

## ATTRIBUTES OF WINE IN SERBIAN DECASYLLABIC FOLK POEMS

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### Абстракт:

В настоящей работе на материале сербской десятисложной эпике, в частности на существительном вино и его определениях, авторы доказывают справедливость положения русского фольклориста А. П. Евгеньевой об относительной постоянности эпитета в русских былинах и причитаниях, распространяющегося таким образом и на сербскую фольклорную эпiku. Проведя статистический анализ тт. 1–4 сборника сербской народной поэзии Вука Караджича, авторы удостоверились, что относительно постоянными эпитетами вина могут называться только пять из них (рујно, ладно, црвено, мрко, црвеника), тогда как остальные определения всего лишь – единицы. Пример вина в сербской эпике выказывает, с одной стороны, неустойчивость определений/эпитетов во временном и пространственном отношениях, а с другой – индивидуальные стилистические характеристики отдельных сказителей.

**Ключевые слова:** славянский фольклор, сербский фольклор, эпитет, относительная постоянность эпитетов, вино в сербской народной эпике

We approached the issue of wine attributes in Serbian folk poems through studying some other phenomena. The focus of our research attention was geared toward metrical aspects related to the rules of constructing Serbian folklore asymmetric decasyllable, observed in the mirror of equimetric Polish translations. The material presented here is part of our broader studies on lexical and metric formula of Serbian folk decasyllable 4+6<sup>1</sup> and its correlates in relevant Polish translations of the XIX and XX century.

The motif of *wine*, i.e. of *drinking* wine, is very frequent in Serbian folk epic poetry, and it would often appear as exposition cliché as well. This frequency of use and its function of an epic marker made the motif of wine one of the recognizable constituents of lexical and metric formula. Thus – beside wine „without attributes“ and its drinking – in different metric conditions, as formulae and formulaic expressions, there will also appear the constructions *attribute+wine* or *wine+attribute*. For this occasion, we would like to draw your attention to them.

In determining the notion of *attribute* or *attributive modifier* we rely on a simple definition of Serbian linguist Mihailo Stevanović, who says that those are „adjectival words, i.e. words with adjectival functions that [...] by whatever feature (quality, colour, size, warmth, substance, place, time, origin, appurtenance, or anything else) determine a noun or a cluster of words in nominal

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<sup>1</sup> In definition of lexical and metric formula we rely on Parry-Lordian proposition. Cf.: Lord, Albert B.: The Singer of Tales. Cambridge, Mass., 1960, p. 31 et sqq.

function“.<sup>2</sup> Syntactically, Stevanović does not make any other difference among attributes than „whether they are marked by adjectives and adjectival nouns, or by a cluster of nominal words used in a case with or without a preposition“.<sup>3</sup>

For attributes, i.e. attributive modifiers, as terms from linguistics, traditional stylistics and normative poetics use the term *epithet*, what, of course, doesn't mean that any attribute automatically becomes the epithet in a literary text. When it comes to folklore, most often, as toll of older Homerology, „permanent epithet“ is mentioned and, „unlike attributes it designates a feature pertinent solely to the notion it refers to“.<sup>4</sup> There are usually quoted examples like: *vjerna љуба* (faithful wife), *вита јела* (slender fur tree), *брутка сабља* (sharp sabre), etc. In folk poetry, the connection between certain epithets and the notions they stand for sometimes is so reinforced that it does not leave any room for alternative use of other epithets. But still, in even greater number of similar examples there will be allowed multiple variations too.

„Permanence“ of epithets was questioned long time ago in the Slav literary folklore studies. Russian author Anastasia Petrovna Yevgenyeva speaks about „relative“ permanence of epithets in Russian byliny (былины) and laments (причитания).<sup>5</sup> Interpreting the already classical assertion of Franz Miklošič that the epithet of oral epic poetry is not just a decoration, but it also makes the subject more obvious and singles out the characteristic that revives it, Yevgenyeva emphasizes that permanent epithet through time is not after all an unalterable category, but that it is liable to evolution, and also that different „variances“ are possible on the synchronic level as well.<sup>6</sup> In this, the author points to three types of epithet „permanence“: 1) absolute permanence, when epithet „coalesces“ with the noun and together with it creates an indissoluble lexical pair – which is actually the rarest occurrence; 2) when the given noun is compatible with a range of epithets, so the singer or narrator chooses one or another, depending on individual taste and the concurrence of circumstances; 3) when, besides two or three most common epithets, others are arbitrarily attached to the noun.<sup>7</sup> The most frequent ones are precisely type 2. and 3. – *relatively* permanent epithets. In conclusion, Yevgenyeva emphasizes: „The ‘permanence’ of this or

