

Slavonic Pseudepigrapha, Nubia, and the Syrians

1. Introduction

The following study is a response to the unique event: the so-called “Slavonic” *2 Enoch* has been identified in a Coptic manuscript found in Nubia.¹ This discovery of Joost Hagen demonstrated, in 2009, that there existed a network of ecclesiastical movements connecting, at its extremities, Nubia and the Slavs but, apparently, skipping Byzantium. We will try to sketch an outline of the relevant connexions.

Some Slavonic pseudepigrapha left no trace in Byzantium; the most famous among them are *2 Enoch*,² the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, and the *Ladder of Jacob*, but the full list could reach the dozen (if not dozens).³ Nevertheless, some of these works were considered as highly authoritative in the early Slavonic literatures—judging from such parameters as the number of manuscript copies, amalgamation into the Slavonic version of the Byzantine Old Testament midrash-like commentary *Palaea Interpretata*, and a long quotation (of *2 Enoch*) in the Russian important legislative document *The Just Balance* (*Měrilo pravednoje*, 2nd half of the 13th cent.).

Apparently, to gain such a success in the *Slavia Orthodoxa*, these Slavonic translations would have been originated from the principal Slavic translation schools, such as the circle of Constantine-Cyril and Methodius with their direct disciples or the Preslav and Ochrid literary schools—but this is hardly the case. All these translation schools were oriented to some literature widespread in the contemporary Byzantium.⁴ We can suppose, for the sake of the argument, that the Greek originals of our group of the Slavonic pseudepigrapha were still available in the nine-

¹ Joost L. Hagen, “No Longer ‘Slavonic’ Only: *2 Enoch* Attested in Coptic from Nubia”, in: *New Perspectives on 2 Enoch: No Longer Slavonic Only*. Eds. A. A. Orlov and G. Boccaccini (Studia Judaeslavica, 4; Leiden: Brill, 2012), 7-34. I am very grateful to Joost Hagen for sharing with me his still unpublished materials.

² The overlaps between *2 Enoch* (longer recension only) and the 13th-cent. Byzantine *Disputation between Panagiotes and Azymites* go back to an unknown Byzantine source with a completely different calendar (the 28-year cycle of sun’s movement mentioned in 15:4 is a feature proper to the Julian calendar, whereas *2 Enoch* elsewhere follows the 364-day calendar(s)). This source ultimately goes to a Jewish background (and contains important overlaps with *3 Baruch*), already Christianised in *2 Enoch* and even more Christianised in the *Disputation*. For more details (including implausibility of Vaillant’s idea of borrowing from the *Disputation* into the longer recension of *2 Enoch*, without, however, necessary returning to the earlier Sokolov’s idea of *vice versa*), s. Francis I. Andersen, “The Sun in *2 Enoch*, *Book of the Secrets of Enoch*,” *Христианский восток* [*Khristianskij Vostok* “Christian Orient”] 4 (10) (2002) [published in 2006], 380-412, reprinted in: *L’Église des deux Alliances. Mémorial Annie Jaubert (1912–1980)*. Eds. M. Petit, B. Lourié, A. Orlov (Orientalia Judaica Christiana, 1; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2012), 1-38.

³ Cf. an evaluation in Basil Lourié, “Direct Translations into Slavonic from Syriac: a Preliminary List,” in: *FS Mario Capaldo* [tentative title]. Eds. C. Diddi *et al.* Moscow: Indrik (in press).

⁴ The contents of the corpus of translations made in Bulgaria in the “Golden Age” of the Slavic literature (especially in the 10th century) and available to the Russian learned men in the 10th to 13th cent. is similar to that of the library of a contemporary important Byzantine monastery; cf. Francis J. Thomson, “The Nature of the Reception of Christian Byzantine Culture in Russia in the 10th to 13th Centuries and Its Implications for the Russian Culture,” *Slavica Gandensia* 5 (1978) 107-139; repr. in *idem*, *The Reception of Byzantine Culture in Mediaeval Russia* (Variorum Collected Studies Series, CS 590; Aldershot: Ashgate/Variorum, 1999), ch. I, with *Addenda*, p. 1-4; cf. also other papers of this volume. For a discussion and further bibliography, s., first of all, the Russian translation of Gerhard Podskalsky, *Christentum und Theologische Literatur in der Kiever Rus’ (988–1237)* (Munich: Beck, 1982): Герхард Подскальски, *Христианство и богословская литература в Киевской Руси (988–1237 гг.)*. Издание второе, исправленное и дополненное для русского перевода. Пер. А. В. Назаренко под ред. К. К. Акентьева (Subsidia Byzantinorossica, 1; St. Petersburg: Byzantinorossica, 1997), 110-127, where the text of Podskalsky is expanded in many respects by Alexander V. Nazarenko and Constantin K. Akentiev. Cf. also Gerhard Podskalsky, *Theologische Literatur des Mittelalters in Bulgarien und Serbien, 865–1459* (Munich: Beck, 2000).

or ten-century Byzantium.⁵ Even this supposition, however, is of a little help when we have to explain why such works were chosen for translation and, especially, why the resulting translations (at least, some of them) became so highly esteemed.

Our present knowledge of the availability of the pseudepigrapha in Byzantium from the ninth to the twelfth century is certainly incomplete,⁶ but our current knowledge of the standard repertoires of the Church literature, which were relevant in Byzantium for different audiences, is normally taken for representative enough. Therefore, either our knowledge of the middle Byzantine culture bears a blatant blind spot and needs to be radically reconsidered in the light of these allegedly relevant Slavonic sources or—which seems *a priori* to be much more realistic—it is our knowledge of the early history of the Slavic writing that has blind spots of a similar scale. Some source(s) of a non-Byzantine and non-Western influence on the earliest Slavic Christian culture is (are) to be detected. A number of Slavists in the first half of the twentieth century has recognised this problem—at least, in a part. It becomes the more acute the more increases our knowledge of the Middle Byzantine literature and culture in general, because our feeling of a gap between the early Slavic Christianity and its Byzantine counterpart strengthens. The same feeling is also reinforced with the studies in other fields, especially in the Syrian and Armenian roots of the earliest Bulgarian architecture⁷...

So far, the hypotheses on the non-Byzantine and non-Western influences on the early Slavic Christianity, which were proposed by Slavists are distributed between two approaches (paradigms), either Syrian (implying an impact of literary traditions in two languages, Syriac and Greek) or Jewish (also bilingual, in rabbinic Aramaic and Hebrew). Both paradigms presupposed an intensive non-Byzantine influence on some important centre(s) of the early Slavic Christian culture. For both of them, the most important Slavonic pseudepigrapha among those unknown in Greek—especially those three mentioned at the beginning of the present article—create a true stumbling block. Now, with the identification of the Coptic fragments of *2 Enoch* a chance appeared that the stumbling block will be eventually removed. I hope that we became able to sketch, even though still not in full details, the Syrian (bilingual Greek-Syriac) literary tradition that influenced so much the earliest Slavic Christianity.

Before tracing this tradition, I will recall very briefly the previous studies in the field. I will start from the “Jewish” paradigm whose explanatory power I consider to be minimal but still not negligible, then, pass to the “Syrian” paradigm in its original version by Vaillant and Jakobson, and, finally, to my proper approach within the “Syrian paradigm” developed in my previous publications. After having discussed the problems left unresolved in all the three approaches I will propose a fresh look on the way of transmission of *2 Enoch* and, probably, some other Slavonic pseudepigrapha.

2. Possible Non-Byzantine (and non-Western) Sources of the Slavonic Pseudepigrapha: a Review of the Existing Hypotheses

2.1. The “Jewish” Paradigm

The “Jewish” paradigm has been first proposed by Nikita Alexandrovich Meshchersky (1906–1987) in his 1956 paper mostly dedicated to the so-called “Russian” version of the *Esther*

⁵ Cf., e.g., Stephan Gero, “Jannes and Jambres in the Vita Stephani iunioris (BHG 1666),” *Analecta Bollandiana* 113 (1995), 281–292.

⁶ Cf. Basile Lourié, “Le second iconoclasme en recherche de la vraie doctrine,” *Studia Patristica* 34 (2001), 145–169, here 168–169 (Annexe II: Qu’est-ce que l’*Hylilas*?).

⁷ Cf. esp. A. Л. Якобсон, *К изучению раннесредневековой болгарской архитектуры (армянские параллели)* [A. L. Yakobson, *Toward the Study of the Early Mediaeval Bulgarian Architecture (Armenian Parallels)*], *Византийский временник* [Vizantijskij vremennik] 28 (1968), 195–206; cf. his summarising monograph: A. Л. Якобсон, *Закономерности в развитии средневековой архитектуры IX–XV вв.* [A. L. Yakobson, *Trends in Development of the Mediaeval Architecture of the 9th–15th cent.*], Leningrad: Nauka, 1987.

that represents a recension unknown in any other language.⁸ Meshchersky proclaimed it a direct Slavonic translation from a lost Hebrew original, performed in the Kievan Rus' (before 1237). In the 1980s, Horace Lunt and Moshe Taube disproved Meshchersky's argumentation and argued for Greek as the original language—without, however, resolving the problem of the *Sitz im Leben* of this text.⁹ The dispute is still unsettled, because more recently Irina Lycén put forward a completely new system of argumentation for Hebrew as the original language.¹⁰ Be this as it may, the so-called “Russian” Slavonic version of the *Esther* preserves, most likely, a Jewish text (written in either Greek or Hebrew/Aramaic) that goes back to the Second Temple period.

