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INTERVIEWING AND TRANSLATION IN CREATING AN ADEQUATE ATTITUDE TO THE SPIRITUAL CLUSTER

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Abstract

An important part of ethno-positioning of people, preservation of its folklore and ethnographic potential is a folklore and ethnographic expedition. The main method of collecting and recording folklore and ethnographic material on audio-video media and recording by hand is the survey/interviewing of information carriers/informants. In this article we want to identify the process of "getting" the folklore text at a psychological level and detect the aspects related to entrance to traditional environment. An important part of representing the people in the outer world is the translation of folklore texts into the languages of other peoples, in particular, into Russian. In a formal approach the translator tries to find the language elements without distorting the form of the original message. Semantic equivalents assume the preservation of semantic identity of lexems. The aim of the article is to describe the process of recording/fixing a folklore text about the sacral sphere. In addition to the specifics of the survey related to the genre features of oral stories, the theme of the survey is also specific, namely, the sacred one, concerning sanctuaries, sacred characters, symbols and attributes of Ossetian traditional beliefs. The result of such a survey is usually oral stories, including extended variants of "definitive" legends and tales. The authors of the article investigated the risks of intrusion into the traditional environment.

1. Introduction

In the context of processes related to globalization many traditional cultures, especially, those of small peoples are under the threat of disappearing. Specialists in different fields of knowledge, including ethnologists, concern about searching methods and ways to create such conditions for the existence of traditional cultures, in which they would not only survive but also develop. Their task is to fix folklore and ethnographic material, translate it into the languages of other peoples adequately and interpret it correctly in the process of publishing.

The mountain territories of North Ossetia-Alania represent a complex set of natural, spiritual and social factors. A disturbance of inner balance occurs in case of interference with any purpose, even positive. The foregoing is principally bound up with religious sphere. The article concerns the ritual space of Ossetian traditional beliefs. The religious experience of the main character of Huycau and sacred patrons who are under his control represented in the Ossetian tales, legends and oral stories is a part of the designated ritual space. Folklore texts create conditions for keeping Ossetian traditional beliefs through the personal experience of each narrator. The narrator's opinion differs only in details from collective, fixed notion of the universe. However, in memorats (stories of individual origin/a narrative relating personal experience) the progression in the narrative is due to the narrator's own motivation to a greater extent than motivation that is peculiar to the Ossetian folklore tradition as a whole. The peculiarity of the oral story as a folklore genre is that it is often part of informant's oral activity, which is not true for such "completed" genres as fairy-tale or Nart saga.

2. Problem Statement

The sacred heritage of the natural landscape is a highly significant part of the entire ethnic heritage. Sacred places and folklore representing them are important for preserving traditions and ethnic identity of the people especially the Ossetian people. It is important to describe the environment that we are investigating in terms of "performer – text – listener" and designate the basic principles of folklorist's/interviewer's behavior that will ensure a non-conflict entry into the tradition. We get into a living tradition during folklore expeditions.

3. Research Questions

We are interested in the risks of intrusion into the traditional environment in the course of the ethnological survey. An incorrectly formulated question, an inadequate translation of the recorded folklore text, an incorrect interpretation of the character, the plot, etc. may adversely affect the tradition. The material for the article was oral stories, legends and tales collected from 2000 to 2018 in the mountain area of the North Ossetian-Alania.

4. Purpose of the Study

4.1. The performer

Each variant of the well-known plot of the non-fairy prose with the sacred character or symbol is an individual representation of mythological and religious perceptions of the Ossetian traditional beliefs. It is the system of the traditional Ossetian sacred characters that is defined thoroughly by narrators. It is necessary to distinguish narrators and storytellers. Storytellers are already proven talented narrators, who are entrusted with the mission of transmitting experience to future generations.

The authors of the article are still continuing to collect the Ossetian folklore texts. A large number of recorded texts about the sacred sphere have been translated into Russian and distributed by topic.

4.2. The text

Oral stories are considered as an independent folklore genre and functional addition to the legends and the tale. However, not every story may be implicitly called an oral story. We consider an oral story as a personal narrative, a memorat as well as with the sacred component. When the narrator tells about characters those are demonological in nature it is a mythological story. In addition, a description of the rite can be distinguished in the Ossetian non-fairy prose. A certain theme is specific for this genre (Tikhonova, 2014). The descriptions of rite, told by tradition bearers undoubtedly differ from those left to us by researchers: folklorists, travelers, etc. They are characterized by involvement into the informants' environment or exclusion from it.

As the practice of collecting material has shown, oral stories about the sacred sphere develop cross-cutting motives that are characteristic of both the Ossetian folklore and the world folklore. Oral stories texts transmit "suprafolklore" information which folklore has incorporated into its artistic system (They are primarily texts telling about the ceremonial life of the Ossetian traditional society).