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<sup>2</sup> Стевановић, М., Савремени српскохрватски језик (Граматички системи и књижевнојезичка норма), II. Синтакса. Београд 1974, с. 49.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Pešić, R., Milošević-Đorđević, N.: Narodna književnost. Beograd 1984, p. 77 et sq.

<sup>5</sup> Cf.: Евгеньева, А. П.: Очерки по языку русской устной поэзии в записях XVII–XX вв. Москва 1963, p. 307. – In the chapter on permanent epithet, as a separate work (О некоторых поэтических особенностях русского устного эпоса XVII–XVIII вв. [Постоянный эпитет]) published as early as 1948, gives a representative overview of older literature on „permanent“ epithet.

<sup>6</sup> Cf.: op. cit., p. 312–314.

<sup>7</sup> Cf.: op. cit., p. 337–338.

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that epithet is one of individual forms of expressing tradition, and certainly not one of the specific semantic and stylistic features of epithets.<sup>8</sup>

Another Russian author, Petr Dmitrievich Ukhov, researcher and systemizer of byliny, put forward an even more radical approach. In his view, the „indissoluble“ whole of epithet and noun in oral creation actually did not exist,<sup>9</sup> so what Yevgenyeva singled out as type 1. of permanence, actually is sheer fiction.

Polish researcher Stanisław Glinka in his study of the language in Byelorussian folk poems collected by Michał Federowski, offers a rich and valuable, exceedingly incentive material. His classification of epithets and gradation by frequency, and above all exhaustive statistical analysis of epithets in Michał Federowski's collection, plausibly illustrates precisely the *relative permanence* of epithets in Byelorussian oral creation.<sup>10</sup>

We would illustrate the situation with epithets in Serbian folklore, with statistical analysis, with the corpus of decasyllabic poems from Vuk Karadžić's collection (Books I–IV of the „classical“ Vienna edition). In our broader research of Polish translations of Serbian folk poetry, this corpus is relevant because, with rare exceptions, it served as the source to Polish translators. We will present as illustrative materials the specific attributes of wine in decasyllabic poems from older records (*The Erlangen Manuscript*, Bogišić's collection).

In once popular high school textbook of the theory of literature, „permanent epithet“ is, among other things, illustrated by the assertion that in the folk poetry „wine is always *рујно* (crimson red) or *црвеника* (scarlet red)“.<sup>11</sup> For Svetozar Koljević, wine is „usually ‘хладно’ (cold) or ‘рујно’ (crimson red)“.<sup>12</sup> And Polish researcher of Serbian folklore and its Polish translations, Milica Jakóbiec Semkowowa, says that in our folk poems „permanent“ epithets for wine can be: „ладно, румено, мрко, рујно“<sup>13</sup> (cold, rosy, dark, crimson red). Here, nobody embarks on the question of the quality and real presence of those epithets. For, what is actually „permanent“ about them: *рујно* or *црвеника*, *хладно* or *рујно* or, perhaps – *ладно*, *румено*, *мрко*, *рујно*?

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<sup>8</sup> Op. cit., p. 338.

<sup>9</sup> Cf.: Ухов, П. Д., Постоянные эпитеты в былинах как средство типизации и создания образа in Основные проблемы эпоса восточных славян. Москва 1958, p. 160.

<sup>10</sup> Cf.: Glinka, S., Języku białoruskich pieśni ludowych w zbiorze M. Federowskiego. In M. Federowski, Lud białoruski na Rusi Litewskiej. Materiały do etnografii słowiańskiej zgromadzone w latach 1877–1905, t. 7, Supplement do t. 5 i 6. Warszawa 1969, p. 211–223.

