

Bulgarian – A Language *Sui Generis*

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0. General.

Modern Bulgarian belongs to the large Slavonic subgroup of Indo-European languages. In the course of the ethnogenesis of the Bulgarian people, however, the Slavonic dialect brought to these lands by the South Slavonic tribes, of the group to be later called 'Bulgarian Slavenes', entered into contact with a number of non-Slavonic languages: 1) that (those) spoken by the autochthonous Thracian population and the peoples inhabiting the territory in the Antiquity: Thracian, Balkan Latin (or a local Thraco-Latin); 2) that of the founders of the Bulgarian state – Ancient Bulgarian, a language of unclear origin; 3) finally, the languages of the neighbouring populations: Dacian or Daco-Mysian and Albanian, then Greek in its various stages, much later – Rumanian and, finally, Turkish.

Bulgarian is the first literary Slavonic language: the earliest Bulgarian texts date back to the 9th century. Since then, the system of the language has undergone considerable development. Remaining genetically a Slavonic language, Modern Bulgarian is, nevertheless, *different*. Its specific development is often attributed to its inclusion in a supposed 'Balkan linguistic union', formed by Albanian, Bulgarian, Rumanian, Greek and, partly, Serbian. However, while indeed manifesting a number of 'Balkan' features and tendencies, Bulgarian remains, even in its Balkan environment, a language apart.

What are the features inherited by the Modern Bulgarian language; what factors influenced its system and in what ways; what defines best

the development that it underwent – these are the major problems addressed in this study.

The diachronic investigation of a language is almost unthinkable without taking into consideration the history of the people speaking it. The problem of the development of Bulgarian will therefore be placed in the general context of the history of the different peoples who participated in the ethnogenesis of the Bulgarian people, as well as of those peoples, languages and territories that influenced the development of the language or that, as historical sources, can throw light on its development.

1. The Indo-Europeans and Indo-European.

Today, Slavonic languages are spoken by a population of appr. 250 million. The Slavonic peoples belong to the much larger group of 'Indo-Europeans'. Since the 19th century, linguistics has accepted an account of the similarities between several large groups of languages – such as Balto-Slavonic, Romance, Germanic, Indo-Iranian, etc., according to which they developed on the basis of dialects of one common, 'Indo-European', mother language.

Archaeologists have put forward two major hypotheses on the origins of Indo-Europeans. According to one of these hypotheses, they were nomadic invaders. V. Gordon Childe supposes that these peoples lived over a large common territory, situated to the North of the Black Sea (on the territory of present-day Ukraine). Maria Gimbutas presents arguments that the proto-Indo-European culture, which she calls 'Kourgan', spread from a territory further to the East (North of the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea) and that the westward migration to the Danube valley and the Balkan Peninsula began between the years 4000 and 3500. Another, more recent, hypothesis, first formulated by Colin Renfrew and strongly supported by recent archaeological findings, suggests that the Indo-European expansion began much earlier, around 7 000 B.C., from Anatolia

or the Black Sea region. According to Renfrew this expansion did not take the form of nomadic invasions, but rather of the slow diffusion of an agrarian culture (Cf. Renfrew 1990, Barber 1993, Lebedynsky 2004). Both these hypotheses support the linguistic hypothesis of a common, Indo-European source language.

As reconstructed by comparative linguistics from the 19th century onwards, in the last stages of its existence Indo-European had the following major features:

Phonetic Features:

The vocalic system was marked by an opposition long/short. The opposition also covered the vowels 'schwa primum' (long) and 'schwa secundum' (short), presenting stages of vowel reduction. The vowels *a*, *o* and *e* (both long and short) could form the first element of diphthongs and diphthongal combinations.

The 'sonant' *r*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *w* could have vocalic or consonantal status. Another major opposition (covering plosive consonants) was the presence or absence of aspiration.

Syllables could be open or closed.

Accent was mobile, of intensity (not melodic) and was charged with a number of linguistic functions.

Morphological Features.:

The Indo-European language had a rich morphological system of nominal and verbal forms. The category of number was represented by the singular, dual and plural. Grammatical gender had three members: masculine, feminine and neuter. Verbal inflexion was well developed, marked for the categories of Person, Tense, Correlation, Voice, Mood.

The anaphoric pronouns **so/*to* formed both the demonstrative and the 3rd person of personal pronouns. Personal pronouns had forms for the two persons of the singular and plural. They had both tonic and atonic forms.

Cardinal numbers formed additive composites (10 + 1, 2, 3 etc.) up to 20 and multiplicative composites (2, 3 etc. x 10) up to 100. Ordinals were derived.

Syntactic Features:

Indo-European was a synthetic language.

The system of Case put in opposition: 1. nominal expressions, external to the clause proper (which were marked by the Vocative) and the arguments of the verb; 2. the verb's external argument, i.e. the Subject (marked by the Nominative) and the arguments forming part of the Verb Phrase (the direct and indirect objects); 3. the arguments forming the internal structure of the verb phrase. These latter could be marked for the following cases: the Accusative, the Dative, the Instrumental, the Locative, the Ablative.

The Case system also comprised the Genitive, marked by the Noun.

It is probably between the end of the third millennium and the beginning of the second millennium B.C. that the Indo-European linguistic unity was broken, giving rise to a number of languages - standing more or less individually (such as Albanian, Greek and the dead languages of the Illyrians, Thracians, Moesians, Dacians and Macedonians) or forming language groups (such as Iranian, Indian, Germanic, Slavonic, Baltic, Italic, Romance).

2. The Slavonic language group.

2.1. Proto-Slavonic.

Our information on the Slavonic tribes comes from three major sources:

1. *History of the Gothic Wars* by Procopius of Caesarea, written in 551-

554;

2. *Strategicon*, written at the end of the 6th century and attributed to the Emperor Mauritius and 3. *History of the Goths* by Jordan, written in 551. (Cf. Dimitrov 2002). According to these sources, around the first centuries A.D. the territory of dissemination of the common language of the Slavonic tribes (known today as 'Proto-Slavonic') was: to the East – the middle course of the Dnepr; to the West – the left bank of the Oder; to the South – the upper course of the Dnestr and the Carpathian mountains, to the North-West – the Baltic coast. It is estimated that Proto-Slavonic existed as an independent all-Slavonic language for appr. 2500 years before splitting up into three large groups. Towards the end of this period, it had already considerably deviated from the Indo-European mother tongue:

In the vocalic sphere, this development was expressed by the neutrallisation of the opposition long/short and the disappearance of the *schwa* sounds and the diphthongs. *Schwa primum* became *O*, *schwa secundum* developed in two vowels, called *ultra-short*: *ǫ* and *ɔ*. Among the other major developments were: a/ the changes: **a* -> *o* (lat. *acus* -> *остръ* [ostrʲ]), **o* -> *a* (lat. *duo* -> *дѣва* [dva]), **e* -> *ǣ* (an open vowel close to English [ae] , or even to the diphthong [ea], **u* -> *ы* (*tu* -> *ты* [ti]); b/ the emergence of the nasal sounds *ǫ̃* (close to the French *on*) and *ɔ̃* (close to French *en*).

In the consonantal sphere, the tendency towards simplification found expression in the neutralisation of the opposition aspirated/non-aspirated of plosives. Only the opposition *k/kh* was preserved and gave *k* and *x* (*h*), respectively – Cf. lat. *reciprocus* -> *прокъ* [prok] and Old Indian *kharah* -> *храбрь* [hrabr – 'brave'].

Proto-Slavonic underwent three processes of palatalisation. The first affected consonants placed in front of *j*. This shift of articulation towards the central palate had, as one result, the softening of the consonants *r, l, n* and, for the other consonants: a/ the development of a secondary (epenthetic) *l*. (In an initial syllable, this epenthetic *l* is typical of all

Slavonic languages: **bjudo* -> *блюдо* [blyudo – ‘dish’]. In other positions, the results are different for each individual Slavonic language); b/ a change of quality: in this respect, the groups *tj* and *dj* are particularly interesting, as they gave clearly different results for each separate Slavonic group or even language (Cf. below). The two following palatalisations gave, too, some differing results for the individual languages.

The accent of Proto-Slavonic became musical or of intonation. The intonation of the accented syllable could be rising or falling.

The syllable developed a tendency to be open, known as ‘Law of the Open Syllable’. The above-noted disappearance of diphthongs and the development of the two nasal vowels – *ǫ* and *ǫ̃* (on the basis of syllaboforming *n* and *m*) were important consequences of this law. The groups *or*, *ol*, *er* and *el* in front of and between consonants developed in specific ways in different Slavonic languages – Cf. 2.2. (iii) and 2.2. (iv) below.

