic toponymy. The main criteria for the classification of the toponymic lexemes as the units of the relict Eastern Iranian language vocabulary are: 1) identity of their sound structure to the historical phonetic characteristics of the words in the Eastern Iranian languages, in particular Ossetian; 2) identity of the morphology presumably Iranian hydronyms to the structure of the toponyms and the appellatives of the Ossetian language, the material of which is the main source for the reconstruction of Sarmato-Alanian vocabulary.

*It is possible to talk about the reconstruction of such Sarmatian/Alanian words as: *a-sam[ā] 'shoreless, the river, that does not have shores' (for example, because of their swamping) ~ Wakhi sam; *mār-kan or *mār-xan 'dammed water source', 'flow/stream with weir' ~ Sarm. mār-, Osset. mar & Osset. хæн; *marγ-āb[ā] 'meadow river/water' ~ Sogd. al-Muryāb, Tajik muryob; *vaz-āb 'dammed water' ~ Sogd. ''w'zy, (Manichaean) ''wzyy = āwāze, Osset. awæzt.*

Key words: *Sarmato-Alanian, etymology, reconstruction, derivative, hydronym.*

Іліаді Олександр. Sarmato-Alanica (етимологічні розвідки)

Статтю присвячено важливій проблемі іранського порівняльно-історичного мовознавства та етимології, а саме – виокремленню сармато-аланської спадщини у слов'янській гідронімії. Топонімія є особливим класом лексики, який «консервує» давні сліди перебування носіїв однієї мови в суцільному ареалі іншої. Об'єктом аналізу слугують кілька гідронімів (водних назв), формальні (фонетичні, морфологічні) ознаки яких дають підстави розглядати їх як елементи сарматського / аланського стратуму в місцевій слов'янській топонімії. Основні критерії кваліфікації лексем як елементів словника реліктової східноіранської мови: 1) тотожність їхньої звукової будови історико-фонетичним характеристикам слів східноіранських мов, осетинської зокрема; 2) тотожність морфології гадано іранських гідронімів будові топонімів і апелятивів осетинської мови, матеріал якої є основним ресурсом для реконструкції сармато-аланської лексики.

*Можна говорити про реконструкцію таких сармато-аланських слів: *a-sam[ā] 'річка, ручай без берегів' (наприклад, через їх заболочування) ~ вахан. sam; *mār-kan чи *mār-xan 'загачений водний об'єкт' ~ сарм. mār-, осет. mar & осет. хæн; *marγ-āb[ā] 'лугова річка / вода' ~ согд. al-Muryāb, таджк. muryob; *vaz-āb 'загачена вода' ~ согд. ''w'zy, (маніхейське) ''wzyy = āwāze, осет. awæzt.*

Ключові слова: *сармато-аланський, етимологія, реконструкція, дериват, гідронім.*

Introduction. The traditional material for the linguistic researches in the field of Alanian studies is represented with not numerous written monuments of the Alanian language, the data of the Ossetian language, which evolved from Alanian dialects, numerous Alanian onyms in Greek, Latin, Arabic, Syrian, Armenian, Georgian, Iranian, Mongolian, Russian, Chinese and other literary sources, and, of course, Alanian loan words in the languages of Europe and Asia. Another source of replenishment of our knowledge about Alanian vocabulary is Sarmato-Alanian toponymy in the historical area of the Slavonic languages. Singling out Sarmato-

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Alanian stratum in Slavonic toponymy is at the initial stage, therefore the scientific search in this direction remains a **relevant challenge** for Iranian etymology and the reconstruction of the Alanian language.

The goal of the suggested study is etymological analysis of several Slavonic toponyms, which supposed to be belonged to Sarmato-Alanian heritage in the local geographical nomenclature. This goal is achieved by solving several **tasks**: 1) determining the genetic and morphological (regarding the root and derivational structure) identity of the toponyms under consideration and Eastern Iranian (first of all, Ossetian) toponymy and the appellative vocabulary; 2) the reconstruction of Iranian lexemes (in their Middle Iranian form), which were saved in the toponymy.

Specificity of the scientific procedure has caused the choice of corresponding **methods**, namely – *the etymological method*, *comparative-historical method*, and *the method of linguistic reconstruction*.

Statement of the research results

Alan. **a-sam*[*ā*] (?)

