

Alexandra SUPERANSKAYA

Moscow, Russia

RUSSIAN PERSONAL NAMES

Many slavists are sure that first Slavonic personal names formed a system consisting of only one name for a person. Later on a system of two names was developed. So far as Russian anthroponymics is concerned this theory is not correct. There is but little information before the 900-th and 1000-th. The earliest material shows that our ancestors had two names for each person, a given name and a concealed one. Given names were widely used while concealed names were known only by a few close relatives of a nominee. There was a belief that one could cause harm to a person by repeating his name because a name was regarded as an alter ego of the nominee. At the earliest time both names, given and hidden, were heathen. After christening one of the names became Christian the other remaining heathen. Then both names became Christian.

Since the earliest time there were heathen names of two types:

1. Names used within the family: *Glazko* (eye), *Bolshak* (big, eldest) and
2. Names used out of doors: *Kuznets* (smith), *Bezrukiy* (with one hand or arm).

The first ones were given by parents or grandparents according to the family believes and traditions. There was a special set of base words for personal names in some families. For ex., the *Traviny* (the Grass's) had the names *Osoka* (sedge), *Otava* (after-grass), *Stchavey* (sorrel) etc., the *Ovtsyny* (the Sheep's) had the names *Yagnysh* (lamb), *Baran* (Ram) etc. in their family. The documents of 1300-1400 show that many people had not only a first name but also a kind of a surname, for ex. *Bychko Grikhnov*, 1495, peasant, Novgorod. *Bychko* is a derivative of *Byk* (ox), *Grikhno* is a derivative of *Grigoriy* (Gregory), *-ov* is a possessive suffix; prince *Dmitriy Konstantinovich Nogot'* (nail) *Suzdal'skiy*, 1350; *Sergey Ivanovich Yar'a Borozdin*, 1381-1461, *Yar'a* is a derivative of *Yaroslav*, he is also known as monk *Sava Visherskiy*, the founder of a monastery on the river *Vishera* near *Novgorod*.

THE CONCEPTION OF THE PERSONAL NAME

At the earliest period of time the interconnections of the members of a family were realized by means of co-nomination, i.e. the set of names within a family displayed that the people belonged to the same family. For ex., if the head of the family was called *Byk* (ox), his wife was *Bychikha* (Byk's wife), his son was called *Bychok* (little ox), his daughter – *Bychka* (Byk's daughter), his grandson – *Bychonok* (the smallest Byk). A thematic arrangement of names in a family made for their lexical co-nomination: grandfather *Ovtsa* – father *Baran* – son *Yagnysh*. A rich set of suffixes made for the structural co-nomination.

After christening new names of a new structure were added to the previous ones. The idea of co-nomination was changed. It became the coordination of anthroponyms with agionyms, the latter forming a system of their own. A baptized person connected his life with his saint by a spiritual tie. Lexical bases of names became now of lesser importance because the connection of a person with his saint was based on the spelling and pronunciation of the name.

The system of old Russian suffixes participated in the process of adaptation of borrowed names in the Russian language. Thus *Mikhail* developed colloquial forms *Misha*, *Mishka*, *Mishonok*, *Mikhalka*, *Mikhno*, *Mikhail'onok* and many others. Abridged and affective forms of Christian names could be easily compared with their full forms because everybody knew this correspondance and each name was connected with a date in the calendar. The latter was the case why Christian names were also called calendar names.

In the course of time the interconnections of full forms and abridged ones became vaguer. Some irregular forms, for ex., *Lesko* for *Alexey* or *Serpokh* for *Serapion* were forgotten, still to be found in such place-names as *Serpokhov*, modern *Serpukhov* or in the surname *Leskov*. Some typical short and affective forms of personal names became widely spread. At the beginning of the 1900 the short names *Lel'a* and *L'ol'a* could be used for *Alexey*. Now *L'ol'a* is used as a diminutive for *Ol'ga* and *Elena* (both are women's names). Most typical diminutives for *Alexey* are *Al'osha*, *L'osha*, *L'on'a*.

When after 1917 atheism was declared to be the main ideology of the world the conception of a personal name was changed once more. Names were no longer connected with the images of the saints because the officials ceased recognizing them. In this aspect Russian names began to resemble protestants names. The protestants have no saints and they regard names as pure marks which differ from each other by spelling and pronunciation. After 1920 some variants of Russian calendar names were regarded as different names (*Yuriy* and *Georgiy*, *Agrippina* and *Agrafena*). Before 1920 children when they were baptized received their names in accordance with the spelling in the church books,

i.e. *Georgiy, Agrippina*. Then their parents received civil documents and when doing so they might choose the form of names they wanted for their children, mostly according to their family's tradition, i.e. either *Georgiy*, or *Yuriy* or *Yegor*, either *Glikeria* or *Lukerya*, either *Agrippina*, or *Agrafena*. Many new names for Russian children were introduced after 1920. The identification of persons called with the new names and their differentiation was now based only on their spelling and pronunciation.

