

Declension of Nouns in the texts from the Ohrid Literary School

The Old Church Slavic language had a rich system of noun forms. However, in the history of the inflected system of nouns there were innovations and changes noticed in the canonical manuscripts, which were later confirmed and intensified in the Church Slavic period. These changes led to loosening of the declension and later to shedding of the synthetic way of expressing the relations between the words.

These developments were caused by various factors and thus, when talking about the declension system of the nouns, we must inevitably take into account the contacts with the neighbouring, above all, the Balkan languages; the penetration of the characteristics of the vernacular in the written language; the influence of the morphologic analogy, as well as the influence of the phonetic rules.

The above-mentioned processes resulted in reorganisation of the noun paradigms. As a result of the mutual influence (mixing) of the noun stems and the case suffixes of the nouns, the number of the noun stems was reduced; the unproductive noun bases were eliminated; the difference between the palatal and the non-palatal noun declension was eliminated; the functions of some cases were expanded; certain inflections were not expressed; some inflections were crossed, etc.

The development in the history of the noun case system will be illustrated with an accent on the declension composition of those texts related with the activities of the Ohrid Literary School, starting from the 12th century until the beginning of the 15th century. The subject of the research will be the representative monuments, more precisely: Dobromir's Evangeliary, Bitolski Triodion, Bologna Psalters, Zagreb Triodion, Radomir's Psalters, Macedonian Gospel.

The paper will focus mostly on the comparison of the noun system in the previously mentioned Church Slavic texts with a traditional situation. At the same time it will focus on those forms that display innovations in relation to the canonical paradigms. This will be an attempt to show if and to what extent the texts of the Ohrid Literary School follow the general tendency for deviation from the condition typical for the canonical texts. In the older manuscripts of the Church Slavic literature the examples that illustrate the deviations are optional and testify about the start of this process. The deviations in the noun system of forms in the more recent literary monuments are regularly and widely represented.