Among the materials on Russian hydronymy, published by Max R. Vasmer, the river name *Асома*, attested in Nizhny Novgorod governorate, appears [16 (1, p. 51)]. Earlier we have already made an attempt to analyze the name on Iranian grounds as **āsa-asma-* (?) "Nurturing mother of Ases' (*Ases*, *Asi* – one of the branches of Alans), having attributed it to the vestiges of Alanian toponymy in the Middle and Lower Volga region [5, p. 160–162]. The likelihood of Alanian linguistic affiliation of this hydronym increases with taking into account the historical language situation in the Volga River region too: presence here of Sarmato-Alanian ethnic component in 8th–10th centuries is evidenced with a significant stratum of the lexical borrowings from Sarmato-Alanian dialects in the Finnish languages of the mentioned area (including Mari and Mordovian). However, now *such* Alanian etymology of the noun appears doubtful in terms of the semantics of nomination. It is possible to give a more convincing explanation for the lexeme without going beyond Iranian vocabulary.

We daresay the potamonym *Асома* conveys Sarm.-Alan. **a-sam*[*ā*] as the composition of the caritive prefix **a-* and the geographic term **sam*[*ā*], cf. Wakhi *sam* 'edge', 'creekbank' [12, p. 306]. The final *-ā* is etymologically ambiguous, therefore it may be both the vestige of Iranian indicator of *ā*-stem as well as the result of Iranian lexeme rebuilding on the analogy of the local Finno-Ugric toponymy with *-ома* (cf. *Войдома, Кочкома, Нетома, Охтома, Пулома* etc.). Thus, **a-sam*[*ā*] (< **n̥-śam*[*ā*]?) 'shoreless, the river, that does not have shores'; to the typology of nomination cf. Russ. *Безберегое* – the lake in the Oka River basin (Smolitskaja G. P. (1976) "Hydronymy of the Oka River basin (List of the Rivers and Lakes)": 130) = **bez-bergoje* 'the same'.

For the phonetic reasons the hydronym *Асома* can hardly be etymologically oriented to *Óшма* – the river, the right tributary of the Pizhma < Mari *ошма* 'sand' (see about it: Morokhin N. W. (1997) "The Nizhegorodsky Toponymic Dictionary": 148).

Sarm.-Alan. **mār-kan* or **mār-xan*

The water name *Mrakoň* is attested in the area of Czech insular dialects in Romania [15, p. 139]. The formal similarity between the hydronym and Czech appellatives, derived from Proto-Slav. **morkъ* 'darkness, gloom', **morkъ*(*jь*) 'dark' (cf. Czech *mrak* 'darkness; twilight; rain cloud'), proves to be superficial on closer examination, because suff. *-oň-* forms the derivative not from **mork-*, but from the variant base **mьrk-* (cf. Czech dial. *mrkoň* 'the one who often blinks') [14 (19, pp. 234–236; 21, p. 135)], although color motive of nomination is widespread in Slavonic hydronymy.

May be, corresponding Czech appellative words and appropriate toponyms have not yet been attested; in this case their fixation in new lexicographical sources will cast doubt on the proposed treatment of the given above name as Iranism. However, there is a possibility that *Mrakoň* is the genetically ambiguous toponym from the category of those, the distinctly Slavonic form of which is the result of rethinking of the foreign-language lexeme, as is observed, for example, the case with Ukr. *Самоткан*/*Самоткань* from Iran. **asma-xan-*, *Домоткан*/*Домоткань* < Iran. **danu-xan-*/**danava-xan-* (Trubachev O. N. (1968) "The River Names of Right-bank Ukraine: Word-formation. Etymology. Ethnic Interpretation": 207).

The word under consideration is devoid of the written history, capable shine a light on the process of changing its form. However, given the fact that Czech ethnic component appeared in Romania comparatively late, it is reasonable

to assume that *Mrakoň* is the Slavonization some local Romance form like **Mrahan*/**Mrakan*, which in its turn was inherited from the speech of the old Slavonic population, that lived here before coming Romanians. The reconstructed archaic Slavonic hydronym **Mraxan*/**Mrakan* presumably saves even more ancient Iranian lexeme, namely Sarm.-Alan. **mār-kan* or **mār-xan* 'dammed water source', 'flow/stream with weir', rethought in the language of Slavs. In particular the sequence *tārt* in the foreign-language lexeme was changed in *trat* according to the pattern of Slavonic words with "group phoneme" (phoneme cluster) *tort*, which indicates relative chronology of adapting the hydronym by Slavs in an age when the process of development of *tort* > *trat* was still active. Regarding the composition of the hydronym cf.:

**mār-* < Iran. **māra-* 'weir' (< **mār-* 'to block, to interfere' → 'to dam, to weir'), represented exactly in Sarmato-Alanian and Ossetian water nomenclature;

**xan* 'source, spring', 'creek', 'canal', 'ditch', cf. Osset. *хæн* 'wellspring' as a part of the toponym *Æндæр-хæн* [3, p. 78].

