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Antrešelj
An Early Romanian Remnant in Serbo-Croatian**

Abstract: The paper discusses SCr. *antrešelj* 'gap in the middle of a pack saddle', a Balkan Latin loanword that was transmitted to Serbo-Croatian via either Dalmatian Romance or Romanian, and, based on formal criteria, advocates for the latter as the exclusive intermediary.

Keywords: Etymology, Serbo-Croatian, Romanian, Dalmatian Romance, herding terminology.

1. Introduction

In the vocabulary of a herdsman, there is, in Serbo-Croatian, a term for the 'gap in the middle of a pack saddle', which can be used to store additional load, usually when the saddlebags (on the side of a pack horse or a mule) have already been put to use. It is called ***antrešelj***. The term is generally believed to be a remnant of Balkan Latin **intersell*(*i*)*um* (< Latin *inter* 'between' + *sella* 'seat, saddle') that was transmitted to Serbo-Croatian via either Romanian or Dalmatian Romance. In this paper, I try to determine which of the two served as the actual intermediary.

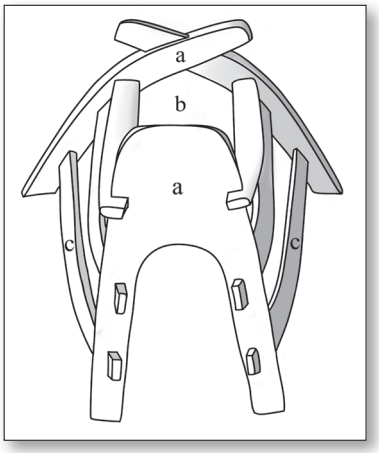


Fig. 1: Front View of a Pack Saddle
a – trees, b – *antrešelj*,
c – side boards

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2. *Early Attestations*

The earliest attested form is *antarsegl* (= ***antrselj***); it appears in the *Bogatstvo i uboštvo* (Wealth and Poverty), an early 18th century poem by Jerolim Kavanjin of Split (Croatia). In the twenty first canto of the poem, which is a vision of Hell, the poet describes the Devil as *u antrselj sideć maše* (sitting in the *antrselj* and flailing his arms); see Kavanjin 1913: 408.

The other early attestations can be found in the 18th and 19th century lexica, the *Dizionario italiano, latino, illirico* of Ardelio Della Bella and the *Rjecsoslòxje* of Joakim Stulli; they are *antarscèglje* (= ***antršẽlje***, Ligorio 2016: 191) 'il vacuo trà due fascie, che sono sopra il basto' (Della Bella 1728: 131) and *antarscàlje / intrescèlj / utrescelj* (= ***antršälje / intrešẽlj / utrešelj***, Ligorio 2016: 190–93) 'il voto, che lascia a soma in mezzo al basto; vacuum inter sarcinas ephippio impositas jacens' (Stulli 1806: I 3, I 227, III 521). Đ. Daničić deemed *antršälje* a misprint (RJA I 93) but the form was later recorded in Herzegovina; see sec. 3 below.

The first contemporary Serbo-Croatian dictionary, Vuk's *Rječnik*, has ***antrèšelj*** 'ono što se na natovarena konja metne odozgo među strane' (that which is put atop a laden horse, between the side bags). The word doesn't make appearance until the 2nd edition (1818^1, 1852^2) of the dictionary; see Караџић 1852^2: 52.

3. *Dialectal Variation*

Ever since the first attestations were recorded, it became apparent that *antrešelj* has a variety of dialectal forms. They vary in form, accent, and meaning. A convenient distinction can be made by sorting them according the Anlaut into *an-* forms (*antrešelj* etc.), *in-*forms (*intrešelj* etc.), *u-*forms (*utrešelj* etc.), and forms without either *an-*, *in-*, or *u-* (*trešelj* etc.).