In the morphology, the Law of the Open Syllable resulted in the loss of the consonantal endings – Cf. **mater* -> *мати* [mati]. The inflectional system of the noun remained richly developed but witnessed the loss of the Ablative Case. The verb, more conservative still, kept its abundance of categories. The formation of numerals followed the Indo-European model. (Cf. on the Slavs and Proto-Slavonic: Conte 1996, Gorshkov 1963, Gyuzelev et al 2001, Konstantinov 1993)

2.2. The Slavonic groups. The Bulgarian Slavenes.

In the course of the 6th century AD, the territory of the Slavonic tribes expanded considerably. Around that period they split up in three large groups: Venedes (Western Slavs), Antes (Eastern Slavs) and Slavenes (Southern Slavs). The Slavonic tribes which peopled densely the territory of present-day Bulgaria, and most of the Balkan Peninsula, were of the Slavene group. In the centuries to follow, they were to further divide into

Slovenes, Serbians and Bulgarian Slavenes. A small set of phonetic features places in opposition the languages belonging to the different Slavonic groups:

(i) The Western Slavonic languages are opposed to the Southern and Eastern groups with respect to the following features: 1/ the results of the second and third palatalization – sh / s : pol. *musze* / Old Bulgarian *моус* [mous – ‘fly’] (Dative of *моуха* [mouha]); 2/ the development of the Proto-Slavonic **kv* and **gv* in front of the vowel □ of diphthongal origin: *kv / цв* [tsv], *gv / зв* [zv] : Pol. *kwiat*/Old Bulgarian *цвѣтъ* [tsvyat – ‘colour’], Pol. *gwiazda*/ Old Bulgarian *звѣзда* [zvyazda – ‘star’]; 3/ the development of the Proto-Slavonic groups *tl, dl* : *dl / l*, *tl / l* : Pol. *mydlo* / Old Bulgarian *мыло* [mylo – ‘soap’].

(ii) The Western and Southern groups are opposed to the Eastern one with respect to the development of initial *e* in front of a syllable containing a front vowel: Bulgarian *един* [edin – ‘one’], *езеро* [ezero – ‘lake’] / Russian *один* [odin], *озеро* [ozero].

(iii) The languages of the Southern group, as well as Czech and Slovak, are opposed to the languages of the Eastern group, and all these languages are in turn opposed to Polish, with respect to the development of the groups *or, ol, er, el* between two consonants : **gordь* -> Bulgarian *град* [grad – ‘town’], Russian *город* [gorod], Polish *grod*; **melko* -> Bulgarian *мляко* [mlyako – ‘milk’], Russian *молоко* [moloko], Polish *mleko*.

(iv) The languages of the Southern group are opposed to the Western and Eastern groups with respect to the following features: 1/ the development of the groups *or, ol* in front of a consonant : *pa/po (ra/ro)* or *po (ro)*: **orm* □ -> Bulgarian *рамо* [ramo – ‘shoulder’], Russian *рамя* [ramya], Polish *ramie* ; **orvьль* -> Bulgarian *равен* [raven – ‘equal’], Russian *ровный* [rovniy], Polish *rovny* ; 2/ the form of the plural Accusative of the masculine nouns, having the theme *jo* and the feminine nouns, having the theme *ja* : Old Bulgarian *конѣн* [konen – ‘horses’], Old Russian *кон* □

[konya], Polish *konie*.

(v)The language of the Bulgarian Slavenes is opposed to all the other Slavonic languages with respect to the result of the first palatalisation, for the groups *tj*, *dj*. Only in Bulgarian, these groups developed in *шт*[sht], *жд* [zhd] – *свещ* [svesht – ‘candle’], *межда* [mezhdā – ‘bound’].

(On the Slavonic groups, Cf. Gorshkov 1963, Kondrashov 1956, Mirchev 1978.)

Towards the 2nd - 3rd century AD, the Slavenes spread south of the Carpathians and settled in the lands of present-day Hungary. Two other migration waves followed: A. to the South-East and the middle course of the Danube (these were to become the future Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians) and B. towards Dacia (these would become the future ‘Bulgarian Slavenes’). In the 6th century, a large mass of this latter population crossed the Danube and peopled densely the Southern part of the Balkan Peninsula. Despite the efforts of the Eastern Roman Empire, the beginning of the 7th century saw the end of the Antique civilisation on these lands. Fortresses were destroyed, towns ruined, churches, amphitheatres and baths – deserted. A large part of the population was massacred. The Thracian and Thraco-Roman survivors found refuge in the mountains, known today as Sredna gora, Stara planina and the Rhodopes.

The Slavenes of the Bulgarian group participated in the formation of the Bulgarian state as one of the three major components of the Bulgarian ethnicity. Their language formed a pre-literary stage in the development of Bulgarian, covering the period from the occupation of the peninsula by this Slavonic subgroup to the creation, in the second half of the 9th century, of the first Bulgarian texts. The Slavene tribes densely peopled the region from Dacia to the Peloponnesus for centuries; even where they were later conquered and/or assimilated, they left a linguistic trace – the local toponyms – which is very important for the diachronic study not only of the Bulgarian language, but also, generally, of the languages of the Slavonic group. Our principal sources for that period are the archaic

Slavonic toponyms in Greece, Albania, Rumania and Hungary. It is to the data provided by toponymy that we owe the knowledge that, at the time of the arrival of the Slavenes in these lands, the vowel *o* was open (rendered by the *a* Greek: *Γαρίτσα* from *Горица* [Goritsa], *Ζαγара* from *Загора* [Zagora]); that the vowel *□* had the character of a large *e*: *a/ia* or *εα* in the Greek toponyms: *Ρεαχοβο* from *Р□хово* [Reahovo], *Λιασκοβετσι* from *Л□σκοвец* [Liaskovets]; *b/ea* in the Rumanian toponyms: *Breaza* from *Бр□за*); that we can judge of the nasal character of the vowels *□* and *□*: (Greek *Ομπλοσ* from *□ блъ* [onbl], Hungarian *korong* -> *кр □гъ* [krong], Greek *Λεντινή* from *Л□дина* [lendina] etc.). The analysis of the toponyms allows us further to establish that in the pre-literary period the groups *шт* [sht], *жд* [zhd] had already substituted the Proto-Slavonic groups *tj*, *dj* (Greek *Πεστια* from *Пештн* [Peshti]) – hence, that the process of linguistic differentiation of the South Slavonic tribes was already active; that the third palatalization was still limited (Greek *Γαρδικι* from **гордькъ* [gordiki], later *градъць* [graditsi]) and that the metathesis of liquids was not yet completed (Greek *Χαρμα* from **хормъ* [horm], later *храмъ* [hram]).

3. The Thracians and the Thracian language.

At the time of the Slavonic invasions of the Balkan Peninsula, this latter was far from being a deserted land. The truth is that the Slavenes settled on one of Europe's most densely populated territories. From the second half of the first century onwards, this region had formed part of the Roman Empire and its successor – the Eastern Roman Empire, or Byzantium. Long before that, at least from the 7th millennium B.C., it had been the land of the Thracians -- the first known population of present-day Bulgaria and of South-Eastern Europe. The thousands of archaeological sites in Bulgaria (Varna, Karanovo, Slatina, Gradeshnitsa, Vratsa etc.) seem to refute the theories of an Indo-European invasion.

They indicate a gradual development, uninterrupted from the exterior, with the first signs of a developed material culture and social hierarchy dating back to the 6th millennium B.C. Antique authors speak of Thracian state formations from the 13th C. B.C. onwards. In the course of their long history, the Thracians had entered into direct contact with a large number of peoples of different origin. The 2nd millennium B.C. saw the incursions of the Scythes, an Iranian people which settled in the North-East of the Balkans and the region, known today as Dobrudja. This was followed by migrations of Dardanians, Moesians and Phrygians from the Northern parts of the Balkans to Asia Minor, across Thracia. The same millennium witnessed the arrival of the Greeks and their occupation of the southernmost parts of the peninsula and areas of Asia Minor. Around the 5th century B.C. Greek populations coming from Asia formed colonies on the territory of several ancient Thracian settlements – Messambria, Odessos, Apollonia. In the 3rd century BC, large parts of Thrace became part of the Empire of Philip and Alexander of Macedon, for about 70 years. It is for about as long that a Celtic kingdom existed, in the South-Eastern parts of Thracia. In 46 AD, after a resistance of nearly 200 years, Rome imposed its power in the region and the lands of the Thracians became two Roman provinces – Thracia and Moesia. To the South of the Danube, this conquest marked the beginning of more than 600 years of uninterrupted rule of Rome and the Eastern Roman Empire. The country was peopled with populations coming from all parts of the Empire. In the 3rd century, Nicolopis ad Istrum near present-day Veliko Tarnovo saw a settlement of Goths; it is there that Wulfila created the Gothic alphabet. (Cf. Dimitrov 2002, Gyuzelev et al. 2001, Bakalov et al. 2000, Konstantinov 1993.)

The culture of the Thracians reflected a vision of the world close to that of the Scythes and Persians. Their religion was dominated by one of the most ancient cults of humanity – that of the Goddess-Mother. They venerated the Sun and the Thracian Horseman. The dominant doctrine was that of Orphism. (Marazov 1994). The Thracians played an active role

in the cultural, religious and political life of the region. Three great Emperors of the Eastern Roman Empire were of Thracian origin – Maximin, Martian and Justinian the Great.

Our sources on the Thracian language are not numerous. Of these, four monuments only could indicate the existence of pre-Greek Thracian writings: inscriptions from the 5th millennium BC in the area of the 'Varna Civilisation'; a runic inscription, found near the village of Sitovo in the Rhodopes; two tablets with inscriptions in Linear A (the oldest monuments of that type, dating from the 4th millennium BC). Our information on the Thracian language is based, though, on inscriptions from the 6th century BC on, most of which are in an Attico-Ionian alphabet (Alexandrov 1996, Georgiev 1977). This information, while rather modest, is not negligible. In fact, from the first half of the 19th century to this day, the Thracian language has been the object of a number of in-depth studies. The pioneer of Thracian studies was the Vienna professor of linguistics W. Tomaschek. According to him, this language formed part of the Iranian branch of Indo-European. In 1873 A. Fick defined Thracian as a particular Indo-European language, close to Phrygian. Contributions on the Thracian language have been made by a large number of linguists; in Bulgaria, the most important contributions have been made by G. Katsarov, D. Detschew, St. Mladenov, V. Beshevliev, Vl. Georgiev and I. Duridanov.

