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The Slavonic *Solunskaja Legenda* ("The Thessalonican Legend") and Its Syriac Original

To the memory of Vyacheslav Mikhaylovich Zagrebin (1942–2004)

0. Introduction

The *Solunskaja Legenda* ("The Thessalonican Legend", thereafter *SL*) is a hagiographical legend about creation of the first Slavic alphabet by some Cyril completely distinct from the brother of Methodius. It certainly belongs to the hagiographical genre that Hippolyte Delehaye would define as "épique". This is not to say, however, that it is void of historical meaning[1].

Twenty years ago, in 1994, I proposed an idea that *SL* is a direct translation from Syriac into Slavonic[2]. Since then, this idea provoked some interest among the Slavists, especially in Bulgaria[3], as well as some criticisms from other Slavists, especially in Russia[4]. One of the most

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[1] Cf. H. Delehaye, *Les passions des martyrs et les genres littéraires.* Deuxième édition, revue et corrigée. SH 13 B; Bruxelles: Société des Bollandistes, 1966). For the historical meaning of the "epic" hagiography, s. В. Лурье, *Введение в критическую агиографию* [B. Lourié, *An Introduction to the Critical Hagiography*], St Petersburg: Ἀξιῶμα, 2009.

[2] First presented at an International Conference of Byzantine and Slavic Studies in the Institute of the Slavic and Balkan Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Moscow) in 1994, then published as В. М. Лурье, Около Солунской легенды: Из истории миссионерства в период монофелитской унии [B. Lourié, Around the *Legend of Thessalonica*: From the History of the Missions during the Period of the Monothelete Union], *Славяне и их соседи.* Вып. 6, Moscow: Индрик, 1996, 23-52. The published paper is an enlarged version of the oral communication, with a specific attention to localisation of the *Sitz im Leben* of *SL*. Moreover, I was trying to address the main objections I have heard in the discussions during all the three days of the conference (from B. N. Florea, D. I. Polyvjannyj, and some others), namely, that my reconstruction does not take into account the ethnogenesis of the Bulgarian people: in *SL*, the people is called "Bulgarians" but it is obvious that it is a Slavic people that is meant; however, in the 7th and even the 8th cent., the Turkic Proto-Bulgarians and the local Slavic tribes did not form a unique ethnos yet. I had an opportunity to answer with references to recent works of Bulgarian scholars showing that the terms derived from Βουλγαρία / βούλγαροι were applied, since the 7th cent., to the whole symbiotic system of Turkic and Slavic tribes, without any specific sensitivity to ethnogenesis or ethnic differences. However, my own counter-argument, as I have been recently shown by A. M. Pentkovsky, is not exhaustive, either (s. below, translation of *SL*, endnote xv).

[3] В. Тъпкова-Заимова, А. Милтенова, *Историко-апокалиптичната книжнина във Византия и в средневековна България*, Sofia: Св. Климент Охридски, 1996, 313 (a benevolent summary of my 1994 communication penned by Anissava Miltenova; both authors have heard my conference paper and discussed with me its topic); cf. a (not completely adequate) English tr.: V. Tăpkova-Zaimova, A. Miltenova, *Historical and Apocalyptic Literature in Byzantium and Medieval Bulgaria*. Tr. M. Paneva, M. Lilova. Sofia: East-West Publishers, 2011. Cf. also the entry "Legend of Thessalonica" of the *Cyrillo–Methodian Encyclopaedia* by Ivan Dobrev: И. Добрев, Солунска легенда, in: Л. Грашева (ed.), *Кирило-Методиевска енциклопедия*, vol. 3, Sofia: Св. Климент Охридски, 2003, 707-715 (713). Gerhard Podskalsky limited himself to mention that I "[e]ine völlig neue Datierung (8. Jh.) vertritt" (G. Podskalsky, *Theologische Literatur des Mittelalters in Bulgarien und Serbien, 865–1459*, Munich: Beck, 2000, 284, fn. 1247).

[4] A Russian specialist in mediaeval Bulgaria, Dmitry I. Polyvjannyj accepted my thesis that *SL* goes back to "some ancient apocryphon of Syrian origin" (некий древний апокриф сирийского происхождения) but rejected my explanation of its origin [Вывод автора о славянском переводе сирийского текста в VIII в. не представляется нам обоснованным ("Author's conclusion about a Slavic translation of a Syriac text in the eighth cent. does not seem to us well-founded")], whereas without argumentation whatsoever; s. Д. И. Полывянный, *Культурное своеобразие средневековой Болгарии в контексте византийско-славянской общности IX-XV веков* [D. I. Polyvjannyj, *The Cultural Identity of Medieval Bulgaria in the Context of the Byzantine-Slav Community (9th–15th Centuries)*], Ivanovo: Издательство Ивановского государственного университета, 2000, 126 and 264, n. 98.

prominent scholars in the field of the whole *Slavia orthodoxa*, Anatoly Arkadievich Turilov, became my most passionate critic[5]. Then, in the early 2000s, Vyacheslav Mikhaylovich Zagrebin proposed a fresh approach to *SL* and provided the first (and so far the last) argumentation against my idea about translation from Syriac[6].

We have never come to agreement with Vyacheslav Mikhaylovich, but, in our discussions, when we have many times met each other in the Department of manuscripts of the Russian National Library, I always felt his encouragement for pursuing my work. His mind remained open to decisions contrary to his owns. In a considerable extent, I owe to him my present understanding of the Slavic text of *SL*. I would like to dedicate this paper to the memory of my dear opponent.

The purpose of the present paper is to replace my 1994/1996 analysis with a new study of the Slavic text but avoiding, however, too large excurses into the historical context (I hope to prepare a separate study of the historical and hagiographical context of *SL*). A closely connected but too complicated problem of the origin of the Glagolitic Slavic script will be not addressed here either, as it has been not addressed *per se* in my 1996 paper[7].

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[5] Cf. his invective addressing both mine and G. M. Prokhorov's [Г. М. Прохоров, Глаголица среди миссионерских азбук <The Glagolitic Alphabet among the Missionary Alphabets>, *Труды Отдела древнерусской литературы* 45 (1992) 178-199] papers: Разумеется, нельзя относиться всерьез (несмотря на гипертрофированное наукообразие аргументации) к новейшим попыткам трактовки «Солунской легенды» как аутентичного исторического источника о крещении варваров (болгар и славян) в VII–VIII вв. ("Evidently, one cannot take seriously—despite a hypertrophied sciolism of argumentation—the newest attempts of treatment of *SL* as an authentic historical source about the baptism of barbarians (Bulgarians and Slavs) in the 7th–8th cent."): А. А. Турилов, После Климента и Наума: славянская письменность на территории Охридской архиепископии в X — первой половине XIII века [A. A. Turilov, After Clement and Naum: Slavic Writings on the Territory of the Okhrid Archdiocese in the 10th — the first half of the 13th cent.], in: Б. Н. Флоря, А. А. Турилов, С. А. Иванов, *Судьбы кирилло-мефодиевской традиции после Кирилла и Мефодия*, St Petersburg: Алетейя, 2000, 76-162 (143, fn. 2). — I do not know in what sense such an "epic" hagiographical legend could be called "*authentic* historical source*", although, indeed, it is certainly an authentic representation of its *Sitz im Leben*. In the recent reprint of his paper, Turilov adds, for the first time, a kind of argumentation: Убедительная критика лингвистических построений В. М. Лурье дана В. М. Загребиным ("Persuasive criticisms of the linguistic constructions by B. Lourié are provided by V. M. Zagrebin"), with a reference to Zagrebin's paper that will be discussed below (А. А. Турилов, *Межславянские культурные связи эпохи средневековья и источниковедение истории и культуры славян* [A. A. Turilov, *Inter-Slavic Cultural Links of the Mediaeval Epoch and Source Studies in the History and the Culture of Slavs*], Moscow: Знак, 2012, 126-165 (161-162, n. 143; quoted p. 162)). In fact, Zagrebin said no one word about the linguistic side of my argumentation (s. below). I would presume that this reference is simply a memory error from Turilov's part, but Turilov did not provide any other argument so far.

[6] В. М. Загребин, К интерпретации «загадочной фразы» из «Солунской легенды» [V. M. Zagrebin, Towards an Interpretation of the "Enigmatic Phrase" from the "Legend of Thessalonica"], in: *idem, Исследования памятников южнославянской и древнерусской письменности*, составитель и ред. Ж. Л. Левшина, Moscow—St Petersburg: Альянс—Архео, 2006, 209-214. This is a posthumous publication of the text of an oral communication read at a round table in Moscow on 19 November 2003; it is not provided with explicit bibliographic references but all of them are quite recognisable to those familiar to the topic.

[7] In my 1994/1996 paper I followed Prokhorov's 1992 guess that *SL* describes invention of the Glagolitic alphabet [Прохоров, Глаголица...]. This hypothesis could not be verified, of course, within a study focused on *SL* only. Prokhorov, unlike me, provided an attempt of analysis of the Glagolitic script itself, but not very convincing, and so, I limited myself to putting forward a raw hypothesis. Since then, Prokhorov's argumentation has been criticised by T. A. Ivanova (apparently without knowing my 1994/1996 study): Т. А. Иванова, Глаголица: новые гипотезы (несколько критических замечаний по поводу новых исследований о первой славянской азбуке) [T. A. Ivanova, Glagolitic: New Hypotheses (Some Critical Notes Concerning New Studies of the First Slavic Alphabet], *Труды Отдела древнерусской литературы* 56 (2004) 78-93 (78-81); earlier in a shorter form: Т. А. Иванова, О первой славянской азбуке, ее происхождении и структурных особенностях [T. A. Ivanova, On the First Slavic Alphabet, Its Origin and Structural Features], in: *Научные доклады СПбГУ*, St Petersburg: Издательство СПбГУ, 2001, 3-12, reprinted: *eadem, Избранные труды*, Ars philologica; St Petersburg: Издательство филологического факультета СПбГУ, 2004, 83-97 (94-96); and also by Boryana Velcheva (also without knowing my 1996 article): Б. Велчева, Отново за глаголицата [Once more on the Glagolitic], *Palaeobulgarica* 25 (2001) Nr 2, 16-20. I consider these criticisms justified only in a part. A Byzantinist and historian of the early Slavic world Sergei A. Ivanov rejected—but without any argumentation at all—G. M. Prokhorov's (1992) and my hypothesis «будто глаголица была создана в ранневизантийское время» ("that the Glagolitic Slavic alphabet was created in the early Byzantine period"): С. А. Иванов, *Византийское*

The present first part of a larger study will be mostly limited to the linguistic and textological component of the demonstration. It will result in a plausible hypothesis that *SL* could be a translation or a reworking of a Syriac *Vorlage*. The further verification or falsification of this hypothesis will require different methodologies and will be continued, God willing, in further parts of the present study.

1. Manuscript Tradition

SL is now known in five manuscripts, whereas it must be known in six. Three of them are mediaeval[8], the two other are nineteenth-century copies of lost mediaeval protographs (but one of them is, in turn, a copy of an earlier nineteenth-century copy which is preserved only in a small fragment). Moreover, there is an edition of the sixth (lost) manuscript, which has mysteriously dropped out of historiography and was refound quite recently by the present author. Thus, the total number of the text witnesses is now seven, but they represent only six mediaeval manuscripts.

The present consensus concerning the textology of *SL* has been established in the 1980s, when two of the three mediaeval manuscripts have been discovered and published, one in 1966 (*S* in my notation)[9] and another one in 1961/1984 (*N* in my notation)[10]. Long before 1984 and even 1961, the scholarly attitude to *SL* (which became known to the Slavists in the middle of the nineteenth century[11]) has been solidified, if not fossilised. *SL* was always considered as a quite late legend with no historical importance, whose dating is limited with the date of the earliest manuscript, that is, the fifteenth century. Thus, the new textological data did not influenced modern scholarly understanding of *SL* (except the most recent studies of Zagrebin, Dobrev, and the present author, which will be discussed below).

According to the consensus established since 1984[12], the five manuscripts belong to two recensions going back to a common archetype. The recension represented by the manuscripts

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миссионерство: можно ли сделать из «варвара» христианина? [S. A. Ivanov, *The Byzantine Missions: Is It Possible to Make a Christian from a "Barbarian"?*] Studia historica; Moscow: Языки славянской культуры, 2003, 151-152, fn. 44. Turilov rightly distinguishes between the two hypotheses on the origin of the Glagolitic, Prokhorov's one and mine, but rejects mine without argumentation whatsoever and distorts it in his paraphrasis: according to Turilov, I "derive" the Glagolitic "из гипотетического миссионерского алфавита Кирилла Каппадокийского, фигурирующего в болг. апокрифе XII в. «Солунская легенда»" ["from a hypothetical missionary alphabet by Cyril of Cappadocia featured in the Bulgarian 12th-cent. apocryphon 'Thessalonican Legend'"]; А. А. Турилов, Глаголица [Glagolitic], in: *Православная энциклопедия*, vol. 11, Moscow: Церковный научный центр «Православная энциклопедия», 2006, 538-543. In fact, according to my hypothesis, which will not be discussed here in any detail, *SL* is a legend about the creation of the Glagolitic alphabet itself.

8 Their detailed descriptions are now (since 2013) available on-line at David J. Birnbaum's site *Repertorium of Old Bulgarian Literature and Letters* (repertorium.obdurodon.org), *via* the search entry "Солунска легенда".

9 Ст. Кожухаров, Неизвестен препис на Солунската легенда [St. Kozhukharov, An Unknown Manuscript of the *Thessalonican Legend*], *Български език* 16 (1966), kniga 5, 491-494. Published independently by B. St. Angelov: Б. Ст. Ангелов, Солунската легенда [The Legend of Thessalonica], in: *idem*, *Из старата българска, руска и сръбска литература*, vol. 2, Sofia: Издателство на Българската академия на науките, 1967, 63-66.

10 Б. Ст. Ангелов, За два преписа на Солунската легенда [B. St. Angelov, About Two Manuscripts of the *Thessalonican Legend*], *Кирило-Методиевски студии / Cyrillo-Methodian Studies* 1 (1984) 9-20, 5 ill., esp. 9-12. This new copy of *SL* was discovered and first noticed by Vladimir Mošin (1894–1987) in his 1961 description of the manuscript, but, despite the expectations of the scholarly community, he has never published the text.

