

ONE HAPAX LEGOMENON AND THE DATE OF 2 ENOCH

Promitaya – **prwmty*(') – *prwīmy* – *πρωτομή*

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Several scholars, including Sreznevskii, Vaillant, and Andersen, have discussed a strange epithet of Enoch found in 2 Enoch 43:1 (shorter recension and the fragment in *Mērilo pravēdnoe*): *promitaya*. This is a *hapax legomenon* in Church Slavonic. Enoch is referred to here as ruling or managing affairs on the earth and, then, *promitaya*.

The manuscripts give the following variant readings: *promitaya* (*Mērilo pravēdnoe*), *prometamaq* (B), *promētaemaa* (N), *pometaya* (U), *pamētaya* (A). In the latter case a hypercorrection is obvious because this word (*pamētaya*) could be considered as a participle, “remembering.” Sreznevskii, Vaillant, and Andersen agree that the word is a participle from some verb like **promitati*, the meaning of which was unclear to Sreznevskii.¹ Vaillant supposed that the genuine form of the word is *p(r)ometaya* and that this was a participial form of a rare verb with the general meaning of βασιλεύω.² Thus, Vaillant’s translation reads: “Et voici, mes enfants, (moi), éprouvant les choses dirigées sur terre...” Andersen is more sceptical as to the exact meaning of the verb, and so, he prefers to translate in a periphrastic manner:

“And behold, my children, I am the manager *of the arrangements* on earth.”³

The authors of the Prague *Lexicon Linguae Palaeoslovenicae* describe, though without reference to 2 Enoch, a much more suitable verb *prometati*, apparently unknown to the previous scholars of 2 Enoch, whose meaning is “deici, pulsari” or “in mente, in animo versare.”⁴ However, even this word is not very helpful in explaining the sense of 2 Enoch 43:1.

Andrei Orlov, following Vaillant’s reconstruction, put forward a hypothesis that the word **prometaya* “may represent a very early, rudimentary form of the title that was later transformed into the designation

¹ Sreznevskii [И.И. Срезневский], *Материалы для словаря древнерусского языка по письменным памятникам* (3 vols.; Moscow: Znack, 2003 [1893-1912]), vol. 2, p. 1544.

² A. Vaillant, *Le Livre des secrets d'Hénoch. Texte slave et traduction française* (Textes publiés par l'Institut d'Études slaves 4; Paris: Institut d'études slaves, 1952; reprint 1976), pp. 44-45.

³ F. Andersen, “2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. J.H. Charlesworth (2 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1983, 1985), vol. 1, p. 217.

⁴ *Slovník jazyka staroslověnského. Lexicon linguae palaeoslovenicae* (4 vols.; St Petersburg: St Petersburg University Press, 2006 [1966-1997]), vol. 3, p. 359.

Metatron.”⁵ In my 2006 review of Orlov’s monograph I criticized the details of Orlov’s demonstration, but acknowledged that he is basically right in his intuition, namely, that the obscure word **prometaya* has something to do with the title Metatron.⁶ Now I would like to elaborate on the latter point.

Despite the fact that the ending *-aya* would suggest that we are in the presence of a Church Slavonic verbal participle, there are other possibilities, especially if no Church Slavonic verb is found that fits the context without stretching the point. Orlov has already started to explore this line of thought in trying to recover in the Slavonic word its Hebrew and, maybe, Greek prototypes.

There is no need to recover anything, however. The word we need is known almost as it is in Hebrew and Aramaic. There is a plural form *prmw̄tyn* attested in rabbinic sources. The dictionaries interpret it as a variant of the plural *prw̄t̄wmyn* or *pr̄t̄wmyn*, attested in singular as *prw̄t̄wmy* that, in turn, is a transliteration of the Greek *πρωτομή*, in a terminological sense quite pertinent to our present topic.⁷ The singular form corresponding to the plural *prmw̄tyn* is unattested but it could be easily derived as **prmw̄ty(’)*.

Given the alternations of long vowels in the attested Aramaic forms and the form *promitaya* that is closest to them among the attested forms in the Slavonic manuscripts of 2 Enoch, we could reasonably suppose that, in our case, the Aramaic prototype was **prwm̄ty(’)*. There is no need to turn to Vaillant’s reconstruction **prometaya*, but, of course, the difference of one vowel does not affect our search of the Semitic prototype.