Thus, **mār-kan* or **mār-xan* stands in line with other Sarmato-Alanian and Ossetian potamonyms-composites with prepositive **mār-*, cf.:

Sarm. *Marabius* (in Ammianus Marcellinus) = **Mār-āb* from Old Iran. **māra-āpa-* 'the river with weir' [4, p. 120–121];

Alan. **mār-āf* 'the river with weir' [6, p. 54] < **māra-āpi-*;

Alan. **mār-wārā* or **mār-rār-* 'river/water with weir' (literally – "Weir-River/Water" [7, p. 15];

Sarm.-Alan. **mār-ud* (< **mār-od*) 'stream/river with weir' < **māra-*[*a*]*uda-* [8, p. 9–10];

Alan. **mār-want* (< **māra-u̯anta-*) – the designation of dammed river or stream (literally – '[the river] with weirs') (it is etymology of 2022 by A. I. Iliadi);

Osset. **Raw-mar-don* 'water of weir of the big river', *don-mar-æn* 'dam, weir' [4, p. 120–121].

Restored **mār-kan* or **mār-xan*, may be, is one of the traces of Sarmatian toponymicon on the lands of modern Romania, comp., for example, presence of Sarmatian tribes (Roxolani, Jazyges) on the Lower Danube in the first century AD (Dzigovskij A. N. (2003) "Essays on the history of Sarmatians of the Carpathian and Dnieper River areas": 76–87). Its preservation became possible due to the continuity of language tradition (Eastern Iranian → Slavonic → Eastern Romance → Czech) for hundreds of years.

Alan. **marγ-āb*[*ā*]

Margoaba, 1939 (?) – the creek or the river (in the record – *pârăul*) in the area of the village *Бырново* (the territory of contemporary Ocniţa District in Moldova) [10]. It is a case of Eastern Romance adapting (**Margoábă*) Slavonic form **Margab*[*a*] or **Margob*[*a*] (comp. *новъкова* > Roman. *potcoávă*) with the remodeling its outcome according to the pattern *cocioábă*, *cosoroábă* etc. In Slavonic toponymics of the Dniester River area this hydronym is an element of Alanian substrate: it is about Alanian composite **marγ-āb*[*ā*] 'meadow river/water'. Its first part is the reflex of Iran. **margā-* 'meadow', cf. Sogdian *mrγ(h)* [*marγ*] 'meadow', Pashto *marγá* 'grassplot, meadow' [11 (5, pp. 231, 232)], while the second is Middle Iranian dialect reflex of Proto-Iran. **āp-* 'water stream, river', comp. Middle Persian (late) *āb* ['*b*] 'water', Parthian *āb* ['*b*], Sogdian (Christian) '*b*, Khwarezmian '*b* 'the same' [11 (1, p. 312)]. The whole-lexical correspondence is found in Sogdian *al-Muryāb* 'The River of the thickets' (Lurje P. B. (2004) "Historical and Linguistic analysis of Sogdian Toponymy": 141: to *marγ* 'wood, meadow'), as well as in the name of the city in the Pamirs *Muryāb* [11 (5, p. 233)] and in eponymous river name *Мурғоб* (Tajik *muryob*) = *Murg-river* (Edelman D. I. (1975) "Geographical Names of the Pamirs": 45).

The auslaut *-ā* is etymologically ambiguous: it may be both a vestige of properly Iranian indicator of *ā*-stem, as well as genetically identical with it Slavonic flexion of feminine nouns.

It is not excluded that the water name belongs to the heritage of the Western Alans (Aorsi, Asi), which had settled in northern Moldova (Ocniţa District belongs to its North part) and the adjoining lands of Bessarabia by the end of the second century AD (perhaps, they have been joined later by small groups of Eastern Alans). About them see, for example, in: [13, p. 171].