In the same 1956 article, Meshchersky formulated the main idea of his “Jewish” scholarly paradigm covering an imprecise but great number of other works of translation known in the Russian manuscripts: “...this rich and varied stream of Old Russian writing can be explained only under the condition that we acknowledge the possibility of direct translation from Hebrew in the Kievan Rus'.”¹¹

The real scale of Meshchersky's idea has been uncovered in his 1964 paper dedicated mostly to *2 Enoch*. He argued that even this work has been composed in Hebrew and translated into Slavonic directly from the original. In the final passage of the paper he enumerates other pseudepigrapha that have passed, according to him, through a similar trajectory before reaching the “Slavic-Russian” literature (does this term mean here that Meshchersky believed them to be translated also in the Kievan Rus'?): “the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, the *Visions of Isaiah*, and others”.¹²

In his argumentation for a Hebrew original of the Slavonic translation of *2 Enoch*, Meshchersky pointed out a number of Semitisms in the Slavonic text but without even an attempt to demonstrate that they do not belong to either possible Semitic *Urtext* behind the possibly lost Greek original of the Slavonic version or even to the Greek language under the pen of a Jewish Greek-speaking author of the (Greek, in this case) original *2 Enoch*. The very act of pointing out quite a few Semitisms in *2 Enoch* was nothing more than breaking through an open door.

Meshchersky's project as a magnificent whole failed but some of his particular ideas were more successful. Thus, his disciple Anatoly Alekseev substantiated Meshchersky's 1956 claim that the Slavonic cycle of the ten stories about Solomon¹³ goes back directly to a Jewish

⁸ Н. А. Мещерский, “К вопросу об изучении переводной письменности Киевского периода” [N. A. Meshchersky, “Toward the Question of the Study of the Translation Literature of the Kievan Period”], *Ученые записки Карельского педагогического института* [*Memoirs of the Pedagogical Institute of Karelia*], vol. II, issue 1 (1956), 198-219; repr. in Н. А. Мещерский, *Избранные статьи*. Ред., сост. Е. Н. Мещерская [N. A. Meshchersky, *Collected Papers*. Ed. E. N. Meshcherskaya] (Наследие ученых; St. Petersburg: St. Petersburg State University Press, 1995), 271-299.

⁹ H. Lunt, M. Taube, “Early East Slavic Translations from Hebrew?”, *Russian Linguistics* 12 (1988), 147-187; *idem*, “The Slavonic Book of Esther: Translation from Hebrew or Evidence for a Lost Greek Text?”, *Harvard Theological Review* 87 (1994), 347-362.

¹⁰ И. Люсен, *Книга Есфирь: К истории первого славянского перевода* [I. Lycén, *The Book of Esther: A Contribution to the History of the First Slavonic Translation*] (Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. Studia Slavica Upsaliensia, 41; Uppsala, 2001) (in Russian, with a summary in English); cf. Alexander Kulik, “Judeo-Greek Legacy in Medieval Rus'”, *Viator* 39 (2008) 51-64, here 58-62. The latter paper by Alexander Kulik provides the basic bibliography of discussions related to the question of direct Russian translations from Hebrew.

¹¹ “Эта богатая и разнообразная еврейская струя древнерусской письменности может быть объяснена только при том условии, что мы признаем возможность непосредственного перевода с еврейского в Киевской Руси”; Мещерский, К вопросу..., 298 (quoted according to the 1995 reprint).

¹² Н. А. Мещерский, “К истории текста славянской книги Еноха (Следы памятников Кумрана в византийской и славянской литературе)” [N. A. Meshchersky, “Toward the History of the Text of the Slavonic Book of Enoch (Traces of the Monuments from Qumran in the Byzantine and Slavic Literature)”], *Византийский временник* [*Vizantijskij vremennik*] 24 (1964), 91-108, here 108.

¹³ The cycle has recently been published in a critical edition by Constantine Bondar': К. В. Бондарь, *Повести Соломонова цикла: из славяно-еврейского диалога культур* [C. V. Bondar', *The Narrations of the Solomon Cycle: from the Slavic-Jewish Dialogue of Cultures*], Khar'kiv: Novoe slovo, 2011.

original (in Hebrew, according to Alekseev).¹⁴ Some other scholars, including Meshchersky's and Alekseev's staunch opponent Moshe Taube, pointed out some other, mostly pseudepigraphic texts that were, according to them, translated directly from Hebrew in an early period (before the 15th cent.).¹⁵ I agree that, in all these cases, we are in presence of direct translations into Slavonic from a Semitic (Hebrew and/or Aramaic) original. Some of these Slavonic texts have close parallels in the Jewish literary tradition (the Babilonian Talmud and midrashic collections for the Solomon cycle,¹⁶ the *Yosippon* for some chronicles' fragments pointed out by Taube), even though these parallels are substantially different from the lost originals of the Slavonic versions; moreover, the Solomon cycle as a whole is unknown to the Jewish literature, and the *Yosippon* is a 10th-century Jewish work composed as a digest of exclusively Christian sources¹⁷ (and, thus, most likely, shared some common sources with these Slavonic fragments).

One can see that the situation is not as simple as one could believe. It is even less simple: in the unique case when I was able to perform a differential diagnosis between Hebrew/rabbinic Aramaic and Syriac as the possible languages of the original (for the Solomon cycle), it turned out that the language of the original is to be defined as Syriac.¹⁸ For the remaining Slavonic texts of this series, such a differential diagnosis is either not performed or impossible, because Syriac, being also a dialect of Aramaic, is too close to Aramaic of the rabbis.

To sum up: there are certainly texts that were translated into Slavonic in an early epoch directly from Semitic originals. It is not to exclude that the originals of some of them were Jewish (in Hebrew, rabbinic Aramaic or both). Nevertheless, in all these cases, a hypothesis of an original in Syriac is, at the very least, equally acceptable.

2.2. The “Syrian” Paradigm-1: Vaillant and Jakobson

The problem posed by the discrepancy between the earliest literature in Slavonic and the repertory of the contemporaneous Byzantine libraries goes beyond the frames of the pseudepigrapha. Its most discussed part is that of the Slavonic earliest Gospel translation that contains some non-Byzantine readings, known, however, from some Oriental and, especially,

¹⁴ A. A. Алексеев, “Русско-еврейские литературные связи до 15 века” [A. A. Alekseev, “Russian-Jewish Literary Connexions up to the 15th century], *Jews and Slavs* 1 (1993) 44-75, esp. 67-70; *idem*, “Апокрифы Толковой Палеи, переведенные с еврейских оригиналов” [“Apocrypha of the *Palaea Interpretata* Translated from the Hebrew Originals”], *Труды Отдела древнерусской литературы (ТОДРЛ)* [The Proceedings of the Department of the Old Russian Literature (TODRL)] 58 (2007), 41-57, here 47-53. For one of the ten stories, Alekseev refers to the Babilonian Talmud as if the relevant part were in Hebrew, whereas it is in Aramaic; he then constructs on this “fact” some of his proofs that the Semitic original behind the Slavonic text was in Hebrew and certainly not in Aramaic. Cf. B. Lourié, “The Courts of Solomon. A Jewish Collection,” *Scrinium* 5 (2009) 353–363.

¹⁵ Such as fragments within different Russian chronicles interpreted by Taube as direct translations from the mediaeval Jewish book *Yosippon*—despite their divergences with the text of the latter [e.g., those studied in Lunt, Taube, “Early East Slavic Translations from Hebrew?” and M. Taube, “On Certain Unidentified and Misidentified Sources of the Academy Chronograph,” in: *Russian Philology and Literature: In Honour of Prof. Victor D. Levin on His 75th Birthday*. Eds. W. Moskovich *et al.* (Jerusalem: Hebrew UP, 1992), 365-375]. Cf. also Lyudmila Navtanovich, “The Slavonic *Apocryphon of Zorobabel*,” in: *The Old Testament Apocrypha in the Slavonic Tradition*. Eds. L. DiTommaso, Ch. Böttrich (Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism, 140; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 303-335.

¹⁶ Lourié, “The Courts...”

¹⁷ Cf. Saskia Dönitz, “Historiography among Byzantine Jews: the Case of *Sefer Yosippon*,” in: *Jews in Byzantium: dialectics of minority and majority cultures*. Eds. R. Bonfil *et al.* (Jerusalem studies in religion and culture; Leiden: Brill, 2012), 951-968; *eadem*, *Überlieferung und Rezeption des Sefer Yosippon* (Texts and Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Judaism, 29; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013).

¹⁸ A Slavonic *hapax legomenon* in the phrase мечь прудань “sword *prudjan*”, with the parallel from the Hebrew text “sword (made) from tin/plumbum” (מִן הַבְּדִיל) (Lunt, “The Courts...,” 357-358) that the Slavonic *hapax* must be explained as a transliteration from Syriac ܩܪܝܕܐ *pridā* “fragile, putride” misunderstood by the translator into Slavonic as a noun signifying some material suitable for the situation. The conjectural reading прутянь (“made from a wooden stick”), absent in the manuscripts, proposed by Lunt and Taube [Lunt, Taube, “Early East Slavic Translations from Hebrew?,” 159] would hardly fit with the plot, where the wife seriously intends to kill her husband with this sword; such an intention implies that the sword was apparently not a toy.

Syriac versions. The first hypothetical way out of this problem has been found shortly after 1935, when André Vaillant proposed a partial “de-byzantinization” of Cyril and Methodius.¹⁹ According to his hypothesis, often called that of Vaillant—Jakobson (because Roman Osipovich Jakobson soon became its second main proponent and the first who started the discussion on the possible Oriental readings in the Slavonic Gospels²⁰), Constantine-Cyril made his Gospel translation from Greek into Slavonic keeping an eye on a Syriac version. According to Jakobson, this hypothesis could be corroborated with, at least, one instance of a direct translation into Slavonic from Syriac (Jakobson meant François Nau’s (1909) and Alexander Grigoriev’s (1913) hypothesis on the origin of the Slavonic *Aḥiqar*).²¹ Thus, according to Jakobson, the brothers of Thessalonica and the first generations of their followers were influenced with the Syriac literary culture, and this influence was predefined by Constantine-Cyril personally. The core of Vaillant—Jakobson’s hypothesis consists in attributing to Constantine-Cyril a role of the first channel of the Syrian cultural influence on the Slavs. This idea is now shared, whereas in a different extent, by an important number of the Slavists.

Let us suppose—again for the sake of the argument only—that such a hypothesis is enough for explaining the peculiar readings in the Slavonic biblical translations and even for the occurrence of the occasional direct translations from Syriac into Slavonic. Anyway, the Slavonic presumably non-Byzantine pseudepigrapha, with the unique exception of the *Aḥiqar*, are unknown in the available to us Syrian traditions either.