Three main theories have been put forward on the origins of Thracian:

1/ It was the result of the superposing of an Etrusque (or Etruscoid) population and an Indo-European population of the Iranian group. There are two major objections to this theory: a/ linguistic data: a considerable phonetic differentiation between Thracian and Iranian, e.g. a different development of *IE long and short *e, of long *o, of the sonants *r, l, m, n*; b/ historical data: no evidence indicating Etruscan presence in the Northern Balkans.

2/ It was a Indo-European language common to the autochthonous population of the Balkans – a Thraco-Phrygian or Thraco-Illyrian language, i.e. a language spoken by the population of Dacia, Moesia,

Scythia Minor, Thracian and Illyria. However, the data available indicate that Thracian and Daco-Moesian were phonetically and lexically well differentiated and that a similar differentiation existed between Thracian and Phrygian.

3/ It was a Indo-European language *sui generis*, with specific structure, which however bore the marks of intensive contact with other languages of the region, especially Greek and Daco-Moesian.

The third hypothesis was strongly supported by Vl. Georgiev (an authority on the antique languages of the Balkan region with important contributions not only on the Thracian language, but also on the deciphering of Linear B). He based his analyses on four types of data: a/ glosses (about 40), found predominantly in the works of Greek authors; b/ about 1500 toponyms and anthroponyms (Bulgarian toponymy does not contain layers preceding the Thracian ones – a further argument in support of Renfrew's hypothesis); c/ inscriptions (the most important of which on a ring, found in Ezerevo, region of Parvomay – Cf. Appendix A); d/ Thracian words preserved in the lexicon of Balkan languages.

The analysis of these sources allowed Vl. Georgiev:

(i) to define Thracian as a particular Indo-European language, phonetically distant from the Iranian branch, but close to Phrygian;

(ii) to establish some of the phonetic and morpho-syntactic features of Thracian with respect to Indo-European and outline the phonetic and morpho-syntactic structure of the language. The majority of these features have parallels in Modern Bulgarian and other Balkan languages:

- transition from *IE short *o* to *a*;
- transition of the diphthongs **oi* and **ei* into monophthongs: **oi* -> *ai* -> *e*, **ei* -> *ei* -> *i*;
- reduction of non-accented vowels (parallels in Bulgarian and other Balkan dialects);
- consonantal mutations;
- development of the consonantal group **sr* into *str*.
- assimilation *dn* -> *n* (parallels in the Bulgarian dialects – Cf. Stoykov

1993);

- vocative form in -e (parallels in Balkan languages);
- article in post-position (parallels in Bulgarian, Albanian and Rumanian);
- short Dative pronominal forms (Bulgarian and Balkan parallels);
- personal pronouns (e.g. 1st p. sg. *as*, with Bulgarian parallels);
- prepositions *do*, *an* and prepositional phrases as signs of analytical tendencies (characteristic of all Balkan languages);

(iii) to establish, on the basis of the comparison of the Thracian and Daco-Moesian sources, that these were different languages, though probably related, and to specify their particular developments from *IE (Cf. Appendix B);

(iv) to observe that, even though Thracian, Dacian and Phrygian were different Indo-European languages, they knew 'reciprocal convergences, due to the influences exercised by the contact of neighboring languages, as well as to a number of influences, due to the migrations of Moesians, Dardanians and Phrygians towards Asia Minor across Thrace (...)' (Georgiev op. cit., p.298, translation mine);

(v) to conclude that:

'(...) the three languages in question (Thracian, Dacian and Phrygian) had come very close in the course of their historical evolution as a result of mutual interrelations. It can therefore be supposed that in the course of the first millennium BC, they had formed a Balkan linguistic union – a phenomenon which characterises Balkan languages.' (Georgiev, op. cit.:299, translation mine).

VI. Georgiev thus made the important point that, first, the romantic theory of a common Thraco-Illyrian does not have serious linguistic foundations and, second, that the territory of the Balkans formed, already in the Antiquity, an area of intensive language contact.

Following the Roman conquest, the territory of present-day Northern Bulgaria became the most important centre of Latinity on the Balkan

Peninsula. For an extended period, the Danube formed a natural frontier between the Roman Empire and the 'barbarian' world. It is therefore not surprising that over 30 settlements on the right side bank of the river were modernised or built by the newcomers to serve as military stations. In this border area, Latin was the language of official communication for more than six centuries. (Cf. Mirchev 1978: 76-7). In the course of the assimilation of the Romanised population, a Latin lexis penetrated the local Slavonic dialects and, later, the Old Bulgarian monuments, to become part of the lexicon of Modern Bulgarian. A few examples of this lexis are: *баня* [banya – 'bath'] (Lat. *balneum*), *комин* [komin – 'chimney'] (Lat. *caminus*), *кум* [kum – 'best man, godfather'] (Lat. *compater*), *олтар* [oltar – 'altar'] (Lat. *altare*), *оцет* [otset – 'vinegar'] (Lat. *acetum*), *ружа* [ruzha – 'rose', 'hollyhock'] (Lat. *rosa*), *цар* [tsar] (Lat. *caesar*). Around the time of the Slavene invasions of the Balkan Peninsula, this Eastern Latin had undergone an analytical development and retained as few as two oblique cases.

To sum up, the Thracians, one of the three numerous peoples which formed the Bulgarian ethnicity, were, at the time of the Slavonic invasion, a highly civilised population with state and cultural traditions of very long standing. Thracian society was probably bilingual (adding Greek, trilingual), or spoke a specific Balkan Thraco-Latin. A high percentage of the Thracians participated in the administration of the Roman Empire. Compared to the Slavonic invaders, this Thracian population formed without any doubt a layer of superior standing, sufficiently numerous to leave behind considerable traces – and these are clearly observable even today not only in Bulgarian toponymy, but also in the anthroponymy, in the system of Bulgarian holidays and customs, in the clothes, furniture, cuisine and traditional art. Modern anthropological investigations – cephaloscopy, cephalometry and ethnic dermatoglyphy indicate the domination, in the present-day population of Bulgaria, of local populations, possessing a South-Europeide dermatological complex, close to that of anterior Asia and the Caucasus, with some specific features.

According to L. Kavgazova and R. Stoev, in the formation of the Bulgarian population, a central role is due to the ancient Balkan substratum, dating back to the time of the neolitisation (Kavgazova, Stoev 2002:49). In view of the above considerations, it is difficult to imagine that the language spoken by that population could have had no influence, one way or another, on the dialect of the Slavonic tribes. Among the possible parameters of influence, the following, I believe, deserve serious consideration: the analytical tendencies of Balkan Latin; the (apparently quite frequent) use in Thracian of prepositional phrases (another sign of analytical tendencies); the probable existence of a Thracian post-positioned definite article, a Vocative in *-e* for masculine nouns, short pronominal dative pronouns, a personal pronoun *as*, the reduction of non-accented vowels. Bearing in mind that all these features form part of the future specific developments of the Bulgarian language, with first manifestations clearly observable in Old Bulgarian texts, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the Thracian and Balkan Latin (or a local Thracio-Latin) may have been among the factors of change.

4. The Ancient Bulgarians and Ancient Bulgarian.

Of the three large populations which formed the Bulgarian ethnos, the Ancient Bulgarians were the last-comers to these lands. According to medieval sources, they formed a numerous people, on a considerably higher level, in its state organisation traditions, technical knowledge and economic activity, than the earlier invaders. Like the Thracians, they were the bearers of a culture of an Iranian type. They brought to South-Eastern Europe a monumental architecture, stone sculptures and writings.

Establishing the origin of the Ancient Bulgarians is, of course, important in the context of the problem of the specific development of the Bulgarian language. It is a problem which has long been debated, opinion consecutively shifting from a Finnish, Turkic, Slavonic, Celtic and

Sarmatian to, finally, Iranian origin. While the Turkic theory was the leading one through most of the 20th century, recent archaeological findings and sources brought to light data which strongly support the theory of the Pamirian roots of the Ancient Bulgarians and, hence, of the Iranian or Indo-Iranian lineage of their language. We know for certain, however, that between the 2nd and 4th C. AD a considerable number of Ancient Bulgarians settled in the Caucasus – between the rivers Donets and Don and the Azov sea, assimilating what remained of the Sarmatian tribes and entering anew into contact with the Alans (whose ancient homeland had also been the Pamir) and the Slavs. In the 4th century a Bulgarian clan led by Vanand migrated to Armenia, where they were gradually assimilated. Another group joined the wave of Huns; they settled in Pannonia and the planes around the Carpathian Mountains. In the 6th century two Ancient Bulgarian groups migrated to other European territories: to Northern Italy and to the regions South of the Danube. The Bulgarian populations which remained in the Caucasus created a state, which later Byzantine chroniclers referred to as 'Great Ancient Bulgaria'. Probably because of Khazar pressure, in the second half of the 7th century these Bulgarians dispersed, splitting into five groups. One remained *in situ*, another moved up the Volga, a third – to Northern Italy. A large group, led by Kuber, settled in the area of Bitolya in present-day Macedonia. The largest group was led by Asparuh and occupied Scythia Minor, at the Danube outflow. For an extended period, a corridor for migration was thus open between Ancient Bulgaria and the Danube area, serving for the transfer of large masses of Bulgarian populations. In 681 Byzantium found itself constrained to sign a peace treaty with the invaders and to accept the loss of Dobrudja and Moesia. This treaty marks the foundation of the Modern Bulgarian state. (Cf. Dimitrov 2002, Bakalov et al. 2000, Konstantinov 1993).