*An-*forms: ***antrešẽlj*** (Zagarač and Old Montenegro / Montenegro, EPCJ I 171); ***antrèšelj*** (Srem / Serbia, Караџић 1852^2: 5; Dubica and Krajina / Croatia, PCA I 133; Studenci / Croatia, Babić 2008: 25; Lovinac / Croatia, Japunčić 2013: 47; Pridraga / Croatia, Babić 2022: 26; Popovići / Croatia, Tokić–Magaš 2018: 50; Krivošije / Montenegro, EPCJ I 47; Prošćenje / Montenegro, EPCJ loc.cit.); ***antréšelj*** (Dragačevo / Serbia, ibid.); ***antrèšalj*** (Kordun / Croatia, PCA loc.cit.); ***antrešalj*** (Bukovica / Croatia, Maver 1922: 241); ***antréše*** (Šibenik / Croatia, ERHJ loc.cit.); ***antreš*** (V. Vrčević / 19th century, RJA I 93); ***anteršelj*** (Lika / Croatia, Maver loc.cit.); ***antršẽlj*** (Gacka / Croatia, Kranjčević 2003: 7); ***antȓšelj*** (I. Ćipiko / 19–20th century, PCA I 134); ***antȓšelje*** (Poljica / Croatia, PCA loc.cit.); ***antršalje*** (Herzegovina / Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bartoli 1906: II 287); ***antràšelj*** (Temnić / Serbia, PCA I 133); ***antràšẽ(l)*** (Trogir / Croatia,

Geić 2015: 27). Derivatives: ***antrešeljak*** (Kreševo / Bosnia and Herzegovina, JE I 19).

*In-*forms: ***intrèšelj*** (B. Đaja / 20th century, PCA VIII 98); ***intrèše*** (Janjina / Croatia, JE I 19); ***intrèšalj*** (NW Boka / Montenegro, EPCJ I 133); ***intrèšet*** (NW Boka / Montenegro, ibid.); ***intrišȇl*** (Smokvica and Korčula / Croatia, ERHJ I 47); ***intrìšēl*** (Smokvica / Croatia, JE I 19). Derivatives: adv. ***intreśĭjo*** (Vis / Croatia, Roki 1997: 165).

*U-*forms: ***utreš*** (Stj. M. Ljubiša / 19th century, RJA XX 136).

Forms without *an-*, *in-*, or *u-*: ***trèšelj*** (folk poetry, RJA XVIII 617; Broz–Iveković 1901: II 588); ***trešéj*** [*sic*] (Zatrebač / Montenegro, ERHJ I 47), ***trešēj*** (Kornati and Murter / Croatia, JE I 19; Kornati / Croatia, Skračić 2013: 187); ***trẽšъnj*** (Krtole / Montenegro, ERHJ I 47). Derivatives: ***trešèljāk*** (Sarajevo, ibid.).

The *u-*forms and the *an-*forms may or may not reflect different layers of the same proto-form; see EPCJ I 171. In case they do, the *u-*forms reflect the older layer, prior to the shift from Sl. **anC-* to **ǫC-*, and the *an-*forms reflect the younger layer, posterior to it.

4. *Other Forms*

The Albanian minority in Zadar / Croatia (*Arbanasi*) have a Serbo-Croatian loanword, ***untrèsh***; see Krstić 1987: 124. According to JE I 19, it was borrowed from an *u-*form. Since the *u-*forms are confined to Montenegro (see sec. 3) and the *Arbanasi* hail from Montenegro / Albania, it would appear that the word was borrowed prior to their migration to Zadar and, more precisely, prior to the shift from Sl. **ǫC-* to SCr. *uC*; cf. Sl. **sǫditi* > Alb. *sundoj* 'rule'.

5. *Range of Meaning*

Most forms have the same meaning as the early attestations (sec. 2), i.e. 'gap in the middle of a pack saddle'. Developments (evidently of a later date) are few. One group of forms (*antrèšelj*, Dubica, Krajina, Popovići) shifted the original meaning to **'burden'**, the other (*antrešẽlj* Zagarač, Old Montenegro, *antreš* V. Vrčević, and *antràšelj* Temnić) to **'surplus, excess burden'**, and the third (*intrišȇl* Smokvica) to **'wineskin'**. Still other forms (*antrèšelj* Srem, *antrèšalj* Kordun, and *antršȇlj* Gacka) shifted the original meaning to **'mess'**. The latter shift is comparable to SCr. *samâr* 'pack saddle' → 'mess' (Medulin, Peruško 2013: 210).

6. *Etymological Dilemma*

The etymology of SCr. *antrešelj* was established by Đ. Daničić. While editing RJA (1880–82), Daničić derived the word from L *intersellāre*; see RJA I 93. The

proposed etymon is recorded in the *Glossarium mediae et infimae Latinitatis* (with the remark *vulgo dici solet*) and its meaning given as 'indorsare, supra dorsum ponere'; see Du Cange 1885: 346.

