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**Diachronic text linguistics digital - The Life of Petka Tărnovska from Middle Bulgarian Church Slavonic to Balkan Slavic**

Establishing a diachronic corpus for East-South Slavonic which covers a time span ranging from 14<sup>th</sup> century Bulgarian Church Slavonic to 19<sup>th</sup> century Balkan Slavic is a highly worthwhile undertaking from both a linguistic and a philological point of view. However, it is confronted with crucial problems relating in particular to the changing circumstances and norms of literary production occurring during this period. On the example of the intended project "All-embracing manuscript edition, South Slavonic (A-MESS)", currently under review at the Swiss National Scientific Foundation, the present paper outlines difficulties, possible solutions and prospective benefits related to such an enterprise.

Contrary to classical historical corpora, a truly diachronic corpus should provide insight into different snapshots in time in order to reflect synchronic variability and, in addition, mirror the dynamicity of linguistic development. To that end, the data included need to be as comparable as possible. This can be achieved by designing the corpus as a parallel corpus which aligns representative versions - in terms of time and (linguistic) origin - of one and the same text. Ideally suited for the project under discussion is Patriarch Euthymius' *Life of Petka Tărnovska* (Paraskeva of Epibatai). Together with its vernacular versions contained in *damaskini* it represents a case in point for the literary and linguistics changes and the abundance of textual versions occurring between the medieval and early modern period of Slavonic written language on the Balkans.

In order to ensure - as far as possible - reliability and validity of the data gathered in the corpus, the inclusion of philological expertise concerning the social, historical and communicative embedding of the selected texts is of utmost importance. The necessary combination of linguistic and philological know-how can be achieved by joining two principle ways of accessing historical data: by means of a linguistic corpus and by means of a philological edition.

This integrated approach constitutes the surplus value of the A-MESS project, which at the same time contributes to the development of the technical means necessary for the corpus linguistic processing of lesser studied languages.