11 *Editio princeps* in 1856, became a necessary section of the scholarly *Cyrillo-Methodiana* since the early 1870s. Cf. the early bibliography in Тъпкова-Заимова, Милтенова, *Историко-апокалиптичната книжнина...*, 318-319.

12 Ангелов, За два преписа...; cf. З. Рибарова, Солунската легенда [Z. Ribarova, The *Thessalonican Legend*], *Спектар* (1984) Nr 4, 5-14; Тъпкова-Заимова, Милтенова, *Историко-апокалиптичната книжнина...*, 309-323, esp. 312 [Appendix «Солунска легенда» (*Thessalonican Legend*) by A. Miltenova]; Г. Поп-Атанасов, Белополскиот препис на «Солунската легенда» [G. Pop-Atanasov, The Bijelo Pole's Manuscript of the *Thessalonican Legend*], *Кирилометодиевскиот (старословенскиот) период в Кирилово-Методиевската*

NSk (in my notation) is closer to this lost archetype than the recension ***Txp***. The manuscript ***T*** is the earliest but not the best. The manuscript whose edition was refound by the present author, ***p***, is very similar to ***Tx***.

The most careful edition of each of the five manuscripts (without ***p***) is provided by Lidia Stefova in 1999, who took into account the differences between the nineteenth-century copies and their editions[13].

The manuscripts:

SNk recension:

S — Sofia ms (Sofia, Church Historical and Archival Institute, Nr 1161, ff. 98v-100r), second half of the 16th cent. (Serbian origin), paper;

N — Nikoljac ms (ms Nr 52, ff. 185r-188r, of the Nikoljac Monastery of the Montenegro-Primorska Episcopate, near Bijelo Polje, Montenegro), early 16th (late 15th according to Mošin; redated by B. St. Angelov[14]) cent., paper;

k — a 1886 copy of ***k****;

k* — a 1861 copy (survived in a small fragment) of the lost parchment ms which was preserved in the village Krivorečna Palanka near Tărnovo, Bulgaria (otherwise called "Tărnovo ms");

Txp recension:

T — Tikvesh ms (Sofia, National Library "Cyril and Methodius", Nr 677, ff. 55v-56v), late 15th cent. (written in modern Macedonia, now in Sofia), paper[15];

x — a copy (1856) taken by Yordan Hacı Konstantinov-Cinot[16] from an old ms very similar to ***T***;

p — Porphyry (Uspensky's) 1877 edition[17] of a manuscript found by him in 1846.

Anissava Miltenova has confirmed an impression by Yordan Ivanov (who had no direct access to ***T***) that ***x*** could be a copy of ***T*** or, at least, of a very similar manuscript which coincides with ***T*** not only word by word but even in spelling (including diacritics). There are only two meaningful divergences (that will be discussed below):

традиција на Македонија. Прилози од научниот собир одржан по поводу 1100-годишната од смертта на Методиј Солунски. Скопје, 1-3 октомври 1985 година, Skopje: МАНУ, 1988, 113-117, and, finally, the encyclopaedic entry by Ivan Dobrev (Добрев, Солунска легенда).

[13] Л. Стефова, Речник на Солунската легенда по пет преписа [L. Stefova, A Dictionary of the Thessalonican Legend according to the five manuscripts], *Palaeobulgarica* 23 (1999) Nr 2, 53-77.

[14] And now redated to the second half of the 16th cent. in the *Repertorium* by D. J. Birnbaum.

[15] The paper, according to hallmarks, is dated to the 1480s. This important collection of apocrypha, *narrationes animae utiles*, etc. was discovered and published by a scholar and Bulgarian enlightener Nacho Nachev (or Nachov; 1853–1916). See now: Л. Илиева, П. Петков, Л. Перчеклийски, *Средневековни български новели. Тиквешки сборник. Текст и изследвания* [L. Ilieva, P. Petkov, L. Percheklijski, *Mediaeval Bulgarian Stories. Tikveshki Collection. Text and Studies*], Blagoevgrad: ЮЗУ «Неофит Рилски», 2010. *Editio princeps* of *SL* according to ***T***: Н. Начовъ, Една нашенска рѫкописъ [N. Nachov, One our manuscript], *Книжици за прочитъ съ беллетристическо, техническо, научно и забавително съдержание* [Thessalonica], 1 (1889) 42-47.

[16] In Bulgarian, Iорданъ Хаджи Константиновъ Джинотъ, in the modern spelling Йордан Хаджиконстантинов-Джинот (1821/1822–1882). Another Bulgarian teacher and enlightener and one of the very important figures of the Bulgarian National Revival. He discovered *SL* and produced its first edition in a Serbian periodical without information about the manuscript whatsoever: I. Х[аѓи] Константиновъ, Слово Кѵрила Славенца Солунскагѡ Фiлософа Бугарскагѡ [I. Насι Konstantinov, A Sermon of Cyril the Slav of Thessalonica the Bulgarian Philosopher], *Гласник Друшства србске словесности* 8 (1856) 146-147 (reprinted many times during the following twenty years). This text of *SL* was the only available to such classical authors of the *Cyrillo-Methodiana* as V. A. Bil'basov (1871) and A. D. Voronov (1877). The direct source of Konstantinov-Cinot is unknown, but his own autograph is preserved in Belgrade, in the archive of the Serbian Academy of Sciences, Н 59 (9), year 1856. A photocopy of the manuscript (two pages) is published by Ангелов, За два преписа...

[17] Published simultaneously twice: [Порфирiй Успенскiй], *Первое путешествiе въ аѳонскiе монастыри и скиты архимандрита, нынѣ епископа Порфирiя Успенскаго въ 1846 году* [*The First Travel to the Athonite Monasteries and Scetes by Archimandrite, Now Bishop Porphyry Uspenskij in 1846*], Part II, section 1, Kiev: Типографiя Фронцкевича, 1877, 98-128, esp. 102-106; *idem*, Отрывокъ изъ путешествiя Епископа Порфирiя Успенскаго въ Аѳонскiе монастыри и скиты въ 1846 году. О св. Кириллѣ просвѣтителѣ Славянъ Моравскихъ [A Fragment from the Travel of Bishop Porphyry Uspensky to the Athonite Monasteries and Scetes. About St. Cyril the Illuminator of the Moravian Slavs], *Труды Кiевской духовной академiи*, year 18 (1877) vol. 3, 79-110, esp. 83-85. This publication is mentioned in the most of bibliographies, but forgotten is the fact that it is independent from all others.

one in the title of *SL* and another one in the number which occurs in *SL* twice ("32" in ***T*** *vs* "35" in ***x***, where the reading "35" is corrected from "32" at the first occurrence)[18].

The history of ***k*** and ***k*** is rather complicated and needs to be briefly described. Some parchment manuscript (the only parchment manuscript of *SL* known so far, at least, by hearing) was found and copied by a village teacher Dimităr Angelov Drumukharov (or Drumakharski) (1838–1889) in May 1861; this copy is ***k****. In 1863, a publication of the original manuscript has been announced as forthcoming in a Bulgarian periodical but did never take place there. Meanwhile, somewhere between 1862 and 1865, the owner of the parchment manuscript, a village priest, exchanged it for a couple of new liturgical books to a Russian traveller, reportedly a diplomat, whose name remains unknown (the witnesses said only that he travelled together his wife). Since then, the traces of the original manuscript are lost, although a hope that it will once reappear is not completely vanished. Moreover, the copy written by Dimităr Angelov (***k****) is now also lost, except its latest leaflet[19] (containing the end of *SL* starting from the words "...whom the God has sent to us"). Nevertheless, Dimităr Angelov's brother who was a dilettante scholar, Georgi Angelov Drumukharov (1843–1912), made another copy in 1886 (***k***)[20]—evidently from Dimităr Angelov's one—and eventually published the text of Dimităr Angelov's copy in his 1900 book *Кюстендил* (*Kyustendil*, a collection of different documents related to the area of this town in western Bulgaria) which has been noticed by the scholarly community[21]. It turned out, however, that his publication is not identical to the 1886 text, and so, the 1886 manuscript has been published in 1984 by Bonju St. Angelov (with variant readings from the 1900 edition)[22]. Below, I will take into account the 1984 publication without referring to the specific readings of the 1900 edition. This decision is justified by the fact that all these differences are limited to the spelling ("modernised", as B. St. Angelov said).

Despite such a complicated history of the 1886 ***k*** text, it is of a rather great importance. Its parchment original was obviously one of the oldest known copies and certainly the most costly among them, and so, it was, probably, especially carefully written.

Thus, Zagrebin's decision to disregard the manuscripts ***k*** and ***x*** in the reconstruction of the difficult place in *SL* could be justified, more or less, for ***x***, but certainly not for ***k***.

The text ***p*** has been published by Bishop Porphyry (1804–1885) without knowing any of the historiography dedicated to *SL* that appeared before 1877, neither the doctoral thesis by A. D. Voronov (s. below, fn. 30) whose parts were published in the same *Proceedings of the Kievan Theological Academy* in the same 1877. Indeed, in 1846, when Bp Porphyry found his text, it was unknown to anybody.

The learned bishop has never been a part of the scholarly community and normally did not have shown any interest to the current bibliography. He was completely overtaken by his passion to manuscripts. He says nothing about the source of his publication; we do not know, therefore, whether he had in hands the original manuscript or only a copy written by him in 1846. His text ***p*** turned out to be very similar to ***x***, whereas not identical.

A part of the differences between ***p*** and ***x*** was analysed in a detailed review by the patriarch of Slavistics Vatroslav (in Russian milieu, Ignatij Vikent'evich) Jagić (1838–1923)[23]. It

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[18] Тъпкова-Заимова, Милтенова, *Историко-апокалиптичната книжнина…*, 311-312.

[19] Now preserved in Sofia, the Library of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Scholarly Archive, found 52 (Yordan Ivanov), Nr 179; published as a photocopy among the unnumbered illustrations in Ангелов, За два преписа…

[20] Preserved in Sofia, the Library of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Scholarly Archive, found 141 (V. D. Stojanov), Nr 335.

[21] Especially because Yordan Ivanov (1872–1947) used Dimităr Angelov's manuscript once more for his publication of *SL* (based on ms ***T*** with variants from ***X*** and ***K***): Й. Иванов, *Съверна Македония. Исторически издирванья* [Y. Ivanov, *Northern Macedonia. Historical Investigations*], Sofia [no publisher], 1906, 62-65; the edition and the list of the manuscripts were reproduced in the 2nd ed. of his *Български старини изъ Македония* [*Bulgarian Monuments from Macedonia*], Sofia: Държавна печатница, 1931 [repr. Sofia: Наука и изкуство, 1970], 281-283 (not in the 1908 first ed.). Dimităr Angelov's manuscript has been sent to Yordan Ivanov by Georgi Angelov, and therefore is preserved (albeit only in a minor part) in Ivanov's personal archive. Yordan Ivanov produced the standard edition of *SL*, which has been used and reprinted by the scholars throughout the twentieth century until having been replaced with Angelov's 1984 edition.

[22] Together with a photocopy of its first leaflet containing the most of the text: Ангелов, За два преписа..., 17-18, and one of the illustrations.

[23] V. Jagić, Die neusten Forschungen über die slavischen Apostel Cyrill und Methodius. V–VII, *Archiv für slavische Philologie* 4 (1880) 297-316. This recension covers the whole publication of Bp Porphyry, including his historical ideas about three different Cyrils (the brother of Methodius, the principal character of *SL*, and the illuminator of Rus' according to the Greek legend *Conversio Russorum* published by Banduri). Only part V (pp.

is this review that has been dropped out from the bibliographies[24]—and it is this fact that I consider to be somewhat mysterious given the authority of Jagić in any field of the Slavic studies. According to Jagić, it is possible that Bp Porphyry used another manuscript than Konstantinov-Cinot; at least, his transcription is more careful and readable than the publication of the latter.

The appearance of a "new" copy of *SL* does not challenge the current textological consensus opting for the *SNk* recension as closer to the common archetype of both. Nevertheless, some variant readings peculiar to *p* could be important.

For limited purposes of the present study I prepared an English translation taking into account the variant readings of all the seven sources of the text except the most of the differences in spelling and various equivalent grammatical forms[25]. If one needs to select one manuscript as the basic text, the choice is between *S* and *N*. B. St. Angelov's standard 1984 edition of *SL* is an edition of *N* (being its *editio princeps*) with the variant readings of the four other manuscripts. My translation is based on *S*. Both *S* and *N* contain later paraphrasing, but *S* seems to me less arbitrary in general (and especially in the obscure place which is the *crux interpretum*).

2. The Date: the Consensus and the Dissident Voices (before the 1990s)

The manuscript tradition provides for *SL* as a *terminus ante quem* the late fifteenth century.

Since the first half of the twentieth century, there is a consensus among the scholars placing the *Sitz im Leben* of *SL* in the Second Bulgarian kingdom (1185–1396) or, at least, somewhere in the social movements of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, which further resulted in establishment of this kingdom[26]. Indeed, the text as it reached us is perfectly fitting with the Bulgarian ideology of the Second kingdom.

The most important results in the late twentieth-century studies of the meaning of *SL* were achieved with reading *SL* within the context of the so-called "historical apocalyptic" Byzantine and Slavic literatures[27]. Thus, now, we can be sure that the very fact that *SL* came down to us is an echo of its relevance for the Second Bulgarian kingdom's ideology. We cannot be equally sure, however, that *SL* was created in this epoch instead of being simply called for from the earlier hagiographical found.

The early attempts of dating (at least, some core of) *SL* to the ninth century with considering its main character, Cyril, as a legendary transformation of the brother of Methodius[28], were almost[29] abandoned already in the 1870s[30], whereas the attempts of an even

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297-307) deals with the textology of *SL*. Number "38" (of the letters of the Slavic alphabet in *SL*) appears in Jagić's review twice (pp. 298, 301), but it is a mistake (instead of the correct "35").