The development of new research methods for folklore texts and the introduction of new terms contribute not only to a more detailed analysis of the material, but also to the development of a balanced approach to the traditional environment. The complication of studying the oral stories consists in the fact that their origin is derived from not only geographical features of a particular area, the history of the people, but also the people's mentality, or the mentality of people united on religious ground (Burnakov & Tsydenova, 2014).

4.3. The survey method

Before proceeding to the specification of the interviewing within a certain method of describing tradition, we would like to emphasize the overall character of the approach to tradition. Our primary task when implementing the tradition into the ethnic space is to be aware of our responsibility and take into the account legal, ethno-cultural and historical practices in order not to violate the natural, established ethnic balance (Hayward & Kuwahara, 2014; Novikova, 2016; Sofield et al., 2017).

The methodology of the folklore survey and the folklore interviewing has its own history. It includes both general guidance and narrowly focused questionnaires compiled according to various principles and serving to identify certain information. In addition to traditional questionnaires that have been used by folklorists for more than a century, at the current stage of scientific development scientists

are elaborating new methods and techniques for collecting folklore material to solve different tasks. For example, in order to reconstruct fragmentary monuments of traditional literature, namely texts of ancient Egyptian literature, a typological methodology was developed. It is used to fill in content gaps. According to Nekliudov (2016), "the tools of comparative folklore studies can provide additional opportunities for reading such monuments" (p. 51). Based on the above we consider the survey can provide to identify some details that may disappear in answering to a very general question.

The involved observation of the tradition and naturalistic observation are also known. In this article we are based upon this approach to the relationship between a folklorist and the environment that he describes. Scientists argue a lot about which method is more preferable (John & Hall, 2015; Sera-Shriar, 2011; Sanjek, 2015; Valentin & Gomez-Corona, 2018).

We believe that method of involved observation allow studying the environment profoundly and to describe "the reality of human existence". In ethnopsychology there are five types of indicated realities: the realities of the objective world in the context of studied traditions; the realities of the natural world in terms of their interpretation in the ethnic consciousness; the social and normative realities with their reflection in the consciousness of the ethnic community; the realities of sign systems and their interpretation in the folklore; the inner personal realities of the members in the studied ethnic community (Mukhina, 2010). The method of involved observation can be completed with scientific photography (Łuczaj, 2012).

There can be questionnaires of various types, depending on the purpose for which they are completed (Lebedeva, 2017). For example, they completed a questionnaire to collect folklore material on magic and folk medicine. It was used in expeditions held in 1995 and from 2003 to 2007 on the south of Tyumen region and in historic and ethnographic expeditions arranged by Tyumen state university in the mid 1980s and early 1990s under the supervision of N.S. Polovinkin, V.Ya. Templing, S.V. Turov. Reports are stored in the archive facility of the Tyumen museum of archeology and ethnography. The first part under the title of "Magic and medical terms: personality, text, rite" (Ermakova, 2008).

The method of folklore questioning in terms of the context, including the context created by folklorists' introduction into the natural environment of folklore shows good results. They use a certain technique to identify symbolic nature of singing as an activity in a particular village, district, region, etc. It takes into account the gender and age of performers, repertoire, and typical situation of singing. According to the conducted field seasons typical situations are singing on stage, at rehearsals, in an informal setting, during interviews and alone. Each situation of singing is described by the following parameters: performers, repertoire, setting, spontaneous/organized character. The above-noted method of analytical description was developed within the scientific seminars at the philological department of Saint Petersburg state university. The folklore singing is considered as an essential everyday activity (Semenova, 2018).

The survey of sacred information has also its own features besides a set of questions asked in the course of field work. Mythological and religious perceptions of Ossetian traditional beliefs are relevant at the moment. There are active sanctuaries in the mountain and flat areas of the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania and the Republic of South Ossetia-Alania. Consequently, a certain hierophany has developed with respect to each of them. The collector/interviewer both records the material and interprets it. The quality

of this interpretation has influence on the existence of the tradition in the present and future (Bakhtina, 2013).

4.4. The translation of the folklore text

The correct presentation of information contained in the folklore text by informants in the course of interviewing has great importance (Aciobăniţei, 2012). The informant can often switch to Russian or Ossetian for more complete and clear understanding of spoken information. Switching to another language in the course of the survey does not change the sequence of the interviewee's thoughts, it does affect the entire understanding of the text. Using both languages is not intended but spontaneous. The informant transmits a part of his energetics with sacred information through the informational channel.

The process of interviewing does not often complete with getting the text, its understanding and interpretation. The text is further translated into another language (in our case more often into Russian).

The translation is a very important constituent of fairy and non-fairy prose interpretation. In the course of translation new knowledge for the speaker of another language and another culture-bearer is created. The translator of new information – the interpreter – must focus not only on the addressee's needs but also on the level of his knowledge about the reality reflected in the verbal folklore monument. The translation of folklore text requires to minimize the interference in the content and structure of the text. The approach to the interpretation depends on the type of the text its genre: poetic or prose translation, transfering a form of the fairy-tale or the oral story, etc.