Therefore, the Vaillant—Jakobson’s hypothesis on the origin of the earliest Slavonic literature of translation is not sufficient to explain the origin of the non-Byzantine group of the Slavonic pseudepigrapha. However, the main difficulty of Vaillant—Jakobson’s hypothesis is its very core, its peculiar understanding of the personal activity of Constantine-Cyril. The very idea of Constantine’s knowledge of Syriac is based on one conjecture in one early Slavonic source (the long Slavonic *Life* of Constantine-Cyril) and one misinterpretation of another one. The latter source (the so-called Macedonian leaflet²²) is of special interest to us being a preface to the earliest Slavonic Gospel translation written by either Constantine-Cyril himself or somebody from his or his brother Methodius’ close entourage. Its author justifies himself for making use, in his translation, of some texts written by heretics, although without containing any heresy. As I have argued elsewhere, these texts must have been certainly Slavonic and already known to the audience—thus, nothing other than a pre-Cyrrillian Slavonic Gospel translation that should have had a bad reputation due to its known “heretical” provenance.²³

2.3. The “Syrian” Paradigm-2: Lourié

My own explanation of different Syrian connexions of the earliest Slavonic writing consists in acknowledging of a Slavonic Christian culture before Cyril and Methodius. It can be summarised as following.²⁴

¹⁹ In his seminal paper: André Vaillant, “Les « lettres russes » de la *Vie de Constantin*,” *Revue des études slaves* 15 (1935), 75-77.

²⁰ S. esp. Roman Jakobson, “Saint Constantin et la langue syriaque,” *Annuaire de l’Institut de philologie et d’histoire orientales et slaves* [New York], 7 (1939–1944), 181-186 [repr. in: *idem, Selected Writings*, vol. VI: *Early Slavic Paths and Crossroads*. Ed. S. Rudy. Part 1: *Comparative Slavic Studies. The Cyrillo-Methodian Tradition*, (Berlin—New York: W. de Gruyter; Amsterdam: Mouton, 1985), 143-185] and *idem*, “Minor Native Sources for the Early History of the Slavic Church,” *Harvard Slavic Studies* 2 (1954), 39-73 [repr. in Jakobson, *Selected Writings*, VI, 1, 159-189].

²¹ Jakobson, “Saint Constantin...”, 157. For the full bibliography on the Slavonic *Aḥiqar*, s. B. Lourié, “The Syriac *Aḥiqar*, Its Slavonic Version, and the Relics of the Three Youths in Babylon,” *Slověne* 2 (2013) Nr 2, 64-117.

²² Introduced into the discussion on the possible Syriac connexions of the Cyrillo-Methodian mission by André Vaillant, “La préface de l’Évangéliste vieux-slave,” *Revue des études slaves* 24 (1948), 5-20.

²³ B. Lourié, “Syrian Shadows behind the Back of Cyril and Methodius: Vaillant—Jakobson’s hypothesis revisited,” *Slověne* (forthcoming).

²⁴ Cf. now, first of all, B. Lourié, “The Slavonic *Solunskaja Legenda* (“The Thessalonican Legend”) and Its Syriac Original,” in: *The Syriac Voice in the Dialogue of Cultures: Syriac, Persian, Caucasian, and Slavonic*

The brothers of Thessalonica were walking in the footsteps of “unorthodox” (from their viewpoint) Syrian missionaries and submitted themselves to many constraints imposed by the already existing corpus of translations (mostly from Greek but also from Syriac for the texts unavailable in Greek) and several cults of saints with their corresponding hagiographical literature. The earliest witness of a Syriac mission to the Slavs and the Proto-Bulgarians of the Byzantine seventh-century *thema* of Thrace (encompassing the eighth-century *themata* of Thrace and Macedonia) is contained in the acts of the Sixth Ecumenical council and is dated to 9 August, 681.²⁵ This witness is corroborated with the Slavonic hagiographical legend (so-called *Legend of Thessalonica*, a short history of the mission to the Slavs and the Bulgarians of some Cyril different from the brother of Methodius) that dates the beginning of the mission to the three-year siege of Thessalonica by the joint forces of the Proto-Bulgarians and the neighbouring Slavs in 676–678. I consider this document to be a direct translation from Syriac; its lost Syriac original is datable to *ca* 700. These two documents provide us with the two portraits of first Syrian missionaries: an absolutely historical one of a Syrian Constantine of Apamea²⁶ with his very limited knowledge of Greek and a legendary image of some Cyril originated from Cappadocia but educated in Damascus and arrived to the Slavs from Alexandria who, according to the legend, completely forgot Greek after having learned Slavonic.

This view on the origins of the Slavic Christianity removes some old problems but poses some new ones. Among the momentarily resolved problems is that of the very fact of discrepancy between the mainstream early Slavic culture, including the literature, and the contemporaneous Byzantine one. Another such problem is the presence of the *Aḥiqar*, directly translated from Syriac, among the most popular Slavic writings, although it has never existed in Greek. Indeed, the Syriac hagiographical romance on *Aḥiqar* composed by anti-Chalcedonian Syrians about the third quarter of the fifth century on the base of the earlier Aramaic *Vorlage* became a beloved reading for the Syrians throughout the ages and with no regard for their denominations. Symptomatically, the Slavonic translation preserves a recension which is earlier than the available Syriac ones and their Arabic and Neo-Aramaic derivatives, whereas still later than the late fifth-century Armenian translation (also extremely popular among the Armenians throughout the ages).²⁷

However, the *Aḥiqar* put aside, the remaining repertory of the Slavonic non-Byzantine literature of translation is at odds with the most known Syrian traditions as well. The Syrian impact on the Slavs has certainly never been Jacobite nor Nestorian. This is quite expectable given the multiformity of Syrian Christian traditions in the second half of the first millennium and the established fact that Constantine of Apamea (the only historically known missionary to the Slavs and the Proto-Bulgarians) belonged to some extravagant religious minority: he was condemned by the Council as a heretic and a monothelite, but his form of monothelitism was

Interlocutors. Eds. C. B. Horn and C. Villagomez (Eastern Mediterranean Texts and Contexts; Warwick: Abelian Academic) (forthcoming); this paper is intended to replace my first publication on the topic: В. Лурье, “Около «Солунской легенды». Из истории миссионерства в период монофелитской унии” [B. Lourié, “Around the *Thessalonican Legend*: from the History of the Missionary Activity in the Period of the Monothelite Union”], *Славяне и их соседи* [*Slavjane i ikh sosedi*] 6 (1996), 23–52.

²⁵ R. Riedinger, *Concilium universale Constantinopolitanum tertium: Concilii actiones XII–XVIII, Epistolae, Indices* (Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum, Ser. II, vol. II, pars II; Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1992), 682–705, esp. 702–705.

²⁶ The Fathers of the Council eventually agreed to hear Constantine of Apamea only at the insistence of a high Byzantine military official Theodore who was responsible for the whole war seat of the on-going war with the joint forces of the Proto-Bulgarians and the Slavs. Constantine promised that his plan of unification of the Church would prevent their military attacks. Thus, the Byzantine governor-general took quite seriously Constantine’s influence on the symbiotic Proto-Bulgarian and Slavic tribes. (In the seventh century, the Turkic Proto-Bulgarians and the Slavs did not form yet the unique Bulgarian people but were already living and acting in a kind of symbiosis).

²⁷ S., for all these details, Lourié, “The Syriac *Aḥiqar*...”

sharply different from the official monotheletism of the Patriarchate of Antioch.²⁸ Thus, our knowledge of the Syrian tradition of the first missionaries to the Slavs and the Bulgarian was so little that was easily compatible with almost everything.

3. Hallmarks of Syriac in 2 Enoch

There are several linguistic facts that need to be taken into account. According to the most accepted view, 2 Enoch has been translated into Slavonic from Greek, whereas the Greek text was either original or, in turn, translated from a Semitic (Hebrew/Aramaic) original; anyway, the Greek text of 2 Enoch was saturated with Semitisms. This scheme of the history of texts is standard for the majority of the pseudepigrapha: Semitic → Greek → language(s) of Oriental Christianity and/or Latin. The majority of the linguistic facts from the Slavonic text of 2 Enoch (and especially all those discussed by Meshchersky) is fitting with this scheme.²⁹ But we have to discuss those that do not. These facts could be subdivided into two categories. One of them is already known from the Slavonic pseudepigrapha, another one is unique to 2 Enoch.

To avoid distracting reader's attention, I would say in advance that my observations would hardly challenge the presently common opinion that 2 Enoch as a whole is translated from Greek. Nevertheless, they will allow us to figure to ourselves a somewhat more complicated way of the textual transmission.

It is symptomatic that all the facts discussed below belongs to the *Sondergut* of the longer recension of 2 Enoch.

3.1. An Iranian Aramaism: the shift $*t > d$ in the intervocalic position

The Hebrew month Tebet is mentioned in 2 En 48:2 twice, in both cases with *d* instead of the expected *t* or *th* as the third consonant.³⁰ The three manuscripts of the longer recension (JRP, among whom the best preserving old linguistic features is normally J) provide the following readings (always in Genitive):

Table 1.

J	R	P
ѿеѵеда	ѿѣѵиѿа	ѿевана ³¹
ѿеѵеда	ѿиѵиѿа	ѿевада

The relevant phonological feature is now attested to only in some Jewish dialects of Aramaic in Iran: the shift of $*t$ to *d* in the intervocalic position.³² However, I have already noticed it in the Slavonic translation of the *Aḥiqar*, where ܐܕܝܪ “Assyria” is systematically rendered as *Ador*, whereas, in Greek, no rendering of this quite widespread word that would have

²⁸ B. Lourié, “Un autre monothélisme: le cas de Constantin d’Apamée au VI^e Concile Œcuménique,” *Studia Patristica* 29 (1997), 290-303.