[24] At least, once Jagić referred to his review article himself: И. В. Ягичъ, *Вопросъ о Кириллѣ и Меѳодіи въ славянской филологіи* [I. V. Jagich, *The Question on Cyril and Methodius in the Slavic Philology*], Приложеніе Nr 1 to vol. 51 of *Записки Императорской Академіи наукъ*, St Petersburg, 1885, 38.

[25] The published English translation by Kiril Petkov, *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria, Seventh-Fifteenth Century. The Records of a Bygone Culture*, East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450–1450, 5; Leiden—Boston: Brill, 2008, 141-143, is not suitable for any scholarly purpose (the translator knows only two manuscripts and provides no discussion of the variant readings).

[26] S., for a detailed review of the available viewpoints, Добрев, Солунска легенда; cf. also Рибарова, Солунската легенда. The datation to the 12th cent. (first proposed by G. Gechev in 1938) is prevailing, whereas later datations are also often mentioned.

[27] As an almost definitive study in this field, one could consult Тъпкова-Заимова, Милтенова, *Историко-апокалиптичната книжнина…*, 309-323 [Appendix «Солунска легенда» (*Thessalonican Legend*) by A. Miltenova).

[28] First proposed by a Russian academician Arist Aristovich Kunik (Russian rendering of his original German name Ernst Eduard Kunick, 1814–1899). Already in a 1864 paper he used *SL* as a witness of the mission of Constantine-Cyril to the region of river Bregalnitsa, without, however, quoting it explicitly or, at least, naming it [А. Куникъ, О матеріалахъ для исторіи болгарской церкви. Соч. Цахаріе фонъ-Лингенталь <review of K. E. Zachariae von Lingenthal, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der bulgarischen Kirche*>, *Записки Императорской Академіи Наукъ* 5 (1864) 254-262 (254-255)]. Then, he prepared a larger article (never published) which became known

earlier dating—considering Cyril of *SL* as a quite different person from the brother of Methodius—are continuing also since the 1870s. These attempts go back to bishop Porphyry (Uspensky).

Bishop Porphyry pointed out two historical facts known from other sources and witnessed by *SL*: the name of a metropolitan of Thessalonica John and a siege of Thessalonica by the Slavs; their conjunction leads, according to Bp Porphyry, to the events near 680. Therefore, *SL* must be taken quite seriously[31]. This argument, unlike the others provided by Bp Porphyry as well[32], did not meet an adequate objection from either Jagić[33] or somebody else.

Thus, Yordan Ivanov, at first, continued to consider *SL* according to Bp Porphyry's line[34]. Moreover, he elaborated on Kunik's and Bil'basov's argumentation in favour of historicity of the Bregalnitsa mission, but redated the events to the late seventh century.

To the 1920s, the worldwide scholarly consensus became overwhelming. Yordan Ivanov himself abandoned his view as early as 1915, saying that *SL* is a legendary story about Constantine-Cyril[35].

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through extensive and approving quotation in the classical monograph by Vasilij Alekseevich Bil'basov (1838–1904): В. А. Бильбасовъ, *Кириллъ и Меѳодій по западнымъ легендамъ. Критика легендъ. Легендарный образъ Кирилла и Меѳодія. Codex legendarium* [V. A. Bil'basov, *Cyril and Methodius according to the Western Legends. Critics of Legends. The Legendary Image of Cyril and Methodius. Codex legendarium* <part II of author's monograph *Cyril and Methodius*, part I being published in 1868], St Petersburg: Печатня В. Головина, 1871, 1-6 (study, based mostly on Kunik's unpublished article), 217-219 (text based on *k* uniquely, with a parallel Latin tr.), 313-314 (Russian tr.).

[29] A unique exception is probably a Bulgarian scholar К. Мечев, Сознательная автобиографическая мифологизация: о хронологии и авторстве Солунской легенды [K. Mechev, A Deliberately Autobiographical Mythologisation: on the Chronology and the Authorship of the Legend of Thessalonica], in: Г. В. Степанов (ed.), *Проблемы изучения культурного наследия*, Moscow: Наука, 1985, 30-36. He put forward a hypothesis that it was Constantine-Cyril who, *ca* 869, deliberately said some lies about himself when he went into troubles.

[30] The first and devastating criticisms against Kunik's and Bil'basov's theory were provided almost immediately from Zagreb by Franjo Rački (1828–1894) in his review of the part of Bil'basov's 1871 publication related to *SL*: F. Rački, Najnovija izdanja izvora za život sv. Cirila i Metoda [The Most Recent Publications about the Life of Sts Cyril and Methodius], *Rad Jugoslavenske Akademije znanosti i umjetnosti*, kn. 15 (1871) 166-178 (172-178). Among others, Rački pointed out an error committed by Kunik in reading Combefis' Latin notice about a 9th-cent. metropolitan of Thessalonica (it was related to a person named Leo, not John) (*ibid.*, p. 173): "[a]li ovdje se učenomu Rusu podkral ljudska slabost" ("but there human weakness crept to the learned Russian"). Thus, the main Kunik's argument was overthrown. Rački argued for a late Bulgarian authorship without providing a specific date. After him, one of the first influential voices against Kunick and Bil'basov with substantiating the late dating was that of Aleksandr Dmitrievich Voronov (1839–1883) in his doctoral dissertation: А. Д. Вороновъ, *Кириллъ и Меѳодій. Главнѣйшіе источники для исторіи святыхъ Кирилла и Меѳодія* [A. D. Voronov, *Cyril and Methodius. The Most Important Sources for the History of Saints Cyril and Methodius*], Kiev: Типографія В. Давиденко, 1877, 223–237 (first published in 1876–1877 in the *Труды Кіевской духовной академіи*).

[31] [Порфирій Успенскій], *Первое путешествіе...*, 102-106.

[32] I mean here Porphyry's palaeographical argumentation for pre-Cyrillian origin of Cyrillic script which has been disproved by Jagić. In his general conclusion on the *Sitz im Leben* of *SL*, Jagić seconded Rački and Voronov.

[33] Jagić has seen in metropolitan of Thessalonica John an avatar of the homonymous iconoclast patriarch of Constantinople mentioned in a synaxary *Life* of Constantine-Cyril (the so-called *Dormition of Cyril*) just before the mention of the Bregalnitsa mission. Thus, accrording to Jagić, the real patriarch John whom Cyril did really meet "…wurde entsprechend anderen unsinnigen geschichten daraus ein Erzbischof gebildet" (Jagić, Die neusten Forschungen…, 304). Such a complicate transformation would be quite arbitrary, whereas the conjunction of metropolitan of Thessalonica named John and a siege (and even a tree-year siege) of Thessalonica by the Slavs was a really existing hagiographic construct preserved in the seventh-century collections of the *Miracles of St. Demetrius* (s. below).

[34] Иванов, *Сѣверна Македония...*, 62-73. He failed to notice, however, that *p* is independent from the three witnesses that he used for his standard edition, and he did not mention Jagić's review either. This fact contributed decisively to the oblivion of *p*.

[35] Й. Иванов, *Българетѣ въ Македония. Издирвания и документи за тѣхното потекло, език и народность* [Y. Ivanov, *The Bulgarians in Macedonia: Investigations and Documents concerning Their Genealogy, Language, and Ethnicity*], Sofia: Държавна печатница, 1915, 6 (with no word about his earlier enthusiasm concerning Bp Porphyry's idea about three different Cyrils!); repeated in the second edition (Sofia: Царска придворна печатница, 1917 [repr.: Sofia: Наука и изкуство, 1986], 118).

A somewhat compromise view was proposed in 1934 by a Bulgarian academician Alexander Teodorov-Balan (1859–1959): "The legend is a late (14th cent.) work of a zealot of Bulgarian glory... who put in the mouth of Cyril his account assembled from remnants of the 7th and the 9th cent.".... These historical recollections are the siege of Thessalonica by the Slavs and the Bulgarians (7th cent.) and the baptism of Bulgarian Slavs on the river Bregalnitsa and creation of some writing for their language (9th cent.). All additions are "new arabesques in a late Bulgarian taste (in V. Jagić's words[36])"[37]. Thus, Teodorov-Balan acknowledged the historicity of the siege episode but without connecting it to the baptism of the Slavs.

Our review of the main ideas ever put forward about *SL* would be incomplete without mentioning Hermann (Hirsch) Markovich Barac's (1835–1922) paper treating *SL* as a superficially Christianised Jewish story poorly translated from Hebrew in an unknown Slavic milieu. Barac was a Jewish dilettante scholar analogous, in this way, to Bp Porphyry. The professional scholars from the Kievan Theological Academy were interested in works of both of them and, therefore, have published them in their periodical[38]. I hope to show below that, at least, one Barac's linguistic intuition is reasonable.

Since the 1910s, when the seventh-century dating of *SL* becomes abandoned by its main former proponent Yordan Ivanov, the voices calling for revisiting it were heard only trice, in the publications by Gelian Mikhailovich Prokhorov (1992), the present author (1996), and Ivan Dobrev (2003).

3. Seventh-Century Background

3.1. The Three-Year Siege of Thessalonica in 676–678

Prokhorov was the first scholar who has read *SL* in the light of the modern scholarship on the *Miracles of St. Demetrius*[39]. He realised, unlike his predecessors in studying *SL*, that there were two metropolitans called John in the seventh-century Thessalonica, one in the 610s and another one in the 670–680s, and there were sieges of Thessalonica by the Slavs under both of them[40]. The three-year siege, however, fits with the events of 676–678 only. The Turk people of proto-Bulgarians headed by their khan Kuber was then already living in a symbiosis with the local Slavs on the territory of Thrace adjacent to Thessalonica[41].

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[36] This is the latest reference to Jagić, Die neusten Forschungen…, known to me. Teodorov-Balan quotes this Jagić's *bon mot* ("...alles andere [what does not belong to the historical core which Jagić specified in a different way than Teodorov-Balan] aber sind nur neue Arabesken, im späteren bulgarischen Stile und Geschmack an dem Gebäude angebracht", p. 303) without any further reference. Obviously, he quoted from memory, and this is why he did not recall that this Jagić's paper was dealing with an independent witness of *SL*. Therefore, in the textology, Teodorov-Balan followed Yordan Ivanov.

[37] А. Теодоровъ-Баланъ, *Кирилъ и Методи. Свезка втора. Набоженъ поменъ и исторични свидетелства за Кирила и Методия* [A. Teodorov-Balan, *Cyril and Methody.* Fasc. 2: *Liturgical Commemoration and Historical Witnesses on Cyril and Methodius*], Sofia: Придворна печатница, 1934, 111.

[38] Г. М. Барацъ, Кирилло-Меѳодіевскіе вопросы. Образцы еврейскаго элемента въ произведеніяхъ, приписываемыхъ св. Кириллу [H. M. Barac, Cyrillo-Methodian Questions. Specimens of Jewish Element in the Works Ascribed to St. Cyril], II [1891], in: *idem, Собраніе трудовъ по вопросу о еврейскомъ элементѣ въ памятникахъ древне-русской письменности*, vol. I, sect. 2, Paris: Imprimérie d'art Voltaire, 1927, 342-376; first published in the *Proceedings of the Kievan Theological Academy* in 1891.

[39] Mostly represented with the critical edition and study by Paul Lemerle, *Les plus anciens recueils des Miracles de Saint Démétrius et la pénétration des Slaves dans les Balkans*, I: *Le texte*; II: *Commentaire*, Le Monde Byzantin; Paris: CNRS, 1979–1981. Cf. Прохоров, Глаголица…

[40] For the modern bibliography about these events, s., e.g., M. B. Panov, Reconstructing 7th Century Macedonia: Some Neglected Aspects of the *Miracles of St. Demetrius*, *Историја / Journal of History* 47 (2012) 93-115.

[41] The Proto-Bulgarians in the second half of the seventh century and the early eighth century were divided into two parts. The minor part under khan Kuber was living in Thrace, the major part under Kuber's brother khan Asparukh (668–695) was settled far to the north where their capital city became Pliska. Cf., about 7th-century symbiosis between the Proto-Bulgarians and the Slavs near Thessalonica, F. Curta, *The Making of the Slavs. History*

One can easily continue the line of Prokhorov's analysis. It turns out that *SL* was created as a Slavic counterpart to the Byzantine second book of the *Miracles of St. Demetrius*, which was composed in about the 690s (after 688) mostly for the commemoration of the siege of 676–678. Both accounts, the Byzantine one and the Slavic one (*SL*), agree that the siege was taken off due to a miracle—even though each of them points out a miracle of its own. The three-year siege of Thessalonica is, in the eyes of the author of *SL*, as important as it was in the eyes of the composer of the second book of the *Miracles*, who was a Thessalonican survivor of the siege. A symmetrical attitude of the author of *SL* toward the events during this siege—from the opposite side but with the same level of esteem—reveals in *SL* a hagiographical document roughly contemporaneous to the second book of the *Miracles*.

The second book of the *Miracles* is preserved in a unique copy, unlike the first book which survived in a number of manuscripts. This fact demonstrates that, in Byzantium, the memory of the three-year siege of Thessalonica has been lost almost completely. It is thus extremely unlikely that this siege would have become known in the Second Bulgarian kingdom (in the 12th cent. or later). This does not exclude any possibility for *SL* to be created in the twelfth century or later but, at least, requires for *SL*, if it is so late, to have an earlier Slavic *Vorlage* going back to the late seventh century.

The latter conclusion contains something more than the idea put forward in 1934 by Teodorov-Balan. Being a hagiographical legend, *SL* is allowed to mention only the symbolically important facts. It does not matter whether these facts belong to the real or imaginary history, because only their symbolical loading matters. To the author of *SL*, the siege of Thessalonica was not a mention in a chronicle but still a very memorable act of revelation of the divine providence. Therefore, this suggests an early date not only for the source of the mention of this siege in *SL* but also for most of the plot of *SL*, where this siege becomes one of the key moments. Thus, we have to speak, at least, about an early *Vorlage* rather than about some scattered early "sources".

