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**IVAN PETROV, *Od inkunabułów do pierwszych gramatyk. Konteksty rozwoju bułgarskiego języka literackiego (koniec XV – początek XVII wieku)* [From Incunabula to First Grammars. Contexts of the Development of the Bulgarian Literary Language (Late 15<sup>th</sup> – Early 17<sup>th</sup> Century)], Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, Łódź 2015, pp. 268.**

Ivan Petrov's monograph, published by Łódź University Press, basically fits into the mainstream of his research interest, since it refers to the history of language (Bulgarian, in this case). In contrast to the vast majority of his previous publications, which focused on issues related to the development of the systems of Bulgarian and, to a slightly lesser extent, Polish (i.e. the inner history of these languages, according to the nomenclature applied in diachronic linguistics<sup>1</sup>), this monograph is devoted to the so-called outer history, which comprises the entirety of the historical and sociocultural factors that, on the one hand, accompany any given language and, on the other hand, influence its development (cf. p. 9). The author undertakes to describe possibly the most interesting and dynamic

era in the history of the Bulgarian language, namely the transitional period between the Middle Bulgarian representation of the Old Church Slavonic tradition, which was, to some extent, present in the literature of that time, and the so-called pre-renaissance age, which was characterised by breaking with this tradition. The same period witnessed the decline of the era of handwritten manuscripts, already proclaimed at the invention of printing, and the onset of the new age of the printed book. And it is the beginnings of the latter in the territory of *Slavia Orthodoxa* that the monograph focuses on.

Chapter 1 (*Church Slavonic Language and its Influences upon Bulgarian: the Concepts of Description and Interpretation*, p. 17–54) is devoted mainly (but not exclusively) to terminological issues – the author provides a meticulously detailed outline of the massive debate on the definition of 'Church Slavonic language' and its related terms, which has been held in Paleo-Slavonic circles since the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, illustrating the discourse with numerous extensive examples from the subject literature (some fragments may even come as excessively extensive) and referring to it critically. Such a profound synthesis of the previous studies makes it possible for the reader to learn in detail the evolution of the term and the difficulties related to its unambiguous determination and definition. As the title of the chapter indicates, the vast majority of its content is related to the manner of describing such a phenomenon as what Church Slavonic language was (and still is, to a certain extent). Nevertheless, Petrov himself declares that *a holistic collection, an exhaustive critical presentation and a thorough systematisation of opinions*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. e.g.: I. PETROV, *Zdania temporalne w Biblii nowobułgarskiej (1924 r.) i ich odpowiedniki w średniobułgarskim Kodeksie Ochrydzkim (XII w.)*, AUL. FL 43, 2005, p. 91–110; IDEM, *Древнеславянские источники и функциональный (семантический) подход к изучению развития языковой системы: на примере болгарского языка*, SeS 3–4, 2005–2006, p. 173–182; IDEM, *Wyrażanie struktur polipredykatywnych w rozwoju języka bułgarskiego*, Łódź 2007; IDEM, *Наблюдения върху синтаксиса на старобългарската епиграфика (X–XI век)*, Pbg 32.1, 2008, p. 36–46; I.N. PETROV, W.B. TWARDZIK, *Kamień, który odrzucili budując, czyli o staropolskich imiesłowach nieodmiennych w funkcji podmiotu*, JPo 90.1, 2010, p. 5–15; IDEM, *Nie masz, kto ratując, czyli o staropolskich imiesłowach nieodmiennych czasu teraźniejszego w zdaniach podmiotowych*, JPo 93.2, 2013, p. 65–76; IDEM, *Gdyby przysięgły człowiek widział kogo raniąc barzo, czyli o staropolskich imiesłowach nieodmiennych czasu teraźniejszego w funkcji biernej*, JPo 94.1, 2014, p. 63–68; IDEM, *O staropolskich imiesłowach dociekliwie i odkrywco*, Sla 83.4, 2014, p. 423–431.

[regarding various methods in which Church Slavonic language had been described – A.K.] *is currently an unachievable task* (cf. p. 27), and thus, he focuses on the studies published no earlier than in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is also noteworthy that the author does not confine himself to linguistic studies *per se*, but he also refers to research conducted in other branches of science. For obvious reasons, Petrov pays special attention to Bulgarian studies and treatises when theorising on Church Slavonic language, its function and influence upon Bulgarian language.

Chapter 2 (*Incunabula and Cyrillic Old Prints: Issues of Taxonomy and Nomenclature*, p. 57–84) is devoted to the presentation and explanation of terminological intricacies and complexities (e.g. problems related to such definitions as ‘incunabulum’, ‘old print’, ‘first printing’, etc. within the territory of *Slavia Orthodoxa*), and the issues regarding the systematisation and classification of the resource database covered in the publication. Petrov also pays particular attention to the role of writings which accompanied the base texts of old prints, e.g. forewords, afterwords, and colophons, and he consistently names them ‘anagraphic texts’ (following the terminology applied by Mariyana Tsibranska-Kostova<sup>2</sup>).

In Chapter 3 (*16<sup>th</sup> Century South Slavonic Cyrillic Incunabula: Fundamental Traditions and Source Contexts*, p. 87–142) the author chronologically presents the history of Glagolitic incunabula, Cyrillic incunabula from Cracow and Cetinje, Romanian and Bulgarian incunabula (in three variations) with some related centres, Venetian and Serbian printing houses, and finally a brief description of East Slavonic Cyrillic incunabula. Importantly, Petrov does it not only on the grounds of the existing subject literature, but also through the analysis of source texts.

In the last part of his book, Petrov draws the reader’s attention to the growing interest that the printers and their patrons of the time took in publishing works that were of an educational and lexicological nature (and that frequently referred to other works of this kind), which

was, to some extent, a response to normative processes within the language. What is more, Petrov also nominates the most significant publications focusing on the ‘pre-grammatical’ linguistic tradition of South Slavs (p. 146sq.). The summary of the deliberations included in the three chapters (p. 143–149) also allows for speculation regarding the future direction of the author’s research work (p. 144), i.e. a multi-dimensional comparison of the language of various incunabula (both base and anagraphic texts).

Additionally, it is noteworthy to mention that throughout almost the whole book the author manages to strike the right balance between compactness of language and the clarity of his reasoning, which is by no means common practice in scientific works.

Another integral part of the monograph, apart from *Bibliography* (p. 151–187) and *Index of Source Texts* (p. 189–195), is an annex (p. 199–260) which contains a chronological list of Polish translations of forewords, afterwords and colophons, originating from South Slavonic Cyrillic incunabula, and old prints dated between the late 15<sup>th</sup> century and early 17<sup>th</sup> century. The annex constitutes a supplement to Chapter 3, in which (more or less extensive excerpts of) these texts had already been quoted in their original version, and it also corresponds with Chapter 2, where the author indicated the importance of these types of texts. It is also worth mentioning that the author of nearly all translations included in the annex is Professor Aleksander Naumow, a prominent paleo-Slavist, expert in (Old) Church Slavonic literature and Polish translator of numerous incunabula, and emphasising the fact that the vast majority of the anagraphic texts published in the monograph had never been published before, which is of crucial importance, since Petrov – indicating the justifiability of multi-faceted research of such metatexts – at the same time provides a substantial amount of material for such studies.

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. M. ЦИБРАНСКА-КОСТОВА, *Сборникът „Различни потреби” на Яков Крайков между Венеция и Балканите през XVI век*, София 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Uniwersytet Łódzki, Wydział Filologiczny, Katedra Filologii Słowiańskiej