Contrary to the state of knowledge of the first decades of the 20th century, recent historical sources indicate that the Bulgarians who peopled, in the second half of the 7th century, the region of Scythia Minor (Dobrudja) and

Moesia were very numerous. According to Iossif, khagan of the Khazars, the Bulgarians of the clan led by Asparuh were 'more numerous than the sand in the sea'. From the creation of 'Danubian Bulgaria'(1) over a long period, Bulgarian populations migrated towards this new territory, which was not far away from their previous, Caucasian home. Arrived there, they were neither the only nor the first representatives of their people on the Balkans: as noted above, several waves, even though less numerous, of Bulgarian populations had begun to migrate over a vast territory in Europe ever since the beginning of the new millennium. Therefore Ancient Bulgarian, even if spoken by a population which was probably less numerous than the Slavonic population on the Balkans and in Central Europe, was certainly not the language of an insignificant minority.

During the first centuries after the establishment of the Bulgarians on the Balkans and the creation of the First Bulgarian State, Ancient Bulgarian was also the language of state administration. A number of Cyrillic inscriptions in Ancient Bulgarian indicate that this language was still in use well after the 9th century. Ancient Bulgarian was also, for several centuries, the language of communication with the other Bulgarian communities in Europe – while Kuber's Bulgarians in the area of Bitolya were integrated in the Bulgarian state as early as the 8th century, the Bulgarian state of Kama-Volga existed upto the 13th C.

The establishment, at the end of the 9th century, of the local Slavonic dialect as the official and literary language of the First Bulgarian State (Cf. below) may have been partly motivated by a process of integration of the populations of the state; but it was above all a political decision, taken by the Bulgarian aristocracy itself and motivated by the ambition to create a strong, unified Bulgarian state spreading over the Balkans and Central Europe. In the administrative centre of Pliska-Preslav (situated to the North-East of the state), where the population of Ancient Bulgarians was more concentrated, the literary activity was directed by the circle around the Bulgarian ruler. Unlike the provincial centre of Ohrida, Pliska-Preslav formed a boiling pot of language innovation – not only in the lexical stock,

but also in the domain of phonetics and morpho-syntax. Here, Ancient Bulgarian exercised a visible influence in the lexical domain; it could have been among the factors – the most probable factor, at that – for the developments marking today the Bulgarian language as a Slavonic language *sui generis*.

Unfortunately, as in the case of Thracian, our information on Ancient Bulgarian is rather modest. The known sources are: a/ glosses, above all in texts by Arabian travellers; b/ toponyms left by the Bulgarians throughout the territories where they settled from the 5th century onwards – in Pannonia, Dacia, Eastern Serbia, Albania, Macedonia, Greek Thracia and Bulgaria; c/ anthroponyms (names of Bulgarian rulers and clans); d/ stone inscriptions (some of these in an unknown alphabet, but many – in Greek letters); e/ a considerable non-Slavonic lexis of Ancient Bulgarian origin in the texts created in the literary centre of Pliska-Preslav. (Cf. for more detailed information Appendix C). Even though these data are not abundant, they allow to infer some characteristic features of the language.

In the phonetic domain, Ancient Bulgarian was characterised by: a middle vowel *ъ*, which is practically unknown to the other Slavonic languages, as well as an open *a* vowel (close to English *a* in the words 'cat' or 'bat', to the Slavonic *а* or even the diphthongal Indo-European and Thracian *ea*). The consonant *x* (*h* in the German *haben*) was very prominent, forming also groups with the consonants *s*, *t*, *l*: *ohsi*, *dohs*, *eth*, *behti*, *eshatch*, *hlobrin*, *olh*. In word-final position, this consonant frequently appears in anthroponyms: *Asparuh*, *Vineh*; in initial position, it appears in glosses from the region of the Bulgarian state of Kama-Volga: *halandj*, *hadank*, *hut*, *halitche*. [Dj], [ch] and [tz] are frequent in all the sources.

Syllables could be open or closed.

Nominal morphology seems to have been marked by: a post-positioned article *-a* for the masculine nouns, a plural in *-ar*, a genitive in *-i*, *-gi*, *-igi* and a Dative or oblique case in *-e*.

The existential verb had the form *e* for the 3rd person singular.

Ancient Bulgarian was a synthetic language with analytic tendencies.

(On the sources, monuments and hypotheses on the language of the Ancient Bulgarians, Cf. Alexandrov 1996, Dobrev 1994, 1998, 1999, Dobrev, Dobrova 2001, Mirchev 1978: 83-84.)

* * *

The Bulgarian people is thus the product of the union of romanised Thracians with the Slavenes who settled in their lands in the 6th century AD and with the Ancient Bulgarians of Asparuh and Kuber. The resultant language, called by the population itself 'Bulgarian', though of Slavonic origin, flourished on a Thraco-Latin substratum and an Ancient Bulgarian superstratum. Lexically enriched with borrowings from Greek, this language (Old Bulgarian) became, in the 9th century, the first written language of the Slavonic world. It is also, for this reason, sometimes referred to as 'Old Slavonic'. This term is, however, inaccurate: at the time of the appearance of the first Old Bulgarian documents written on Bulgarian lands, the local South Slavonic dialect had already developed in a direction marking this language as a language *sui generis*, a language apart, quite unlike the other languages of the Slavonic group.

5. The First Bulgarian State and Old Bulgarian.

Bulgaria was the first national independent state to be created on Byzantine territory and officially recognized by Byzantium itself. Two hundred years later, it had considerably enlarged its territory and had established itself as a centralised monarchy, as one of the largest and most powerful European states. Until the 9th century, the history of the Bulgarian state is exclusively the history of the Bulgarian element (i.e. of the Ancient Bulgarians) on the Balkans. Their economic and cultural activities, as well as their military victories, demonstrate that this was a numerous and active population. Its language was the language of state

administration during the first centuries of the existence of the Bulgarian state.

In 852 an ambitious ruler, Boris I, ascended the Bulgarian throne, announcing almost immediately his intention to be converted to the Christian faith. Three years later, the brothers Konstantin and Methodius, originating in the slavified area of Thessaloniki, left their positions of Byzantine functionaries and isolated themselves in the monastery Polychrone, where they created the Glagolitic alphabet and translated the sacred books into the Slavonic dialect they spoke. Their first mission was to Moravia where, on the demand of the Moravian prince Rostislav, they created the first Slavonic literary centre. A year later, Boris I forcefully converted to Christianity the population of the Bulgarian state. The ruler hoped that a common religion and language would serve to unify the different populations of the state. The stifling of a great revolt of the Ancient Bulgarian aristocracy, followed by the massacre of the leaders of the rebels and of large parts of their families marked the end, according to historians, to the hegemony of the Ancient Bulgarians in the government of the state, as well as to the use of Ancient Bulgarian as a language of the state administration (2) .

In 879 the Pope Adrian II proclaimed the Slavonic writings canonical. The Slavonic dialect of the Bulgarian territory became the fourth language of the Christian church service. However, the Moravian mission of the two brothers eventually failed. In 885 the German clergy in Moravia forbade the Slavonic alphabet and liturgy. The Slavonic writings were destroyed; the disciples of Konstantin-Cyril and Methodius were banned from the state. Many of them were imprisoned or sold into slavery. Certain managed to escape to Bulgaria, and they found refuge there. Among them were Kliment, Naum and Anghelaria. With the help of the Bulgarian rulers, they laid the foundations of the Bulgarian Medieval Literary School with its two centres – Pliska (the capital, later moved to Veliki Preslav) and Ohrida. (Cf. also Petkanova 1994)

Ironically, it is to the non-Slavonic rulers of the First Bulgarian State

that the Slavonic world owes the dissemination and further development of its literary tradition – the work begun by the two brothers from Thessaloniki. Christian churches, where the Slavonic language was used in the service, were built over the whole territory of the Bulgarian state. In conformity with the 8th Ecclesiastical Council, schools were opened in every parish.

The Cyrillic alphabet was created in the literary centre of Pliska-Preslav. During the reign of the son of Boris I, Simeon (later called Simeon the Great), the new capital Veliki Preslav became one of the greatest literary centres in Europe. The 'fathers' of Slavonic literature Chernorizets Hrabr, Ioan Ekzarh, Konstantin Preslavski worked under the personal direction of Simeon, who had received his education at the University of Magnaura in Constantinople. It is in Preslav that were created the first known works of Slavonic religious and secular literature, forming the basis of the literary traditions of the Slavonic peoples, of Wallachia and Moldavia. This period of Bulgarian history is called, with good reason, 'The Golden Age of Slavonic Literature'.

The periodisation of the Bulgarian language is largely based on its written sources and follows the stages of flourishing of the Bulgarian writings. These latter reflect, in turn, the stages of rise of the Bulgarian state and its culture. The period covering three centuries from the creation of the first Slavonic literary centres and texts in Bulgaria to the Byzantine subjugation of the territory for a century and a half, corresponds to a stage in the development of the Bulgarian language, known as *Old Bulgarian*.

The Bulgarian literary school of the period was very productive, but only a limited, negligible part of its production has reached us. The monuments that we know date from the 10th and 11th centuries and are all copies, even if made with great attention to follow the originals. The majority of the texts are in the Glagolitic alphabet. The most important among these are three Gospels, two prayer-books and a Collection, of which only a small number of pages have reached us. The most important

texts in the Cyrillic alphabet are the *Suprasliensis Collection* and a gospel, called *Book of Sava*.