The etymology proposed by Daničić received stamp of approval when, in 1906, one of the key scholars of Dalmatian Romance, M.G. Bartoli, included SCr. *antrešelj* in a list of Dalmatian Romance remnants in Serbo-Croatian; see Bartoli 1906: II 287. In doing so, Bartoli implied that he (unlike Daničić) considered *antrešelj* a Dalmatian Romance loanword.

It soon became widely held that *antrešelj* is indeed of Dalmatian Romance provenance.

Early in his career, P. Skok proposed L **intercoxium* 'area between the thighs' (REW^5 4488) as the etymon; see Skok 1912: 644. His attempt to question the etymology was, however, to no avail; the proposed alternative failed to catch on. Gi. Maver reverted to Daničić's etymology and amended the etymon (**intersellium* instead of *intersellāre*); see Maver 1922: 245.

Skok himself later gave up on **intercoxium* and adopted Maver's **intersellium*, which he in turn amended to **intersellum*. But in his magnum opus, ERHJ, he observed that **intersellum* needn't have been transmitted to Serbo-Croatian by Dalmatian Romance (as Bartoli and Maver believed to be the case); it could equally, he claimed, have been transmitted by Romanian.

> "Dvije su mogućnosti postanja: **ili je dalmato-romanski leksički ostatak** od vlat. **intersellum*, od *sella* 'sedlo' s prefiksom *inter*, **ili je** kao pastirski termin **ostatak jezika srednjovjekovnih Vlaha** od rumunjske sintagme *între* + *şei* ili *şele* od *şa* < *sella* 'sedlo', pl. *şele*." (ERHJ I 47.)
>
> The origin of the word can be twofold: it is **either a Dalmatian Romance remnant**, from VL **intersellum*, from *inter-* and *sella* 'saddle', **or it is** (being a pastoral term) **a remnant of the language of medieval Wallachians**, from Romn. *între* + *şei* or *şele*, from *şa* < *sella* 'saddle', pl. *şele*."

Later works on the subject all echo the dilemma expressed by Skok and do not attempt to sway the etymology either way; see Rocchi 1990: 323, EPCJ I 171, and Ligorio 2014 s.v. Being a term of limited, primarily dialectal use, SCr. *antrešelj* was not included into the more general works on Serbo-Croatian etymology such as Gluhak 1993, ERHJ, and ПЕРСЈ.

In this paper, I intend to show that one of the options in Skok's dilemma is in fact not tenable. To do this, I will review four salient features of SCr. *antrešelj*. These are: 1. *an-*; 2. *-š-*; 3. *-lj*; and, 4. the geography of its various dialectal forms.

7. *Serbo-Croatian an-*

It has been noted that *an-* in *antrešelj* and other *an*-forms (sec. 3) could be indicative of Romanian provenance of the word since, in Romanian, Latin *in-* develops into *în-* [ɨn]; see EPCJ I 171 and cf. e.g. Rosetti 1986: 362f. The shift from L *in*C to SCr. *an*C is, however, not exclusive to Serbo-Croatian loanwords of Romanian origin. It can also be seen in the loanwords of Dalmatian Romance provenance; cf. L *linteolum* > SCr. *lancun* 'bedsheet', L *tingere* > SCr. *tangati* 'color', L *vindēmiam* > SCr. *bandima* 'vintage', etc. See more Ligorio 2014: §43.

Consequently, *an-* in *antrešelj* and other *an*-forms must be taken as **inconclusive**.

8. *Serbo-Croatian -š-*

It can be argued that *-š-* in *antrešelj* is indicative of the Romanian provenance of the word since it is aberrant in terms of Dalmatian Romance. L *s-* (as would be the case in *sellam*) yields Dalmatian Romance **s-*, and so does L *-(r)s-* (as would be the case in **inter-sellum*); cf. L *sēpiam* > SCr. *sipa* 'cuttlefish' (ERHJ III 240) and L **fersam* > SCr. *fijersa* 'scar' (op. cit. II 545).

In my PhD thesis, I showed that L *-e-* in *-ellum*, *-am*, pl. *-ellī*, *-ae* develops into Dalmatian Romance **-i̯e-*, which in turn translates to Sl. **-ě-*, i.e. SCr. *-i-/-e-/-je-* (depending on the dialect, Ikavian dialects have *-i-*, Ekavian *-e-*, Jekavian *-je*); cf. L **myrt(ic)ellam* 'myrtle' > Ik. *mirtila*, Ek. *murtela*, Jek. **mrkjela* > *mrčela*. See more Ligorio 2014: §119ff and Лигорио 2015.