²⁹ S. their most detailed review, together with the previous bibliography, in the unpublished PhD thesis by Lyudimla Navtanovich: Людмила Михайловна Навтанович, *Лингвотекстологический анализ древнеславянского перевода книги Еноха* [Lyudmila Mikhaylovna Navtanovich, *A Linguistic and Textological Analysis of the Old Slavic Translation of the Book of Enoch*]. PhD Thesis. St. Petersburg: St. Petersburg State University, 2000.

³⁰ I will quote the most convenient synoptic edition of the Slavonic manuscripts (containing the *editio princeps* of ms J): Grant Macaskill, *The Slavonic Texts of the 2 Enoch* (Studia Judaeoslavica, 6; Leiden: Brill, 2013), 172.

³¹ On this erroneous reading with *n*, s. Francis I. Andersen, “2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch (Late First Century A.D.),” in: *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Ed. J. H. Charlesworth, vol. 1 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983), 91-221, here 175, fn. e: “P has *Thevana* to rhyme with *Civana*, but in the immediate repetition of the word P has the more correct *Thevada*.”

³² Geoffrey Khan, *The Jewish Neo-Aramaic Dialect of Suleymaniyya and Halabja* (Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics, 44; Leiden, 2004), 29-30; Hezy Mutzafi, *The Jewish Neo-Aramaic Dialect of Koy Sanjaq (Iraqi Kurdistan)* (Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 2004), 37.

contained *d* at the corresponding position is known. In this connexion, I have already discussed the same feature in 2 En 48:2, pointing out that this Hebrew month's name was rendered in Greek as τηβηθ in the Septuagint (Esther 2:16, gloss in the *Codex Sinaiticus*) with the quite expectable Slavonic equivalent теѡѣѣ /*tevef*'/ (in the so-called "Russian" translation of the *Esther*).³³ Indeed, the final *t* in the Hebrew word *Tebet* is not in an intervocalic position, but, in Syriac, it would have had to acquire the final *-a* (the ending of the *status emphaticus*), which would have been resulted in the form ܬܒܬܐ* (presuming *b > v* in the in intervocalic position, which is the common feature of all the dialects of Aramaic, traceable in the direct translations from Syriac into Slavonic as well).

The two other consonants of the Slavonic Genitive *Theveda* are not problematic at all. The first consonant of *Tebet* would be more likely rendered with *t* (τ) than *th* (θ), as we see in the "Russian" *Esther*. However, already in the Hellenistic Greek the opposite cases took place (*v* rendered with θ),³⁴ not to mention possible confusions between θ and τ in the Slavonic spelling, especially in the texts transliterated from Glagolitic into Cyrillic as we have to presume for 2 *Enoch* (there was no θ in the early Glagolitic script).

To sum up, it is likely that the word *Theveda* (Gen., sg.) reached our Slavonic text after having passed through Syriac, and, moreover, the translator from Syriac (regardless of what was the language he was translating into, either Greek or Slavonic) has kept in mind the same Syriac orthoepy than the translator of the Slavonic *Aḥiqar* (who translated from Syriac into Slavonic), namely, specific to some regions of Iran.

It is largely known that some Syriac works translated into Slavonic were originated from Syriac-speaking communities in Iran. This is still not very significant *per se*, because the literary production of these communities sometimes have attained an enormous success even in Byzantium (e.g., the *Apocalypse* of Pseudo-Methodius of Patara). It becomes more significant, however, given that among the Slavonic pseudepigrapha unknown in Byzantium there are, at least, two that go back to the Syrians in Iran, the *Aḥiqar* and the *Twelve Dreams of Shakhaiṣha* (= *Shahinshah*).³⁵

3.2. The transliteration of *sin* by *tsy*

Even more strikingly abnormal is the spelling of those Hebrew months' names that contain *sin* in Hebrew. In Slavonic of 2 *Enoch*, unlike the normal Slavonic spelling, all of them acquire the letter *tsy* (ц, affricate *ts*), s. Table 2.³⁶

Table 2.

2 <i>Enoch</i>	J	R	P
48:2	цивана of <i>Sivan</i> (Gen.)	памовоуса (= of <i>Sivan</i>) ³⁷	цивана of <i>Sivan</i> (Gen.)
68:1	циван (of) <i>Sivan</i> (Nom. or	памовоуса (= of <i>Sivan</i>)	цивана of <i>Sivan</i> (Gen.)

³³ Lourié, "The Syriac *Aḥiqar*...", 84-85. The Syriac version of the *Esther* does not preserve the month's name in Hebrew (ܬܒܬܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܡܚܠܐ ܕܡܚܠܐ "in the tenth month that is the kanun first").

³⁴ Tal Ilan, *Lexicon of Jewish Names in Late Antiquity*, Part I (Texts and studies in ancient Judaism, 91; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 19.

³⁵ B. Lourié, "The Slavonic Apocalypse *The Twelve Dreams of Shahaisha*: An Iranian Syriac Reworking of a Second Temple Jewish Legend on Jambres," in: *Commentationes Iranicae, Vladimiro f. Aaron Livschits nonagenario donum natalicum / Сборник статей к 90-летию Владимира Ароновича Лившица*. Eds. S. Tokhtasev [Tokhtas'ev] and P. Luria [Lurje] (St. Petersburg: Nestor, 2013), 481-507.

³⁶ Macaskill, *The Slavonic Texts*..., 172, 222.

³⁷ Cf. B. Lourié, "Calendrical Elements in 2 *Enoch*," in: *New Perspectives on 2 Enoch*, 191-219, here 198-202: I consider *Pamovusa* (Gen.) to be an Egyptian Aramaic derivate from the Old Egyptian *p-n-jmnḥtp* though the Elephantine Aramaic rendering *pmnhṭp* (cf. Egyptian Greek φαμενῶθ), where it regularly (in all the five instances throughout the Elephantine archive) corresponds to *Sivan* (roughly Julian June, the month of the Summer Solstice). To the time of the Julian reform of the Egyptian calendar (30 BC), φαμενῶθ of the Egyptian Sothic year roughly corresponded to March; it corresponded to June in the epoch of the Elephantine papyri (5th cent., before 410 BC) and slightly later, in the early 4th cent. BC. This is a possible date of the calendar implied in 2 *Enoch*, whereas not of the book itself.

	Gen.) ³⁸		
68:3	цива (<i>of</i>) <i>Sivan</i> ³⁹	памовоуса (= <i>of Sivan</i>)	цивана <i>of Sivan</i> (Gen.)
68:1	ницана <i>of Nisan</i> (Gen.)	нисана <i>of Nisan</i> (Gen.)	цивана <i>of Sivan</i> (Gen.)

The peculiar reading of R *pamovusa* needs not to be discussed here; it has nothing to do with the Hebrew months' names but is derived from the Old Egyptian prototype through Elephantine Aramaic and Greek (and possibly even Coptic) intermediaries. The two remaining manuscripts, JP are in the perfect accord on the initial *ts* in the Slavonic rendering of *Sivan*. Of course, the Hebrew נִסָּן that in Greek was regularly rendered as σιβάν, sometimes σῳάν, would have been transliterated into Slavonic with the initial *s* (c), as we, indeed, see, e.g., in the “Russian” Esth 8:9.

The same peculiar reading—*ts* instead of the expected *s*—has J for *Nisan*, whereas R provides the reading normative for Slavonic (no wonder: the Hebrew name of this month was widely known and often used in Christian texts, including the Slavonic ones). The erroneous reading of P corroborates, however, even though indirectly, J: *tsivan* more likely resulted from the confusion with *nitsan* than *nisan*.

This appearance, in Slavonic of 2 *Enoch* (and nowhere else in the Slavonic translations!), of the affricate *ts* instead of the expected *s* is equally inexplicable with the suppositions of a Greek intermediary and a direct transliteration from any Semitic language (even with recourse to the scheme Hebrew → Aramaic: cf. Syriac ܢܝܨܢ “Nisan”).

There is a way out from this problem if we allow some more complicated ways of the textual transmission that would involve Syriac. In Syriac, the Greek loanwords could acquire *ṣ* (ܥ) at the place of *s* (σ) on both regular and irregular basis. It appears regularly in the words containing σ after π (e.g., πρόσωπον > ܦܪܥܘܢܐ).⁴⁰ In other cases, it could occur irregularly—apparently in analogy with the overwhelming trend of rendering τ with the emphatic ܬ and not ܬ.⁴¹ For instance, the Greek word σαλός (or σάλος) “fool” (*sc.*, in Christ), normally rendered in Syriac as ܫܠܐܐ, is sometime rendered as ܥܠܐ or even ܬܠܐ (cf. also Arabic derived from Syriac: صالوص).⁴² Thus, the odd Slavonic forms could be explained as rendering of the Syriac ones that, in turn, render the Greek ones. The original Greek forms were the regular νισάν and σιβάν/σῳάν, whereas the Syriac ones were ܢܝܨܢ* and ܥܝܒܢ*.

Unfortunately, the regional, temporal, and/or confessional distribution of the transliteration of σ by *ṣ* in the Greek loanwords in Syriac has never been studied.

Finally, we have to evaluate an even more complicated way of transmission for our month's names: not (1) Hebrew (Aramaic) → Greek → Syriac → Slavonic but (2) Hebrew (Aramaic) → Greek → Syriac → Greek → Slavonic. The path (2) would presuppose two further conditions that would have to be met simultaneously: that (a) the Syriac forms containing *ṣ* would have been rendered into Greek otherwise than with *sigma* (that is, in an unusual way⁴³), and that (b) this rendering would have been correctly recognised by the translator into Slavonic.

³⁸ Both Nominative and Genitive are here possible from a point of view of syntax, but, anyway, the spelling is not perfect: the Nominative form would require the final *jer* (or, at least, its diacritical sign, *pajerok*), whereas the Genitive would require the final *-a* as we see in ms P.

³⁹ Corrupted spelling of either *циванъ (Nom.) or цивана (Gen.).

⁴⁰ Cf., e.g., Carl Brockelmann, *Syrische Grammatik...*, 2. Aufl. (Porta linguarum orientalium, 5; Berlin: Verl. von Reuther & Reichard, 1905), 25, § 48.