<sup>11</sup> Димитријевић, Р.: Теорија књижевности са примерима... Београд 1964, p. 154.

<sup>12</sup> Кољевић, С.: Наш јуначки еп. Београд 1974, p. 286.

<sup>13</sup> Jakóbiec-Semkowowa, M., Słowiańska pieśń ludowa w polskich przekładach doby romantyzmu. Wrocław 1991, p. 36.

1) *Wine attributes by frequency*

By far the most frequent wine attribute in the whole decasyllabic corpus of Vuk's Vienna edition is *рујно*: it appears **66** times in total. The interesting thing about this most frequent wine attribute is that it is not uniform, so we could even discuss the transfer of its meaning. This was much discussed in older literature,<sup>14</sup> and for this occasion we accentuate only the most important. Namely, Vuk Karadžić explained the designation *рујно вино* in his *Serbian Dictionary* as *gemblicher Wein, vinum fulvum*, meaning *white wine*, i.e. *yellow*, when it comes to its true color. Miklošič concluded, however, that *рујно вино* was „црвено” (red) or „рујево” (yellowish red).<sup>15</sup> Tomo Maretić claimed that „рујно вино was felt by singers quite as synonymous with ‘црвено’ (red) wine<sup>16</sup> and quoted an example from Vuk (I 446), where a girl, describing her cheeks, says: „Јес’ видео рујно вино? / Онаке су јагодице“ („Have you seen *рујно* wine? / That's what cheeks are like“). The proof to corroborate this claim is more than obvious: of course it is about blowsy cheeks, not some unhealthy sallow complexion!

Immediately after *рујно* there is *ладно* (cold) wine, found in **49** verses of the Vienna edition. In the third place by frequency there is *црвено* (red) wine with the total of **32** presences.<sup>17</sup> *Мрко* (dark) wine is found **14** times. The noun *црвеника* in attributive role is found **11** times.

Other wine attributes are – real rarity.

Thus *румено* (rosy) wine, singled out as a typical example of „permanent epithet”, is found only twice in the Vienna edition: „И појити вином руменијем“ (I 325, 31) and „У другоге руменого вина“ (II 51, 9). The other example originates from the anthology poem *Косовка дјевојка (Kosovo Maid)*, so that may be the reason why this attribute is put in the same basket with *рујно* or (*х*)*ладно* wine.

Also, we can find two instances of *трегодишње* (three years old) wine, all in one poem (*Наход Момир*, II 30, 115; 151).

In dozen cases we found unique examples – attributes used only once. We'll brood on the most interesting ones.

The attributes *рујевина* and *рујевно*, encountered only once, are special derivatives from *рујно* wine.

In connection with *трегодишње* wine there are *трољетно* and *од три љета*, and akin to them there is the attribute *од седам година* (seven years old). Unlike the previous ones, marking the colour, or warmth, these attributes point to the age of wine. When it comes to the attributes *од три љета* and *од седам*

<sup>14</sup> In detail: Пецо, А.: Значење придијева „рујан“ у српскохрватском језику. Прилози за КИФ, vol. XXVIII, no. 1–2, p. 101–104.

<sup>15</sup> Cf.: Op. cit., p. 102.

<sup>16</sup> T. Maretić, *Naša narodna epika*. Beograd 1966, p. 73.

<sup>17</sup> Out of which 30 times with the noun вино and twice with its diminutive – винце.

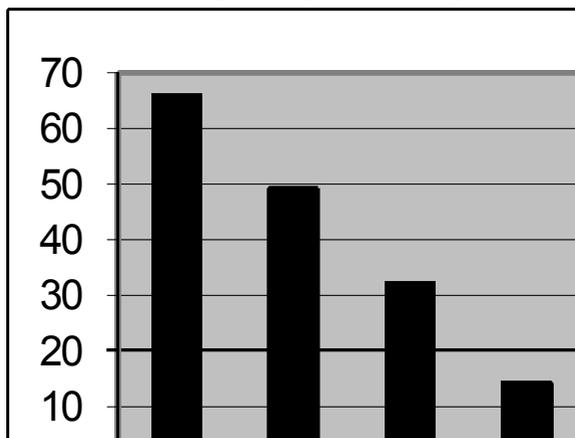
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година, we have at hand the „cluster of nominal words used in a case with a preposition“.<sup>18</sup>