3.2.   Constantine of Apamea at the Sixth Ecumenical Council (681)

The next series of facts relevant to the historical background of *SL* has been discussed by the present author (1996). It is the appearance at the session XVI of the Sixth Ecumenical Council in Constantinople on 9 August 681of some Syrian presbyter Constantine from Apamea, ordained in Arethusa (modern Al-Rastan in Syria) and having only an insufficient mastering of Greek[42]. The facts themselves were known to the historians of the First Bulgarian kingdom since

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and Archaeology of the Lower Danube Region, c. 500–700, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001, esp. 110-112. Asparukh will become in 681 the first khan of the First Bulgarian kingdom. Both Kuber and Asparukh were heathens. There is no substantial ground behind the often repeated (after Vasil Zlatarski's 1894 article and his classical *History of the Bulgarian State in the Middle Ages*, 1918) two claims about Kuber's and Asparukh's father khan Kubrat: (1) that he was baptised in Constantinople under Heraclius [s. V. Beshevliev, Zur Chronik des Johannes von Nikiu CXX 46-49, *Byzantinobulgarica* 5 (1978) 229-236; I can add to Beshevliev's criticisms that the garbled proper names in the Ethiopic text of John of Nikiu are, in fact, far from their "reconstructions" in H. Zotenberg's translation, where John's account is interpreted too closely to the data available from Nicephorus of Constantinople; R. H. Charles in his 1916 English translation of John contributed to the confusion in the most drastic way uncritically accepting Proto-Bulgarian "reconstructed" proper names as if they were really present in the Ethiopic text and without even referring to Zlatarski], and (2) that Kubrat was buried as a Christian (cf. F. Curta, Before Cyril and Methodius: Christianity and Barbarians beyond the Sixth- and Seventh-Century Danube Frontier, in: F. Curta (ed.), *East Central and Eastern Europe in the Early Middle Ages*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005, 181-219 (204)). The study of the relevant passage of John of Nikiu must be postponed until the edition of the two more Ethiopic manuscripts additional to the two used by Zotenberg.

[42] 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.

Yurdan Trifonov's 1931/1932 article[43], but they would become more important—and relevant to *SL*—in the light of some recent scholarship.

Constantine said that from the very beginning (ἀπ'ἀρχῆς) of the Council, that is, from September 680, he was trying to propose his original project of the union between the monothelite and dyothelite parties[44]—but he has never been allowed to attend any session. What happened now, when he was not only allowed to speak before the Council, but the whole session was dedicated to his presentation? — The fathers of the Council conceded to Constantine against their will after having been enforced by a "solicitation" of patrician Theodore, κόμης τοῦ βασιλικοῦ ὀψικίου καὶ ὑποστράτηγος Θρᾴκης.

As R.-J. Lilie has shown in 1977, this title means that patrician Theodore was the official appointed as the first head of the newly established in 680 *thema* of Thrace[45]. This *thema* served exclusively to the defence from the Bulgarian threat and was established at the end of the war which was unsuccessful for Byzantium. Patrician's reasons had have certainly something to do with Constantine's claim that, were his project accepted by the Council in September 680, there would be no defeat εἰς τὸν πόλεμος Βουλγαρίας — "in the war of Bulgaria".

There were two main defeats of Byzantium by the Bulgarians leaded by khan Asparukh, one in the autumn of 680 and the next one in 681, which resulted, in the summer of 681, into a peace treaty disadvantageous for Byzantium. According to Vassil Gjuzelev, it is the second defeat that is meant by Cyril of Apamea, and it is "very probably" that the treaty was concluded before 9 August[46]. In both campaigns, in 680 and 681, the seat of war was Thrace inhabited by the Slavs together with the Proto-Bulgarians of Kuber. The term Βουλγαρία in our text is a toponyme applied to these Thracian lands, which were then formally a part of the Byzantine Empire. An immediate consequence of Asparukh's and Kuber's victory over Byzantium in 681 became the establishment of the First Bulgarian kingdom along the Danube and driving into its orbit of Slavic enclaves within the Byzantine Empire.

The high Byzantine military official was certainly not interested in religious discussions. In his eyes, if a Syrian with some deviant religious views has any influence on the Bulgarians, there is an obvious need to reconcile him with the state Church and to use him further in the state interests.

This episode with a Byzantine governor-general is perfectly documented. The date of the episode is near to the date of the siege of Thessalonica described in *SL*. It witnesses that a Syrian religious leader, at least, theoretically would have been considered by a responsible Byzantine specialist as a potential tool in pursuing of state interests among the Proto-Bulgarians and the Thracian Slavs.

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[43] Ю. Трифоновъ, Извѣстията на сирийския пресвитеръ Константинъ за Исперихова побѣда надъ византийцитѣ [Y. Trifonov, The Data of a Syrian Presbyter Constantine on Asparukh's Victory over the Byzantines], *Извѣстия на Българското археологическо дружество / Bulletin de la Société archéologique bulgare*, 11-12 (1931–1932) 119-215, 334-336. Cf. И. Дуйчев, Константин Апамейски [I. Dujčev, Constantine of Apamea], in: И. Дуйчев *et al.*, *Гръцки извори за българската история / Fontes graeci historiae bulgaricae*, 3; Извори за българската история / Fontes historiae Bulgariae, 6; Sofia: Издание на Българската Академия на науките, 1960, 169-170; Д. Ангелов, *Образуване на българската народност* [D. Angelov, *Formation of the Bulgarian Ethnos*], Sofia: Наука и изкуство, 1971, 200-201; П. Петров, *Образуване на Българската държава* [P. Petrov, *Formation of the Bulgarian State*], Sofia: Наука и изкуство, 1981, 274, 276-277.

[44] Constantine's project, written originally in Syriac but presented to the Council in a Greek translation, was based on an original doctrine about the wills in Christ (two wills before the resurrection, one will after) that was predictably rejected by both conflicting parties. Despite its potential relevance for the history of Christianity among the Slavs, it could be factored out in the present study of *SL*. On this doctrine in its theological context, s. B. Lourié, Un autre monothélisme: le cas de Constantin d'Apamée au VIe Concile Œcuménique, *Studia Patristica* 29 (1997) 290-303.

[45] R.-J. Lilie, "Thrakien" und "Thrakesion". Zur byzantinischen Provinzorganisation am Ende des 7. Jh., *JÖB* 26 (1977) 7-47 (8-10, 32-35).

[46] V. Gjuzelev, Chan Asparuch und die Gründung des bulgarischen Reiches, *Mitteilungen des Bulgarischen Forschungsinstitutes in Österreich* 6 (1984) Nr 2, 25-46 (41) [repr. in: *idem, Forschungen zur Geschichte Bulgariens im Mittelalter*, Miscellanea Bulgarica, 3; Wien: Verein „Freunde des Hauses Wittgenstein", 1986, 3-24 (19)].

This fact needs to be understood as an evidence of two important things:

1. There was, at least, one Christian mission acting among the Slavs and the Proto-Bulgarians in the seat of the "war of Bulgaria", that is, in Thrace including the territories adjacent to Thessalonica, the location of the main plot device of *SL*;
2. This mission was Syrian and, at once, "heterodox" (from a Byzantine viewpoint).

The Point 1 corroborates the early dating of *SL* and especially a possibility to differ between its Cyril and the brother of Methodius. It must be stated, however, that an "early" date must be by several decades (or more) later than the alleged date of the described events (whether historical or imaginary), because the "epic" (in Delehaye's terminology) hagiographical legends are always set in an epic past, namely, in an epoch considered (in some way, at least) as that of the "beginning of history". This etiological meaning is striking in *SL* that returns its intended audience to the origins of the Slavic Christianity.

Thus, *SL* points toward 676–678 as the date of its events, its own "epic" time. Therefore, its own *terminus post quem* is around AD 700.

The three-year siege of Thessalonica chosen as the date of the "epic past" is a precious witness of the real atmosphere of the milieu where *SL* was created: its audience (not necessarily including the author himself) has certainly considered itself as belonging to the unique ethnic body with the Thracian Slavs and/or Proto-Bulgarians[47].

The Point 2 above corroborates my "Syriac" reconstruction of the text of *SL*—among other interpretations of various peculiar phenomena in the earliest Christian Slavic culture as vanishing traces of some pre-Byzantine Syrian Christianisation of Slavs which was struck with *damnatio memoriae*[48].

A personality of Constantine of Apamea with his Syriac mother tongue and Greek far from fluent presents a striking parallel to Cyril of *SL* who forgot his presumably (due to his Cappadocian origin) mother tongue Greek. In both cases, there is a cultural tension with the Byzantine civilisation, but in both cases as well, everything is going on within the Byzantine Commonwealth.

3.3. *Slovinia* (Slavinia)

Finally, a possibility of an early date for *SL* has been revisited by Ivan Dobrev in his 2003 encyclopaedic entry[49]. He noticed that the title of *SL* according to the manuscript ***S*** (first published in 1966 and, therefore, somewhat "unfamiliar" to the scholars) is substantially different from that of other manuscripts: Слово Курила философа како увѣри словинию, рекше блъгаре — "A sermon of Cyril the Philosopher how he converted to the faith a *slavinia* (словинию), that is, the Bulgarians". The words "the Bulgarians" are presented here as well as in other variants of the title, but, in ***S***, these words form a gloss, whereas the glossed word is unique to this manuscript: "slovinia".

This word has never been attested to in Slavonic elsewhere, whereas in the ninth- and tenth-century Byzantine Greek σκλαβηνία (sometimes σκλαυηνία) was a common designation of Slavic semi-state enclaves within the Empire leaded by their own *archontes*. Theophanes uses it regularly describing the seventh-century Byzantium (therefore, probably, following his written source(s))[50]. Already in the eighth century, the term appeared in Latin, *Slawinia*, in the *Vita*

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[47] This will create, however, another problem: it will be difficult to understand what could be the connexion between these Thracian Slavs and those living on the river Bregalnitsa (near 200 km to the north). Cf. below, endnote xv to the translation of *SL*.

[48] Cf. B. Louiré, Syrian Shadows behind the Back of Cyril and Methodius. Vaillant—Jakobson's Hypothesis Revisited, *Slověne* (forthcoming).

[49] Добрев, Солунска легенда, 710-711.

[50] Г. Г. Литаврин, Славинии VII–IX вв. — социально-политические организации славян [G. G. Litavrin, *Sklaviniai* of the 7th–9th Cent. as Social and Political Organisations of the Slavs], in: Л. А. Гиндин (ed.), *Этногенез народов Балкан и Северного Причерноморья. Лингвистика, история, археология*, Moscow: Наука, 1984, 193-203.

Willibaldi by Hugeburc of Heidenheim. The earliest known occurrence is often considered to be in Theophylact Simocatta (*ca* 630), where the term is applied to the barbarian lands across the river Danube[51]. However, even earlier is the occurrence of the same term (and in the same meaning as in Theophylact) in the *Church History* of John of Ephesus written in Syriac (*ca* 585); it has been pointed out by Nikolaj Serikoff[52]. The relevant chapter (III, 6, 45) belongs to the lost part of John of Ephesus' work, but it is quoted by the 12th-century historian Michael the Syrian (*Chronicle* X, 21)[53] and his 13th-century colleague Gregory Bar Hebraeus (*Chronography* IX, *Mauricius*)[54]. Both later Syrian authors preserve John's original term: ܐܣܩܠܒܘܢܐ (whose Greek prototype would have been, most probably, σκλαυηνία). It is homographic with one of the Syriac renderings of the ethnonym "Slav", but the context disambiguates the meaning: it is certainly "(a land of) Slavs" that is meant.

It is important to notice that the term "Slavinia" was known to the Syrian historiography even before the seventh century. On the contrary, it is hardly probable that this term could be known among the 11th- or 12th-century Bulgarians.

Dobrev supposes that *SL* used an earlier document about some late seventh-century Byzantine missionaries among a part of the Slavic population of Macedonia (Dobrev apparently calls "Macedonia" both modern Macedonia and Thrace), who would have translated into Slavonic some necessary texts (in a very limited amount, according to Dobrev)[55].

Dobrev obviously tries to exclude a possibility of any large amount of pre-Cyrillian Slavonic writing, and, for him, there is no question whether or not such missionaries would have been Byzantine. These unnecessary constraints do not affect his conclusion very much, however. It could be represented in the two following points:

1. The title of *S* contains an early reading belonging to the original recension and, then, to one of the ultimate sources of *SL*, which predate Cyril and Methodius;
2. The mission described in *SL* addressed some *Slaviniae*.

Putting aside for a while the question of possible diversities between the original recension of *SL* and the archetype of the available manuscripts, we can only welcome the Point 1. The Point 2 is even more valuable: the term "Slavinia" is perfectly fitting with the historical context, where act two otherwise unknown princes bearing popular Slavic names Desimir and Radivoi. Such Slavic princes could be the *archontes* of their *Slaviniae*.

Therefore, Dobrev's observation could serve to define the social and political level of the missionary activity implied in *SL*. It is the level of the *Slaviniae*, that is, the Slavic semi-state formations on the territory formally belonging to the Empire.

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[51] F. Curta, *Sklaviniai and the Ethnic Adjectives: a Clarification*, *Byzantion Nea Hellás* 30 (2011) 85-98.

[52] Н. Сериков, "Иоанн Эфесский" [N. Serikoff, "John of Ephesus"], in: Л. А. Гиндин, С. А. Иванов, Г. Г. Литаврин (сост.), *Свод древнейших письменных известий о славянах*. Т. I *(I–VI вв.)* / L. A. Gindin, S. A. Ivanov, G. G. Litavrin (eds.), *Corpus testimoniorum vetustissimorum ad historiam slavicam pertinentium*. Vol. primum *(I–VI saecula)*, Moscow: Восточная литература, 1994, 276-291, here 289-290, note 50 (and excerpts from Michael the Syrian and Bar Hebraeus on pp. 284/285 and 286/287 txt/Russian tr.). Not mentioned by Curta, *Sklaviniai…*, even though Curta knew this publication.

[53] J.-B. Chabot, *Chronique de Michel le Syrien, patriarche Jacobite d'Antioche (1166–1199)*, 4 vols., Paris: E. Leroux, 1899–1910, vol. 4, 380c.20 (with an erroneous mark of plural, as it is noticed by Chabot, *ibid.*, vol. 2, 362, n. 8: "*Sclavonia* ; au singulier"; his non-literal translation is "le pays des Esclavons"; *ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 362).

