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Die Ambiguität etymologischer Lösungen am Beispiel von rumän. reg. *berdă*

**[The Ambiguity of Etymological Solutions:
The Romanian Regional Term *berdă*]**

Abstract: The Romanian regional term *berdă* (*de uscături*) means “a load of wood, a pile of wood”. It is without doubt a word of Indo-European (IE) origin. But is it a Slavic relic word or a loan from a modern Slavic language? The suggestion that it is a loan word from German, Germanic via Slavic in particular, has been rejected. Could its specific semantics possibly have been influenced by a relic word transmitted via a locally attested and now extinct IE language such as Dacian?

It is attested only once with the above-mentioned meaning as a word forming a relic island at the inquiry point No. 157 of the linguistic survey displayed on map No. 592 of the *Romanian Linguistic Atlas (ALR) II New Series*. Usually, its solely regionally attested meanings are “slope of a gorge, slope of a hill, abyss, chasm, cliff”, which seem close to some of the Slavic meanings of a possible etymon.

Using the example of this above-mentioned term, we show the difficulties encountered in trying to establish the exact source for that word, which would go beyond a mere Proto-Indo-European root etymology. A solution such as the latter would prevent us from learning about the specific loan history of the Romanian regional term *berdă*.

In general, it has been observed that the ambiguity of etymological solutions reveals the danger of ideologically motivated tendencies in Romanian etymology.

Keywords: Romanian language; Balkan linguistics; etymology; historical linguistics

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