Sarm.-Alan. **waz-āb*

Czech old *Vozáb*, 1740 – the name of the pond (Královédvorsko [9, p. 83]). The hydronym represents Sarm.-Alan. **waz-āb* 'dammed water', forming the separate lexical isogloss with Sogdian (Buddhistic) *"w'z "p* = *āwāz āp* 'water from the

pond' [1, p. 86] or *ā-waz-āp*/*ā-wāz-āp* 'dammed water' (Livshits V. A. (2008) "Sogdian Epigraphy of Middle Asia and the Seven Rivers region": 78).

The first component is Iran. **ā-u̯aźa-*, that is prefixed reflex of Proto-Iran. **u̯aź-* 'to move, to flow' (: Avestan (late) inf. *vazaiδyāi* 'to inflow, to flow into' [2, p. 1389], Baluchi *gwaz* 'irrigation ditch' [1, p. 86]), cf. Sogdian *"w'zy* 'pond, body of water', (Manichaean) *"wzyy* = *āwāze* 'lake, swamp', Ossetian *awæzt* 'dam', 'weir' ([1, p. 86]; Livshits V. A. (2008) "Sogdian Epigraphy of Middle Asia and the Seven Rivers region": 78–79; Lurje P. B. (2004) "Historical and Linguistic analysis of Sogdian Toponymy": 146: from Iran. **ā-vaza-*). The second is a reflex of Proto-Iran. **āp-* 'water, stream, river'. It is essential for proving Sarmato-Alanian etymological affiliation of this hydronym that the reflex of Iran. **āpa-* in the known Sarmatian/Alanian vocabulary was precisely *āb*, cf. Sarm. *Marabius* = **Mār-āb*, Alan. **marγ-āb*[*ā*] (see above) as well as Alan. **ar-āb* or **ar-ab* < Old Iran. **r̥-ăpa-* 'flowing water', cf. *Старый арабъ* – the hydronym in the Dnieper River region (it is etymology of 2021 by A. I. Iliadi), **mal-aba* 'deep river', **sugd-ab-* 'pure waters' (Crimea; Shaposhnikov A. K. (2007) "Sarmatian and Turanian Language Relicts of the Northern Black Sea region": 290, 293, 304, 314) etc.

It should be pointed out that proposed Alanian etymology of the hydronym is quite conditional because of the lack of any reliable Sarmato-Alanian traces in the toponymics of this area of Czechia. It should be noted that search for evidences of habitation of Iranian-speaking peoples in the early Middle Ages in the north of historical Bohemia (Královédvorsko – is its northeast) is the problem also for archaeologists. Findings of ceramics in northern Bohemia, as well as the burial with the iron sword without cross-guard, long spearpoints, clay vessels (one of them is close to some of ceramic forms from Late Sarmatian monuments) in Dure (Kuznecov V. A., Pudovin V. K. (1961) "Alans in Western Europe in the era of the "Great Migration of Peoples"": 81, 90: with reference to E. Beninger and A. Alföldi) are associated with Alans. Hence if there are linguistic preconditions for Sarmato-Alanian etymology of the geographical name, even based on its formal similarity/identity to Iranian toponyms in other areas, they cannot be ignored. At least until more convincing etymology will be proposed.

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Conclusions. With taking into account the results of the etymological analysis of the toponymic lexemes we can draw a few preliminary conclusions.

1. Sarmatian/Alanian lexemes attested in the area of Slavonic toponymy demonstrate close etymological links predominantly with the vocabulary of the Eastern Iranian languages: **a-sam*[*ā*] : Wakhi *sam*; **mār-kan* or **mār-xan* : Sarm. *mār-*, Osset. *mar* and Osset. *xæн*; **marγ-āb*[*ā*] : Sogd. *al-Murγāb* (judging by root sound *u*, it is the result of Persian mediation in rendering this name; according to P. B. Lurje (2004) "Historical and Linguistic analysis of Sogdian Toponymy": 141), Tajik *murγob*; **waz-āb* : Sogd. *"w'zy*, (Manichaean) *"wzyy* = *āwāze*, Osset. *awæzt*, Baluchi *gwaz*. This is quite expected because of belonging Sarmato-Alanian dialects to the eastern branch of the Iranian languages.

2. The reconstructed lexemes expand our knowledge of the vocabulary of hydrographic terms in the language of European Sarmats and Alans or expand the geography of already known Sarmato-Alanian words (**āb*[*ā*] 'water', 'river', **mār* 'weir', **xan* 'well', 'wellspring', 'canal').

Further researches in the stated direction are natural, because the reconstruction of Sarmato-Alanian vocabulary in many ways is based on detection its relicts in onomastics (primarily in toponymics) of the European languages.

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