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Die ruthenische Schriftsprache bei Ivan Uževyč

unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Lexik seines Gesprächsbuchs

Rozmova/Besěda

Mit Wörterverzeichnis und Indizes zu seinem ruthenischen und kirchenslavischen Gesamtwerk
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THE RUTHENIAN LITERARY LANGUAGE
IN IVAN UŽEVYČ'S TEXTS
(ABSTRACT)

1. Introduction. Helmut Keipert¹ has shown the *Rozmova/Besěda*, an 'anonymous' bilingual phrase book held at the *Bibliothèque nationale de France* (Slav № 7) and first published in 2005,² to be an autograph of Ivan Uževyč, the author of the first East Slavic grammar (1643/1645).

2. The Status of Ruthenian. The left column of this manuscript, bearing the title "Popularis", does not represent what happened to be the author's "popular" dialect but rather the literary language of all East Slavs on the territory of Poland-Lithuania. The present work demonstrates that the original Old East Slavic literary language did not immediately break up into three (Russian, Ukrainian, and Belarusian) but first into two distinct parts (Russian and Ruthenian), so that from the late 14th century onwards the Old Russian language of texts written in Muscovy differs noticeably from the language of texts written in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and that in the middle period of their history the ancestors of today's Ukrainians and Belarusians had a single common language that to a considerable extent already met most of the criteria formulated in the 20th century for the definition of a standard language. This language is nowadays generally called *Ruthenian* in the Western philological tradition and *prostaja mova* in Russian language publications. Only after it had finally fallen from use at the end of the 18th century were new national languages formed during the Romantic period on the basis of popular dialects: the Belarusian and the Ukrainian.

3. Ivan Uževyč and his Phrase Book. Before the linguistic analysis of Ivan Uževyč's texts, his biography and the process of his work on the phrase book are

¹ Helmut Keipert. „Rozmova/Besěda: Das Gesprächsbuch Slav. № 7 der Bibliothèque nationale de France“. *Zeitschrift für Slavische Philologie* 60.1 (2001), p. 9–40.

² *Rozmova · Besěda. Das ruthenische und kirchenslavische Berlaumont-Gesprächsbuch des Ivan Uževyč*. Mit lateinischem und polnischem Paralleltext herausgegeben von Daniel Bunčić und Helmut Keipert. München 2005 (= *Sagners slavistische Sammlung*, ed. Peter Rehder, vol. 29).

considered. Additional arguments are provided to prove that not only the two manuscripts of the *Hrammatyka slovenskaja* but also the *Rozmova/Besěda* and the Polish-language panegyric *Obraz cnoty y sławy* of 1641 (the text of which is reprinted in the appendix) must be attributed to him. There is no foundation, however, for Alena Jaskevič's attribution of the Ruthenian/Church Slavonic dictionary *Synonima slavenorosskaja* to Uževyč.³

Apart from that, the issue of Uževyč's faith is raised. At the moment it is difficult to give a clear answer to this question: he may have been a Basilian but there is also a possibility that he was a Roman Catholic.

The *Rozmova/Besěda* is a translation of the first part of the well-known phrase book by Antwerp schoolmaster Noël de Berlaumont that was printed more than one hundred and fifty times from the 16th to the 19th century. Uževyč translated from the Latin column of the eight-language edition *Colloquia et dictionarium octo linguarum* printed in The Hague and Delft in 1613. He did not know the Polish version of the Warsaw *Berlaumont* edition of 1646. It is most likely that he translated his phrase book after he composed the second manuscript of his grammar (1645) and that he intended it not for his compatriots but for well educated Western European (primarily French) readers. Whether the *Rozmova* was meant to teach Ruthenian – say, to Catholic missionaries – remains unclear.

4. The Church Slavonic of the *Besěda*: The central issue here is the practical significance of the translation of a Western European secular text into the Church Slavonic language (in the right column of the manuscript). It is probably safe to assume that Uževyč understood Ruthenian ("lingua popularis") and Church Slavonic ("lingua sacra") to be two varieties of one and the same language, a language that he calls "lingua sclavonica" in his grammar book. On the graphical/phonetic level the Church Slavonic version of the manual does not differ from the Ruthenian. On the morphological and syntactical levels, however, certain devices of 'Slavonification' may be observed: preterites formed with *-l* are substituted by aorist forms, even in cases where the rules of Old Church Slavonic would have called for the imperfect tense, or in "optative" forms with the particle *by* (e.g. *ašče by vosxotěchom* 'if we wanted'). The language structure is made more complex in a variety of ways: the Ruthenian *iti* 'to go' is translated as *pospěšestvovati, vědaj* 'you must know' by *vědomo da budeš ti, oxotne bym prišol* 'I would have liked to come' by *blagovolenie přijti iměl bym* and so on. Several lexical Church Slavonicisms do not correspond to the original semantically: a

³ Алена Аляксандраўна Яскевіч. „Спадчына Івана Ужэвіча і славянскія літаратуры“. *Славістыка* 3 (Београд 1999), p. 249–254, here: p. 253; eadem, *Падзвіжнікі і іх святыні. Духовная культура старажытнай Беларусі*. Мінск 2001, p. 212.

landlord is addressed as *hospodí moj*, a common messenger as *apostol*, a neighbour at the table as *bližnij*, and admonishing one's son to be good comes out as: *priloži prisno sujato žiti*. Similarly, the Church Slavonic equivalents of Ruthenian expressions recommended for letter-writing were in fact used only in prayer. It follows from this that the Church Slavonic language was by no means a mere 'vessel' that would hold any content, but on the contrary that Uževyč, in order to translate a secular text into Church Slavonic, was compelled to interpret each sentence as if he had taken it from a text belonging to the religious canon (e.g. a biblical parable).