⁴¹ The rendering of Greek σ with *ṣ* was already quite common in Hebrew and Aramaic transliterations of the Greek words in the late antiquity: Ilan, *Lexicon...*, I, 20. It is hardly possible, however, to apply this observation to the textual history of 2 *Enoch*, even in supposition that its original language was Greek.

⁴² All these examples are from R. Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1879–1901), col. 2494. Both Syriac examples are from the Melkite calendars (on July 21) in the manuscripts of the Vatican Library: Stephanus Evodius Assemanus et Joseph Simonis Assemanus, *Bibliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae codicum manuscriptorum catalogus in tres partes distributus*, P. I, t. II (Rome: Ex Typographia linguarum orientalium, 1758) [repr.: Paris: Librairie Orientale et Américaine, 1926], 169 (Nr XXI) and 443 (Nr LXXVII).

⁴³ E.g., with σσ; cf., e.g., συνεχόμενος νεεσσαραν “detained” < נעצר (1 Sam 21:8 LXX), Μεσσαρα < מצודה (implying a reading with ܥ *pro* ܬ) (1 Sam 24:23 LXX).

The likelihood of the simultaneous occurrence of (a) and (b) is equal to the product of their respective likelihoods as independent events; given that the likelihood of (b) is already extremely low (I do not know any example of *tsy* appearing in an Old Church Slavonic transliteration from Greek), the likelihood of the path (2) as a whole is completely vanishing and should be taken off the consideration.

Now, we reached the explanation of the peculiar Slavonic forms with *tsy*, which is, to my knowledge, the only one that is linguistically acceptable.⁴⁴ Is it textologically acceptable, too?

4. Two Recensions of 2 *Enoch*

The longer recension of 2 *Enoch* is known from only three manuscripts, which, in turn, could be subdivided into two branches: J (the longest sub-recension) and RP. Obviously, the textual history of the longer recension, as that of 2 *Enoch* as a whole, is complicated. As Francis Andersen put it, “[a]t the very least we should remain open to the possibility that some of the passages found only in manuscripts of the longer recension could preserve ancient traditions, some of which might well be original. Abbreviation as well as expansion has almost certainly taken place.”⁴⁵ No doubts, not all the passages proper to the longer recension are of the same origin.

The passages quoted above (48:1-4 and 68:1-4) contain astronomical and cosmological information hardly accessible to anybody in Byzantium, not to say in the Slavic world. It is based on the 364-day (per year) calendar and, therefore, is to be going back to the Second Temple Judaism. This does not mean, however, that these passages necessarily belong to the original text. The latter is certainly not the case for 48:1-2, where, in the description of sun’s yearly movement between the solstices, two different and even incompatible cosmologies and astronomies are present⁴⁶: the cosmology genuine to 2 *Enoch* (and known also from 3 *Baruch*) implies the phenomenon that I named “asymmetry of solstices”: the year is divided with the two solstices into two uneven parts of 224 and 140 days instead of the common symmetrical subdivision into 182 + 182 days. The relevant cosmological scheme is described in 2 *Enoch* in connexion to the 10-month solar calendar proper to 2 *Enoch*, where the sun passes the six tunnel-like “gates” from I to VI solar months (224 days in total) and return from the sixth gate to the first during the solar months from VII to X (140 days).⁴⁷ Thus, the number “182” in 2 *Enoch* 48:1 is certainly not genuine. Nevertheless, it still implies a 364-day calendrical scheme that was unknown in Byzantium. Therefore, the corresponding interpolation or (unhelpful) “correction” goes back to either Second Temple Jewish milieu or, at least, some very early Christian circles.

This conclusion is important to us now in pondering different ways of transmission of the two recensions to the Slavs. Of course, I consider to be unacceptable the viewpoint of some Slavists (including André Vaillant and now Lyudmila Navtanovich⁴⁸) that the longer recension has been produced on the Slavic ground. The very contents of a part of the “additions” proper to the longer recension has been hardly understandable and called for outside the milieux where the

⁴⁴ I am grateful to Alexey Lyavdansky, a specialist in the dialects of Aramaic, for discussing with me this topic. Of course, I am the only one responsible for my conclusions on the textual history of 2 *Enoch*.

⁴⁵ Andersen, “2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch...,” 93-94.

⁴⁶ “...the sun, so that he might travel along the seven celestial circles, which are appointed with 182 thrones so that he might descend to the shortest day, and once more 182 so that he might descend to the longest day. He also has two great thrones where he pauses when he turns around in this direction and in the other direction, higher than the lunar thrones. From the month Tsivan [R: Pamovus], from the 17th day, he descends until the month Theved; and from the 17th day of Theved he ascends” (48:1-2, tr. by Andersen, “2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch...,” 174). Both *Tsivan* and *Pamovus* mean *Sivan*.

⁴⁷ S., for the details, Lourié, “Calendrical Elements in 2 *Enoch*.”

⁴⁸ André 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), XV-XXII; Навтанович, *Лингвотекстологический анализ...*, 83-97; L. Navtanovich, “The Provenance of 2 *Enoch*: a Philological Perspective. A Response to C. Böttrich’s Paper ‘The Book of the Secrets of Enoch (2 En): between Jewish Origin and Christian Transmission. An Overview,’” in: *New Perspectives on 2 Enoch*, 66-82, here 71-77.

topics of the Second Temple Jewish mysticism and the 364-day calendar with its implied cosmology continued to matter for the actual religious life. The occurrence of some clearly Byzantine additions in the longer recension does not alter this fact. Thus, Andersen's and, then, Böttrich's conviction that the shorter recension resulted from an abridgment of a longer one, whereas the latter was not identical to any of the surviving sub-recensions J or RP⁴⁹, seems to me the most balanced. An incomprehensibility of 2 *Enoch*'s cosmology in the early Byzantine epoch, I think, became the reason of creating the shorter recension that has been translated into Coptic.

Therefore, we have to conclude that the two recensions of 2 *Enoch* reached the Slavic world as two different works. One could expect, in this case, that their Slavonic translations are independent. Lyudmila Navtanovich has shown that it is not the case, however. She provided four kinds of witnesses against the mutual independency of the Slavonic recensions: (1) common *hapax legomena* in Slavonic; (2) common errors in translation from Greek; (3) common obscure places, and, finally, (4) common "related readings which can be explained in Slavic and not in Greek".⁵⁰

Navtanovich's own conclusion is that the two recensions represent the unique translation. She provides a detailed argumentation that is, to my opinion, completely compatible with her conclusion—but not with it uniquely. Another possible conclusion from the same data is that one translation has been edited using another. In her unpublished thesis, Navtanovich did not consider the latter possibility at all, whereas, after a discussion at the Fifth Enoch Seminar (Naples, 2009), she published her objections in a note.⁵¹ She conceded that the witnesses of the category (1) (common *hapax legomena*) could be alternatively explained via an editing process but still insists that the three remaining categories demonstrate the initial uniqueness of the translation. I beg to disagree with the current Navtanovich's evaluation of these arguments.

First, the mutually related readings of the two recensions that certainly arose on the Slavic ground (category (4), such as чрънь "black" in the shorter recension vs. чръмьнь "red" in the longer one) are to be excluded as irrelevant from the discussion of the *origins* of the two recensions. Indeed, the two recensions have had a long history within the Slavic literatures, where they were subjected to changes specific to the Slavic-speaking milieux. Both of them would have acquired some errors specific to some branches of their respective manuscript traditions, regardless of whether they go back to the same initial Slavonic translation or not.

Second, the categories (2) and (3) are not as unambiguous as Navtanovich supposes. She thinks that "...we could not explain why they [the two recensions. — B.L.] share the same obscure passages and translation errors, which should have been 'corrected' or 'clarified' according to the Greek text".⁵² Everybody would agree that such readings *should* have been corrected or clarified in the edition process, but it would be somewhat incautiously to believe that the things are always as they ought to be. One has not to *a priori* reject an alternative supposition that the editing was less successful than one would have wished. It is not less likely that the readings belonging to the categories (2) and (3) resulted from an unhelpful editing.

Navtanovich is convincing in her demonstration of the mutual dependency of the two Slavic recensions, and she is convincing as well in her supposition that *one*—whereas not the unique—possible explanation of this fact is the uniqueness of the initial Slavonic translation. An alternative explanation is also possible: editing of the one translation with recourse to another.

After having demonstrated, I hope, that there is no *textological* ground to reject the latter alternative, I must confess that Navtanovich's hypothesis is much more convincing due to extra-textological considerations. An editorial work aimed to unifying the two independent translations

⁴⁹ Christfried Böttrich. "The Book of the Secrets of Enoch (2 En): between Jewish Origin and Christian Transmission. An Overview," in: *New Perspectives on 2 Enoch*, 37-65, here 41-44.

⁵⁰ Navtanovich, "The Provenance of 2 Enoch...", 75-76. Cf. Навтанович, *Лингвотекстологический анализ...*, 83-97.

⁵¹ Navtanovich, "The Provenance of 2 Enoch...", 76, fn. 22.

⁵² Navtanovich, "The Provenance of 2 Enoch...", 76, fn. 22.

of different originals would look as somewhat unusual in the Slavonic literatures, and the very reason of such an enterprise would be hardly understandable. Normally, the different translations of the same work coexisted—probably, with occasional interferences but without being deliberately unified.⁵³

Now we are in position to recall our previous observation that the passages containing the words *Theved*, *Tsivan*, and *Nitsan* belong to the longer recension, whereas the short recension does not contain any feature unfitting with the idea of translation from Greek.⁵⁴ Taken into account Navtanovich's hypothesis of the uniqueness of the Slavonic translation, it looks that, at first, the shorter recension has been translated from Greek, and, then, it was completed from the (now lost) Syriac version of the longer recension. Alternatively—without accepting Navtanovich's hypothesis—one could guess that there existed a complete Slavonic translation of the longer recension made from Syriac, but I would consider such a supposition as an unnecessary amplification.