As noted above, the Bulgarian literary school had two important centres – the capital Pliska, later moved to Preslav (centre of Pliska-Preslav) in the North-East and Ohrida, in the South-West. The centre of Pliska-Preslav was situated in a region which had been a centre of Latinity and was, at the time of the First Bulgarian State, very densely populated with Ancient Bulgarians. Its activity was controlled, even to a large extent carried out, by the Bulgarian rulers. Simeon the Great himself is believed to have been among the authors working in the centre; the orthographic and structural norms of the production of the centre are called 'Norms of Simeon's literary circle'. Even though reflecting the grammatical and lexical features of the Slavonic dialect of Thessaloniki in more or less parallel fashion, the manuscripts of the two centres nevertheless demonstrate specific features setting apart the two dialects.

One of the most important phonetic developments of the Old Bulgarian period was the loss of the ultra-short vowels *ъ* and *ь* in what are called 'weak' positions (at the end of the word or in front of a vowel of normal length). This process began in the 10th century and had as an important result the formation, anew, of closed syllables (Cf. the 'Law of the Open Syllable' in Proto-Slavonic, 2.2.1, p.4). As to the ultra-short vowels in the positions called 'strong', these changed in different ways in the East and in the West. In the texts originating from Ohrida, they were 'clarified' to *o* (for *ъ*) and *e* (for *ь*) – in a manner parallel to these developments in all other Slavonic languages. The texts produced in the Pliska-Preslav centre demonstrated a tendency to preserve the middle character of *ъ* and not to differentiate the two middle vowels orthographically.

It is as far back as the Old Bulgarian period that Bulgarian lost the Proto-Slavonic epenthetic *l* in non-initial syllables – Cf. Russian *земля* [zemlya – 'earth'] / Bulgarian *земя* [zemya]; that the Proto-Slavonic *ы* [y] became *и* [i] – Cf. Russian *рыба* [ryba – 'fish'] / Bulgarian *риба* [riba]. The nasals,

whose specific graphics characterize the Old Bulgarian monuments, already demonstrated signs of instability, first manifested in a Cyrillic monument of the Eastern literary centre – the *Suprasliensis Collection*, where ѡ is regularly replaced by ѣ.

The reduction of non-accented vowels – a feature forming part of the so-called 'Balkan' traits of the Bulgarian language, is today typical of both Eastern and Western Bulgarian dialects. It was, however, unknown to the 9th century dialect of Cyril and Methodius. The first signs of vocalic reduction appear in those Old Bulgarian texts which originate from the Eastern school.

The system of consonants was marked by a general tendency towards hardening. This feature is today specific to Modern Bulgarian and sets it apart from the other Slavonic languages. The first Old Bulgarian monuments also demonstrate an already effectuated metathesis of liquids: (*Владимиръ* [Vladimir] instead of *Валдимер* [Valdimer]).

Among the morpho-syntactic developments, most important were the following: a/ new forms for the Aorist in -охъ [ohъ] – a phenomenon which was entirely unknown to the Western centre, but is registered with more than 300 examples in the *Suprasliensis Collection*; b/ hesitations in the use of Case forms.

The system of the Modern Bulgarian language, it was noted, is marked by a number of features which set it apart from the other Slavonic languages. On the other hand, it has a number of features which can be found in the systems of non-Slavonic Balkan languages – Albanian, Rumanian and Greek. In the morpho-syntactic domain, the most important of these features, known as "Balkan", are:

analytic tendencies;

the coincidence of the Dative and Genitive (in Bulgarian, this later developed as a parallel analytical expression of the relations with the preposition *на* [na – 'to']);

the development of a post-positioned article;

the development of a "clitic complex";

the disappearance of the Infinitive and its substitution with subordinate clauses (in Bulgarian – the so-called ‘*da*-construction’: *da* + *Present Tense form*;

the development of Future Tense forms with the verb of volition (in Bulgarian - *shte* + *Present Tense form*).

Although these developments only became clearly expressed much later in the development of the Bulgarian language, Old Bulgarian monuments testify that the first manifestations of these so-called ‘Balkan’ features were already noticeable in the course of the 10th and 11th centuries (Cf. Mirchev 1963:318, Mincheva 1979: 20 ff.). If there are controversies on this point in Slavonic studies, they are not so much centred on the reality of the tendencies as on the stage of development of the processes in the Old Bulgarian period. Thus, while the Infinitive still formed part of the verbal system of Old Bulgarian, four monuments present numerous cases of “competition” between the Infinitive and the *da*-construction. Similarly, even though the perfective forms of the Present of the Indicative continued to have the function of a Future, the structure *ХОШТѢ* [hoshton - ‘to want’] + *Present Tense form* was quite frequent. In the majority of cases, the verb of volition was not entirely desemanticised; but in a monograph specially devoted to this problem Ivanova-Mircheva (1962) notes that a number of examples, particularly in the Zograf Gospel, indicate that in Old Bulgarian the group *ХОШТѢ* + *Present Tense form* already functioned as, simply, a Future Tense.

The substitution of the Genitive of possession with a Dative was a well-developed phenomenon in Old Bulgarian; this fact is well established and has been the object of study for more than a century. It is clearly exemplified in the gospels, psalm-books and in the *Suprasliensis Collection*.

The definite article developed in Bulgarian, as in other Indo-European languages (Greek, Germanic languages) on the basis of forms of the demonstrative pronoun. A specifically Bulgarian feature is the enclitic position of this form, following the first element of the Noun Phrase. The

article did not form part of the system of the Slavonic dialect, spoken by the brothers Konstantin-Cyril and Methodius. In their translations from the Greek, the definite forms of the originals were rendered with simple nominal forms. In some cases later translators, making particular efforts to follow as faithfully as possible the Greek originals, often produced artificial constructions of the type 'relative pronoun + nominal' (Mirchev 1978: 200). There were, however, also translators who rendered the Greek definite forms with structural means, which they obviously considered to be equivalent. Galabov 1954 points out that in a number of cases, also registered in the gospels, but particularly frequent in the *Suprasliensis Collection*, the Bulgarian construction *nominal + weak form of the demonstrative*, of the type *мѡжъ тъ* [monzh t - 'man that (the)], *пештера та* [peshtera ra - 'cave that (the)'], *место то* [mesto to - 'place that (the)'] appeared in the Bulgarian translations as a functional equivalent of the Greek definite forms (*το σπελαιον, τον τοπον*). Historical phonetics allows us to establish, further, that the unity *nominal + article* was already formed in Old Bulgarian. As noted above, the ultra-short vowels had begun to disappear around the 10th century. In weak positions (as at the end of the word), they disappeared without a trace; in strong positions (in front of a syllable with a weak vowel), ѡ was clarified to O in certain dialects, or became a middle vowel Ъ of normal length - in others. The process of clarification was completed between the 10th and the 11th centuries. Now, the Bulgarian form *градът* [gradat - 'town the', 'the town'] (in certain dialects - *градот* [gradot]) was developed on the basis of the construction *градъ тъ* [gradъ тъ]. The fact that the final ultrashort ъ in *градъ* developed to Ъ of normal length (O in the dialects) indicates that it was in a strong position, i.e. in front of a *syllable* with an ultra-short vowel - and that, therefore, before the end of the Old Bulgarian period the groups had acquired the status of word forms (Cf. Mirchev 1978:196-205, Duridanov et al. 1993: 554-555). The post-positioned definite article is, again, a development in the Bulgarian language which came from the North-Eastern centre. It is in the *Suprasliensis Collection* and in the works

of Ioan the Exarch that the definite forms are most frequent (Mirchev 1953: 48-49, Galabov 1962:86 and ff.).

Old Bulgarian was a synthetic language which preserved the Proto-Slavonic Case system. That system was visibly destabilised in Middle Bulgarian – as indicated, in spite of the efforts to maintain the archaic literary system, by the confusion of case forms and the numerous errors in their use, typical for most of the monuments of the period. However, the first signs of the disintegration of the declension system, systematically described for the first time by I. Duridanov (Duridanov 1958), were already noticeable in Old Bulgarian. The process found manifestation in the following phenomena: confusion of the uses of the Locative and Accusative; restricted use of the Locative after certain prepositions; hesitations in the inflexion forms and use of the Genitive; cases of substitution of the Genitive and the Nominative; tendency towards the disappearance of the ad-verbal Dative -- marking the Indirect object, cases of substitution of the Dative with the *на* + *Accusative* structure, substitution of the Nominative with the Genitive; loss of the declension of the participles. All these phenomena were already manifest in the 10th century (Duridanov 1993: 552-554).

To sum up, even though the majority of the developments specific to the Bulgarian language only became clearly visible during the Middle Bulgarian period, the first impulses and manifestations were already there in the Old Bulgarian monuments, from the 10th century onwards. Most of the monuments testifying to these processes come from the centre of Pliska-Preslav. That is why it is generally accepted in Bulgarian studies that these phenomena in the norms of the literary language took place in the dialects of the Eastern part of the country, in the cultural dialect of Preslav.

Though to a lesser degree, the dialects of Pliska-Preslav and Ohrida were also lexically differentiated – as indicated by several couples of doublet forms. Among the lexemes marking the Eastern centre (particularly abundant in the *Suprasliensis Collection*, the *Book of Sava* and the works

of the Presbyter Cosma), we find lexis coming from the Ancient Bulgarian language (Cf. Appendix C below). The innovative role of the centre of Pliska-Preslav, as opposed to the conservatism of Ohrida, could, of course, be explained in the more general context of an opposition between centre and periphery - with, as a rule, a more dynamic and innovative centre and a conservative periphery. However, the character and the source of the lexical differentiation are, it seems, also indicative of the influence exerted on the Eastern dialect by, first and foremost, the language of the culturally more active Ancient Bulgarian population and, next, by possible infiltrations from the Thracian-Roman substratum.