5. The Ruthenian Grammar of the *Rozmova*: The phonetic and grammatical description of Uževyč's language on the basis of his phrase book does not in itself represent the aim of the present book (Oleksandra Antoniv in Lviv is preparing a dissertation dedicated to this task). However, since several linguists analysing the language of the *Hrammatyka* and the *Rozmova* have arrived at different conclusions, it was necessary to at least outline the most important characteristics of its language. The majority of these researchers have committed logical errors: from Uževyč's use of the letter ⟨и⟩ after sibilants it is concluded, for instance, that *i and *y coincided in his native dialect, or his confusion of the letters ⟨ѣ⟩, ⟨и⟩, and ⟨е⟩ in unstressed positions (*ikan'e*) is supposed to indicate that he pronounced *ě as [i]. It would seem that letters are taken altogether too literally here: the spelling ⟨ѣа⟩ in a Ruthenian text by no means indicates that c is not palatalised, just as in contemporary Russian the spelling ⟨ча⟩ is used although č is palatalised.

Discovering Uževyč's origins has proved a lot more complicated than has been assumed so far. It is most likely that his home dialect was characterised by an [e]-type (possibly diphthongised) pronunciation of *ě as well as by *ikan'e*, which suggests he came from West Central Polesie — whether from the north or south of today's Ukrainian/Belarusian border remains unknown.

Turning our attention away from the mistakes betraying Uževyč's origins to the norm in accordance with which he attempted to write, we find that this norm was a deliberately tolerant one with regard to regional variants; Polonisms are almost always allowed by way of compromise although there are rules regulating such borrowings. Uževyč uses *što*, *ščo*, and *co*; *odin*, *jedin* and *jeden*; *budem* and *budemo*. If we compare the characteristics of this language to that of Skaryna, Smotryc'kyj or Vyšens'kyj, it becomes obvious that all these authors conceive of the Ruthenian norm in similar terms although in each case the author's home dialect can make itself felt in deviations from that norm. We can therefore conclude that Ruthenian was a literary language that allowed variation, but its several regional varieties cannot be identified with present-day Ukrainian and Belarusian.

6. The Ruthenian Vocabulary of the *Rozmova*: The main objective of this book is to establish the lexical and word-formative devices that Uževyč employed in his translation of the phrase book and to relate these to the Polish language — represented by the parallel Polish version of that same text, which was unknown to him. First a small extract from the text is subjected to a lexical analysis. After that various lexical fields are examined where the realities of West European every-day life play an especially prominent role and that will therefore challenge the translator in a special way: currencies, textiles, buildings, religion, the names of the months, anthroponomy and toponymy. (An overview over the lexicon of Uževyč's texts as a whole is provided by a dictionary presented in the appendix.)

On the one hand, there are astounding parallels between the Ruthenian and the Polish translation that extend even to the semantic and the pragmatic levels: both translators, for instance, use the word *funt* 'pound (as a currency)' in conversational and *libra* in literary situations, for both the prototype for the word *sukno* 'texture' appears to be woollen cloth etc. When referring to realities unknown to Slavic readers they employ similar devices of word-formation (the street-name *platea Cameria*, for example, is rendered as *ulica Komornaja/komorna ulica* in one and as *kamerskaja ulica/Cámerijska ulica* in the other case; no suffixation by *-sk-* is used with the old root *komor-*, nor *-n-* with the younger *kamer-*).

On the other hand, there is a host of indications of the independence of the Ruthenian language. Apart from the use of quite a few East Slavic words (e.g. *teper* alongside *teraz* 'now', *xvost* alongside *ogon* 'tail', or *sorok* alongside *čtyridesjat* 'forty'), there are also independent semantic solutions like the choice of the word *hroš* 'grosh' instead of *penjaz* 'penny' to denote 'money' in general: *hroši* (but cf. Polish *pieniądze* 'money'). However, we must not identify the structure of the lexicon of contemporary Belarusian or Ukrainian with that of Ruthenian. Uževyč, for example, does not yet treat the interrogative particle *čy* as part of the Ruthenian lexicon, instead, he consistently uses *li*, which today would be considered a Russianism. Conversely, when referring to the following day he exclusively wrote *jutro*, which would be seen as a Polonism in our time, while *zautra* (cf. Ukrainian *zavtra*, Belarusian *zaŭtra* 'tomorrow') appears only in the Church Slavonic column of Uževyč's phrase book.

7. Conclusion: The case of Ivan Uževyč, whose linguistic origin cannot be definitely located either in Belarus nor Ukraine, shows that Ruthenian authors in general cannot be treated in the context of a single national — i.e. anachronistic — philology, be it Ukrainian or Belarusian, but must be regarded from the broader viewpoint of "Ruthenian Studies".