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A CONTRIBUTION TO THE INVESTIGATION OF ZLATOSTRUJ

Анета Димитрова. *Златоструят в преводаческата дейност на старобългарските книжовници* (The *Chrysorrhoeas* Collection (*Zlatostruj*) in the Translation Activity of the Old Bulgarian Writers). София: Авалон, 2016, 456 p. ISBN 978-954-9704-36-5.

The published in early 2017 book by the young Bulgarian scholar Aneta Dimitrova on the *Chrysorrhoeas* Collection (*Zlatostruj*) in the Old Bulgarian tradition may well be considered an event in the modern Palaeoslav Studies. The topic of the monograph is especially significant. It is focused on issues related to the medieval Bulgarian translations, known to constitute the greatest part of our literature in the Middle Ages. The subject of investigation is



Tsar Simeon's *Zlatostruj* – an Old Bulgarian collection of John Chrysostom's (and Pseudo-John Chrysostom's) selected homilies and sermons with moralising content, which was compiled on the initiative of the Bulgarian Tsar Simeon and which is known in three main versions with different structure: the Short one (S) comprising 81 pieces of writing, the Long one (L) of 137 works and the Hilandar one (H) of 61 works.

The worth of the study is determined by the fact that the monument analysed is indubitably representative of Preslav literature and that the study of this literature's linguistic and translational peculiarities is of particular importance as a necessary basis to prove the Preslav origin of some lexemes, usages and grammatical features found also in other monuments with still unclear chronological and temporal attribution. The homilies in the most archaic part of the Long version of *Zlatostruj* have not been the subject of a detailed linguistic study and analysis prior to A. Dimitrova, even though the scholarly attention to the monument dates back to the late 18th and early 19th century (it was studied by K. F. Kalajdovich, V. I. Grigorovich, P. J. Šafárik, A. F. Gilferding, P. M. Stroeve, S. N. Palauzov, I. I. Sreznevsky, V. Jagić, V. M. Malinin, G. A. Iljinsky, more recently by K. Ivanova¹, F. Thompson², M. Fomina³, T. Georgieva⁴, and Y. Miltenov⁵ mostly focused on the short version).

The research presented here continues the line of the earlier studies on the relationship between the different versions of the monument and fills in significant gaps in our knowledge of it. Some of the conclusions made by previous scholars on the basis of source-critical, archeographical and text-critical methods, are examined, refined and enlarged, at times even corrected, by means of a consistent linguistic analysis. The monograph is particularly substantial in the field of Old Bulgarian Studies and especially in relation to the history of medieval translation. Its contribution is to clarify a number of questions opened by the *Chrysorrhoeas* Collection: about the relationship between its different versions as well as between the Slavic target text and the Greek source tradition of St. John Chrysostom; about the textual history of some particular homilies and of the Long version of the collection as a whole; about the genesis of its structure – was it a work of a single translator or a collective undertaking; were the homilies translated as series and one after another or, rather, separately and at random; which texts are different translations of the same writings and which are revisions of the same translation; how many groups of texts are determined to share common translation principles etc., etc.?

It is worth mentioning here also the specific difficulties in accomplishing the study on the *Chrysorrhoeas* Collection in Old Bulgarian, since such a study requires particularly high professional skills. From the Slavonic perspective, the subject of investigation is not a single uniform codex but a collection with inhomogeneous structure that came down to us in different versions as a result of its extremely complicated textual tradition built up by a collective undertaking of many translators and with a relatively autonomously existing component parts outside the frames of the *Zlatostruj*. From the Byzantine perspective, the subject of investigation is not less complicated – the Slavonic collection does not correspond to one particular Greek prototype but is a compilation, besides, not only of Chrysostomian but also of works by other authors with different style and content. This directly reflects on the Old Bulgarian translation making its manuscript history rich, diverse, not always accessible and not entirely studied. The research is further hampered by the lack of critical editions of the texts in

1 Подробна библиография върху Златоструя до 1976 г. вж. у Иванова 1985,728

2 Thomson 1982, 1-65.

3 Фомина 1990, 297-320; 1993, 34-53; 2000.