When, at the beginning of the 11th century, the Bulgarian state was subjugated for a period of 170 years by Byzantium, the Slavonic writings were transported to Kiev Russia, which became the next centre of Slavonic writings. It is above all to Medieval Russia that Slavonic culture owes the preservation of a large number of Old Bulgarian manuscripts, of which hundreds of copies were made. As to the original texts created in the new centres, they demonstrate a considerable departure from the language coming from the Bulgarian territory. Russian linguists consider them representative of a different language – Old Russian, the first stage in the development of the Russian literary language.

The years of Byzantine rule saw a gradual weakening of the Empire and the invasion of its lands by tribes of Ouz, Pecheneg and Koumanian tribes. These latter actively supported the Bulgarian aristocracy in the restoration of the Bulgarian State. Towards the end of the Byzantine rule, the Wallachians (descendants of the romanised Dacians who had found refuge in the Carpathian Mountains at the time of the 6th century Slavonic invasions) began to return and settle in the lands North of the Danube, mixing with the Slavonic, Bulgarian, Koumanian, Ouz and Pecheneg populations there.

6. The Second Bulgarian State and Middle Bulgarian.

The Bulgarian state was restored in 1188 by the brothers Peter and Assen, would-be descendants of the former Bulgarian ruling dynasty. The territory of the state, which initially covered lands on the two banks of the Danube, was soon enlarged to cover a large part of the Peninsula.

After the restoration of the state, the new capital Veliko Tarnovo (with its school of letters "Sveta Troitsa") and Sveta Gora became its major literary centres. One of the Bulgarian rulers from the period, Ivan Alexander, was, just like Simeon the Great before him, a great patron of Letters.

The Middle Bulgarian monuments that have reached us cover the 12th and the 14th centuries and are more numerous than the Old Bulgarian ones. As reflected in its monuments, Middle Bulgarian presents a stage of transition between two very different states of the system – from a synthetic to an entirely analytical structure. This transition is clear in spite of the extremely conservative character of the documents – in their majority, manuscripts of religious texts. Bulgarian men of letters of the time made a point of following the literary tradition of Old Bulgarian, thus creating what was probably an abyss between the monuments of the literary school and the living language. In the majority of cases, it is due to involuntary errors, to the general and systematic confusion of letters, inflexions and forms that we infer the developments.

In the Middle Bulgarian period, the Verb underwent the following changes: it lost the dual number – one of the Indo-European heritages which had been well preserved in Old Bulgarian; the forms of the Imperfect and Aorist were often confused (which did not lead, however, to the loss of the opposition); the endings of the 2nd person plural of the Imperative were generalised; the Active Present Participles and of one of the Active Past Participles gradually disappeared; gerundive participles were formed. Middle Bulgarian saw the appearance and, by analogy, spreading of a new conjugation type: verbs with an *-am* base form inflection.

Like the Verb, the Noun lost the dual number. The ending of the

monosyllabic masculine nouns in the plural was generalized to *-a*. Two processes, of which the first indications were already visible in the course of the Old Bulgarian period – and above all in the monuments produced in the centre of Pliska-Preslav, became clearly visible: the development of the definite article and the loss of Case inflexions.

In the pronominal sphere, the monuments of Middle Bulgarian testify to the formation of possessive pronouns for the 3rd person singular and plural; to the loss of the ancient relative pronouns and their substitution by forms construed on the model: interrogative pronouns+*то*: *КОЙТО* [koyto – ‘who’], *КАКЪВТО* [kakavto – ‘what’].

The Adjective lost its gender endings in the plural. Towards the end of the period, the formation of the degrees of comparison was entirely analytical.

7. Modern Bulgarian.

The last years of the 14th century saw the advancement in Europe of the Seldjouk and Osmanli Turcs. Bulgaria was the first European state to be subjugated; it only became independent five centuries later.

The language of the administration of the Ottoman Empire was Turkish, and a certain degree of bilingualism existed on the territory, but not on the scale of the Roman times: it was not the policy of the new rulers to integrate the local population in the administration. The Empire needed large subjugated non-Moslem populations – ‘rum’ or ‘raya’ – to support its enormous military machine. The ‘raya’ were subject to many restrictions and prohibitions, among which the prohibition to carry arms. The roads of the Empire being extremely dangerous, large numbers of the population were immobilised for centuries in one village or group of villages. This immobilisation was an important factor for the conservation of the local dialects, folklore and customs.

The subjugation of the Bulgarian state marked the end of the Middle Bulgarian literary centres. A considerable literary activity was carried out

in Wallachia, where a numerous Bulgarian population lived, now increased by waves of immigrants. Two types of texts were produced in Wallachia: 1/ religious texts, following the tradition of Old Bulgarian (very conservative and of little interest for the study of the development of the Bulgarian language) and 2/ administrative texts, written in the chancelleries of the local princes – Bulgarian being still, at the time, the literary and administrative language of the region. It is in these texts, called 'Wallachian-Bulgarian Edits', that the living Bulgarian language of the time manifests itself for the first time as an entirely analytical language (Mirchev 1978:25-26). On the territory of present-day Bulgaria, the literary traditions were preserved and continued in the monasteries. From the 15th C. on, a considerable scholarly and literary activity was carried out in the Rila Monastery and, later, the monasteries around Sofia. Of the 16th century monuments, the Bulgarian translation of a collection of fantastic stories – *Physiologist*, reflects most clearly the features of the spoken language. Other interesting documents are the translations of German religious songs by the 'Bulgarians of Sedmigrad'-- an entire village from Eastern Bulgaria, which had, in the 13th century, been captured by the Hungarians and sold into slavery. These translations are among the important documents marking the beginnings of Modern Bulgarian. (Cf. on the Bulgarians of Sedmigrad: Balkanski 1996). The 17th C. saw the appearance of works in a new genre - the *damascenes*: homilies in the popular language. These damascenes also testify to changes in the literary language under the influence of spoken Bulgarian and to the formation, between the 15th and 17th centuries, of Modern Bulgarian. (Cf. also Bakalov op. cit., Konstantiov op. cit.).

The new developments characterising Modern Bulgarian with respect to the preceding stages are:

In the nominal sphere: a/ the development of the form of the quantified plural in *-a* for masculine nouns; b/ the expression of genitive and dative relations with the help of a general form of the Noun and the preposition *на* [na – 'of', 'to']

In the verbal sphere: a/ the loss of the Infinitive and its substitution with the *da-* construction (*da+verbum finitum*) – a process, the beginnings of which lead us back to the 10th century; b/ the development of the Non-Evidential mood and, in relation to this mood, of the Imperfective Past Participle – two entirely new developments which are either directly due to the influence of Turkish, or accelerated by this language.

In the syntactic sphere – a/ the development of a number of different patterns, unified by the cover term 'object doubling', the sources of which can also be traced back to Old Bulgarian; b/ the generalisation of clitic positions in the form of a clitic complex, attached in symmetrical fashion to the functional superstructure heads of lexical categories; c/ free clitic climbing.

8. From Proto-Slavonic to Modern Bulgarian: Major Developments.

The above presentation briefly traced the manner in which Bulgarian developed in its fifteen centuries of existence as a separate language and in its twelve centuries of existence as a literary language. Here are, summarised, the major morphological and syntactic developments:

In the *morphological sphere*, a dozen of important developments can be noted. To a few exceptions, these are processes which took their impulse and were first manifested in the Old Bulgarian period.

The Bulgarian Noun underwent the disintegration of its declension, which marked the transition from a synthetic to an analytical state of the language. The first signs of this disintegration are evident in the Old Bulgarian monuments produced in the Pliska-Preslav centre. Another important phenomenon was the development of the post-positioned definite article. The first manifestations of this development were already apparent in Old Bulgarian, again in the monuments coming from Pliska-Preslav. The use of the article in the language of Ioan the Exarch indicates that certain eastern dialects already had, in the 10th century, a well-developed definite article. It is, again, back to Old Bulgarian that we can

trace the use of the numeral *единъ* [edin - 'one'] as a functional equivalent of the indefinite article. In the course of Middle Bulgarian, the forms for the dual number were lost. Masculine monosyllabic nouns developed a generalised plural form. In the Modern Bulgarian period, the formative *-a* was generalised for the plural of quantified masculine nouns. The developments in the pronominal system are also considerable: the appearance of a personal pronoun for the 3rd person, on the basis of the demonstratives *тъ, та, то* [тъ, та, то] (first observed in Old Bulgarian texts) – one of the specific features of Bulgarian in the Slavonic language family; the reduction of the trilateral opposition of Indo-European and Proto-Slavonic deixis to a bilateral one (to the exception of certain Bulgarian dialects of the West and the Rhodope region); the substitution of the Proto-Slavonic *мы* [my – 'we'] with *ны* [ny] – though sporadically, again already effectuated in Old Bulgarian. Specialised possessive forms for the 3rd person singular and plural appeared in Middle Bulgarian. A more frequent use of the clitic pronouns in ad-nominal position is visible from Old Bulgarian on, and in ad-verbal position – mainly from Middle Bulgarian onwards.

In the course of the Middle Bulgarian period, the adjective developed the analytical forms of the degrees of comparison: *по* [po – 'more'] + *adjective* for the comparative and *най* [nay – 'most'] + *adjective* – for the superlative.