The more archaic is a text, the more likely it survives only in an Oriental language after having disappeared in Greek. The longer recension of *2 Enoch* is, indeed, more archaic than the shorter one (regardless of which of them is more genuine). Thus, it is *a priori* likely that it continued to be accessible in Syriac after having disappeared in Greek. Thus, my hypothesis of the two-stage evolution of the Slavonic *2 Enoch* seems to be fitting with the general history of the texts in the Christian Orient and the best fitting with the available data on *2 Enoch*:

- Stage 1: translation of the shorter recension from a Greek original,
- Stage 2: creation of the longer recension by addition of the passages translated from the Syriac version of the (then already inaccessible) Greek text of the longer recension.

In some way, I would agree, therefore, that the longer recension of the Slavonic *2 Enoch* appeared on the Slavic soil.

5. Who Were Those Syrians? (Putting the Question)

The Syrian connexions of the early Slavic literature, apart from the omnipresent among the Syrians *Aḥiqar*, are of such nature that, at the first glance, is difficult to identify. There is certainly no specific connexions between the Slavs and the major Syrian traditions, such as the Church of the East ("Nestorians"—*pace* Vaillant who believed that Constantine-Cyril used the Diatessaron in the "Nestorian" Syriac tradition⁵⁵) or the "Monophysite" Jacobites (the major "Monophysite" faction)⁵⁶, not to say of the Byzantinised eighth- or ninth-century Melkites. All other branches of the Syrian Christianity, whose number to be taken into account for the period from the sixth to the ninth century is not less than a dozen, are presently too little studied, whereas—ironically—it was they who were often responsible for sharply influential missions to the margins of the Christian oecumene, including especially Armenia, Nubia, Ethiopia, and... indeed, the Slavs, too.

Iranian connexions of the relevant Syrian tradition or, at least, a part of it are also of a little help for identifying: both "Nestorian" Christian majority of Iran and the "Monophysite" Christian minority (which, in turn, was subdivided into many factions since the sixth century)

⁵³ Cf., e.g., F. J. Thomson, "The Slavonic Translations of Pseudo-Methodius of Olympus' Apocalypse," *Търновска книжовна школа [Tărnovska knižovna škola]* 4 (1985), 143-173.

⁵⁴ Strictly speaking, the traces of a Greek original discovered in the Slavonic text of the shorter recension are of such nature that they do not prove that there was no intermediary language between Greek and Slavonic. There is simply no specific reason in favour of the hypothesis of an intermediary. In such a situation, the Ockham's razor is applicable.

⁵⁵ Vaillant, "La préface de l'Évangéliste vieux-slave," already convincingly criticised by Bruce Metzger, *Chapters in the History of the New Testament Textual Criticism* (New Testament Tools and Studies, 4; Leiden, 1963), 74-75 and 88-89. Cf. further Lourié, "Syrian Shadows..."

⁵⁶ I will use the old-fashion and not especially helpful terms "Monophysite" and "Nestorian" in the brackets because they remain the most "readable" and still more natural than such artificial constructs as "Miaphysitism."

were extremely active in their missionary zeal. Theoretically speaking, any of them would have reached the Slavs.

Thus, let us return to Constantine of Apamea, the only historical figure of a Syrian missionary to the Slavs that we know. His religious background was some—otherwise unknown—minority within the Monothetism. The Monothetism was then (in 681), however, a recent creation, about half a century old.⁵⁷ It would be anachronistic, therefore, to say of a specific cultural Monothete tradition in the late seventh century. After having the Monothetism factored out, we see, in Constantine of Apamea, a Western Syrian that grew up in a mostly Syriac-speaking milieu but within the bilingual Greek-Syriac country. Before the Monothete Union (*ca* 633), such Syrians were mostly anti-Chalcedonians and, more exactly, Severianists (followers of Severus of Antioch in the major split throughout the whole history of the “Monophysitism,” the schism between Severus and Julian of Halicarnassus in the 520s). However, to the late sixth or the early seventh century, the number of the Severianist factions was, at least, eight.⁵⁸ Thus, even though we know something about the cultural background of Constantine of Apamea, our knowledge is too vague for a more practical purpose.

Fortunately, there are other sources of the sixth and the seventh centuries that could shed some more light. The very obscure routes of the Church history start to become observable through the lenses of critical hagiography.

6. St. Eleutherius’ Dossier and the Hagiography of Syrian Missions to Arabia

Below I will try to describe very briefly the relevant part of a unique tangled skein of hagiographical legends. All of them will lead us backward, from the earliest Christianity among the Slavs to the missions among the Arabs of the Arabian Peninsula in the early sixth century (mostly Syrian “Monophysite” but partly Chalcedonian Byzantino-Arabian).

The so-called Eleutherius recension of the *Twelve Fridays* is known in Slavonic only and preserved within the same collections of apocrypha as the already mentioned *Aḥiqar* and the *Twelve Dreams of Shakhshaisha*.⁵⁹ As I demonstrated elsewhere,⁶⁰ this text has been composed in Syriac not so long before the 680s or 690s and translated into Slavonic, most likely, from Syriac directly; anyway, there is absolutely no trace of this text in Byzantium or in any documents in Greek at all.⁶¹ The text contains a prophecy about the end of the Islamic rule within 63 years

⁵⁷ I mean here “Monothetism” as a specific confession name but not any Christological doctrine postulating the unique will in Christ. Such doctrines were quite common, in the sixth century, among the Chalcedonians, but the same language was shared by the anti-Chalcedonians (“Monophysites”) and the Church of the East (“Nestorians”). Therefore, the *language* of “one will” was compatible with any kind of Christology.

⁵⁸ Seven of them resulted from the dogmatic polemics [for a detailed review of the dogmatic splitting among the “Monophysites” in the sixth cent., s. B. M. Лурье, *История византийской философии. Формативный период* <B. Lourié, *The History of the Byzantine Philosophy. A Formative Period*>, St. Petersburg: Axiōma, 2006, esp. 248-250], but the Severianists were split as well on purely canonical (disciplinary) grounds (s. below on the schism between the Jacobites and the followers of Paul Beth Ukkame).

⁵⁹ Anissava Miltenova is now preparing the critical edition. No translation into a modern language except Russian is available.

⁶⁰ B. Lourié, “Friday Veneration in Sixth- and Seventh-Century Christianity and Christian Legends about the Conversion of Naḡrān,” in: *The Coming of the Comforter: When, Where, and to Whom? Studies on the Rise of Islam and Various Other Topics in Memory of John Wansbrough*. Eds. C. A. Segovia, B. Lourié (Orientalia Judaica Christiana, 3; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2012), 131-230. This long paper deals with all the legends mentioned in this section.

⁶¹ Sergey V. Ivanov, “The Legend of the Twelve Fridays and *Quattuor Tempora*,” *Scrinium* 9 (2013), 185-206, challenged one point of my argumentation for the Syriac original of the legend (according to him, one Slavonic *hapax* goes back to the Latin and not Syriac original). It is not a place here to discuss this point at length, but, *pace* Ivanov, it is certainly not sufficient for disproving the whole system of argumentation that would hold even without this argument. In his later publication Ivanov ceased to insist on the Western origin of the legend: С. В. Иванов, М. Л. Кисилиер, “Два ранее не издававшихся текста «Сказания о 12-ти пятницах» и славянская традиция” [S. V. Ivanov, M. L. Kisilier, “Two previously unedited Greek texts of ‘The Tale of the 12 Fridays’ and the Slavic tradition”], *Byzantinoslavica* 72 (2014), 310-339.

(counting from either 622 or 635). Similar prognoses were quite typical for a large flow of the Syriac “historical” apocalypticism provoked by the Arab conquest of the seventh century.

The text is subdivided into two parts. Its first part is a dispute between Eleutherius and a Jew (in a locality whose name is corrupt but should be recovered as Illyricum with a further identification of the city as Dyrrachium, modern Dörres in Albania), whereas the second part is an allegedly apostolic document on the twelve Fridays previously concealed by the Jews.

The second part is an elaboration on the widely known sixth-century document, the so-called Clement recension of the *Twelve Fridays* (used here with Clement’s name dropped out). The Clement recension of the *Twelve Fridays* is an instruction, on behalf of Clement of Rome (for the sixth-century Byzantium, the most authoritative transmitter of the disciplinary and liturgical teachings attributed to the Apostles), to fast on the twelve especially important Fridays throughout the year. The document is preserved in three Greek manuscripts and a great number of manuscripts in Latin, Slavonic, and vernacular languages of the West,⁶² but has no trace in the anti-Chalcedonian traditions and is unknown in Syriac.

The first part of the Eleutherius recension is an original work (otherwise unknown) but enrooted in the early sixth-century hagiographical dossier of the 20-year-old bishop martyr (of Illyricum) Eleutherius and his mother having a strange name Anthia (Ἀνθία, not Ἀνθεία).

The martyrdom of Eleutherius was patterned after that of Apostle Philip (from the *Acta Philippi*) considered as the first enlightener of Arabia together with Nubia and Ethiopia. Eleutherius’ hagiographical dossier belongs to the cluster of the “Monophysite” sixth-century legends reflecting the establishment in the oasis of Nağrān in South Arabia, modern Yemen, of a diocese of the metropolia of Syrian Hierapolis/Mabbug (the events of *ca* 500, but the legends are somewhat later). These legends were partially shared with the Chalcedonians. Like Eleutherius, the principal characters of these legends were wandering (and even secret) bishops who left their dioceses.

The very name of Eleutherius (“Free (man)”) was, in this epoch, an important symbol of the conversion of the “sons of (the servant) Hagar” from slavery to freedom. Probably, “Eleutherius” is a Greek rendering of the very popular Arabic name Ḥarīṭ (normally rendered in Greek with the transcription Ἀρέθας) due to the folk etymology (from North and South Arabic root *hr* “to be free” and the South Arabic suffix of personal names -*t*), whereas his mother’s name that looks so strange in Greek, Anthia, is a rendering of a woman’s name popular among the Arab nobility, Hind. Therefore, Eleutherius the son of Anthia is to be read as Ḥarīṭ ibn Hind, in conformity with a custom of the pre-Islamic Arab nobility to call an important person after his mother.