Two unique wine attributes point to its geographic origin: *приморско* (coastal) and *из Видина* (from Vidin).<sup>19</sup> Relevant to the verse „Црвенога вина из Видина“ (III 49, 122), and that of „Рујна вина од седам година“ (Vuk II 68, 163), we will point to their euphonic organization – internal rhyme: *вина–Видина*, and *вина–година*. Sound links between epithets and nouns they qualify were noticed by Petr Grigoryevich Bogatyrev: „Permanent epithets not only indicate the basic typical features of the subjects they designate, but some of the permanent epithet rhyme, and even more often they alliterate with the nouns they designate.“<sup>20</sup> Among the examples of Serbo-Croat epic poetry, he mentions „црвено вино“. The examples we have just mentioned illustrate this phenomenon even more vividly.

The two mentioned verses are unique by something else too. Those are two only verses in the Vienna edition where there are *two* wine attributes in each.<sup>21</sup>

So, our statistics would arrange this order of wine attribute inventory in Serbian decasyllabic poetry in the Vienna edition: *рујно, ладно, црвено, мрко, црвеника*... This will, after all, be plausibly illustrated by the following chart:



<sup>18</sup> Стевановић, М.: op. cit., p. 49. – In another place Stevanovic says: „Attributive functions [...] are also in syntactic link between the preposition од and numbers or quantitative phrases“ (op. cit., p. 224).

<sup>19</sup> „Especially often used genitive with preposition из functioning as adjectival to mark where someone or something is from.“ –Стевановић, М.: op. cit., p. 242–243.

<sup>20</sup> Bogatirjov, P. G.: Stalni epiteti i antiteza u epskim pesmama slovenskih naroda [Original title: Некоторые задачи сравнительного изучения эпоса славянских народов] in Koljević, S.: Ка поетичи narodnog pesništva. Beograd 1982, p. 362.

<sup>21</sup> The situation when a noun has got two attributes is typical of bugarštice (examples from Bogišić): црвено хладно вино, сјеновито хладно вино, лијепо хладно вино. In bugarštice doubled attributes are always adjectives and in the mentioned examples we have the combination of adjective and genitive phrase.

The illustrated distribution of wine attributes finds its evidence in the time of Vuk. And was it like this in pre-Vuk era?

In order to take this question, we have studied the poems of *The Erlangen Manuscript* and Bogišić's collection with the constituent verse decasyllable 4+6.

In *The Erlangen Manuscript*, by frequency, the unqualified first place belongs to *ладно вино* (19). Then there are *добро* (7), *рујно* (2), *црно* (2) and *црвено* (1). We notice thus, that in *The Erlangen Manuscript* there are no *мрко*, *црвеника*, *румено*... *Рујно*, the most frequent one in Vuk, belongs to the rare wine attributes, and *црвено*, third by frequency in Vuk, is unique here. On the other hand, in *The Erlangen Manuscript*, there are attributes that cannot be found in Vuk: *добро*<sup>22</sup> (good) and *црно* (black, i.e. dark red).

The results of the analysis of decasyllabic corpus from Bogišić's collection have shown more similarities with Vuk's Vienna edition. There can be found: *рујно* (6), *хладно* (5), *из Видина/од Видина* (2) and *од година дванаес* (1) (twelve years old). As we can see, the most frequent ones, as in Vuk's collection, are *рујно* and *хладно*. Wine *из/од Видина* (of/from Vidin) certainly has a strong tradition – it was esteemed even before Vuk.

The differences between the two pre-Vuk collections, the records of which originate from the same century, the XVIII, were most probably motivated by regional specificities. Bogišić's collection, as its title indicates, contains folk poems „from older, mostly coastal records“, while the texts from *The Erlangen Manuscript* originate from the area of the former Vojna krajina (Military borderline). This is a kind of confrontation between the North and the South.

