

кѣле and хѣръ in the birch bark letters. An alternative explanation

In his interpretation of the Novgorod birch bark letter no. 247, which reads as follows: ...рѣзанами а замѣке кѣле, а двѣри кѣлѣ, а господарь въ нетамѣ, не дѣе..., and letter no. 130 with the text: у Вигара 20 локото хѣри безо локти etc., A.A. Zaliznjak claims that the words кѣле and хѣре are two clear cases in which a velar appears before a *ѣ*, derived from an old diphthong. For Zaliznjak these examples are clear proofs of the fact that the Novgorod-Pskov dialect never underwent the process of the second regressive palatalization, which otherwise is known in all of the Slavic languages. The two words thus can be regarded as forms of *цѣлъ* and *сѣръ*. I accept Zaliznjak's contention that the words stand for *цѣлъ* and *сѣръ*, but I cannot without reservation accept his line of argumentation. Zaliznjak (1986, 113) writes:

"Для выявленных выше древненовгородских словоформ (кѣле, кѣлѣ, хѣри, гвѣздѣкъ) по-видимому, невозможно предложить какое-либо правдоподобное объяснение, кроме простейшего; они непосредственно сохраняют праславянский облик, т.е. в них никогда не было второй палатализации. Тем самым эти словоформы служат мощным аргументом в пользу гипотезы, выдвинутой в частичной форме Б.М. Ляпуновым, а в полной форме С.М. Глускиной, об отсутствии второй палатализации в новгородско-псковском диалекте".

Of the various proofs that Zaliznjak provides for his contention that the second regressive palatalization is missing in the Novgorod-Pskov dialect, only the cases кѣле, кѣлѣ and хѣръ are truly convincing. Even these forms, however, are convincing only if they cannot be explained in any other way. In the case of гвѣздѣкъ it is necessary only to look at West Slavic, which even though it has retained the second regressive palatalization, never has palatalized the clusters *kv-* and *gv-*.

Thus there arises the question whether some other explanation can be provided for the phenomenon кѣлъ and хѣръ, other than that which Zaliznjak himself regards as "the simplest". Zaliznjak (1987, 117) ascertains that the dialect used in the birch bark letters belongs to the Novgorod-Pskov dialect:

"Древненовгородский диалект не был полностью един. Уже на нынешнем этапе исследования мы можем различить в нем по меньшей мере две группы говоров - западную (по-видимому, соотносимую с псковскими кривичами) и восточную (по-видимому, соотносимую со словенами). Западная группа говоров отличалась от стандартного древнерусского более резко, чем восточная. Сравнение берестяных грамот с данными современной и исторической диалектологии показывает, что в самом Новгороде господствовал западный вариант древненовгородского диалекта; особенно ярко это господство проявляется в XI-XII вв."

It is my intention to demonstrate that it is possible to explain *кѣлъ* and *хѣръ* as dialectal innovations in the Novgorod-Pskov dialect. This can be done, however, only if one does not assume, as Zaliznjak does, that the second regressive palatalization never appeared in this dialect.

Let us begin with an analysis of letter 247, stemming from the eleventh century: *а замѣке кѣле, а двѣри кѣлѣ, а господарь в неѣжѣ, не дѣе*. Zaliznjak (1986, 112) translates this letter as follows: *А замок цел, а двѣри целы, а хозяин в немоци, не работает*.

In order to make sense of the text, Zaliznjak is compelled to introduce in this dialect text a word **неѣжа*, with the meaning "в нетрудоспособном состоянии". He does this by referring to the appearance of a word *неѣжа* in Old Church Slavonic texts. (In 1987, 121 Zaliznjak provides yet another interpretation of this same passage by reading *въ не ѣжѣ не дѣе*, a reading which previously he had regarded as incorrect.) This OCS word, however, is masculine. It has a complete different meaning, *ленивый человек*, and only two instances of it are known, both in the Book of Proverbs of the Old Testament: 13:4 *ѣ похотѣхъ естъ ѣсъкъ неѣжа* (SJS) and 15:19 *пѣтъ неѣжѣ*. In several Russian dialects, however, there is a word *неѣга* which can mean 'sickness', *слабость*. This word supports Zaliznjak's interpretation better. If we were to use this word, the locative singular with second regressive palatalization would be *въ неѣжѣ*, or *въ неѣжѣ* without palatalization. How then is it possible to explain the form *въ неѣжѣ*? In the Pskov dialect a change *з' > ж'*, *шоканье*, is documented already in the eleventh century. Zaliznjak himself (1986, 127) refers to this dialectal phenomenon in the birch bark letters: "Следующие примеры, по-видимому, отражают смешение мягких свистящих и шипящих

(характерное для псковских говоров): *заожеричь* Свинц. (XI/XII - XII), *ризы* "рыжий" (?) 160 (сер. XII), *прикажываеши*, *зеребе* <*жеребѣ*> 99 (сер. XIV); ...". He, however, does not include *нетяжѣ* among these examples, since it would contradict his claim of the nonimplementation of the second regressive palatalization in the dialect. Zaliznjak (1984, 10), in his commentary to the свинцовая грамота, says: *ж* вместо *з* в *заожеричь* скорее всего отражает соответствующее смещение (псковского типа). Zaliznjak (1987, 119) writes: "В западной зоне древне-новгородского диалекта по крайней мере в части говоров /с'/, /з'/ совпали соответственно с /ш'/, /ж'/". В берестяных грамотах эта черта отражается, но сравнительно редко".

Filin (1972, 267ff.) points to the fact that "Как давно уже установлено исследователями, смещение букв с и ш, з и ж имеет место главным образом в древнепсковской письменности. Примеров этому смещению в лингвистической литературе приводилось много".