The main reason for the appearing of new names was the ideological one. People were sure that new life was approaching and they wanted to give their children new names to cheer New Life. There were several types of new names. First of all there were names with a revolutionary contents: *Barrikada, Revdit* (revolutsionnoye dit'a, i.e. a revolutionary child). There were names aimed at the development of science and technique: *Akadema, Elektrifikatsiya*. Some names were given after names and surnames of participants of some previous revolutions: *Spartak, Robespier, Marat*. There were many borrowed names as a token of proletarian internationality: *Edward* and *Eduard, Willy, Nelly, John, Jack, Nora* etc. Parents had no idea that those names were also church names, like the Russian *Ivan, Yakov* etc, that those were the names of Catholic saints.

A new interest for the religion was revealed in Russia in the 1990-th. After a long interval children are being baptized, grown-ups go to church. But that does not influence the conception of a personal name. Many unofficial forms are already forgotten. The interconnection of official and unofficial forms became irrelevant. The officials check the spelling of names more strictly as before and regard *Natalia* and *Natalya, Sofia* and *Sofya* as different names.

OLD RUSSIAN (HEATHEN) NAMES

The state Rus' appeared in the 800-th as a result of amalgamation of Scandinavian (Normann) warriors with the Slavonic citizens and peasants. Their main cities were Novgorod and Kiev. The twofold origin of the nation was reflected in their personal names; they were of double nature, Slavonic and Scandinavian.

Old Slavonic names were of two types: simple names derived from Slavonic appellatives (*Bel, Bel'ay* – white, *Drozd* – ouzel) and composita (*Miroslav, Toligne, Domaded*).

Scandinavian names were mainly composita. They changed their forms in the course of adaptation in the Russian language. Thus *Hrodric* became *R'urik, Valdemar* – *Volodimer, Ragnhild* – *Rogneda*. Still there were some simple names: *Oleg, Ol'ga* (Scandinavian *Helge* – saint).

The patterns of composita in Slavonic, Germanic, Greek, Indian and Iranian languages are similar. That is why composita were easily formed in those languages. Slavonic and Germanic composita influenced each other: the Slavonic *-mir-* (peace) was the result of borrowing Germanic *-mar-* (glory), while Germanic *-fried-* (peace) was a translation of Slavonic *mir-* (peace), Slavonic *-slav-* was a translation of Germanic *-mar-*. Compare the Germanic name *Valdemar* and Russian *Vladislav* with both phonetic and semantic similarity of their first components and semantic similarity of their second components.

Much efforts was done in the Old Rus' to protect babies from danger, evil forces etc. which according to the old Russian beliefs were numerical. Names with negative semantics were used for that purpose: *Neudacha* (misfortune), *Nenash* (not our baby), *Bezobraz* (ugly) etc. To keep a baby alive and prosperous and not to attract an evil eye to it the denominations of some non-valuable objects were used as personal names: *Bashmak* (a shoe), *Gorshok* (a pot), *Kocherga* (a poker), *Poleno* (a piece of wood) etc. Some more examples of old Russian names see in the previous part.

CHRISTIAN NAMES

The official christening of Rus' took part in 988 in Kiev. But some persons were Christians long before this date. Some others were baptized only several centuries later. East Slavs who were called Rus' comprised many different tribes. They spoke the same east Slavonic language. They had close contacts with each other as well as with Western and Southern Slavs. East Slavs moved gradually eastwards where some non-Slavonic tribes lived. The Slavs baptized them. The further from Kiev or Novgorod those tribes lived the later they were baptized, Kiev and Novgorod being two starting points of Slavonic colonization. There were some Baltic, Turkic, Iranian and Finno-Ugrian tribes among those whom the Slavs met. Thus Rus' became a multinational state from the very beginning of its existence.

The earliest set of Christian names used by the Rus' was rather small. Documents of the 1000-th held about 80 names included into calendars. Many dates of a calendar held no information about any church ceremony. The number of church dates and Christian names was increasing in the process of copying church books which came from Greece, Bulgaria, Makedonia. By the 1300-th almost all the days of a calendar held information on church holidays or saints.