4 Георгиева 2003.

5 Милтенов 2013.

the two traditions, editions that are based on at least as much as possible and earliest copies to allow establishing a model that is reliable and closest to the archetype. This inevitably requires the scholar to be also a textual critic.

The main source for the Old Bulgarian translation of the homilies 1-45 of the Longer Collection are two Russian manuscripts: MS 33.2.12 from the Library of the Academy of Sciences in Saint Petersburg (late 15th century) and MS 214 from the collection of the Chudovsky monastery, State Historical Museum in Moscow (15th century). They were chosen precisely because of their content – homilies L1-L45. The observations, however, are not limited thereto. Some copies of the Long version (homilies 1-137) are attracted for comparison, namely MS 43 from the Moscow Theological Academy (1474, Russian) and, in only rare cases, the almost identical with it MS 44 (16th century, Russian). The sources used for the study of the Greek text are not only *Patrologia Graeca* and the *Pinakes* database (<http://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr>), but also many not edited and not studied manuscripts (those are preferred for comparison, which are dated back to the 12th century or earlier and descent to a time closer to the translation).

The monograph consists of an introduction, a research part and a few appendices. The introduction summarises the issues related to the *Zlatostruj* and describes the theoretical principles of study by using and enriching the scholarly experience gained in investigations dedicated to medieval Slavonic translational principles and techniques.

There is a paragraph in this part, which is dedicated to the usage of the Biblical quotations in the *Zlatostruj*. The conclusions here are particularly valuable, even though sketchy. They have resulted from a thorough analysis and reveal the multilayer problems related to their usage not only in the analysed collection but also in all the monuments of the time. The author may well be advised to continue with such observations in her future studies.

Dimitrova's clarifications regarding the Greek source texts are well grounded. It would not be possible to fully reflect the characteristics of the respected Old Bulgarian versions without them.

Each of the homilies L1-L45 is observed separately and every description follows a constant pattern, which serves as a matrix and allows for comparing the results. Some general data are given concerning the place of the respected homily in the *Zlatostruj*, concerning its Greek source text with its versions and the relation of the Old Bulgarian target text to one of these versions (if it is at all possible to determine and support by some text material).

The various syntactic and lexical criteria combined create the profile of translation. The linguistic analysis of the homilies is focused on those syntactic and morphological peculiarities, which are symptomatic when characterising the translational principles of the Old Bulgarian target texts – constructions with an article (*substantivated* and attributive), infinitive with an article, participles and participial constructions; declarative infinitive and synonymous means to express indirect speech; approaches to translate genitive of possession and the Old Bulgarian usage of dative with nouns; *da*-construction instead of infinitive; archaic rection of verbs etc. This list may well be enlarged, in a further study, with other specific morphological parameters (e.g. usage of various forms in the verb paradigm). The vocabulary is presented by means of translational equivalents taken from categories of words which are indicative for the language of either the school or the particular writer, like terminological and abstract vocabulary, loan words, compound words etc. What would be advisable here is to work out the details of the comments to some of the lexemes.

Two types of homilies with similar features are distinguished on the basis of the so conducted analysis. What is discussed in this part of the book are the variant readings in the Greek tradition (according to the copies used for the study) which can explain the discrepancies

and unclear phrases in the Slavonic translation and which attest to another Greek source text. This largely compensates for the lack of critical edition of the homilies.

The appendices present the individual for each homily results of the matrix description of the linguistic features of the texts in a way that allows for comparing and summarising the information in a new high level of deduction. Appendix 1 is a list of examples taken from various homilies to illustrate the different aspects of translation as exactness, correctness, innovativeness and archaicity of grammatical forms. Appendix 2 summarises the linguistic data about all the examined texts, given systematically in tables according to the type of syntactic structure, ways of translation and number of uses. This provides a quick look at the similarities and differences between them and favours their comparison.