[54] E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Chronography of Gregory Abu'l Faraj the Son of Aaron, the Hebrew Physician Commonly Known as Bar Hebraeus, Being the First Part of His Political History of the World*, 2 vols, Oxford—London: Oxford University Press, H. Milford, 1932 [reprints: Amsterdam: Philo Press, 1976; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2003], vol. 2, f. 32va.13 (txt); cf. vol. 1, p. 84 (tr.).

[55] Добрев, Солунска легенда, 711: Не е изключено в неговите [*sc.*, of the author of *SL*] извори да се разказвало за ранните опити на виз. мисионери да християнизират част от слав. население в Македония и дори да преведат някои от найнеобходимите текстове (отделни молитви, християнски формули и др.) ("It is not to be excluded that his sources said about early essays of Byzantine missionaries to Christianise a part of the Slavic population in Macedonia and even to translate some of the most necessary texts (several prayers, Christian formulae [this term is used, among the secular Bulgarian scholars, for verbal idioms that could be presented, e.g., in graffiti] etc.)".

3.4.   The Legacy of the Paulist Severianist Movement and the Geography

The recent (2009) discovery by Joost Hagen of the "Slavonic" *2 Enoch* among the Coptic fragments excavated in Qasr Ibrim (northern Nubia) gave me an opportunity to suppose that the Syrian legacy inherited by the Slavs—that was certainly different from that of the major Syrian traditions (such as the Church of the East, the Jacobites, and the Melkites in communion with Constantinople)—was in fact that of the "Paulist" Severianists, the followers of the Patriarch of Antioch Paul Beth Ukkame (564–581)[56]. This religious minority split from the rest of the Jacobites in 575. It was operated, in a great extent, by a part of the Syrian diaspora in Egypt, and the very *casus belli* between the Paulists and the other Jacobites became the consecration of a Syrian monk from Egypt, Theodore as the Patriarch of Alexandria. An alternative Patriarch of Alexandria, Peter has been consecrated almost immediately by another part of the Egyptian Jacobites, which has been infiltrated by Syrians to no less extent.

The followers of Paul Beth Ukkame were especially successful in Nubia, where their Bishop of Noubadia Longinus, one of the leading figures of the whole movement, converted into his faith two from the three kingdoms (northern Noubadia and southern Alodia, or Alwa, whereas the middle Makuria was converted to the faith of the Chalcedonians). Outside these two Nubian states, the Paulists were a minority among the Severianists.

My conclusion that the Syriac legacy of the Slavs goes back to the Paulists is founded, on the one hand, on observations on the early Slavonic literary monuments (especially but not exclusively *2 Enoch*) and, on the other hand, on the episode with Constantine of Apamea (demonstrating that the earliest missionary to the Slavs belonged to some minority within the Syrian, mostly Severianist by its origin, monotheletism). Thus, it is independent from my interpretation of *SL*. Quite a contrary: it could help to shed some light on the peculiar geography of our legend.

In the hagiographical text, geography is always one of the most important elements, as it has been already noticed by Hippolyte Delehaye who coined the term "hagiographical coordinates" (spatial and temporal). In some legends, like in *SL*, the spatial hagiographical coordinates form a complicated graph that displays the ecclesiastical geography of the milieu that produced the legend.[57]

In *SL*, the role of Thessalonica is evident and well known[58]. The role of "the city of Raven on the Bregalnitsa river" is, at least, clear from the presently available form of the legend: it is the very place of the cult commemorating the events described in *SL*. It remains disputable whether this is the original place of the mission. "The city of Raven" is placed as a centre between some (one of the two known) "Moravia" and Preslav, which is also explainable (s. below, commentaries *ad loc.*).

However, other geographical details of *SL* are also meaningful but much less understandable. They form the following chain: Cappadocia (Cyril's birthplace) — Damascus (where he was educated) — Alexandria (where he received the revelation about his mission to the Slavs) — Cyprus (the first place that he visited in his search of the Slavs) — Crete (the

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[56] B. Lourié, "Slavonic Pseudepigrapha, Nubia, and the Syrians" (forthcoming); s. detailed bibliography there.

[57] Cf., for the details, Лурье, *Введение в критическую агиографию*, 71-129. Cf. H. Delehaye, *Cinq leçons sur la méthode hagiographique*, Subsidia hagiographica 21; Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1934.

[58] For the large context of the role of Thessalonica in the religious life of the Slavs, see, first of all, numerous publications by Vassilka Tăpkova-Zaimova, especially the following: V. Tăpkova-Zaimova, "Les legends sur Salonique — ville sainte — et la conversion des Bulgares", in: A.-E. N. Tachiaos (ed.), *The Legacy of Saint Cyril and Methodius to Kiev and Moscow. Proceedings of the International Congress on the Millennium of the Conversion of Rus' to Christianity. Thessaloniki 26-28 November 1988*, Thessaloniki: Hellenic Association for Slavic Studies, 1992, 133-141; *eadem*, "Die eschatologische Literatur und die byzantinisch-bulgarischen Beziehungen", Βυζαντιακά 12 (1992), 101-117, and the majority of the articles reprinted in *eadem*, *Byzance et les Balkans à partir du VIᵉ siècle. Les mouvements éthniques et les états*, Variorum Collected Studies Series, CS88; London: Variorum, 1979.

second place of his search) — Thessalonica (the third and the final one) — the city of Raven on Bregalnitsa, somewhere in between Moravia and Preslav. Damascus is perfectly fitting with the Syrian origin of the legend, but why Cappadocia, Alexandria, Cyprus, and Crete appeared as well? Indeed, Cyril managed to find out the Slavs in Thessalonica at the third attempt, as it occurs in fairy tales, but the choice of Cyprus and Crete for the two previous unsuccessful attempts must be meaningful as well: the hagiographical legend never knows arbitrary toponyms.

Accidently or not, the first Syrian author who described the late sixth-century Slavic invasion of the Balkans and coined the term "Slavinia" in Syriac, John of Ephesus, not only belonged to the Paulinists but was one of their leading bishops. He left to us the most detailed description of his movement in the 580s, which will be useful for understanding of *SL*, too. At least, John's data make perfectly understandable the appearance of Alexandria and Cyprus and conjecturally understandable Cappadocia and Crete.

The Paulist movement has been leaded by Syrians in a great extent, but another important part of its members has had Greek as their mother language (including, as it seems, e.g., the Nubian missionary bishop Longinus). The culture of West Syrians was then bilingual, Greek and Syriac. Moreover, the movement has had relatively strong positions in Egypt, whose culture was, in the late sixth century, also bilingual, Greek and Sahidic Coptic.

Cyril, the principal character of *SL*, is apparently a native Greek speaker: otherwise, the miracle where he forgets Greek would have no much sense. This goes in accordance with his Cappadocian origin. Then, he studied in Damascus, a centre of the bilingual Greek-Syriac culture. He received the revelation in Alexandria, where the Paulists have had a separate Church hierarchy going back to their first Patriarch of Alexandria Theodore. The Greek language in the seventh-century Egypt continued to be used even after the Arab occupation[59].

We do not know what happened to the Paulist hierarchy in the 630s, when the Monothelete union was imposed to Egypt by the Chalcedonite Patriarch of Alexandria Cyrus, or in the middle of the seventh century during the restoration of the Coptic "monophysite" Church under the Arab rule. There is no room for doubt, however, that no Church group would have joined the Coptic hierarchy restored by Patriarch Benjamin (*ca* 626–665) without sharing the peculiar Triadology by his predecessor Damian (577/578–605/606)[60]. Thus, the remains of the Paulists, either in or out of communion with the Chalcedonian monothelete hierarchy, would have been certainly outside the Coptic Church of Benjamin. Cyril's behaviour in *SL* shows him as preserving communion with the official Byzantine hierarchy (in the person of the metropolitan of Thessalonica) which remained monothelete until the Sixth Ecumenical Council (680–681). The same behaviour has been shown by Constantine of Apamea, who was in communion with the official Byzantine Church, then monothelete.

The visit of Cyril to Cyprus is also revealing. At least, in the 580s, Cyprus was reputed to be a place having an important community of the Paulists with several local bishops[61]. John of Ephesus in his *Church History* (III, 4, 55-56) says that, when Patriarch Paul Beth Ukkame disappeared from the public space, the Patriarch of Alexandria Theodore tried to search for him

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[59] S. a detailed review of the available data in Adel Sidarus, "Multilingualism and Lexicography in Egyptian Late Antiquity," *Hallesche Beiträge zur Orientwissenschaft* 44 (2007), 173-195; cf. *eadem*, "Pluriliguisme en Égypte sous la domination gréco-romaine", *Journal of Coptic Studies* 10 (2008), 183-202.

[60] Cf. B. Lourié, "Benjamin of Alexandria," in: S. Uhlig (ed.), *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*. Vol. 1, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003, 530. Cf. *idem*, "Damian of Alexandria," *ibid.*, vol. 2, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005, 77-78, with further bibliography. The often-repeated opinion that the "monophysite" Church of Egypt managed to restore its unity in 616 is erroneous (going back to the Jacobite propaganda reproduced by Michael the Syrian in the 12th cent.).

[61] Moreover, since about the eighth century, it becomes a major shelter of the Maronite—that is, monothelete—refugees. However, the origin of the famous Maronite community at Cyprus is not sufficiently clear to be discussed in the present context.

in Cyprus, "because there were some of his [Paul's] bishops there (ܕܐܝܬ ܗܘܐ ܬܡܢ ܡܢ ܐܦܣܩܘܦܐ̈ ܕܝܠܗ)"[62].

Finally, Crete in the period of the Monothelete union was a place preserving some ecclesiastical connexions and the full communion with Christians of Egypt under the Arab rule. The cult of bishop Eumenius of Gortyna[63], albeit not sufficiently studied so far[64], is a witness of this (s. excursus below).

Therefore, the geography of *SL* in its pre-Thessalonican part is perfectly fitting with that of a seventh-century monothelete movement sharing the legacy of the followers of Paul Beth Ukkame.

3.4.1. Excursus: the Cult of St. Eumenius of Gortyna

Eumenius is reported to be the leading figure of the reconciliation between Heraclonas and Constantine III in February of 641[65]. Even though this looks as an exaggeration, a contemporary Byzantine source preserved within the *Chronicle* (ch. 120) of John of Nikiou confirms, in this event, the role of the clergy supporting Heraclonas'

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[62] E. W. Brooks, Iohannis Ephesini *Historiae Ecclesiasticae pars tertia*, CSCO Syr III, 3 T [= vol. 106, Syr., t. 55]; Paris: Typographia Reipublicae, 1935, 244; cf. English tr.: R. Payne Smith, *The Third Part of the Ecclesiastical History of John Bishop of Ephesus*, Oxford: University Press, 1860, 328.

[63] The first and almost the last student of the history of this cult has been a Bollandist Jan Stiltingh (1703–1762): J[oannes] S[tiltingus] ("Eumenius episcopus Gortynensis, forte defunctus in Thebaïde", in *Acta Sanctorum Septembris*, t. V (Antwerp: Bernardus Albertus vander Plassche, 1755), cols. 786-787. The most complete bibliography of the sources and the secondary literature (mostly reference entries) is collected by Э. П. А., А. А. Лукашевич, Э. В. Шевченко, "Евмений" [É. P. A., A. A. Lukashevich, É. V. Shevchenko, "Eumenius"], in *Православная энциклопедия* [*The Orthodox Encyclopaedia*], vol. 17 (Moscow: «Православная энциклопедия», 2009), 179-180.

[64] The *Life* of the saint is unknown (most probably, lost). The only biographical source is, in fact, the liturgical canon (poem; preserved in the actual liturgical usage on 18 September in the Churches that follow the Byzantine rite) written in the ninth century by Josephus the Hymnographer (attribution by the acrostic), to whom different Byzantine synaxarium entries go back. Stiltingh uncritically combined anti-monophysite and anti-monothelete phrases in *theotokia* of the canon (odes I and V, respectively) with a statement of the *kathisma* after the 3rd ode of the canon (not necessarily going back to Josephus the Hymnographer or his time) that Eumenius "diminished all the darkened heresies (τὰς ζοφώδεις αἰρέσεις πάσας ἐμείωσας)" and, therefore, concluded that he was struggling against the monophysitism and the monotheletism; thus, he supposedly dated his life to the 7th cent. Such reasoning is unconvincing: it acknowledges exactly the impression that the author of the canon, Josephus tried to produce, whereas Josephus himself never names explicitly Eumenius' religious opponents. Even Josephus' phrase Οἷα πυρσὸς ἐπιστάς, Ῥώμην φωτίζεις ἐκτελῶν θαύματα ("Having stood as if a torch, thou illuminatest Rome performing miracles…"; ode V, troparion 3) does not necessarily imply polemic or preaching in the field of dogma (although the anti-monothelete *theotokion* of ode V directs the reader's thoughts toward such conclusion). Thus, a participation of Eumenius in the struggle against the monotheletism belongs to the *pia desideria* of Josephus but not to his source; otherwise, the relevant facts would have been mentioned within the regular *troparia* of the canon, not the *theotokia*, where Josephus retells facts of Eumenius' biography. Nevertheless, the 7th-century date is to be confirmed on the ground of other data alluded to in the canon: Eumenius successfully worked for the reconciliation of Emperors brothers (V, 1-2). Oddly enough, only one scholar managed to identify the situation as that of 641 (Heraclonas and Constantine III, the sons of Heraclius from different mothers)—the unique one, as he said, from the 6th to the 9th cent.: Archbishop Sergius (Spassky; 1830–1904) in the second edition (1901) of his *Complete Menologion of the East* (s. below); his observation remains unknown to both Western and Greek scholars.