Accordingly, one would expect *-sellum* in L **inter-sellum* to develop into Dalmatian Romance **-si̯elo*, which should then translate to Sl. **-sělŭ*, or, in Serbo-Croatian terms, Ikavian *-sil*, Ekavian *-sel*, and Jekavian **-sjel* > *-sio*, gen. *-sjela*. However, nothing of the kind (*antre-sil*, *antre-sel*, *antre-sio*, *-sjela* etc.) is to be found amongst the available forms; see sec. 2 and 3.

An objection could be made on the grounds of *-š-* being an expected development of *-sj-* (as in the hypothetical **antresio*, *-sjela* > *antresio*, *-šela* >> *antrešel*). Notice, however, that this reasoning would hold only for the Jekavian dialect with *sj* > *š* and *š* is not limited to Jekavian; it is also there in Ikavian (e.g. *antrèšelj*, Pridraga) and Ekavian (e.g. *antràšelj*, Temnić).

It follows that *-š-* in *antrešelj* cannot be explained in terms of Dalmatian Romance.

By contrast, it can promptly be explained in terms of Romanian since it mirrors *ş* in Romn. *şele* < L *sellae*. The development is regular. L *-e-* in *-ellī*, *-ae* develops into Romn. **-i̯e-* and the resulting **-si̯-* merges into *ş*; see Rothe 1957: 9, 45. More in Лигорио 2018: 44–47. The merger is Common Romanian; cf. Aromn. and MRomn. *şali* (Cioranescu 1966: 7301).

Consequently, it appears that *-š-* in *antrešelj* speaks decisively **in favor of the Romanian provenance** of the word.

9. *Serbo-Croatian -lj*

It could be argued that *-lj(-)* in SCr. *antršelj(e)* is indicative of the Romanian provenance of the word since, in various Romanian dialects (but particularly in Aromanian and Wallachian, or Vlach), *l* is palatalized when followed by *e*; cf. e.g. Romn. def. pl. *-ele* > Aromn. *-ilĭ* (Papahagi 1963) and Wall. *-ilĭ* (Литорио 2024). However, Serbo-Croatian *lj* needn't necessarily be of Wallachian or Aromanian origin. In Serbo-Croatian loanwords of Dalmatian Romance provenance, it can occasionally stand for L *ll* (as would be the case in L **intersellum*); cf. L *anguīllam* > SCr. *jegulja* 'eel', L *offellam* > SCr. *filja* 'slice', L *piscellum* > SCr. *peškelj* 'kind of fish', etc. See more Ligorio 2014 s.vv. The same is true in some Common Slavic loanwords of Vulgar Latin provenance; cf. e.g. L *casullam* > Sl. **košulja* 'shirt', whence SCr. *košulja*.

Consequently, *-lj-* in *antrešelj* must be taken as **inconclusive**.

10. *Geography of SCr. antrešelj*

When data from sec. 2 and 3 is mapped (see Fig. 2 below), it immediately becomes apparent that the geography of SCr. *antrešelj* clashes with its tentative