Appendix 4 is arranged in two parts which complement one another – an Old Bulgarian – Greek and a Greek – Old Bulgarian. It combines in a list the translation correspondences of the lexemes excerpted while working on the separate homilies. One can find here words of different origin (Preslav, Cyrillo-Methodian, Greek, Semitic, Proto Bulgarian) and of different type (compound words, terminological, thematic, specific and stylistically marked vocabulary). In this way it is possible to compare the texts also in terms of the choice of the lexical correspondences in the respective translation. The detailed excerpt only slightly reveals the enormous lexical richness of the *Zlatostruj*. It would be a good idea, at a later stage, to publish a full bilingual glossary of all the words found in the archaic part of the Long version of the monument. Moreover, since *Zlatorstruj*, even though among the sources for Miklošič and Sreznevsky, does not have its vocabulary presented in full in these lexicographic reference books because of the different set of homilies included in their excerption.

The contribution of Appendix 3 concerns the source-critical Old Bulgarian studies. It introduces the most archaic part of the *Zlatostruj* into scholarly circulation by offering a bilingual edition of homilies L12, L40 and L42 after MS 33.2.12 (Library of the Academy of Sciences, Saint Petersburg) with Greek parallel after MS 75-76 (New College, Oxford). The author may well be advised also here to accomplish what she has started and prepare a full edition of all the 45 homilies of the archaic part of the Long version of the collection (with a broader source basis, if possible).

One of the major advantages of this study is that it combines in a harmonious unit the detailed analysis of the single text item with the broad perspective covering larger groups of texts (e.g. when presenting the presence of the *Zlatostruj* homilies not only in its versions but also in other miscellanies – calendar or with stable content – or to be used by themselves etc). In this way, the study provides information on both the single homilies and the history of the whole they belong to. By necessity, this requires some excellent knowledge not only of the specific subject of study – the archaic part of the Long version of *Zlatostruj* – but also of all the varieties of the collection as well as of the Old Bulgarian homiletic heritage as a whole.

The monograph is an excellent example of methodological implementation and gives the model for future investigations by means of the principles applied in it:

— Of the way to examine translated text – to identify the characteristics inherent to the source text prior to making conclusions about the feature of the translation (I would call this the principle of primacy securing the objectivity of the study).

— Of the way to study inhomogeneous text entities as are the medieval miscellanies – the principle of the matrix ensuring comparability of results: to prepare both a model to describe the analysed characteristics of the separate texts and uniform criteria on which to base their comparison; the principle of the interdependence of the whole and its constituents: the study of the place of each of the texts among the others, both in the *Zlatostruj* and in any other

medieval miscellany, can be done only on the basis of a comprehensive analysis of all the other texts that accompany it, first, one by one, and then, as the whole they constitute.

— Of the way to develop criteria to characterise the translation principles: by means of searching for and finding diagnostic linguistic specifics (syntactical and lexical) based on the translator's opportunity to choose when there are more than one solutions to express the same meaning or when there is a lack of an exact correspondence between the source language and the target language (the so-called language asymmetry) and based on the relative stability and weaker variability of the different translation decisions expressing the same meaning, when distributing the text in a manuscript environment.

— Of the way to lexicographically describe the vocabulary of a medieval miscellany – with references to homilies and not to codicological designation, which allows for a direct look at the distribution of the respective translator's decisions according to text entities and a clear visualisation of the isoglosses between the groups of homilies sharing the same features.

It should be stressed in conclusion that, even though some of the aspects of analysis could have been broader, the monograph of A. Dimitrova is especially valuable. The future studies in the field of Old Bulgarian literature, language and translation should take it in consideration not only as a specific research, but also as a methodology to study Old Bulgarian translated texts.

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