The Bulgarian verb preserved the Proto-Slavonic aspectual opposition Perfective/Imperfective, presenting a generalisation over the older category of Aktionsart (also typical of Germanic languages). Aspect as a lexico-grammatical feature of the verb has been preserved in all Slavonic languages. A specifically Bulgarian feature is the systematic coexistence of this opposition with the Indo-European opposition Aorist / Imperfect and the preservation of the category of Correlation. The Bulgarian verb lost, at different stages, the forms of the Supine and of the Infinitive. Some active participles disappeared during the Middle Bulgarian period; it is during this same period that the gerundives were formed. The first indications of the

development of the Future with the help of the verb of volition are apparent in the Old Bulgarian monuments. Finally, the development of a new mood – the Non-Evidential –, as well as of the forms of the Imperfective Past Participle, is a relatively recent innovation, possibly due to the influence exercised by the Turkish language during the centuries of Ottoman rule.

In the *syntactic sphere*, the most important development of the Bulgarian language is its transition to analytical structure. This transition from a synthetic to an analytical system began in the Old Bulgarian period and is very clearly manifested in the Middle Bulgarian monuments. Analyticity marks Bulgarian not only as a particular Slavonic language, but also as a particular Balkan language: although they have all undergone analytical developments, all other Balkan languages have, to one degree or another, preserved the category of Case.

I. Duridanov (Duridanov et al. 1993) notes several first cases of object doubling in the Old Bulgarian period, exemplified in the *Suprasliensis Collection*. This phenomenon became very active later and is today one of the specific features (called 'Balkan') of the language: *Прислужницата я помете стаята* [Prisluzhnitsata ya pomete stayata. – 'The servant has swept it the room'.], *Мене ме е страх* [Mene me e strah. – 'Me I'm afraid', compare also with French 'Moi, j'ai peur'.). These structures have a different status in literary Bulgarian and in the Western dialects. In the latter, the doubling is obligatory for the definite nominal phrases and still presents a compensatory mechanism for the loss of Case endings. In this sense, these dialects can be qualified as 'pseudoanalytical' or 'post-synthetical'.

An interesting syntactic development is the formation of Impersonals of the 'There is X' type. In the Old Bulgarian period, these structures were formed with the existential verb, while in Modern Bulgarian they are formed with the verb of possession. A study of the semantic factors facilitating this transition is presented in Stambolieva 1988.

One of the Balkan features of Bulgarian is the coincidence of the forms of

the Genitive and the Dative. The "Dative of possession" is manifested from the 10th century onwards in texts created in the Pliska-Preslav area. It is, again, from the Old Bulgarian period onwards that the short dative forms of the pronouns appear in possessive function.

Finally, a parameter of change often noted but seldom specified is the development towards more rigid word order.

9. Factors of Change.

In the course of its long history as a literary language, Bulgarian has undergone changes of a kind that no other Slavonic language has. Most of them were already noticeable in the first, 10th century Bulgarian writings. The changes are in two major directions, which may well be related: 1/ the preservation of (or return to) Indo-European categories and forms which did not form part of the local Slavonic dialect; 2/ the development or, more probably, preservation of local, 'Balkan', features, some of which do not form part of the structure of other Indo-European languages. Without doubt, the specific development of Bulgarian is related to the mutual influence of the languages and dialects of the diverse populations which participated in the ethnogenesis of the Bulgarian people, but also, possibly, to the language contacts in the region of the Balkans.

Beginning with the *a d s t r a t u m*:

While Bulgarian was for centuries the literary language used by the church and administration north of the Danube and has influenced Rumanian at all language levels, Rumanian influences on the structure of Bulgarian are highly improbable: this language appeared on the local scene during the Middle Bulgarian period, centuries after the development tendencies of Bulgarian had become manifest, and became a literary language seven centuries later -- the oldest surviving Rumanian document dates from the 16th century.

As to Greek, as a literary language of great prestige, it was spoken by the Thracian aristocracy and used in Thracian inscriptions. In the Middle Ages,

Greek was spoken by the rulers of Ancient Bulgaria and used in their communication with Byzantium. The first Slavonic writings were translations from the Greek and demonstrate clear cases of interference. Even if it did not directly affect the morpho-syntactic development of the Bulgarian language, it probably played the role of catalyst of language change, such as: analytical tendencies, development of the deictic pronoun into a definite article, coincidence of the dative and genitive pronouns, preservation of the Indo-European system of verbal tenses.

Turkish – which during the centuries of Ottoman rule was the language of administration on the Balkans – has often been identified as the source of the development of the Bulgarian Evidential Mood. Recent studies of Evidentiality, however, demonstrate that this category is certainly not an exotic Turkic feature. V. A. Plungian points out that:

“Nowadays, evidentiality is not regarded as a rare and unusual category (...). The extended Euro-Asian arc, including the Balkan languages (except Modern Greek), Asia, a broad strip going to the Far East over the Caucasus, Southern Asia, the Volga district, and Southern Siberia; in the linguistic literature (...) is usually called the “Great Evidential Belt” and considered to be the most significant geographical locality of evidentiality, both with respect to the size of the territory and the number of languages and their genetic diversity (The Great Evidential Belt includes Southern Slavic, Albanian, Iranian, Indo-Asian, Armenian, Kartvelian, Abchaso-Adygei, Nachsko-Daghestan, Turkish, Finno-Ugric, and some other languages).” (Plungian 2010, p. 19)

A. Alcazar (Alcazar 2010) points out that Evidentiality is also a prominent feature of Basque. This Mood is thus forms part of the oldest languages of Europe, such as Basque, Albanian and Armenian, and of the Indo-Iranian branch of Indo-European. It may well have formed part of the structure, or development tendencies, of both Thracian and Ancient Bulgarian.

Next, the s u b s t r a t u m: analytical tendencies, short pronominal

forms, postpositioned article, vowel reductions, diminutives – these probably formed part of the system of the Thracian language. Even though Latin was a synthetic language, it probably had strong analytical tendencies – as can be observed in the structure of all modern Romance languages. It did not have articles, but the germs must have been there, for articles are a typological feature of the Romance world. Other features that Bulgarian shares with this language group are: clitic pronouns and clitic climbing, temporal forms. The eminent Bulgarian linguist Vl. Georgiev considered Latin as the main factor defining the specific development of the Bulgarian language.

Finally, interest in the Ancient Bulgarian *s u p e r s t r a t u m* is of relatively recent date and was first raised by the results of research carried out on the economic culture of the Ancient Bulgarians by P. Dobrev (Cf. Dobrev 1986, 1994, 1998). Bulgarian linguist Ts. Tafradjijska defined Old Bulgarian as a language *sui generis*, related to the Iranian branch of Indo-European. In his investigation on the First Bulgarian Kingdom, archaeologist R. Rashev concludes that the cumulative evidence provided by archaeological, anthropological and language data supports the hypothesis of the domination of an Iranian ethnic element in the ethnogenesis of the 'Danubian' branch of the Ancient Bulgarians (Rashev 2000, Cf. also Bozhilov, Gyuzelev 1999, Vasilev 2009). According to P. Dobrev, Ancient Bulgarian was a typically Pamirian language belonging to East-Iranian language group, with some Caucasian and Altaic admixtures (Cf. Dobrev 1999). Most of the evidence presented by Dobrev is based on lexical parallels with modern languages of the Pamir, predominantly words belonging to the basic stock of a language: names of family members, dwellings, items of clothing, flowers, basic verbs, as well as anthroponyms and toponyms. Continuing this line of synchronic parallels, we could add, for what they are worth, some structural similarities between Modern Bulgarian and Modern Persian: postpositioned clitic determiners; the category of Aspect; a similar Tense system incorporating the opposition Aorist/Imperfect; the category of Correlation; analytical future with the

verb of volition; 1st person sg. Present tense inflexion: *-am*; ad-verbal negative particle *-ne*, etc. As clearly observable features or tendencies, these already formed part of the system of 10th century Bulgarian -- the first stage of existence of Bulgarian as a literary language.

10. Concluding Remarks.

Modern Bulgarian was shown to be the result of the development of a 9th Century South Slavonic dialect, forcefully imposed as the literary language of the First Bulgarian State, in a mixed, possibly even predominantly, non-Slavonic environment. This language contact led to the early differentiation of Bulgarian from the other languages of the Slavonic group, including the South-Slavonic language of neighbouring Serbia.

The first signs of the differentiation of Bulgarian from the Slavonic language group can be observed in manuscripts from the 10th Century. Therefore, the use of the term 'Old Slavonic' for the monuments produced on the territory of the First Bulgarian Kingdom is inappropriate.

The first departure of Bulgarian from its Slavonic ancestry is more noticeable in works coming from the North-Eastern literary centre -- where the influence of the Thracian-Roman substratum and the Ancient Bulgarian superstratum was stronger. While our information on the Thracian and Ancient Bulgarian languages is not abundant, the development tendencies of Bulgarian clearly indicate a language contact between the local Slavonic dialect and one or more non-Slavonic Indo-European languages. This contact resulted in the conservation or development of categories and phenomena, also characterising today languages of the Iranian and Romance groups. These structural parallelisms indicate, as the most probable triggers of change, the language of the latinised Thracian population and the language of the Ancient Bulgarians -- the founders of the Bulgarian state and of the first literary schools on its territory.

Appendix A

The inscription in *scriptio continua* on the ring from Ezerovo, presented below, is the most important Thracian text found to this date:

ROLISTENEASN
 ERENEATIL
 TEANESKOA
 ARAZEADOM
 EANTILEZU
 PTAMIEE
 RAZ
 ELTA

VI. Georgiev (op. cit., 105-110) proposes the following analysis of the inscription :

Translation: *Rolisten, I, your young chosen wife, I die at your side, my (late husband), resting in beatitude, (I), who brought up your children.*

(The translation is based on our knowledge of the funerary rites of the Thracians : the deceased man's favourite wife was buried at his side, this being considered a great honour.)