Finally, an extremely important topic of different (“Monophysite” and Chalcedonian) missions to the Arabs was the veneration of Friday as a weekday of abstinence from work. The Friday veneration in the Islam goes back to this—obviously, marginal—sixth-century Christian tradition, and even the links of transmission are observable (the famous Bahira-legend is among them). The most important and rich with historical details “Monophysite” Syriac legend on the conversion of Nağrān (partially preserved within the Islamic and Byzantine traditions as well), that of the secret bishop Paul and his friend priest John, especially insists on the holiness of Friday.

A roughly contemporary legend emerging from the competitive Chalcedonian milieu (Constantinople’s sphere of influence) is that of the personified Friday—holy martyr and virgin Parasceve of Rome (the ample dossier of this martyr, with an exception of the 11th-cent. Armenian version from Greek, is limited to the Chalcedonian traditions).⁶³ It resulted from a

⁶² The totality of the relevant manuscripts and publications in Slavonic, Latin and the vernacular Western languages is catalogued in a series of publications by Sergey B. Ivanov (enumerated in his latest paper: Иванов, Кисилиер, “Два ранее не издававшихся...”). Ivanov’s conviction that I believe that the original of this recension was in Syriac (“The Legend of the Twelve Fridays and *Quattuor Tempora*,” 186) is a misunderstanding: I consider the Clement recension to be written in Greek in the sixth century.

⁶³ To the bibliography provided by Lourié, “Friday Veneration...,” one has to add (published later, despite its official year of publication, and already referring to Lourié): Salvatore Pennisi, “Un frammento della Passio di

missionary activity among the Arabs, which was directed from the Chalcedonian diocese of Bostra.

The above data show that both anti-Chalcedonians and Chalcedonians were compelled to preach an unusual, for the remaining part of the Christian world, veneration of Friday when they were dealing with the Arabs. The tradition itself is, most likely, of a Syrian origin, judging from an unpublished Syriac hagiographical legend about the secret bishop John (one more secret wandering bishop!) and the personified Lady Friday.

If we recall that Bostra was one of the most important centres of the Ghassanid political influence (the pro-Byzantine Arab tribe whose “Monophysite” Christian leaders protected both “Monophysite” and Chalcedonian Churches within their zone of domination),⁶⁴ we will perhaps obtain the answer why, at least, some forms of a specific Friday veneration and the related legends of “Monophysite” origin leaked to the Chalcedonians. Nevertheless, in Byzantium, St. Parasceve has never become a saint of the first rank—as we see her venerated among the Slavs. A Slavic translation(s) of an unknown in Greek recension(s) of the *Martyrdom of Parasceve* is (are) contained in the same manuscript compilations as apocryphal works connected with the Syrians.⁶⁵ Moreover, as we have said, a seventh-century derivative of these sixth-century legends, the Eleutherius recension of the *Twelve Fridays*, is not Byzantine at all but evidently Syrian.

We have to conclude that the Syrian mission to the Slavs in the seventh century have had in its disposition the legacy of those Syrians, mostly anti-Chalcedonians, that preached to the Arabs of the Arabian Peninsula about a hundred years ago and more, especially in the first half of the sixth century, when the anti-Chalcedonians and the Chalcedonians in this region were more cooperating than competing. These missions, in turn, have had close connexions with the “Monophysites” (and even the “Nestorians,” too) of Iran.⁶⁶ Therefore, we have not to wonder that, in the Syriac heritage preserved by the Slavs, this “Arabian” layer coexists with the earlier “Iranian” one.

Our conclusion is, hopefully, useful but still not enough for resolving the riddle of 2 *Enoch*. The legacy of the missions to Arabia became a part of the common legacy of the mainstream (in the middle of the sixth century) Severianist tradition. The Syrian tradition we are looking for must have inherited this legacy while becoming different from the later Severianist mainstream. Thus, its parting of the ways with the future Jacobite “Monophysitism” took place not earlier than in the middle of the sixth century.

7. Who Were Those Syrians: Longinus of Noubadia and the Paulists

Sancta Venera (BHL 8530) in due pergamene del XIV secolo. Nuovi contributi su Santa Parasceve – Santa Venera,” *Accademia di Scienze Lettere e Belle Arti degli Zelanti e dei Dafnici Acireale, Memorie e Rendiconti*, Serie V, 9 (2010), 233-277.

⁶⁴ Greg Fisher, *Between Empires: Arabs, Romans, and Sasanians in Late Antiquity* (Oxford Classical Monographs; Oxford: Oxford UP, 2011), 99-103; cf. *idem*, “Kingdom or Dynasties? Arabs, History, and Identity before Islam,” *Journal of Late Antiquity* 4 (2011), 245-267. On the relations between the Ghassanid rulers and the Chalcedonians, s. also Philip Wood, “Christianity and the Arabs in the Sixth Century,” in: *Inside and Out: Interactions between Rome and the Peoples on the Arabian and Egyptian Frontiers in the Late Antiquity*. Eds. G. Fisher and J. H. F. Dijkstra (Late Antique History and Religion, 8; Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 353-368, esp. 361-363.

⁶⁵ Мая Петрова, “Към въпроса за южнославянските преводи на житието на мъченица Параскева/Петка Римлянка” [Maya Petrova, “Toward the Question of the South Slavic Translations of the *Life* of the martyr Parasceve/Petka the Roman”], *Старобългаристика / Palaeobulgarica* 20 (1996) Nr 2, 83-109, here 88-92.

⁶⁶ It is interesting to notify that the most active Syrian “Monophysite” missionary of this epoch (active since ca 500, † before 548), himself of Persian origin, Simeon Beth Arsham has visited Illyricum about a half century before the first Slavic settlements were created in the area (in the 580s); s. his *Life* within John of Ephesus’ collection: E. W. Brooks, John of Ephesus, *The Lives of the Eastern Saints. Syriac texts edited and translated*. I (Patrologia orientalis, 17, fasc. 1, Nr 82; Paris, 1923) [repr.: Turnhout: Brepols, 2003], 138.

Now it is the time to recall that the Coptic 2 *Enoch* was found in Nubia and, more exactly, in the town Qasr Ibrim in Noubadia (one of the three Nubian kingdoms that was adjacent to Egypt). Coptic and Greek were the *linguae francae* in this region and were used alongside with Nubian. The manuscript is tentatively dated to the interval from the eighth to the tenth century,⁶⁷ that is, an epoch when the whole Nubia has been ecclesiastically unified and subordinated to the Coptic Patriarchate of Alexandria.⁶⁸ The latter was ecclesiastically unified, too, since about the middle of the seventh century.⁶⁹ Would this manuscript borrowed in the Coptic Egypt in such a late epoch, one has to expect recognisable traces of 2 *Enoch* in the literatures of the Coptic and/or Ethiopian Churches. In the absence of anything of this kind the natural supposition is that the Coptic version of 2 *Enoch* reached Noubadia earlier, in the time of its conversion into the Severianist “monophysite” faith in the middle of the sixth century but before its temporary rupture with the mainstream “Monophysitism” of Alexandria in the late sixth century.⁷⁰

A somewhat complicated story of this conversion and the following rupture is now recoverable from literary sources left by the competing parties; in several respects, these sources now allow to be checked against the archaeological data.⁷¹

The establishment of the “Monophysite” bishop see in Noubadia headed by Longinus was accomplished, in about 565, still within the mainstream Severianist movement. The latter was then formally headed by the Patriarch of Alexandria Theodosius (536–566; he was deposed by the official imperial authorities but still continuing to perform his duties from Constantinople where he was detained until his death) and informally animated with an inexhaustible activity of the bishop of Edessa Jacob Baradaeus (542–578), who gave his name to the whole movement of the Jacobites.

Longinus, as well as his predecessor in Nubia the missionary priest Julian (538–540), was a priest from the close entourage of Patriarch Theodosius during his forced stay in Constantinople. Nevertheless, being an Alexandrian, Longinus has had become earlier a member of the clergy of the Patriarchate of Antioch. He arrived to Constantinople as an envoy of the Patriarch of Antioch Paul Beth Ukkame (564–581). The episcopal consecration of Longinus has been performed by Patriarch Paul according to the written demand to him from the Patriarch of Alexandria Theodosius (dated to 565).

After having stayed in Noubadia from 569 to 575, Longinus arrived to Alexandria at the instigation of Paul Beth Ukkame and presided over the consecration of the new Patriarch of

⁶⁷ Hagen, “No Longer ‘Slavonic’ Only...,” 14–15.

⁶⁸ Under the Coptic Patriarch of Alexandria John III (681–689). See C. Detlef G. Müller, “Stellung und Haltung der koptischen Patriarchen des 7. Jahrhunderts gegenüber islamischer Obrigkeit und Islam,” in: *Acts of the Second International Congress of Coptic Study* [i.e. Studies], Roma, 22–26 September 1980. Eds. T. Orlandi and F. Wisse (Rome: C.I.M., 1985), 203–213. Cf. Laurence P. Kirwan, “The Emergence of the United Kingdom of Nubia,” *Sudan Notes and Records* 61 (1980), 134–139. For the Chalcedonian tradition in Nubia, cf. B. Lourié, “India ‘far beyond Egypt’: Barlaam and Ioasaph and Nubia in the 6th century,” in: *Bibel, Byzanz und Christlicher Orient. Festschrift für Stephen Gerö zum 65. Geburtstag*. Eds. D. Bumazhnov, E. Grypeou, T. B. Sailors, A. Toepel (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta, 187; Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 135–180.

⁶⁹ On the unification of the Coptic Church in the middle of the seventh cent., s. B. Lourié, “Benjamin of Alexandria,” in: *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*. Ed. S. Uhlig. Vol. 1 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003), 530.

⁷⁰ On the historical context of this rupture, s. especially Philippe Blaudeau, “Le voyage de Damien d’Alexandrie vers Antioche puis Constantinople (579–580),” *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 63 (1997), 333–361.