And when it comes to wine attributes, the comparison between pre-Vuk situation and Vuk's Vienna edition confirms the observation of A. P. Yevgenyeva that “permanent” epithets are changeable in time too.<sup>23</sup>

#### 2) Wine attributes – individual choice of singers?

It would be interesting to use our material for testing the stand of A. P. Yevgenyeva about the choice of epithets (in cases that she classified in type 2. by their „permanence“) depends on, among others, the singer's/narrator's individual taste and style.<sup>24</sup> Therefore we have made a statistical overview of wine attributes in Vuk's four most important singers – a) Tešan Podrugović, b) Filip Višnjić, c) old Milija and d) old Raško.

(a) Distribution of wine attributes on the material of Podrugović's poems shows a picture incomparable to the „average“, which is only seemingly unexpected. He namely had wine *мрко* in 11 cases, *рујно* in 9, *црвено* in 7, and *црвеника* in 4.

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<sup>22</sup> In Vuk this attribute „suits“ the noun јунак (hero), but not with wine.

<sup>23</sup> Cf.: Евгенъева, А. П.: op. cit., p. 327–328.

<sup>24</sup> Cf.: Евгенъева, А. П.: op. cit., p. 338.

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(b) Filip Višnjić is very poor in wine attributes. In his recorded oeuvre, wine has accompanying attributes only 3 times, and it is the same one every time – *рујно*.

(c) Wine attributes with the old Milija are interestingly distributed: *црвено* (3),<sup>25</sup> *рујно* (2), *ладно* (2) and *трољетно* (1).

(d) With the old Raško, the most frequent combination of wine and attribute is *ладно вино* (6 realizations altogether), then *црвено* (2) and *црвеника* (2).

From this overview, we can infer an unequivocal conclusion about differences among Vuk's singers. Podrugović and Višnjić are antipodes, two opposite points of the amplitude. Milija and Raško, also mutually different, are situated between Podrugović and Višnjić.

Višnjić's individual characteristic consists of the fact that wine cannot be either (*х*)*ладно*, or *црвено*, or *црвеника*... Milija uses only three of average most represented wine attributes in the Vienna edition and a rarity – *трољетно* (three years old) wine. What does Raško lack? Raško, apparently, could not bring himself to utter precisely the most frequent attribute – *рујно вино*, or *мрко* either.

If we carefully compare the figures along Podrugović's attributes to the above chart, we will conclude two things. Firstly, we notice that 11 out of total 14 appearances of *мрко вино* in the corpus of Vuk's Vienna edition originate from Podrugović, i.e. *мрко вино* is nearly exclusively his stylistic property. Moreover, in at least one case we could discuss the folklore feedback, i.e. Podrugović's „influence“ through the print edition:<sup>26</sup> the attribute *мрко* appears in the poem *Костреш Харамбаша* (III 46, 138) that Vuk got written down and sent by Marko Nemanjić, who was, as Vuk mentions, „a very good singer himself“.<sup>27</sup> The next thing we notice with Podrugović is absolute absence of the attribute (*х*)*ладно* – otherwise the second most frequent in total statistics!

The results and examples presented confirm a) the justifiability of the view of relative permanence of epithets in oral literature, and b) the fact that the use of epithets is not in patterns or impersonal, but on the contrary, it predominantly depends on tradition liable to incessant change and on personal touch of each individual oral creator.

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<sup>25</sup> This attribute appears twice with the noun *вино* and once with – *винце*.

<sup>26</sup> It is a well known phenomenon that once codified piece of oral literature or more of them from published sources return to oral circulation again and make an effect on oral creation. Studying this phenomenon, Miodrag Matićki, among various options, chose the phrase (bookish) feedback of epic poetry. Cf.: Матицки, М.: Српскохрватска граничарска епика. Београд 1974, р. 40–57. – The authors of this paper also discussed this in: Топић, М., Буњак, П.: Пољске метаморфозе двеју српских народних песама. Зборник МС за славистику, 2003, vol. 63, р. 263–284.

<sup>27</sup> Сабрана дела Вука Караџића. Књ. VII. Београд 1986, р. 403.