Currently, scientific approaches and principles of folklore translation are studied in depth (Limorenko, 2017). Approaches to the equivalence of translated folklore text differ from the equivalence of literary text. If literary translation gives the priority to achieving artistic and aesthetic equivalence of both texts (the original and the translation), then the translation of folklore text requires a comprehensive approach. In a formal approach the translator tries to find the language elements without distorting the form of the original message. Semantic equivalents assume the preservation of semantic identity of lexems.

However, a literal translation is not always reasonable in the folklore translating. The method of mechanical transfer of ethno-cultural components including theonyms, oronyms, toponyms, anthroponyms to the translated text is used to provide name availability to the recipient. The method of scientific commentaries for interpretating difficult-to-understand parts in the folklore text is necessary. Interpreters often use the following types of commentaries: *the ethnographic commentary*, *the philological commentary*, *the folkloristic commentary*. The ethnographic commentary gives historical background about details of life, customs, traditions of the ethnic community, and other ethnographic gaps, religious and mythological perceptions found in the text. The philological commentary is an explanation of deviations from the original, interpretation literary translated parts of the folklore text, and linguistic means used in it (phraseological locutions, fixed expressions, nonfree phrases, figures of speech, archaisms, historicisms, etc.). The folkloristic commentary introduces the genre features of the translated folklore monument to a foreign-language reader (Limorenko, 2007).

5. Research Methods

The aspect of the interviewer's/folklorist's introduction must be solved in the context of psychological compatibility of the environment and the folklorist. Neither the suitable appearance of the folklorist, nor the correctly asked questions should provoke the interlocutor to rejection or any other negative emotions. A deeper level of adequate attitude to a surveyed group of people in the mountain area of North Ossetia-Alania is to know Ossetian etiquette norms of behavior and rules of contact with the sacred zones. There is a strict gender division of roles in the sacred space in the Ossetian tradition according to which women are not allowed to be near the male sanctuaries.

6. Findings

Translating folklore texts of different genres (fairy-tales, legends, tales, oral stories and songs) into Russian (Sokaeva & Dzaparova, 2015; Sokayeva, 2012) we used the ethnographic and philological commentaries. We gave commentaries in toponymic features of places where the folklore text was recorded, explanations in meal names and other ethnographic names, interpretations of the individual statements meaning in translating of the Turkish Ossetians oral stories.

The toponymic complex in the translated folklore texts recorded on the territory of the North Ossetia is represented by toponymic names and sanctuaries. The Ossetian non-fairy prose is represented by the oral stories about sanctuaries: *"St Hidikusa", "Dream about kuvd", "About Ardzhinaraga", "Dziri's sanctuary", "Uacill's sanctuary"*. We transliterated, transcribed or calqued toponyms without the subsequent commentary: *"Цымыти" – "Цымыти" (Cymyti), "Къадат" – "Кадат" (Kadat), "Дзуарыхъæу" – "Дзуарикау" (Dzuarikau), "Хидыхъус" – "Хидикус" (Hidikus), "Хуыцауы дзуар" – "Святилище Бога" (God's sanctuary), "Уæлæмæсыг" – "Верхняя башня" ("The upper tower"), «Заманхъул» – «Заманкул» (Zamankul), "Йелхот» – "Эльхотово" (El'hotovo), «Æрджынарæг» – «Арджинараг» (Ardzhinarag), «Тæтæртупский минарет» – «Татартупский минарет» (Tatartup minaret), "Дзирийы дзуар" – «святилище Дзири» ("Dziri's sanctuary"), "Уациллайы кувæндон» – «святилище Уацилла» ("Uacill's sanctuary")*. The search for another translation way would be inappropriate, since the potential reader (Ossetian) is well familiar with the toponymic complex represented in the oral stories. Language immersion and the readers' background knowledge about cultural objects influence the choice of translation technique. Switching from one language into another in the course of interviewing (Ossetian → Russian) sometimes gave us a cue about the representing way of toponym in the language of translation *(«Тæтæртупский минарет» – «Татартупский минарет» (Tatartup minaret))*.

7. Conclusion

Thus, the interviewer should not burden the members of the traditional environment/informant with his presence, disrupt the established worldview balance in the mountain territory. The folklore interview/survey undoubtedly actualizes sacred information and prolongs the life of traditional plots, and therefore supports above-noted worldview balance. Language interaction is an integral process in

obtaining folklore material. It is represented in a spontaneous switching from Ossetian into Russian in the course of text generation. The received information is translated into another language while creating a secondary text. Adequate perception of the sacred text depends on transfering ethno-cultural elements including folklore and ethnographic names in the translation. The presentation of the Ossetian culture as a whole is possible in a complete format with the help of adequate translation (taking into account the specifics of the original text).

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