[65] According to the identification proposed by Sergius Spassky: Архиепископ Сергий (Спасский), *Полный месяцеслов Востока* [Archbishop Sergius (Spassky), *The Complete Menologion of the East*], vol. 3 (Moscow: Православный паломник, 1997 [reprint of the 1901 edition]), 385. In 1987 (first ed. of the French original), the author of the new complete synaxarium, monk Macarius of the Simonopetra monastery, without knowing Sergius' work, put forward an identification of the situation in question with the conflict between Constantine IV and his brothers Heraclius and Tiberius and provided the dating of Eumenius' activity from 667 to 680; Greek tr.: Μακαρίου Σιμωνοπετρίτου, *Νέος Συναξαριστής της Ορθοδόξου Εκκλησίας*, vol. 1 (Athens: Ἴνδικτος, 2009), 196-197. This is untenable. Macarius followed the outdated and erroneous hypothesis of some modern scholars that there was, within this conflict, a peaceful period. In fact, the two brothers of the Emperor were deposed, between 16 September and 13 December, 681, without any temporary reconciliation. See, first of all, E. W. Brooks, "The Brothers of the Emperor Constantine IV," *The English Historical Review* 30 (1915), 42-51; cf. Walter E. Kaegi Jr., *Byzantine Military Unrest, 471 – 843. An Interpretation* (Amsterdam: A. M. Hakkert, 1981), 167-168.

side[66]. This period of peace was broken in the late April or May of the same year with the sudden death of Constantine III. The mother of the 15-year old Heraclonas, Martina was accused of having poisoned Constantine, which leaded to the fall of the whole Heraclonas' party in September. Patriarch Pyrrhus was also deposed (without any canonical procedure) and departed for the West asking the support from the Pope of Rome. In 645, after having denied the monotheletism, he was accepted in communion by Pope Theodore, but returned to his previous confession shortly after. In a similar way, the "digest" of the lost *Life* of Eumenius—the canon by Josephus the Hymnographer—mentions Eumenius' visit to Rome (V, 3) immediately after the episode with the Emperors brothers (V, 1-2). All this looks as Eumenius left his see as a member of Pyrrhus' ecclesiastical party, that is, among the clergy from the entourage of Martina and Heraclonas. The next event mentioned by Josephus is Eumenius' refuse to accept money from the Emperor (VI, 1)[67]; this looks as Emperor's (then Constans II, 641–668) failed attempt of convincing Eumenius to be restored on his see of Gortyna and/or to come back to Constantinople.

Then, the canon mentions Eumenius being abroad in his very old age (VII, 1: …ἐν βαθυτάτῳ γήρᾳ Ὅσιε, ἀποδημίαις ἐκέχρησο) and indicates that he left Rome due to an involuntary depart for Thebaid (VII, 2)[68]. After having been lost to the Arabs in December 640, Thebaid has never been regained by the Byzantines. Therefore, one has to exclude Jan Stiltingh's guess (uncritically followed by many others) that this final journey of Eumenius was an exile (for his alleged resistance to the monotheletism). It would have been involuntary in another way, as an emigration in the circumstances when the return to his see was impossible.

Finally, the canon by Josephus says that the holy relics of Eumenius were returned by the inhabitants of Thebaid (VIII, 2)[69] and deposed, apparently with a great pomp, at the place called Raxus in the matyrium of the holy bishop of Gortyna Cyril[70], thus putting Eumenius on the same level of veneration with this semi-legendary Father of the Cretan Church. The surviving cult of Eumenius certainly goes back to this feast of translation of his relics. Thus, the ultimate source of Josephus' canon has been composed on this occasion. If it did not survive together with the cult itself (even, at least, as a synaxarium entry, but independent from the canon of Josephus), one can hardly avoid the conclusion that the original hagiographic dossier of this companion of Pyrrhus became a victim of censorship from the side of the victorious dyotheletism. Thus, it is reasonable to conclude that the cult of Eumenius has been established at Crete after the murder of Constans II (668) but still in a monothelete period, that is, either in 668–680 or 713–715 (the second interval corresponds to the temporary monotheletism of Andrew of Crete under Bardanes Philippicus[71]).

What we have to retain from this excursus is the fact of longstanding relations between the monothelete Church of Crete and her coreligionists in Upper Egypt (Thebaid), already under the Arab rule. Alexandria, the point of depart of the plot of *SL*, was located on this route from Upper Egypt to Crete.

3.5.   The Thessalonican Legend: a Translation

The variant readings taken into account are of two kinds: meaningful textual differences and meaningless errors. The former are marked within the text (+ means "added", – means "absent"), whereas the latter are provided in the footnotes. Differences in spelling are discussed when they are relevant for evaluation of *p*. The paragraph numbers are added by me (not coinciding with Lidia Stefova's sections; other editions do not have sections at all).

Underlined are the words which will be discussed in connexion to the problem of the original language of *SL*.

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[66] H. Zotenberg, "Chronique de Jean, évêque de Nikiu. Texte éthiopien publié et traduit," *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale* 24,1 (1883), extrait, p. 215 (cf. p. 459, French tr.): "And, then, Heraclius the Younger [= Heraclonas] climbed on the royal ship, having with him a great number of priests, monks and venerable bishops (ወሰበ ፡ ኮነ ፡ ዘንተ ፡ ዐርገ ፡ ሐርቃል ፡ ሐዲስ ፡ ውስተ ፡ አሕማር ፡ ዘንጉሥ ፡ ወምስሌሁ ፡ ብዙኃን ፡ ካህናት ፡ ወመነኮሳት ፡ ወኤጲስ ፡ ቆጶሳት ፡ ክቡራን ፡)…" (and thus met Constantine's representative Philagrius in Chalcedon); in this way, he became able to address the hesitating troops with a religious exhortation.

[67] Ἐνεργῆ θησαυρὸν ἀδαπάνητον, ἔχων ἐν καρδίᾳ σου, Χριστὸν Εὐμένιε, ὥσπερ πηλὸν λελόγισαι, τὸν χρυσὸν Βασιλεύς, ὃν παρέσχε σοι ("Having in thine heart the inexhaustible active/effective treasury [that is] Christ, thou, oh Eumenius, hast considered as a mood the gold [money] that the Emperor gave to thee").

[68] Ἡ Ῥώμη τῶν σῶν, ἀπολαύσασα καλῶν, δῶρον ποθούμενον, τῇ Θηβαΐδι μὴ βουλόμενον, Πάτερ ἐκπέμπει Εὐμένιε…; "Rome, after having tasted thy virtues, sends thee, oh Father Eumenius, to Thebaid as a beloved gift, [even though] without thy will…"

[69] Ἀμνημονήσαντες τῶν σῶν, οὐδαμῶς Πάτερ καλῶν παῖδες Θηβαίων, τῇ πατρίδι καὶ ποίμνῃ τὴν ἱεράν σου σορόν, αἰσίως κρίναντες ἐκπέμπουσιν· ἧς τῇ ἐπανόδῳ, θαυμάτων ἔρρει χάρις. — "The Children of the Thebaeans, who were in no way forgetting thy virtues, oh Father, (after having) justly decided, send to thine homeland and thy flock thine holy coffin, at whose return the grace of miracles flows".

[70] The place is now unknown. It was commemorated as that of the execution and burial (under Diocletian) of Bishop Cyril of Gortyna; cf. J.-M. Sauget, "Cirillo, vescovo di Gortina," *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, t. 3 (Rome: Istituto Giovanni XXIII, 1963), cols. 1321-1322. To Eumenius' epoch, there was there a church containing the relics of Cyril (matryrium).

[71] Simon Vailhé, "Saint André de Crète", *Échos d'Orient* 5 (1902), 378-387.

The footnotes to the translation are reserved for textological and linguistic topics, whereas all other commentaries are placed into the endnotes which follow the translation immediately.

Title

S A sermon of Cyril the Philosopher how he converted to the faith a slavinia (словинию), that is, the Bulgarians.
N A sermon of Cyril the Philosopher how he converted to the faith the Bulgarians.
k A sermon of Cyril the Philosopher.

T A sermon of Cyril the Philosopher how he converted to the faith the Bulgarians.
xp A sermon of Cyril the Slav of Thessalonica the Bulgarian Philosopher[72].

Text

1. I was born [*Txp* lived] in Cappadocia[73] and studied in Damascus[i]. [*Txp* +And,] one day, as I stood in the great church of the Patriarchate of Alexandria[ii], and it was a voice [глас(ь)] to me from the altar saying: "Cyril, Cyril, go into [*Txp* go; *k* go out] to the wide land and [*N* –and] among the †Slav peoples called Bulgarian ones† [†† *N* Bulgarian peoples][iii], because the Lord said that you have to convert them to the faith and to give them the law"[iv].

2. I became very sad because I did not know where[74] the Bulgarian people [*Txp* land] is, and I came to Cyprus, and I heard no <u>voice</u> (глас) about[75] the Bulgarian land [и не слишах глас ѡ земле бльгарскои; *T* и не ѥхь глась <*xp* гл҃а[76]> ѡ земли Бугарскои "I had no voice about the Bulgarian land"; *k* не чухъ ни рѣчь ни глас... "I did not heard either speech or voice about the Bulgarian land"], and I wanted to return home. I feared, however, lest I should become like the prophet Jonas, and <u>I went down</u> (сьнидох) to Crete as well[77], and there †I was told: "<u>Go down</u> (сьниди) to the city of Thessalonica".

3. <u>I went down</u> (сьнидох)† [†† *k* I thought (there are) the Bulgarians but they were not. And <u>I went down</u> to the city of Thessalonica] and appeared before metropolitan John, [*Txp* +and] when I told him (what had happened), he blamed me much [*N* –much] [*NkT* +and] said: "Oh, you crazy[78] elder, the Bulgarians are man-eaters [*N* man-killers[79]] and they will eat you!"[v] [*N* +And] I went out into the market place and heard Bulgarians talking[vi]; *my heart standeth in awe* [Ps 118(119):161] in me and I felt as though I were in hell and [*N* +in] darkness.

4. [*NTxp* +And] on one day, on the holy Sunday[vii] [ст҃ую неделю / *N* неделю ст҃ую / *Tx* вь неделоу ст҃оу / *p* въ нед́лю[80] ст҃у; *on the Easter Sunday?*[81]], I went out from the church and sat on the marble when being thinking and grieving. And I saw a raven[viii] croaking [врана грачеща; *N* врана кричюща "a raven shouting"; *Txp* голѹба глагл́ющи "a dove saying"] [*k* +and] (who) was bearing in the mouth [вь оустехь ношаше] [... **HERE THE TEXT IS CORRUPT**], and he threw them [*NTxp* –them] on my wing [крило; *could mean* near the shoulder blade[82]], and †I counted them and found 32 [*x* 35 *corrected from* 32; *p* 35] in total[ix], and† [†† *N* I, after having took

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[72] Without taking into account *p*, the title of *x* could be suspected to be an invention of Konstantinov-Cinot.

[73] *Kadokia* in *xp*: *x* вькадокыи, *p* въ Кадокіи, whereas *T* preserves the correct reading.

[74] An erroneous reading како ("why") in *N*, instead of the correct reading камо in *SkTxp*.

[75] An erroneous reading (ѿ instead of w "about") in *N*.

[76] This abbreviated word states in *p* and the *editio princeps* of *k*; it could mean both гласа (Gen. of "voice") and глагола (Gen. of "word"). But the ms of Konstantinov-Cinot has clearly the letter с written under the *titlo* (abbreviation mark). Thus, the reading meant is гласа.

[77] *k* has така ("in this way, thus") instead of пакы ("as well").

[78] *xp* have the word безумни ("crazy") distorted as геумни, which Bp Porphyry understood as "hegumen".

[79] This phrase in *N* is paraphrased, without change in meaning, as following: и снѣсти те хотеть; the remaining mss have a different word order and a similar but different verb: тебѣ хотеть изести; *p* has a different spelling and an error in the latest word (demonstrating the independence of *p* from *x*): и тебе [*sic!* without ѣ, and so, against the Russian orthography as well] хотеть извести "and they want to destroy you".

[80] This abbreviated spelling (with a *titlo*) which is unique to *p* reveals a different protograph than that of *x*.

[81] Thus, Bil'basov translates: "Die autem quodam hebdomadis Paschae".

[82] Thus according to Ф. П. Филин (ed.), *Словарь русского языка XI–XVII вв.* [F. P. Filin (ed.), *The Dictionary of the Russian Language of the 11th–17th cent.*], issue 8, Moscow: Наука, 1981, 94, *s.v.* крыло (крило). I. I. Sreznevsky for Old Russian Church Slavonic and Petar Skok for Serbian provide the meaning "bosom": И. И. Срезневскій, *Матеріалы для словаря древне-русскаго языка по письменнымъ памятникамъ* [I. I. Sreznevsky, *Materials for the Dictionary of the Old Russian Language according to Written Monuments*], vol. 1, St. Petersburg: Типографія Императорской Академіи Наукъ, 1893 [repr. Moscow: Знак, 2003], col. 1323, *s.v.* крило–крыло: κόλπος, пазуха; P. Skok, *Etimologijski rječnik hrvatskoga ili srpskoga jezika / Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue croate ou serbe*, II, Zagreb: Jugoslavenska Akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, 1972, 195-186, *s.v.* kril: Schoss.

them[83],] I put [*NkTx* +them] into bosom[x] †in order to communicate [*k* +them] to the metropolitan†[84]. Then they disappeared into my body[xi], and I lost [изгꙋбыхь; *Tx* истребихь "I exterminated"; *p* потребихь "I exterminated"[85]] the Greek language[xii], [*xp* +and] when the metropolitan sent to call me for the repast, I did not understand †what he says to me in Greek†[86]. Then all the Thessalonians gathered wondering about me and †thus [*NkT* –thus; *k* +also] they hid† [†† *Txp* thus have searched for] me[xiii].

5. [*Nkxp* +And] I heard that the Bulgarians were [*N* +asking; *Txp* +speaking] about me. The great Prince Desimir of Moravia, and [*xp* –and] Radivoi[87], the Prince of Preslav[xiv], and all Bulgarian princes gathered round Thessalonica and fought for three years against Thessalonica, shedding [*Nk* +a great deal of] blood, and [*Nxp* –and][88] saying[89]: "Give us the man whom[90] God [*N* Lord] sent to us"[91]. †In this way† [†† *N* And the citizens took] [*Nk*kTxp* +and] gave me [*N* +to the Bulgarians].