ROLISTENE – Vocative form in -e of a complex anthroponym;

AS – personal pronoun for the 1st p.sg., Nominative form – Cf. Old Bulgarian *азъ*;

NERE – Noun, fem., possible copulative form *neri-+-e*, - Cf. O. Indian *nari* – woman, wife.

NEA – Adjective, fem. form - **newa* - new, young

or

NER(I) E NEA – with a copular article – Cf. Albanian *grua(ja) e re*, or Rumanian *sotia cel tanara* – the young woman (wife).

T(I) ou T' – Dative personal pronoun – Cf. Albanian *ty, t'*, Bulgarian

ти [ti], Rumanian *ti*;

ILTE-A – ‘the chosen’, Cf. **wlte-ya* – Passive past participle, fem.; Cf. also Rumanian *aleas-a* – ‘the chosen’, *carte-a* – the book, Albanian *fole-ja* ‘the nest’.

NESKO – ‘to die’. Cf. Greek *νησκο*. Development *dn* -> *n(n)* with analogies in the Bulgarian dialects: *днеска* [dneska – ‘today’] -> *неска* [neska].

A(R)RAZE-A – ‘at your side’. – from *a(n)* (Bulgarian *на-* [na – ‘at’, ‘to’] and **rog'i* – ‘line’, ‘row’, ‘direction’, Locative form; *-a* – post-positioned article.

DO – preposition, from **d(h)o* – Latin *do*, Anglo-Saxon *to*, Bulgarian *до* [do – ‘to’, ‘by’].

TILE-ZUPTAM – ‘late’ (resting in beatitude) – Bulgarian *блаженопочивши* [blazhenopochivshi], archaic Adjective.

IE – **ya* – ‘who’, ‘which’.

ERAZ – ‘children’ – Noun, Accusative, sg. or pl.- Cf. **erons* or **eros*.

ELTA – Aorist 3rd p. sg. – ‘to bring up’, from **al-to*.

Appendix B

Vladimir Georgiev proposes a general Table with the particular Thracian and Dacian developments from Indo-European :

I.-E	Daco-Moesian	Thracian
O	a	o
ew	e	eu
aw	a	au
ri	ur(or), ul (ol)	
n,m	a	un
b,d,g	b,d,g	p,t,k
p,t,k	p,t,k	ph,th,kh

(Georgiev op. cit.:282)

Appendix C

Glosses, found in accounts of Arabian travellers (e.g. Ibn-Fadlan, 922): *kalan souv* (long hat), *soudjouv* (drink, made with honey), *haldja* (lake), *halandj* et *haldank* (types of wood). All these Nouns have Pamirian parallels.

Toponyms, of Ancient Bulgarian origin in the territories of their invasions in Central and Eastern Europe from the 5th - 6th centuries: in Pannonia and Dacia, a number of toponyms in -SHI, -IK, -ICH, (-ECH, -ESHT): *Bouilesht, Balvanesht, Zhupanek, Baunesht, Tchukich, Balsha, Toyaga* etc.; in Eastern Serbia – *Mourgash, Madara, Kalubre, Chikatovo, Beleg, Hubava, Chuchulyaga*; in Albania, Macedonia and Greek Thrace - *Chuka, Chuka-Borya, Zhupani, Bulgaretz, Kutsaka, Shishman, Kruma, Kossara, Isperih, Tsera, Vinyahi*, the Mount *Presiyan* (near Kavala), *Chavka, Kishino, Shamak; Tsera, Chukasi, Bahot, Tana-i-bulgarita, Maniku, Kuchi, Zhoupanata*. In Bulgaria: *Pliska (Plaskova), Varna, Shumen, Shabla, Madara, Tutrakan, Veregava, Galata*, etc.

An even large number of **anthroponyms** have reached us through different sources : travellers' accounts, written documents - such as the Onomastic List of the Bulgarian Khanas, stone inscriptions from the rule of Omurtag and Malamir, a number of Old Bulgarian texts. It is thus that we learn the names of some Bulgarian tribes (*Kupi bulgar, Kuchi bulgar, Onoghondor bulgar, Chdar bulgar*), clans (*Dulo Ermi, Vokil (Ukil), Ugain, Ermiar, Kubiari, Chakardar*), rulers (*Avitohol, Kardama, Ziezi, Vund (Vanand), Irnik, Organa, Kubrat, Bezmer, Kotrag, Kouber, Altzek, Asparuh, Tervel, Tvirem, Sevar, Kormisosh, Vineh, Telets, Umor*).

Our sources from the Old Bulgarian period contain more than forty **aristocratic titles, positions of honour and professions**: *kana* (with

an open *a*, rendered by Hungarian sources as *ea*: *kana* - *ceanus*), *boïla*, and composites: *kanasyubigi* (*ceanus magnus*, 'the great cean'), *kana boïla kolobar*, *zitkoi otchirgou boïla*, *boïla tarkan*, *boïla zhoapan*, *iouk boïla* etc. Many professions and positions were marked by the suffix *-ЧИИ* ['chii'], with parallels in Central Caucasus and the Pamir region: *кънигачии* [*kanigachii* - 'man of letters'], *шаръчии* [*sharchii* - 'painter'], *сокачии* [*sokachii* - 'cook'], *зъдчии* [*zadchii* - 'architect'], *самъчии* [*samchii* - messenger, ambassador], *бирчии* [*birchii* - 'tax collector'], *кормчии* [*kormchii* - 'guide', 'chief', 'leader'].

A small number of stone inscriptions have been found – some in a system of writing of unclear origin, but others – in the Greek alphabet, easily read: *ZENTY AΣO E*. ['To Zent the ash is'] - Inscription from Silistra; *ANZI ZERA ITZH AΣO E* ['To Anz the ash is'] – Inscription from Silistra; *ΟΗΣΙ ΥΟΒΟΚ ΕΑΛΗ* - Inscription from Pliska; *ΒΟΥΗΛΑ ΖΟΑΠΑΝ ΤΕΣΙΔΥΓΕΤΟΗΓΗ ΒΟΥΤΑΟΥΛΖΟΑΠΑΝΤΑΓΡΟΓΗ ΗΤΖΙΓΗΤΑΙΣΗ* – Inscription from Nagi Sent Miklosh. The longest inscription which has reached us from the region of Preslav and probably contains a list of military equipments: *ΖΗΤΚΟΗ ΗΤΖΥΡΓΥ ΒΟΥΛΕ ΧΟΥΜΣΧΗ ΚΥΠΕ ΟΝΕ' ΤΟΥΣΧΗ Μ' ΕΣΤΡΟΓΙΝ ΚΥΠΕ ΟΚΖ' ΤΟΥΣΧΙ ΟΝΔ' ΤΟΡΤΟΥΝΑ ΠΙΛΕ ΖΟΠΑΝ ΕΣΤ ΥΓΙΝ ΚΥΠΕ Κ' ΤΟ ΟΛΣΧΗ Μ' ΑΛΧΑΣΙ ΚΥΠΕ Α' ΧΛΟΥΒΡΙΝ Α'* (where *-SI*, *-SHI* seem to be Adjectival formatives, and *ΒΟΥΛΕ* seems to be a Dative form of *ΒΟΥΛΑ*).

The Onomastic List of the Bulgarian Kanas, found in Russia in a later copy, contains a list of the Bulgarian rulers with the year of their coming to the throne and the years of their rule. The list also gives us valuable information on the Ancient Bulgarian calendar. The names of the years were: *диломъ твиремъ* [*dilom tvirém*], *дохсъ твиремъ* [*dohs tvirem*], *шегоръ вечемъ* [*shégor vétché*], *верени алемъ* [*véreni além*], *текоу читемъ* [*teku chitem*], *дванъ шехтемъ* [*dvan shehtem*], *тохъ алтомъ* [*toh altom*], *шегоръ твиримъ* [*shegor tvirim*], *шегоръ алемъ* [*shegor alem*], *соморъ алтемъ* [*somor altem*], *диломъ тоутомъ* [*dilom tutom*].

A considerable Non-Slavonic lexis of Ancient Bulgarian origin is present in the texts, created in the literary centre of Pliska-Preslav: *българин*

[balgarin – ‘Bulgarian’], белег [beleg – ‘sign, mark’], белчуг [belchug – ‘loop’], бисер [bisser – ‘pearl’], болярин [bolyarin – bolyar], бъбрек [babrek – kidney], капище [kapishte – ‘idol’, ‘pagan temple’], књигы [kanigy – ‘book’], кумир [kumir – ‘idol’], сан [san – ‘grade’, ‘rang’], пашеног [pashenog – ‘brother-in-law’]; чертог [chertog – ‘palace, ‘castle’], чипаг [chipag – woman’s clothing], тояга [toyaga – ‘stick’]; тикъ [tik – ‘mirror’].

(Cf. Dobrev 1999, Dobrev & Dobreva 2001)

Notes:

(1) The term 'Danubian Bulgaria' is used, mainly in Russian sources, to oppose this Bulgarian state, on the one hand, to Great Ancient Bulgaria and, on the other, to the Bulgarian state founded by Kotrag on the Volga, to the North-East, in the area of present-day Kazan.

(2) Ancient Bulgarian continued to be used, though, long after this year, witness of which are inscriptions in this language in the Cyrillic alphabet.

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