

Etymology and dialectology in diachronic perspective

From the experiences of writing the Etymological dictionary of Serbian

Summary

As two branches of the historical linguistics, dialectology and etymology are of mutual importance. The very notion of dialect arises from a basically etymological comparison between the lexicons of two tongues; on the other hand, an isogloss (or, more precisely, an isolex) can be the starting point of an etymological analysis as well as its result. In the present paper, it is exemplified by some experiences resulting from the work on the comprehensive etymological dictionary of Serbian, which largely includes vernacular words and forms. Some isolexes are focused connecting, more or less exclusively, Serbian linguistic territory with different parts of the northern Slavic area. Amongst others few onomastic and lexical indications are discussed suggesting that in the Slavicization of the north-western Balkans a stream of previously Slavicized Balts from which is today Western Russia (the former tribal territory of the *Kriviči*) may have taken part. In addition, the presence of some exclusive isolexical ties between South-Slavic and other Indo-European languages (Iranian, Tocharian, etc.) is pointed out, that reflect the linguogeographical situation of Common Slavic on various chronological levels and, eventually, the process of Slavic glottogenesis.