6. [*N* +And] the Bulgarians received me with a great [*k*k* –great] joy and took me to the town of Raven [*T* Ražen; *k*p* Roven[92]] on the river[93] [*k*k* +called] Bregalnitsa[xv]. [*k*k* +And] I wrote them †words about all† [†† *Nk*kTx* 32 {*xp* 35} letters {слове; *lit.* "words"}][xvi]. [*Nk*k* +And] I taught them a little, but [*N* –but] they themselves learned a lot[xvii], because, as the Lord said to them [*xp* –to them], they will preserve for God [богу прѣдадоуть] the right [*Txp* orthodox] faith[xviii] and [*NT* –and] the Christianity [*T* христо; *xp* христито "Christ<ianit>y"?].

7. To our God glory [*N* +unto the ages of ages].[94]

Such meaning seems to be unattested in Old Bulgarian; cf.: О. Н. Трубачев (ed.), *Этимологический словарь славянских языков. Праславянский лексический фонд* [O. N. Trubachev (ed.), *Etymological Dictionary of the Slavic Languages. Pra-Slavic Lexical Found*], issue 12, Moscow: Наука, 1985, 152-153, *s.v.* *kridlo, but not in non-Russian manuscripts: cf. J. Kurz (ed.), *Slovník jazyka staroslověnského / Lexicon linguae palaeoslovenicae*, II, Prague, 1973 [repr. St. Petersburg, 2006], 65, *s.v.* крило; В. И. Георгиев *et al.* (eds.), Български етимологичен речник [V. I. Georgiev *et al.* (eds.), *Etymological Dictionary of Bulgarian*], III, Sofia: Издателство на Българската Академия на науките, 1986, 11-12, *s.v.* крило.

[83] *N* excludes the operation of counting but edits the corrupted place as if Cyril would have found some "Bulgarian numbers".

[84] *Txp* have a different phrase instead of †† (да повѣмь митрополитоу), which is nowhere written correctly. *T* has несох митрополитꙋ ("I brought to the metropolitan") without any conjunction which would be required here. This conjunction is present ("and") in *xp* but their reading и несох митрополитъ (*p* and the *editio princeps* of *x*; *x* itself has an abbreviated spelling митроп͠от which could be read also as an unusual abbreviation of митрополитꙋ) has an erroneous form of the latest world (Nom. instead of Dat.).

[85] *p* uses a different synonym than *Tx*.

[86] *Txp* have a different phrase instead of †† (*S* что кь мнѣ грьчьски говори; *Nk* do not differ substantially), which is written correctly, whereas with an incorrect spelling, only in *p*: що грьци грѣ мѣ "what the Greeks say to me". Cf. a discussion already in Jagić, Die neusten Forschungen…, 300: "...(d.h., говорѣ ми), nur möchte man wissen, ob das eine glückliche Conjectur oder die wirkliche Lesart ist". The two other mss have severely corrupted fragments: *T* що грьцк кьмнѣ; *x* що грьцки крьмѣ; *editio princeps* of *x* що грьци крьмѣ.

[87] Радивои; *p* has instead clearly erroneous Радикои, due to a common confusion between в and к in Cyrillic. The edition of *x* has also Радикои, whereas ms *x* is here unclear (judging from the published photocopy only).

[88] From the words "The great prince" up to this place inclusively the text of *T* is almost completely destroyed. The only readable words are "and Radivoi". The conjunction "and" is still preserved, whereas already missing in *xp*.

[89] Here *p* has a unique erroneous reading: глаголах "I said" instead of глаголахоу "they said" of other mss including *Tx*.

[90] The reading of *T* for "the man (*Acc.*) whom" (ч͠лвка ꙗгоже) is corrupted in different but equally senseless ways by *x* (елика ꙗгоће, with ћ used instead of ђ; edition: елика и егоже) and *p* (елика и его жо).

[91] Here, with the words егоже богъ посла намь ("whom God sent to us") begins *k**.

[92] In *k** one can clearly read ровень; *p* has Ровьнь. Ms *k*, according to the editions, has Равьнь (but the relevant part of the ms is not published as a photocopy), as also *x* and *SN* (Равнь), whereas *T* has an obviously corrupted reading Ражен. Probably, the reading of *k** has been corrected in its copy *k*. This reading provides an argument against Jagić's guess that Ровьнь in *p* is probably a typo in the printed text instead of Равьнь (Jagić, Die neusten Forschungen…, 300).

[93] The words "on the river" на рѣцѣ were in *N* transformed into нарицаеми "called"; thus, "Bregalnitsa" becomes here an additional name of the town.

[94] These words are written down in full only in *N*. In *S* the phrase is interrupted before the (implied) words "unto the ages of ages". In *k**kT* it is omitted completely. In *x* the latest word added after the end of § 6 has been erroneously read by all editors (from Konstantinov-Cinot up to B. St. Angelov) as боже (Vocative of "God", which

The corrupted place according to the six manuscripts

S свытькь сьчици скокине сьгуле свезане
svytьk sьčici skokine sьgule svezane ("scroll … tied")

k сборокъ с'чице со куки[95] и жголѣ[96] свр'зана
sborok sьčice so kuki i ugole svrьzana ("*sborok* … tied[97]")

T зборькь сьчици скокине соупоуль свезаноу
zborьk sьčici skokine supulь svezanu ("*zborok* ... tied")

x зборькь сьчицискокине соугоуль[98] звезаноу
zborьk sьčici skokine sugulь zvezanu ("*sborok* … tied")

p зборькь сь чици с кокине с оугоуль свезану
zborьk sь čici s kokine s ugulь zvezanu ("*zborok* … tied")

N зборакь сь числи бльгарскыми ("*zborak* with Bulgarian numbers")

Note

All the manuscripts passed through the mediaeval South Slavic writing tradition where ь = ъ (the "unique *jer*" spelling); thus, the reading сборокъ (with ъ) in *k* does not go back to its mediaeval protograph.

Commentaries to the translation

[i] *Damascus*. A mention of Syrian "roots" of Cyril. For the mentions of Cappadocia, Damascus, Cyprus, Crete, and Thessalonica, s. above, section 3.4.

[ii] *Alexandria*. Thus, our Cyril is another Cyril of Alexandria. Cyril of Alexandria was *the* principal saint for the anti-Chalcedonians (including the Syrian ones) but not for the Byzantines. One can see that Cyril of Alexandria's cult was more popular among the Slavs than in Byzantium. Moreover, the monastic name of Constantine, the brother of Methodius, was also Cyril. As B. N. Florea and, after him, Dimo Češmedžiev supposed, it was took after Cyril of Alexandria[99]. This choice looks unmotivated in the context of the *Vita Constantini*, where Constantine especially venerates two other saints, Gregory of Nazianze and Clement of Rome (and is thus buried in a church dedicated to the latter). If our "Syrian" approach is justified, the best explanation would be Constantine's wish to replace his predecessor[100] (cf. also endnote x). It is worth noting that Alexandria and the Syrian "monophysite" diaspora in Egypt have had an especial importance for the Paulist movement.

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is not fitting here with the syntax). Nevertheless, Konstantinov-Cinot preserved in his copy the reading of its protograph, which is different: боуже: (that is, богу же…, with the mark of phrase's interruption at the end, — "whereas to God..."). It is obviously an abbreviation for a standard final phrase "...whereas to our God glory unto the ages of ages". The reading of *p* is similar to that of *x* (божіе), which is certainly a further distortion of the latter.

[95] The manuscript gives the impression that the words со куки were written jointly in the protograph, as it was normally for the prepositions and conjunctions.

[96] The same for the words и жголѣ; there is a mark of aspiration above и.

[97] I am grateful to Anna Pichkhadze for having pointed me out the meaning of this word, which is a product of "Bulgarisation" of the text in *k*. Cf. F. von Miklosich, *Lexicon palaeoslavenico-graeco-latinum*, emendatum auctum, Wien: W. Braumüller, 1862–1865 [repr. Aalen: Scientia., 1977], 79, *s.v.* врѣсти, врьзж, врьзеши "ligare".

[98] Thus according to all editions, but the manuscript by Konstantinov-Cinot has соупоуль (the same reading as in *T*). Two graphemes, г and п, which are often too similar in Cyrillic, are clearly distinguishable in the handwriting of Konstantinov-Cinot. Probably, this difference between his own manuscript sent by him to a Serbian periodical and the two editions (Serbian in 1856 and Bulgarian in 1859) produced by himself reflects the writing of his mediaeval protograph where these two letters were not easily distinguishable. Lidia Stefova noticed this variant reading in her edition: Стефова, Речник…, 72.

[99] Б. Н. Флоря, *Сказания о начале славянской письменности* [B. N. Florea, *The Narrations on the Origins of the Slavic Writing*], Памятники средневековой истории народов центральной и восточной Европы, Moscow: Наука, 1981, 141, note 5; D. Češmedžiev, Une contamination entre Constantin-Cyrille le Philosophe et Cyrille d'Alexandrie et sa repercussion dans l'art balkanique médiéval, *Études balkaniques* 25 (1989) Nr 1, 45-59 (49 and *passim*).

[100] Cf. also Lourié, Syrian Shadows... The hagiographical analysis will be postponed to the next part of the present study, but some landmarks must be put now. An anti-Chalcedonian hagiographical substrate has been

ⁱⁱⁱ *Slav peoples called Bulgarian ones*. One can see how the mention of Bulgarians in a gloss replaces in *N* the glossed words "Slav peoples". Compare a similar evolution in the variant readings of the title. The mention of Bulgarians belongs to the common archetype of all our manuscripts but it is still unclear whether it belongs to the original recension of *SL*. The archetype of *SL* continuously identifies the Slavs with the Bulgarians, which is normal for the 11th and later centuries but is not normal and mostly impossible before the 9th cent., when the Proto-Bulgarians were still preserved as a separate ethnos clearly distinct from the Slavs. In the late 7th cent., however, we see (in the *Acts* of the Sixth Ecumenical Council) Βουλγαρία as the name of Thracian lands inhabited by Slavs under Proto-Bulgarians of Kuber. Thus, in some contexts, the designations of Slavs and Proto-Bulgarians would have been common even then. It is a difficult problem to decide whether the mentions of Bulgarians in *SL* belong to the original text. Anyway, all of them could be either removed or replaced with mentions of Slavs with no harm for the plot. Cf. further endnote xv.

^{iv} *to give them the law*. *SL* will later elaborate on this Moses imagery, cf. endnote xi.

^v *Man-eaters*. The alleged cannibalism of Slavs was a motive of the "common knowledge" in Byzantium[101], often actualised in an eschatological context where the Slavs would have been identified with (certainly cannibalistic) tribes of Gog and Magog[102].

^{vi} *into the market place and heard Bulgarians talking*. Hardly the Proto-Bulgarians but certainly the Slavs were habitual guests in the markets of Thessalonica. According to the *Miracles of St. Demetrius* (II, 4.254 and 258), the Slavic tribe of Belegezites continued to supply grain to the besieged city, whereas another Slavic tribe of Drugubites supplied food to Kuber (II, 5.289); Curta, *The Making of the Slavs...*, 112.

^{vii} *Sunday*. A hallmark of liturgical traditions connecting the learning of the letters with the Sunday Eucharist. A corresponding Greek rite has been fragmentary edited, with an English translation, by George Frederick Abbott[103]; cf. also below, endnote xi.

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already noticed for the Caucasian part of the *Vita Constantini*: M. van Esbroeck, Le substrat hagiographique de la mission khazare de Constantin-Cyrille, *Analecta Bollandiana* 104 (1986) 337-348.

[101] Cf., on the alleged γυναικομαστοβορία of the Slavs, I. Dujčev, Le témoignage de Pseudo-Césaire sur les Slaves, *Slavia Antiqua* 4 (1953) 193-209, repr. with addenda in *idem*, *Medioevo bizantino-slavo*, I; Storia e letteratura. Raccolta di studi e testi, 102; Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1965, 23-43, 543-544; on this 6th-cent. source, s. R. Riedinger, Zur den Erotapokriseis des Pseudo-Kaisarios, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 86/87 (1993/1994) 34-39.

[102] Gog and Magog were often associated with the "unclear peoples" enclosed somewhere in the north by Alexander the Great: A. R. Anderson, *Alexander's Gate, Gog and Magog and the Inclosed* [sic!] *Nations*, Monographs of the Mediaeval Academy of America, 5; Cambridge, MA: The Mediaeval Academy of America, 1932, 46-90; F. Pfister, *Alexander der Grosse in den Offenbarungen der Griechen, Juden, Mohammedaner und Christen*, Deutsche Akademie der Wiss. zu Berlin. Schriften der Sektion für Altertumswissenschaft, 3; Berlin: Akademie Verl., 1956, 43-44. The same motive in a late 7th-cent. Byzantine apocalypse: H. Schmoldt, *Die Schrift "Vom jüngen Daniel" und "Daniels letzte Vision". Herausgabe und Interpretation zweier apokalyptischer Texte*. Diss. Hamburg: Universität Hamburg, 1972, 190-199 (198).