The Aramaic *prw̄t̄wmy* means Greek *πρωτομή* (“bust” or, initially, “head and face of a decapitated animal” and rarely “of a decapitated man,” [LXX 2Macc 15:35],⁸ but in a more specific sense, a bust of the emperor as a cultic object). Such busts, called in Latin *imagines*, were introduced in the Roman army at “some point in the early empire” (that is, after 27 B.C.E.).⁹ In the rabbinic literature the term acquired a broader sense which included idols of any kind.

⁵ A. Orlov, *The Enoch-Metatron Tradition* (TSAJ 107; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), pp. 176-180 (esp. p. 180); cf. pp. 159-161, 217-218.

⁶ B. Lourié, Лурье, *Метатрон и Прометей: Вторая книга Еноха на перекрестке проблем* [*Metatron and Prometaya: Second book of Enoch on the crossroad of problems*], *Scriinium* 2 (2006), pp. 371-407 (400-401).

⁷ M. Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (London: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1903), pp. 1230a; cf. p. 1219b. See also S. Krauss, *Griechische und lateinische Lehnwörter im Talmud, Midrasch und Targum* (2 vols.; Berlin: S. Calvary & Co, 1898-1899), vol. 2, p. 485a.

⁸ *LSJ*, p. 1537.

⁹ K. Gulliver, “The Augustan Reform and the Structure of the Imperial Army,” in *A Companion to the Roman Army*, ed. P. Erdkamp (Blackwell Companions to Ancient World; Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), pp. 183-200 (187).

The first attestation of Greek *προτομή* in the sense of the bust of the emperor in the Roman army is in Flavius Josephus, *Ant.*, 18.1.55. Josephus tells the story about Pontius Pilate who had introduced into Jerusalem the emperors' busts, *προτομαί*, and the Jews who were persuading him, with a great danger to their lives, to take them away. This story is datable to the years of Pilate's procurator duties in Judea, 26 to 36 C.E. Josephus himself places this story before the crucifixion of Christ, that is, nearer to the end of this interval, but this is far from precisely certain.

In the context of 2 Enoch the word does not carry the pejorative sense that will become more typical in the later rabbinic literature. Being applied to Enoch, it evokes the theme of the Divine Face, especially important in the book. As Orlov has shown, Enoch himself acquires the properties of the Divine Face (see esp. chap. 37 on Enoch's face and compare with chap. 22 on the Divine Face).¹⁰ Therefore, it is quite logical if Enoch calls himself a (divine) *προτομή*, that is, the cultic object representing the Divine Face.

The correct translation of 43:1 is: "And behold, my children, I am the manager on earth, *προτομή*." Enoch presents himself as a vicar of God, divine manager and divine *imago*.

If our obscure term is now deciphered, we do not have anything important to pronounce about the original language of 2 Enoch, but we do now have substantial data for making some precise decisions about its *terminus post quem*.

It is unlikely that the Aramaic word *prwtwmy* had been borrowed earlier than the establishment of the direct Roman rule in Judea, that is, in about 6 C.E.

Therefore, the *terminus post quem* for 2 Enoch is 6 C.E. I owe this conclusion to Étienne Nodet (personal communication), who pointed out that the Roman cult of the *imagines* had to become known in Judea immediately after the establishment of direct Roman administration, even before the episode under Pontius Pilate. Moreover, Nodet has found another reference to the Jewish negative reaction to the cult of Emperor's *imagines* in the Roman army in Qumranic *pHab* 6:3-5 where the army of "Kittiim" sacrifices "to their 'wtwim (signs);" such a practice is unknown in the Hellenistic armies and is quite peculiar to the imperial Roman one.¹¹ This observation serves Nodet as one of his arguments for dating *pHab* to the first century C.E.

The *terminus ante quem* is much more imprecise, probably, the date of the *Sefer Hekhalot* and certainly not 70 C.E.¹²

¹⁰ Orlov, *The Enoch-Metatron Tradition*, pp. 227-229.

¹¹ E. Nodet, "Jacques le Juste et son épître," *Revue biblique* 116 (2009), pp. 415-439.

¹² See Lourié, Лурье, *Метатрон и Прометей: Вторая книга Еноха на перекрестке проблем*, for my argument, the core of which is the fact that 2 Enoch shows no specific attitude to the actual Herodian Temple in Jerusalem.