

AN UNKNOWN OLD BULGARIAN HONORIFIC TITLE

(Summary)

The article examines new evidence for a honorific title $\Delta\rho\omicron\gamma\Gamma\text{Z}$ / $\Delta\rho\pi\Gamma\text{Z}$ / $\Delta\rho\text{b}\Gamma\text{Z}$ / $\Delta\rho\text{z}\Gamma\text{Z}$ / $\Delta\epsilon\rho\Gamma\text{Z}$, found in the Slavonic version of the *Chronographia Georgii Synceli*, in the Old Testament (*Jonah* 3: 7) and in the *Martyrium St. Clementis, Papae Romani*. These medieval Slavonic texts have been preserved in manuscripts copied in the 14-th – 15-th centuries, but translated in Bulgaria several centuries earlier, some of them going back to a Glagolitic original. The Greek equivalents of the Slavonic title (σύγκλητος ἢ, ἐκ τῆς συγκλήτου, συγκλητικός ὁ, μεγιστᾶνος, ἄρχων, οἱ ἐν τέλει ὄντες, περιφανής) prove that it was used to refer to a notable person, a boyar, a dignitary, a person of power. It is argued that the different phonetic variants do not depend on the spelling in the manuscripts and that the etymology of the primary form $\Delta\rho\omicron\gamma\Gamma\text{Z}$ has a parallel in the Altayan lexeme *dapyza*, *darga* t.e. “he who stands at the head, a man of higher status”, and is a borrowing from the Persian *dāroγā*, *darova*. This Persian-Altayan title was used by the Proto-Bulgarians, but it lost its original meaning early and was not understood correctly by the Slavonic men of letters, who either “corrected” $\Delta\rho\omicron\gamma\Gamma\text{Z}$ into $\Delta\rho\pi\Gamma\text{Z}$ or reinterpreted $\Delta\rho\omicron\gamma\Gamma\text{Z}$ according to the Slavonic root $\Delta\rho\text{b}\Gamma\text{-}/\Delta\rho\text{b}\text{ж-}$ in the sense that it signifies strength and power.

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