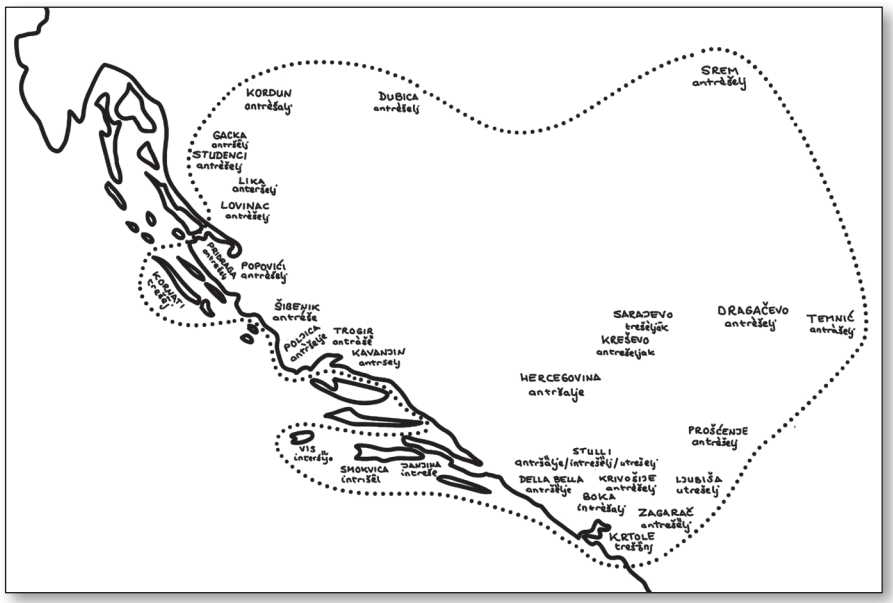


Fig. 2: Geography of SCr. *antrešelj*

Dalmatian Romance provenance. Pins in Bosnia (Sarajevo, Kreševo, Dubica) and Serbia (Srem, Dragačevo, Temnić) speak against it, and, to a lesser degree, so do the pins in other inland regions, i.e. Herzegovina, Lika (Gacka, Studenci, Lovinac), Kordun, and continental Montenegro (Prošćenje).

In his noteworthy supplement to the ERHJ, V. Vinja pointed out that such geography **speaks decisively in favor of a Romanian loanword**; see JE I 19.

11. *Conclusion*

Two of the four features reviewed in this paper have been shown to be inconclusive in terms of the provenance of SCr. *antrešelj* (sec. 7 and 9) while the other two (sec. 8 and 10) favor Romanian as the intermediary, which leads me to conclude that the preponderance of features (but particularly *-š-*) **points to the Romanian provenance of the word.**

12. *Recap*

In the light of the conclusion, we can now address various questions that surround SCr. *antrešelj*, and in particular the details of its transmission and dialectal variation.

From the numerous forms in *-lj*, it can safely be assumed that SCr. *antrešelj* was borrowed from a Wallachian or Aromanian form of *şele*, with the telltale palatalization (*şele* > *şeľe*).

In the solitary *trešьnj* (Krtole), *lj* was dissimilated to *nj* due to *r–lj*; see ERHJ I 47.

In another solitary form, *intrešet* (NW Boka), *-lj* (or better yet *-elj*) was understood to be the suffix and, under Dalmatian Romance and/or Italian influence, replaced with SCr. *-et* < L *-ittum*.

The only *lj*-less forms are *antràšël* (Trogir), *intrišêl* (Smokvica), *intreše* (Janjina) and, possibly, *antréše* (Šibenik). Theoretically, these could reflect *şele*, with the unpalatalized *l*.

Wall. / Arom. *şeľe* is plural. When the word was borrowed, some identified it with the SCr. *o*-stem accusative plural and, based on that, extrapolated the nominative singular in *-šelj*.

Others identified Wall. / Arom. *şeľe* with neuter *o*-stems in *-e* such as *polje* 'field'; this gave rise to one group of forms having the nominative singular in *-elj* and the other in *-elje*.

Forms in *-šalj* reflect the secondary Wall. / Arom. plural *şaľe*, formed by analogy with the singular form, i.e. *şa*, pl. *şele* (*şeľe*) >> sg. *şa*, pl. *şale* (*şaľe*); cf. Aromn. pl. *şali* in sec. 8.

The only *š*-less form is Kavanjin's *antrselj*. In my opinion, that is the only form that could be of Dalmatian Romance provenance (since it has the expected *s* instead of *š*).

The difference between the *an-* and the *in-*forms is of no consequence for the etymology; it reflects different ways Wall. / Arom. *în-* [in] was adapted to Serbo-Croatian.

*An-*forms are the default. *In-*forms and *u-*forms are both confined to the south, the former occuring in Boka, Dubrovnik, Pelješac, and Korčula, and the latter in Montenegro, and Dubrovnik.

Forms without *an-*, *in-*, or *u-* (Krtole, Zatrebač in the south, Kornati, Murter in the north) are due to the reanalysis of Wall. / Aromn. *între*, the first part of which was mistaken for L *in-*.

Abbreviations

Alb.	Albanian
Aromn.	Aromanian
Ek.	Ekavian
Ik.	Ikavian
Jek.	Jekavian
L	Latin
MRomn.	Megleno-Romanian
Romn.	Romanian
SCr.	Serbo-Croatian
Sl.	Slavic
VL	Vulgar Latin
Wall.	Wallachian (Vlach)

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