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LINGUISTIC HISTORY AND THE OLD BULGARIAN DEFINITE ACTIVE PARTICIPLES

In Old Bulgarian there are attested two quite contrary analogical changes in definite active participles, one of which arose in the nominative plural masculine, and the other in certain other grammatical cases. It is not possible to determine whether one of the changes occurred in one set of dialects, and the other in another set of dialects, or whether they both occurred in a single dialect. Therefore one cannot reconstruct the exact history of these changes in Old Bulgarian during the ninth to eleventh centuries, nor even exclude the possibility that the change that occurred in the oblique cases might be a Moravian feature. Nevertheless, whatever their dialect distribution may have been, these forms constitute an interesting illustration of the general principle that linguistic change may be, paradoxically, at one and the same time motivated and yet fortuitous in the sense that the actual outcome of a change is a matter of probability rather than of inevitability.

In the nominative plural masculine, about two thirds of the examples of definite active participles are attested with an older desinence *-eji*, while about a third of the examples have a younger desinence *-iji*.[1]

Nominative Plural Masculine Definite Active Participles[2]

	Ps	Mar	Zo	Sav	Ass	Euch	Supr	Total
-eji	102	80	79	46	20	4	13	344
-iji	27	1	6	2	39	12	82	169

Diels states that the younger desinence could have arisen either as the result of the loss of intervocalic *-j-* followed by assimilation of *-ei* to *-ii*, or as the result of analogy with adjectives.[3] However, there is no evidence that the sequence *-eji*, or *-i,e* underwent such an assimilation, since, for example, the spelling of the dative singular feminine anaphoric pronoun always points to the sequence *jeji*, or *jei*, but never to **jii*, **ji*, or **ji*.[4] The younger desinence *-iji* of the nominative plural masculine of definite active participles is thus quite certainly analogical rather than phonetical in origin. Definite adjectives and passive participles had the

[1] The desinence of the accusative singular masculine of definite active participles, spelt -нн, -ѥн is homographic with the nominative plural masculine desinences, but phonologically distinct from them. In the accusative singular, *-нн* represents either an older form *-iji*, or a younger *-ij* arising as a result of the loss of the weak reduced vowels in dialects where these reduced vowels had high allophones in contiguity with *-j-*, whereas -ѥн represents a younger form after the loss of the weak reduced vowels in dialects without the high allophones. One can account for these two spellings of the accusative singular desinence only if one assumes that the most conservative attested form of accusative singular masculine definite marker is phonemically (jь), but not (i), so that the corresponding nominative plural masculine marker must have been (ji), but not (i).

[2] The statistics for the Zographensis include the younger part of the manuscript, folia 41-57.

[3] Diels, P. Altkirchenslavische Grammatik, 1. Heidelberg, 1932, pp. 113, 234, 242.

[4] An apparent exception, сѥѧн Supr 200. 16 dat sg fem 'one's own' is a scribal error for сѥѧѩѥи.

desinence *-iji* in the nominative plural masculine, while the sequence *-iji-* also occurred in the plural as a non-terminal suffix in the oblique cases, other than the accusative, of definite active participles and definite 'soft' stem adjectives in all three genders. A similar non-terminal suffix *-yji-* occurred in these grammatical cases in the definite passive participles and in 'hard' stem adjectives. Thus the younger desinence *-iji* in the nominative plural masculine of definite active participles gives rise, through proportional analogy, to a convergence of this type of definite modifier with all other definite modifiers, by generalising the sequence *iji* in certain grammatical cases.

However, in the genitive and dative plural masculine of definite active participles there is a rarely attested younger non-terminal suffix *-eji* instead of the older suffix *-iji*.

Genitive and Dative Plural Masculine Definite Active Participles

	Ps	Mar	Zo	Sav	Ass	Euch	Supr	Total
-iji-	70	69	56	1	63	141	354	754
-eji-	5	2	7	—	—	—	1	15

There are also three examples of such younger forms in cases other than masculine plural: — КАѢШТЕІМЬ СѦ Lk 15.10 Zo loc sg masc. '(over) the one repenting', БЖІВАІѢ-ЩЕІХЪ Lk 13.17 Sav loc pl neut '(about) the things happening', ВНДѦШТЕН Lk 10.23 Mar nom du neut '(the eyes) which see', where *eji* replaces an older sequence *iii*.

The ratio of older to younger spellings in the nominative plural masculine, for example *Marianus* 80:1, *Zographensis* 79:6, *Savvina kniga* 46:2, is such that these spellings could not have provided a model whereby the younger spellings in other grammatical cases could have been artificial as a result of purely scribal analogy.[5] There is such a ratio in the *Assemanianus*, 20:39, but this manuscript does not have younger forms in *-eji-*. The younger sequence *eji* was probably extended first in oblique cases of the masculine plural, by analogy with the nominative, and from there to other grammatical cases with an older sequence *-iji-*. This change is quite contrary to the extension of *-iji* into the nominative plural masculine, which brought about a convergence of definite active participles with other definite modifiers, since the extension of *eji* outside of the nominative plural masculine brought about a divergence of definite active participles from the other definite modifiers. One cannot be sure whether these two changes are evidence for dialect differentiation, or whether both changes could have occurred in a single dialect, for when either of these changes had occurred there would first have arisen optional sequences *eji/iji* either in the nominative plural masculine or in the other grammatical cases. Once these optional sequences had arisen in one case or other in the paradigm they could have been transferred analogically to another form or forms which previously had only the sequence *eji* or only the sequence *iji*. In such a dialect there would have arisen contrary analogical changes within a single paradigm, since the nominative plural masculine would have been converging with the other modifiers while other grammatical cases would have been diverging away from the other modifiers.

These forms, whose exact history cannot be traced, are only of marginal importance for the history of Old Bulgarian itself. However, again paradoxically, these apparently trivial data are of considerable interest when they are considered in the light of what we know about linguistic change in general.

[5] Younger contracted nominative plural masculine desinence *-i* is also poorly attested: — Ps 4, Mar 3, Zo 2, Sav 0, Ass 5, Euch 0, Supr 2.

SOURCES

Ass — Evangelarium Assemani II, ed. J. Kurz. Prague, 1955.
Euch — Euchologium Sinaiticum II, ed. R. Nahtigal ((=Akademija) Znanosti in Umetnosti v Ljubljani. Filoz.-Filot.-Hist. Razred II. Ljubljana, 1942).
Mar — Quattuor evangelorium versionis palaeoslovenicae codex Marianus, ed. V. Jagič. Berlin, 1883. (Reprint, Graz, 1960).
P_S — Синайская псалтырь, ed. S. Sever'janov. Petrograd, 1922. (Reprint, Graz, 1954).
Sav — Саввина книга, ed. V. Ščepkin. St. Petersburg, 1903. (Reprint, Graz, 1959).
Supr — Супрасълски или ретков сборник. 1 & 2, ed. J. Zaimov and M. Capaldo. Sofia, 1982, 1983.
Zo — Quattuor evangelorium codex glagoliticus olim Zographensis nunc Petropolitanus, ed. V. Jagić. Berlin, 1879. (Reprint, Graz, 1954).