When Rus' was baptized the Christian world was not yet split into the Catholics and the Orthodoxes. The catholicization and germanization of the Western Slavs in 1200 – 1400-th drew them away from the Eastern Slavs. The

oldest Christian names borrowed by the Eastern Slavs before 1100-th are just the same as used by the Catholics: *Georgiy* (Georges) celebrated on the 23 of April; *Ivan* (John) – on the 24 of June; *Agafia* (Agathe) – on the 5 of February. Some mentionings of the saints differ by one or two days: *Varfolomey* (Bartholomew) is on the 25 of August in the Orthodox calendars and on the 24 of August in the Catholic ones.

After the Christians were split into the Catholics and the Orthodoxes new canonizations of the saints were done by them separately. Many Orthodox saints are unknown to the western world: *Tatiana*, *Feogniy*, *Feognid*, *Feodorit*, *Feofilakt* etc. Names of Germanic origin, such as *Albert*, *Eric*, *Amalia* are not to be found in the Orthodox calendars.

Catholic names came to the inhabitants of Europe through the Latin language while the Orthodox names came to the Russians through the Greek language. That is why they differ very much in their spelling and pronunciation: Russian *Fekla* or *F'okla* – western *Thekla* or *Thecla*, Russian *Dmitriy* – western *Demetrius*.

Rus' lived in a close contact with Greece. Russian education and enlightenment came from Greece. The Greek language was gradually changing but the Russians did not notice that. The Greek of the Byzantine period when the Christian names were first borrowed into the Russian was very much unlike the New Greek which was finally established after 1400 when a philological work began in Russian cloisters.

In 1453 Konstantinopol, the capital of Greece, was seized by the Turks. The main centre of the Eastern Christendom did not cease its existence but it was restricted in its resources. Moscow prince Ivan the 3rd felt himself responsible for the further development of Christianity. He married Sophia, the niece of the last Byzantine emperor. Moscow was declared to be the Third Rome, the First one being Rome itself, the Second one being Byzantium. The adherents of the theory used to say that the Fourth Rome would never exist, although soon afterwards Geneva was called a Protestant Rome. The importance of Moscow for the Eastern Christianity grew day by day.

In 1400-1500-th Eastern Slavs split into Malorusses (later the Ukrainians), Byelorusses and Velikorosses. The word Maloruss was later on spelled as Maloross. The ethnic borders between them were not quite evident. The geographic border between Moscow part and both south-western parts of the former Rus' was marked along the line: Velikiye Luki – Toropets – Viaz'ma – Peremyshl' – Bel'ov. In 1485 the Russian Church was divided into two metropolises; the Nord-Eastern part with the centre in Moscow became independent of Konstantinopol patriarch. It was submitted to Moscow princes and later to the tsar. The South-Western part was only nominally dependent on Konstantinopol patri-

arch but indeed it was independent. In 1589 Moscow Patriarchate (independent of Konstantinopol) was established. Hundred years later the Ukrainian Church was submitted to Moscow patriarch.

There are periods of national attraction and national and confessional repulsion in the history of folks and countries. Thus a certain distrust towards the Ukrainians was observed in Moscow in the 1600-th. The Muscovites doubted if the religion of the Ukrainians were true enough. Many Ukrainians came to Moscow at that time, and they were baptised in Moscow once again. Since the South-Western Rus' was in contact with Poland and the Poles had Roman alphabet a mistrust for the Latin language as well as for everything foreign was developed in Moscow. There were no schools in Moscow the authorities shrinking from education. As a result of that it was difficult to find anybody who could become a priest, and priests were often invited to Moscow from the South-Western Rus'.

In 1596 Brest Union was established. It provided for catholic church service in Slavonic language. At the same time repressions against the Orthodoxes began in the South-Western Rus'. It made for the resettling of the Orthodoxes to the North-Eastern Rus'. There were many highly educated persons in the South-Western Rus' for schools had been functioning there for a long time. Thus the South-Western culture removed to Moscow. The problem of Greek vs. Latin still existed. A mistrust for everything foreign remained until the 1700-th.

It was in the middle of the 1500-th that it was noticed that some passages in the church books were unclear. New translations of some books from Greek into Church Slavonic were made in the 1600-th. South-Western scientists were invited to make those translations because there were few educated people in Moscow. Some differences between Moscow Church Slavonic and South-Western Church Slavonic appeared by that time. As a result of that new translations of church books performed in Moscow gained some traits of the South-Western Church Slavonic. And that was of importance for the spelling and pronunciation of proper names.