⁷¹ The early Christianisation of Nubia became the main topic of the monograph dedicated to the frontier city and episcopal see between Egypt and Nubia, Philae: Jitse H. F. Dijkstra, *Philae and the End of Ancient Egyptian Religion. A Regional Study of Religious Transformation (298–642 CE)* (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta, 173; Leuven: Peeters, 2008). This monograph disproves several claims of earlier scholars who have too uncritically read the “Monophysite” historian John of Ephesus. Noubadia was a part of the “Monophysite” diocese of Philae (within the “Monophysite” Patriarchate of Alexandria) since 538–540 (date of the “Monophysite” mission by priest Julian who baptised the king of Noubadia, most likely Eirpanome) to 565/566–569, when a separate diocese of Noubadia has been created within the “Monophysite” Patriarchate of Alexandria (the respective dates of the consecration and the arrival to Nubia of the first bishop of Noubadia Longinus). Dijkstra provides the most reliable account of the activity of Longinus.

Alexandria Theodorus (who was a Syrian monk but having spent many years in Egypt) performed by him in concelebration with two Syrian bishops. The consequences turned out to be disastrous. The majority of the Alexandrian clergy did not accept the new patriarch and almost immediately consecrated a Patriarch of their own, Peter (575–577), replaced, after his death, with his former secretary (and a “grey cardinal”), Damian (577/578–606/607)—also a Syrian who spent many years in Egypt. — Let us notify this overwhelming permeation of Syrians into the “Monophysite” Church of Egypt.

Peter of Alexandria immediately deposed Paul of Antioch (575) and managed to pull to his side the most authoritative figure of the whole movement, Jacob Baradaeus. Thus, a major schism between the adherents of Paul Beth Ukkame (Paulists) and the remaining Jacobites erupted.

Longinus, who returned to Nubia in 579 or 580 for an even more successful mission encompassing, this time, the southern Nubian state Alodia (Alwa), was considered as a leading figure by the two parts of the conflict, both Paulists and Jacobites. For the former, he was a new Jacob Baradaeus,⁷² for the latter, he was, of course, the most perilous person after Paul Beth Ukkame himself.⁷³

Damian created a Patriarch of Antioch of his own, Peter of Callinicum (580/581–591), but *ca* 585 another schism divided the Jacobite sees of Alexandria and Antioch, this time, on a theological ground. The latter schism continued for centuries.⁷⁴

To the end of the sixth century, the Jacobite movement became sharply divided into three groups living in a relative mutual isolation: the mainstream “Monophysitism” of Alexandria, the mainstream “Monophysitism” of Antioch (both considered each other heretical), and, finally, the Paulists who were especially strong in the two “Monophysite” states of Nubia (Noubadia and Alodia) but were represented as well throughout the Empire. All these groups were sharing the common legacy of the early sixth-century missions to the Arabian Peninsula.

We have eventually found what we were looking for: a Syrian Severianist movement dissipated throughout Byzantium as a suppressed—and theologically isolated—minority even among the “Monophysites” but represented in Nubia: the Paulists.

Such a minority would have preserved some literature that, in other communities of the same origin, was replaced with a new literary production. The rule that the more archaic texts are better preserved at the periphery than in the centres of the original literary activity is perfectly applicable here.

The Paulists were multilingual: at least, three languages were, among them, used actively—Greek, Syriac, and Coptic.

In the epoch of the Monothelete union (since about the 620s or 630s), some of them should have been involved into the communion with the Chalcedonites.

The Syrian mission to the Slavs that started about the 670s, that I consider being Monothelete with a Western Syrian “Monophysite” background, was not necessarily Paulist *sensu stricto* but, at least, it has absorbed something from the Paulist legacy.

⁷² As Sergius the Hermit wrote in his *The Defence of Patriarch Paul*, “...Mar Longinus, who was running, I dare say, in the footsteps of Mar Jacob [Baradaeus] (ܐܒܝ ܝܥܩܒ ܕܐܢܬܝܐ ܕܐܒܝ ܝܥܩܒ ܕܐܢܬܝܐ ܕܐܒܝ ܝܥܩܒ ܕܐܢܬܝܐ): I. B. Chabot, *Documenta ad origines monophysitarum illustrandas* (CSCO, Syr. II, 37 T; Paris: Typ. Reipublicae; Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1907) [repr. CSCO vol. 17; Scriptores Syri, t. 17; Louvain, 1952] 240; cf. Lat. tr.: I. B. Chabot, *Documenta ad origines monophysitarum illustrandas* (CSCO, Syr. II, 37 V; Louvain: Typ. M. Istas, 1933) [repr. CSCO vol. 103; Scriptores Syri, t. 52; Louvain, 1952], 168.

⁷³ Luc Lontie, “Un traité syriaque jacobite contre les partisans de Paul de Bēth Ukkāmē (564-581) (ms. British Library Add. 14.533, f. 172r^b-176v^b)” *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 63 (1997), 5-51, s. esp. chapter II, pp. 14/15-16/17 (txt/tr.), where Longinus is accused that, after having performed the illegal consecration of the Patriarch of Alexandria, he had deceived Jacob Baradaeus that it was legal and, in this way, temporarily attired his support at the critical moment of the formation of his schism.

⁷⁴ And has certainly not been healed by the council of 616, as it is often claimed; cf. B. Lourié, “Damian of Alexandria,” in: *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*. Ed. S. Uhlig. Vol. 2 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005), 77-78.

8. The Earliest Slavonic Gospel Translation

Since the middle of the nineteenth century, the scholars point out some readings in the earliest Slavonic translation of the Gospels that seem to go back to Greek originals presently unknown in Greek. They would have been accessible to the translator(s) into Slavonic in either original or via another translation. I have provided elsewhere a detailed review of these readings and their possible parallels in the Oriental languages,⁷⁵ but now I would briefly recall them, because they are corroborating the identification of the Syrian tradition responsible for a part of the Slavonic pseudepigrapha that we have just proposed.

The readings are the following:

1. Mt 5:18: ἰὼτα “iota” — писма or писмо “letter.” A parallel reading in the Old Syriac translation has been noticed by Josef Vajs (1935), and, then, put into the context of the Vaillant—Jakobson “Syriac” approach by Karel Horálek (1956). The Old Syriac reading is not completely the same: “one letter *yud*” (ܝܘܕ ܠܗܝܝܬܐ ܠܗܝܬܐ) instead of “one *yud*” (ܝܘܕ ܠܗܝܬܐ) of other Syriac recensions.
2. Mt 13:48: συνέλεξαν “collected” — избраша “selected.” Noticed by Nicolaas van Wijk (1931) as influenced by the Vulgate (*elegerunt*) but reinterpreted by Roman O. Jakobson (1954) as influenced by Diatessaron in Syriac (ܠܚܫܐ); the hypothesis about Vulgate’s influence on the earliest Slavonic Gospel is almost without ground. In fact, the relevant Syriac reading is common to the whole Syriac tradition (Old Syriac, Peshitta, and Harqleian) and needs not to be explained with recourse to the Diatessaron.
3. Mk 15:23: ἐσμυρμισμένον οἶνον “myrrered wine” — оцѣтно вино “wine vinegar (*lit.* vinegred wine).” A similar reading (“vinegar” instead of “wine”) has only the Harqleian version: ܠܗܝܬܐ ܠܗܝܬܐ ܠܗܝܬܐ “myrrhed vinegar”, with a marginal gloss to the latter word ܠܗܝܬܐ ܠܗܝܬܐ “mixed with myrrh,” as it has been noticed recently by Salustio Alvorado and Enrique Santos Marinas (2006).
4. Lk 15:2: διεγόγγυζον “murmured”— роптахоу вси “murmured all” (“all” *is added*). Noticed by Kapiton Ivanovich Nevostruev (1863) with a correct parallel from the Sahidic Coptic version (having here THPOY “all”). No parallel in Syriac nor in other Coptic versions.
5. Jn 7:17: περὶ τῆς διδαχῆς — omitted περὶ (no preposition before “doctrine”). Noticed by Kapiton Ivanovich Nevostruev (1863) with an (erroneous) parallel to the Sahidic Coptic version (probably, due to a confusion with the late mediaeval Bohairic version, where—unlike the 4th-cent. Bohairic version—the proposition is absent). The reading without the proposition is common to the Old Syriac and Peshitta.

Some of these readings are compatible with any understanding of the Syriac influence on the earliest Slavic culture (especially Nrs 2 and 5 but also Nr 1), whereas some others are more specific.

The remote parallel with the Syriac translation made by Thomas of Harqel (who worked in 615/616 during his staying in Egypt), Nr 3, makes us think about a common source of the corresponding readings. We know that Thomas of Harqel worked with a translation, now lost, prepared by Philoxenus of Mabbog in 506/507.⁷⁶ Philoxenus was, in this time, the head of the metropolia that was responsible for the missions to Naḡrān in Arabia, whose legacy has been preserved by the marginal Syrian tradition that reached the Slavs. Therefore, the common Greek source would have been a manuscript in disposition of Philoxenus.

The coincidence with a reading preserved, apart from the Slavic version, in the Sahidic Coptic only (Nr 4) is even more revealing. To the sixth century, Sahidic became the dialect used for the literary texts throughout Egypt; the Coptic fragments of 2 *Enoch* are also in Sahidic. Thus, this small variant reading—although within a most important text—is the second, after 2 *Enoch*, link between the Slavic and Coptic Christianity.

9. Conclusion

⁷⁵ Lourié, “Syrian Shadows...”

⁷⁶ Sebastian Brock, “The Resolution of the Philoxenian/Harclean Problem,” in: *New Testament textual criticism. Its significance for exegesis. Essays in honour of Bruce M. Metzger*, ed. E. J. Epp and G. D. Fee, Oxford: Oxford UP, 1981, 325-343. Thomas of Harqel was one of the most important bishops of the mainstream Jacobite “Monophysitism” of Antioch and so, did not belong to the minority tradition we are interesting in.

The Syriac connexions of the early Slavonic literature are hardly explainable from any of the major Syrian traditions. There was a number of observations pointing to the direction of one of the Syrian religious minorities (whose total number, in the sixth and the seventh centuries, was quite impressive).

The discovery of the Coptic version of 2 *Enoch* in Nubia clarified matters a lot. Now we can say that, from the late sixth to the early or the middle of the seventh century, the tradition we are looking for belonged to the Paulist Severianists.