It is thus possible to regard *нетяжѣ* as the locative of *нетяга*, with the effect of the second regressive palatalization and with the dialectal change *з* > *ж*. It is not necessary to invent an Old Russian word **нетяжа*, nor look for rare OCS homonyms in this dialectal text.

кѣлъ and *хѣръ* therefore must be explained otherwise than by maintaining, as Zaliznjak does, that this dialect does not undergo the second regressive palatalization.

Zaliznjak argues that by regarding *кѣлъ* and *хѣръ* as archaic forms he is corroborating Gluskina's (1966; 1968) hypothesis that the second regressive palatalization was never implemented in the Novgorod-Pskov dialect. Gluskina claimed that the roots *кѣж-*, *кѣв-* and *кѣл-* are archaisms and proof of the fact that the Novgorod-Pskov dialect was never affected by the second regressive palatalization. Stieber (1968) elaborated Gluskina's hypothesis and claimed that the second regressive palatalization is missing even in dialects to the east of Moscow. This ought to have given rise to a certain cautiousness in the estimation of the correctness of Gluskina's hypothesis. Filin (1972, 381) is sceptical towards Gluskina's hypothesis and rejects Stieber's outright. It is therefore only logical that Zaliznjak limits his line of argument concerning the lack of the second regressive palatalization to the Novgorod-Pskov dialect and does not enter into a discussion of the other Russian dialects.

Björnflaten (1988) has carefully analysed the Gluskina-Stieber hypothesis. He concludes that the forms that have been regarded as archaisms, in reality, are dialectal innovations. This is true both of the dialects east of Moscow and of the Pskov dialect "Summing up, it can be concluded that in the Pskov area the conditions are at hand for the operation of two successive changes which have produced lexical items with velar like *kedit'* < *tedit'* < *cedit'*, *kedilka* < *tedilka* < *cedilka*, *kevka* < *tevka* < *cevka*, *kep* < *tep* < *cep*. Consequently, these lexical items are the outcome of two dialectal sound changes operating successively. Therefore, the claim that these are archaisms providing evidence for the nonimplementation of the second regressive palatalization in uniform environments has to be rejected" (1988, 256-57).

Björnflaten's hypothesis corroborates my contention that *кѣлъ* in birch bark letter no. 247 cannot be regarded as conclusive proof for the nonimplementation of the second regressive palatalization in the Pskov dialect. Rather, it must be considered as a dialectal innovation, a change *ц' > т' > к'*. Letter 247 thus contains three dialectal forms, typical for the Novgorod-Pskov dialect: *кѣлъ*, *негяжѣ* and *дѣе*. For the loss of *-тъ* in the third person of the verb in this dialect, see Zaliznjak (1986, 143).

How, however, it is possible to explain the form *хѣръ* in birch bark letter 130 from the fourteenth/fifteenth century, if we accept Zaliznjak's interpretation that this word is a form of the word **сѣръ*, gray, homespun fabric, but do not accept the view that this word is an archaism? (перед нами слово *сѣръ* без эффекта второй палатализации (1986, 112)).

In the Pskov dialect there exists the change *с > х*: *мяхо*, *мяхой*, *техниться*, *вмехный* (= совместный), *хвет* (= свет), *пихьмо*, *принеху*. Filin (1972, 282) writes: "Гораздо труднее объяснить случаи типа *мяхо*, *пихьмо* и др. Не исключено, что здесь мы имеем ранние замены (по невыясненным причинам) с согласным *х*. В новгородских граффити XI-XII вв. имеется написание *тѣхънова*, которое В.Н. Щепкин объясняет как *тѣсьнова*." Therefore it seems correct to explain the change *сѣръ > хѣръ* as a dialectal one.

To support his case, Zaliznjak (1986, 116) contends that the second and the third palatalization are missing in many forms of the pronoun *весь*. Having pointed to the fact that researchers for a long time have been aware of the two examples with the stem *вх-*, which have not been affected by the third palatalization, he asserts: "Но в парадигме слова <<весь>>

имеется группа словоформ, где окончание начинается с $\dot{x}$ или $\dot{y}$, и, следовательно, корневое x должно было подвергнуться второй палатализации".

It is no mere coincidence that all examples of missing second and third palatalization in the oblique forms of the pronoun *vesь* can be found in the Novgorod texts (Savignac 1975). Zaliznjak (1986, 118) comments this lack of palatalization as follows: "В действительности по данным берестяных грамот можно говорить об отсутствии третьей палатализации только для x ; практически речь идет о единственном слове <<vesь>>".

Björnflaten (1988, 263) suggests that even these forms of *vesь* perhaps can be explained by the dialectal change $c > x$. This means that "forms like *vchu*, *vche*, *vchemo*, etc. have to be looked upon not as archaisms, but as the outcome of a dialectal sound change that in addition to these also yielded *pich'mo*, *ch'vet*, *mjacho*, etc. in the Pskov area".

The strength of Björnflaten's suggestion is that the forms not only correspond to all sound change laws in the Novgorod-Pskov dialect, but also provide an explanation as to why the second and third palatalization seem to be missing in this pronoun.

The aim of this article has been to demonstrate that it is possible to explain the forms $x\dot{t}le$ and $x\dot{t}pъ$ against the background of the sound change laws of the Novgorod-Pskov dialect. Zaliznjak's claim that "...по-видимому, невозможно предложить какое-либо правдоподобное объяснение, кроме простейшего; они непосредственно сохраняют праславянский облик, т.е. в них никогда не было второй палатализации" is not convincing. Neither of these two words, nor the appearance of the $x\dot{t}$ -forms for the pronoun *vesь* can be regarded as substantive proof for the contention that the second regressive palatalization was not implemented in this dialect.

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