The first Christian names were borrowed into the Russian from the Byzantine Greek. Names were perfectly adapted by the Russian language and adjusted for the Russian usage. In the new translations of the 1600-th they were borrowed anew, from the New Greek language which was very much unlike the Byzantine Greek. Thus the inhabitants of Moscow received a list of new names with another spelling and a south-western accentuation. This fact did not influence the oral practice because people went on using the unofficial forms of their familiar names. But written forms of personal names occurred isolated from the colloquial ones.

COLLOQUIAL FORMS OF THE RUSSIAN PERSONAL NAMES

Colloquial forms of the Russian personal names are numberless. One cannot really innumerate them. It should be taken into consideration that one may speak about colloquial forms of anthroponyms but not of those of agionyms. The latter have but one stable form written in the church books. It is anthroponyms that may undergo all kinds of derivation and deviation. The most strictest forms of anthroponyms are homonymous to agionyms. After the reforms of the 1600-th the forms of agionyms were changed but the old official forms of anthroponyms were still in use although they had become inofficial. Thus new church forms *Dimitriy*, *Nataliya*, *Dariya* replaced the former *Dmitriy* and *D'mitriy*, *Natalya*, *Darya*. The latter remain in the oral practice until now and they may be also found in the documents.

Inofficial forms of Russian personal names are manyfold. First of all they may be full forms with some deviations from the official ones, for ex. *Alexan* for *Alexandr* or *Lexey* for *Alexey*, *Guryan* for *Guriy*. The full forms of names or their bases may be supplied with diminutive suffixes: *Alexey* – *Alexeyushka*, *Guriy* – *Guryasha*. The base of a name may be reduced in several ways: *Alexandr* – *Aleks-a* and then supplemented with various suffixes: *Aleksan'a*, *Aleksasha*, *Aleksashka*, *Aleksashechka* etc. The first part of a name can be cut off to receive a reduced base of a name: *(Alek)Sasha*, *(Alek)San'a*. The reduced base can be used as an independent colloquial name or it may in its turn be augmented with some suffixes: *San'a*, *Sanechka*, *San'usha*, *San'ka*; *Sasha*, *Sashka*, *Sashen'ka*, *Sashechka*, *Sashura*. Then the initial part of the name may be cut off again. Thus *Sashura* became *Shura*; the latter having nothing in common with the name *Alexandr* or *Alexandra* because it consists but of suffixes. The name *Shura* may be augmented with some suffixes in its turn: *Shurka*, *Shurochka*, *Shur'onok*, *Shurynda* etc.

NICKNAMES

The inofficial sphere of communication implies nicknames as its immediate ingredient. Nicknames are numerical and manyfold, from playful jokes up to offensive sobriquets. Nicknames giving should be distinguished from teasing. Nicknames resemble a kind of more or less constant additional names. They are given in a company or in a community as a token that a person is received by the fellows. Nicknames are usually affective. They tend to give a certain characteristic of a person. Teasings are temporary. They are aimed at making one nervous, angry, ready to cry or fight. Nicknames are often used together with the first

name (usually in its abridged colloquial form): *Vas'a Chubchik*, *Natasha Gus'a*. Within such a formula a name may be made out of a surname: *Andrey Baletnyi* (his surname is *Andreyev*), and he moves like a ballet-dancer. In the formula *Khoma Belov* the name *Khoma* is made out of a nickname because he looks like a khom'ak (a hamster), *Belov* is his real surname.

Such way of naming a person in an unofficial situation proves that the most stable and regular way of calling a person is a formula consisting of two components. It may be a personal name and a patronym (im'a and otchestvo): *Nikolay Nikitich*, a personal name and a surname: *Tan'a Petrova*, a personal name and a nickname: *L'ova Krasnyi* (with rosy cheeks).

There are individual and group nicknames. The former are numerous. They may be motivated by the aspect of a nominee: *Chornaya*, *Chernomaz* (of a dark complexion), by his manners, behavior, by his motion: *Balaka* or *Baybora* (talkative), *Zakor'aka* or *Utka*, *Ut'a*, *Utochka* (ducklegged), *Veterok* (a light wind) (light-minded).

Names of some well-known persons are often used as nicknames to characterize the nominee: a lean boy or man may be called *Paganel* (Jule Vern. Captain Grant's children), a curly-headed boy or youth is called *Pushkin*, a funny boy is called *Charley Chaplin*. Some nicknames are coined in foreign languages: *Dikatse* (German die Katze means a cat); it is a nickname of a German teacher; *Brotina* (German das Brot means bread, -ina is a Russian suffix).

