Agent Suffixes in Names of Profession in Old Church Slavonic

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In this lecture, I am intended to analyze the agent suffixes in Old Church Slavonic, trying to find out if there is any kind of motivation for the use of every morphological mark. Due to the wide extent of the subject, I focused on a semantic domain: the names of profession that can be found in the four "canonical" OCS Gospel manuscripts: the tetraevangelia *Zographensis* and *Marianus*, and the lectionaries *Assemanianus* and *Liber Savvae*.

As it is a well known fact, OCS is a language of translation, that was created by the Saints Cyril and his brother Method in order to transtate from Greek the liturgical books needed for their mission in the Great Moravia during the second half of the 9th c. And as a result of such translating activity, a huge amount of Greek loanwords and calques were adapted and created in OCS. That's why first of all it will be necessary to check the Greek words translated by the OCS names in order to determine whether the Slavic suffixes and mechanisms of word formation could have been motivated by the Greek ones.

Besides, I considered some other criteria: the lexical base on which are formed the OCS names of profession (either nominal or verbal base), as well as the different types of action expressed by every agent name. This way, I followed the example of a Spanish colleague, César Hernández García (forthc.), who employed the semantic roles and functions defined by the Functional Linguistics for the Syntax (1999) in order to analyze the agent names suffixes in Greek. That is, while in Syntax exist certain universal semantic functions that are expressed in every language through different morphosyntantic mechanisms such as cases, prepositions and so on, similarly in the domain of the word formation, the speaker might bear in mind some semantic motivations in order to create the agent names choosing a specific morphological mark.

For this research I also followed an article of the Dr. Juan Antonio Álvarez-Pedrosa (2001) on the names of profession in the OCS translation of the Gospel, but I just studied the nouns containing the suffixes *-nikŭ*, *-tel'ĭ*, *-ĭčĭ* and *-ar'ĭ* that seem to be more productive. On the contrary, I added some other nouns containing these suffixes which don't belong to the Gospel text itself, but appear in the titles of the lectionaries stating the different feasts of the liturgical calendar.

Comparing the mentioned suffixes with the Greek morphological marks, we observe that there is not a clear correspondence between them. OCS names of profession cointaing the suffix *-nikŭ* translate Greek nouns with almost all the suffixes included in the research (except *-ōnēs*), and in three of them (*-eús*, *-tēs* and *-os*), being the majority option. But it shows a similar number of examples in all of them. This would not allow us to confirm what Cejtlin (1977: 94) says regarding the correspondence of words in *-nikŭ* with Greek terms in *-os*. It is not easy either to establish a relationship between the other Slavic and Greek suffixes, at least within the limits of the research subject.

These results show clearly that the suffix *-nikŭ* is the most productive morphological mark for the names of profession in the OCS Gospel texts, something that is also valid for the OCS agent names in general, as well as for the modern Slavic languages, as it was already pointed out by Cejtlin (1977: 95f.) and Luschützky (forthc.).

If we take a look at the second criterion, we notice how the OCS names of profession containing the suffix *-nikŭ* are mostly based on a nominal stem, in contrast with the nouns in *-tel'ĭ* and in *-ĭcĭ* (just formed on a verbal base). On the contrary, the nouns in *-ar'ĭ* are exclusively denominals. Only four words containing the suffix *-nikŭ* have an adjectival or participial base.

Regarding the calques, we observe a high number of them in the names of profession in *-nikŭ* (18 out of 25), and specially in the denominals (14 out of 15). The proportion of calques is even higher in the nouns in *-tel'ĭ* (8 out of 9), and in *-ĭcĭ* (4 out of 7). Just the terms ending in *-ar'ĭ* don't show such a big preference for calques (with only two examples), including on the contrary three loanwords.

Switching now to the third criterion, I included almost all the types of action mentioned by César Hernández (forthc.), except the one that could be translated as "carrying". On the contrary, I do have found examples of the semantic role "holding". The same as Hernández, I allocated a section for the nouns that don't refer to an agent, but to a passive subject. Of course, this classification is relative and some nouns could denote several types of action at the same time.

If we take a look at the results, we remark a sort of distribution of some types of action among the different suffixes. In order to show this distribution, I drew a semantic map following the example of Hernández (forthc.) and Luján (forthc.). Like this, we see how the actions of producing and transforming are concentrated in the suffix *-tel'ĭ*, while those of standing, holding and not agent are expressed mostly by nouns in *-nikŭ*.

To summarize, we can say that bearing in mind the above-mentioned results, there is not a clear correspondence between the OCS suffixes and the Greek ones. On the contrary, we have found much more defined preferences of the suffixes for a specific lexical base or type of action, that could suggest a motivation of their usage. However, the results of this research are not conclusive, and the study should be extended to all the agent nouns of the whole "canonical" OCS.

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