Some nicknames are based on the contrast: *Kudr'avyi* (curly-headed) – the nickname of a bold-headed man, *Begemot* (hippopotamus) – the nickname of a subtle boy or man, *Kroshka* (a crumb) – the nickname of a corpulent man or woman.

A person may have several nicknames based on different arguments. A very active woman is called *Termoyadernaya* (nuclear) for her velocity, *Starshina* (sergeant) and *Komandirka* (commander) because she usually commands everybody, *Zheleznodorozhnitsa* (a railway woman) because she works at the railway station, *Number 16* because that is the number of a streamliner passing their station.

Different arguments may bring about the same nicknames: *Baran* (a ram) 1. curly headed; 2. stubborn; 3. because his surname is *Baranov*; *Slon* (an elephant) 1. of a large stature; 2. with a long nose turned down; 3. very thin and small. On the contrary similar features may bring about different names: a long-legged girl may be called *Balerina* (a ballet-dancer), *Dlinnonogaya* (with long legs), *Tsapl'a* (a heron); a fat boy may be called *Zhyrnyi* (fat), *Bochka* (a barrel), *Toshchiy* (meagre).

Group nicknames may be given to some persons living in the vicinity:

Selsovet (a village soviet) – seven girl-friends living in the same street. Such nicknames may be received by fellow-students: *Bukvari* (the ABC books) – students of a Pedagogical School; *Nuli* (the noughts) – students of the preparatory courses. There may be group nicknames of families: *Zmeinoye Gnezdo* (a nest full of snakes) – the nickname of a vile family; *Pcholy* (the bees) – the nickname of a working hard family.

The old traditional surnames were often based on personal names or on nicknames. In the 1900-th surnames became arguments for nicknames. The bases of traditional surnames are often distorted in new surnames. For ex., the surname *Leskov* is derived from an unofficial name *Lesko* which corresponds to the official name *Alexey*. It sounds as if it were derived from the word *lesok* (a small wood) . The new nickname derived from that surname is *Leshyi* (a wood goblin). The surname *Beloshapkin* is derived from the old nickname *Belaya Shapka* (a white cap). The new nickname derived from the surname is *Bela* (something white or a variant of a woman's name *Bella*).

It should be noticed that the official forms of Russian first names can be divided into men's (*Alexandr*) and women's (*Alexandra*). The unofficial forms of personal names have no such a division: *Shura*, *San'a*, *Sasha*, *Sashka* are both, men's and women's names. The same is true of nicknames. They have no special forms for men and women if they are substantives. Such nicknames as *Bela* (something white), *Mukha* (a fly), *Klop* (a bed-bug) may belong both to men and women or boys and girls. Nicknames have special forms for men and women if they are adjectives: *Belyi* (m.) – *Belaya* (w.) (white).

Sometimes nicknames of members of a family are differentiated: the family as a whole unit is called *Gusi* (geese), the husband is called *Gus'* (goose), his wife is *Gusikha* or *Gusyn'a* (a female goose), their children are *Gus'ata* (goslings), their son or grandson is *Gus'onok* (a gosling).

Nicknames are an ever alive source of new nomination, especially the source of surnames. Russian surnames form a very complicated lexical stratum which wants a special investigation. It is rather complicated to find the motives of the earliest names and nicknames. When analysing contemporary nicknames one can usually find their motives. But it does not mean that the nicknames of the past had the same motives.

Still nicknames are the most interesting part of the onomasticon, exposing a life word building. They are also demonstrative of the moods and tendencies of a society, of its psychology and world outlook.

Ruska osobna imena

Sažetak

Autorica u članku analizira etiologiju i nastanak ruskih osobnih imena, uspoređujući pritom prvotni sustav osobnih imena kod Rusa s općeslavenskim antroponimijskim sustavom. Smatra netočnom tvrdnju da je kod Slavena primarno svaka osoba nosila samo jedno ime, a da se dvočlani imenski sustav razvio poslije. Naime, prema najstarijim dostupnim podacima Rusi su imali dva imena: jedno javno i jedno skriveno, tajno ime koje je bilo poznato samo članovima najuže obitelji, a prema autorici radilo se o svojevrsnom alter egu nositelja toga imena.

Analizira se također tvorbena struktura najstarijih ruskih imena, njihovi motivacijski poticaji, tipovi kršćanskih imena kod Rusa, hipokoristični likovi osobnih imena i struktura nadimaka.