[103] G. F. Abbott, *Macedonian Folklore*, Cambridge: The University Press, 1903, 362 (txt) / 364 (tr.). The text called "For a child which has a mind unable to learn the sacred letters (ἔχει κακὸν νοῦν εἰς μάθησιν τῶν ἱερῶν γραμμάτων)" runs as follows (Abbott's tr. with corrections): "Write the ABC on a platter used for fragmentation of the Antidoron [εἰς δίσκον ὅπου κόπτουν τὸ ἀντίδωρον— do not confuse with the discos and the consecrated bread of the Eucharist!] and give it to the liturgical use for 3 Saturdays and Sundays (Σαββατωκυριάκα), and when three Saturdays and Sundays are complete, dissolve it in unadulterated old wine and give the childe to drink, and his mind (ὁ νοῦς του) will be free. And when the child is drinking let the schoolmaster read the prayer: 'Lord our God, who hast overcome and enlightened the hearts (τὰς καρδίας) of [*illegible*], presbyters Melchisedeck, Naboi, Jochami... [*follows a series of Hebrew names omitted by the editor*], help ye all, and open the mind and the heart (τὸν νοῦν καὶ τὴν καρδίαν) of the servant of God So-and-So, that he may learn the sacred letters'". Two more prayers follow; then, Ps 33 (LXX). "...And let the schoolmaster hold the child by the head and say..." [follows a long prayer omitted by the editor; it reminds me the final prayer of the Euchelaion (sacrament of the Holy Oil), which is also long and to be read in a direct contact with the head of the ill person, but there, as this prayer emphasises itself, the presbyter's hands are replaced with the open liturgical Gospel]. The Jews have had strikingly similar rites of boy's initiation to the learning of Torah which included eating the Hebrew letters (in some modifications of this rite, the letters are to be written on the cakes and their eating to be accompanied with a cup of wine) and a prayer, to be recited by the teacher, for enlightening the heart of the boy; these rituals are to be performed on the morning or on the eve of the Shavuot (Pentecost) feast, that is, in an emphasised connexion to the day of the revelation of Torah (Law). Cf., for a material from the mediaeval Western Europe, I. G. Marcus, *The Jewish Life Cycle: Rites of Passage from Biblical to*

viii *raven.* The motive of a raven (not a dove!) sitting on the top of the church dome and endowed with prophetic capacities belongs to a genuine Byzantine hagiographical (related to "holy places") tradition which seems to be completely lost in the Christian documents (not only in Greek) except *SL.* Such traditions, however, are mostly preserved by pilgrims' accounts and the written guides, which are not necessarily Christian. In our case, we have a series of testimonies written by the Moslems. They applied a famous among the Muslim travellers description of a church in modern Portugal to some unknown to us church on an island in vicinity to Constantinople. Arab travellers of the 12th cent. (Muhammad al-Idrisi and especially Abu Hamid al-Gharnati al-Andalusi; the latter's account is mostly known through the 13th-cent. geographer Zakariya al-Qazwini[104]) provide the relevant description concerning the easily identifiable St. Vincent church at the Cape of St. Vincent (then under the Moslem rule) which they call "The Church of Raven" (كنيسة الغراب); there is at this place a church preserving this name even now. For an unknown reason, a later geographer[105] Siraj al-Din ibn al-Wardi (d. after 1419)[106]—and, after him, the translator(s) of his Arabic work into Osmanic Turkish (16th cent.)—reproduce the same legend as related to a church on an island near Constantinople, but still continuing to refer to Abu Hamid al-Andalusi and quoting the latter from al-Qazwini[107]. The account is the following. There is an island where a church and a mosque stand near to each other. On the top of the church always sits a raven; it is unknown where he finds the food. When the raven sees Muslim pilgrims going to the mosque, he thrusts his head in at the hole of the dome and crows the exact number of times according to the number of the pilgrims. Thus, he makes known to the Christian clergy the number of the pilgrims, and the clergy prepare for them a repast. This church is renown by its hospitality towards the Moslems. This legend about a place in al-Andalus (Portugal) became reused for another place in vicinity of Constantinople no later than the early 15th cent. by either al-Wardi himself or some his predecessor(s). Such a reuse of an account about one "holy place" for describing another one could hardly be explained without acknowledging some strikingly similar features between the two. *SL* provides us with a Christian counterpart of the legend about the "Church of Raven" of the Moslem sources. Indeed, an island near Constantinople is certainly not Thessalonica, and there are other differences between the two legends, but they share together a non-evident common motive: in both, the raven is an instrument of some procedure related to exact numbering. These similarities are enough for recognising in both legends a common ultimate source, certainly Christian. A "Church of Raven" that appeared in *SL* was a part of the *really existing imaginary landscape* of the holy places of Byzantium. I use the italicised phrase to emphasise the difference between the collective traditions about the imaginary worlds, whose existence is nevertheless real on some

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Modern Times, Washington: University of Washington Press, 2013, 68-76 (the author perhaps exaggerates Christian influences on this Jewish rite).

[104] Text: F. Wüstenfeld, (Zakarija Ben Muhammed Ben Mahmud el-Cazwini's) *Kosmographie.* Erster Teil. *Die Wunder der Schöpfung*, Göttingen: Verl. der Dieterichschen Buchhandlung, 1849, 124 (Arabic pag.). Tr. by H. Ethé, Zakarija Ben Muhammed Ben Mahmûd el-Kazwîni's *Kosmographie*. Nach der Wüstenfeldschen Textausgabe. *Die Wunder der Schöpfung*. 1. Hlbd, Leipzig: Fue's Verl. (R. Reisland), 1868, 254. I have no access to the recent Italian tr.: S. von Hees (ed.), Zakariyyā' ibn Muḥammad al-Qazwīnī, *Le meraviglie del creato e le stranezze degli esseri*. Traduzione di F. Bellino. Mailand: Mondadori, 2008.

[105] Text and Lat. tr.: C. J. Tornberg, *Fragmentum libri Margarita mirabilium auctore Ibn-el-Vardi*, Pars I, Uppsala: Typographia Regiae Academiae, 1835, 88-89 (Arabic pag.) and 123-124 (European "Arabic" pag.). There are a great number of uncritical editions of the whole text in late recensions from the middle of the 19th cent. to 2008. The earliest manuscript datable to the middle of the 15th cent. (representing, according to Francesca Bellino, the short recension which is the closest to the original work) also contains the relevant place: Philadelphia, Library of the University of Pennsylvania, Lawrence J. Schoenberg Collection, ms LSJ 495, ff. 151[149][r-v] (the manuscript is available on-line in full at the web-site of the Lawrence J. Schoenberg Collection: http://dla.library.upenn.edu/dla/schoenberg/index.html).

[106] Often confused with the famous Islamic author Zayn al-Din ibn al-Wardi (d. 1349). For the complicated problem of attribution of the work in question, s. F. Bellino, Sirāj al-Dīn Ibn al-Wardī and the *Ḫarīdat al-'Ajā'ib*: Authority and Plagiarism in a Fifteenth-Century Arabic Cosmography, *Eurasian Studies* 12 (2014) 257-296; *eadem*, Composing, Editing and Transmitting an Arabic Cosmography: The *Ḫarīdat al-'Aǧāib wa Farīdat al-Ġarā'ib* by Sirāǧ al-Dīn Ibn al-Wardī, unpublished paper delivered at the conference "The Author, Editors and Audiences of Medieval Middle Eastern Texts", University of Cambridge, 1st-2nd September 2014. I am very grateful to Francesca Bellino for providing me these articles.

[107] The filiation of these texts as described above is studied by a Russian Turkologist Vasily Dmitrievich Smirnov (1846–1922), who, however, confused Siraj al-Din with Zayn al-Din: В. Д. Смирновъ, *Турецкія легенды о Святой Софіи и о другихъ византійскихъ древностяхъ* [V. D. Smirnov, *Turkish Legends about St. Sophia and Other Byzantine Antiquities*], St. Petersburg: Типолитографія И. Бораганскаго и Кᵒ, 1898, 77-83, with a publication of the relevant fragment in Osmanish Turkish followed with a Russian translation (77-78). According to Smirnov, short mentions of the "Church of Raven" occur in other Arabic and Turkish authors, sometimes with a different localisation. There are several (mostly unpublished) miniatures in the illuminated manuscripts which provide some additional material. Thus, in a Turkish ms (Paris, Bibl. Nat., Nr 93 (242), f. 78r; late 16th cent.) a horoscope (translated from an unknown language in 1582) is illustrated with a picture of "Church of Raven" where the raven holds in his beak something like a rod.

interpersonal level even though not in the material world, and the personal arbitrary fantasies; the same idea has been once coined with Gilbert Dagron's famous book title *Constantinople imaginaire*. I would say that the Church of Raven did *réellement* belong to the *Byzance imaginaire*.

[ix] *32* vs *35*. Both numbers represent some tradition concerning the total number of letters in the Slavonic alphabet. The number of the letters in an alphabet is always and everywhere a cultural convention having rather symbolical than practical meaning; thus, it could never been established from observations on the spelling. The tradition of 35 letters is especially good represented in relatively early sources[108] and could be shared (taking into account the variant reading of ***p***) by the original recension of *SL*. The tradition of the 32-letter Slavonic alphabet is rare. Anissava Miltenova refers to two alphabetical poems preserved in Bulgarian miscellaneous manuscripts of the 14th– 15th cent., whose contents are overlapping with *SL*'s convoy in *SNT*[109]. I could add a 32-letter Cyrillic alphabet in the earliest (first half of the 11th cent.) Novgorodian birch bark letter Nr 591[110].

[x] *into bosom* (вь пазѹхоу *S*; other mss slightly differ in spelling). An important detail for understanding the implied theory of the symbolical anatomy of man: the swallowing of the letters of an alphabet is effectuated not per orally (as it is normal for the parallel customs or miraculous episodes in other cultures) but through the bosom—evidently for shortening the way to the heart (s. next endnote). A close parallel is to be found in an obscure episode from the long Slavonic *Vita Constantini*, ch. 9, related to the Khazarian mission of the brother of Methodius, where Constantine in his first anti-Jewish dispute (immediately after having crossed the north border of Khazaria) faces an unnamed Khazarian sage. The followed discussion has little to do with any standard anti-Jewish polemics and, in the modern scholarly literature, passed so far almost uncommented. In fact, it could be understood much better if one recalls that Cyril's anti-Jewish mission to North Caucasus has had an anti-monophysite background[111]. The following episode seems to me potentially related to the role of "bosom" in *SL*: "And furthermore the Khazar said: 'Why is it you hold the Scriptures in hand, and recite all parables from it? However, we do not do so, but take all wisdom from the chest (отъ прьсїи) as though it were swallowed (поглощьше). We do not pride ourselves in writing as you do.' And the Philosopher said to him: 'I shall answer you in regard to this. If you meet a naked man and he says: 'I have many garments and gold,' would you believe him, seeing him naked?' He said: 'No.' Then Constantine said to him: 'So I say unto you. If you have swallowed (еси поглотилъ) all wisdom as you boast, tell me how many generations are there from Adam to Moses, and how many years did each generation endure?' Unable to answer this, the Khazar fell silent"[112]. The idea of "swallowing" sacred letters (writings) through the "chest" (rather than per orally) refuted here by Constantine is the same as we see in *SL*, where the objects that entered into Cyril's body through the "bosom" turn out to be, indeed, sacred letters (but in the most literal meaning of the word), and the whole procedure assures the same effect as it is normally ascribed to swallowing (s. next endnote). Indeed, "swallowing through the chest/bosom" would have hardly been a routine procedure; it would have had some more ordinary paraliturgical representations, that is, some rituals of eating letters per orally. The above episode in the *Vita Constantini* is thus provides a powerful argument for considering the original cult of Constantine-Cyril as aiming to replace the memory of an earlier Syrian mission.

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[108] The available data are collected by Peter Schreiner, Ein wiederaufgefundener Text der Narratio de Russorum conversione und einige Bemerkungen zur Christianisierung der Russen in byzantinischen Quellen, *Byzantinobulgarica* 5 (1978) 297-303.

[109] Тъпкова-Заимова, Милтенова, *Историко-апокалиптичната книжнина...*, 314, 320.

[110] В. Л. Янин, Новгородские азбуки [V. L. Yanin, Novgorodian Alphabets], *Palaeobulgarica* 8 (1984) Nr 1, 79-86, with an *editio princeps* of the document found in 1981; almost the same article is also published as *idem*, Новгородские азбуки XI–XIV вв. [Novgorodian Alphabets oft he 11th–14th cent.], in: Г. В. Степанов (ed.), *Проблемы изучения культурного наследия*, Moscow: Наука, 1985, 74-80. This alphabet requires a reconstruction but it is provided by Yanin quite convincingly.

[111] van Esbroeck, Le substrat hagiographique...

[112] Tr. by M. Kantor, *Medieval Slavic Lives of Saints and Princes*, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan, 1983, 46; I have corrected this translation in two places where Kantor deliberately replaced "chest" with "heart" and (at the first occurrence) "swallowed" with "absorbed". The only commentary to this episode known to me is provided by Constantine Zuckerman, On the Date of the Khazars' Conversion to Judaism and the Chronology of the Kings of the Rus Oleg and Igor. A Study of the Anonymous Khazar *Letter* from the Genizah of Cairo, *Revue des études byzantines* 53 (1995) 237-270 (244): "Constantine met, no doubt, one of the Khazar Jews who held to a rudimentary bookless form of Judaism before the 'return' to the proper Jewish observance". [There is no place here to discuss the level of "rudimentarity" of the Khazarian pre-Talmudic Judaism; I would only refer to my liturgical observations on the 10th-cent. famous "Jewish-Khazarian correspondence", where I point out some direct evidence that it was an elaborated Temple cult presuming sacrifices and priesthood—but at odds with the rabbinic Judaism: B. Lourié, review of K. A. Brook, *The Jews of Khazaria*, Христианский Восток 2 (8) (2001) 436-441 (439-440)]. Now we are interested not in the episode itself, whether it is historical or imaginary, but in its representation in a hagiographical text, *Vita Constantini*, where each episode is (mostly polemically) inscribed into a network of either corroborating each other or competing hagiographical traditions.

[xi] *disappeared into my body — sc.*, from the bosom. Not to confound with a cognate but different motive of *eating* some book (scroll) or with quite popular customs (among different peoples including the Byzantines and the Slavs) of consuming (but only per orally) the letters, in one or another way, before studying the alphabet[113]; cf. above, endnote vi. The implied imagery in *SL* is rather clear: the letters (whatever their carrier could be; I believe, it is a set of quill pens, s. below) passed directly from the bosom to the heart as to the centre of any knowledge including that of the linguistic capacity (cf. Lk 6:45), where they became "written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart" (2 Cor 3:3), following even more exactly Jer 31:33-34: "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbour and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Cf. at the end of *SL*: "I taught them a little, but they themselves learned a lot". Thus, we have, in *SL*, a complete analogy with Moses and the Law, where the alphabet is given as new tablets of the Covenant. This interpretation is not especially favourable to the hypotheses where the obscure place in *SL* is understood as two tablets with the letters of alphabet, even though these hypotheses are founded on the right understanding of the general ("Mosaic") meaning of *SL*: the *New* Covenant is to be written directly on the heart instead of the tablets, and so, the carrier of the letters in our scene has not to become a sacral object *per se*; quite contrary, it belongs to the category of expendable materials.

[xii] *I lost the Greek language*. This expression of a rupture with the Byzantine culture was certainly called for in the Second Bulgarian kingdom. However, if, at least, the core of *SL* goes back to the early eighth century, this motive must have the same date, being inseparable from the plot of the legend.

[xiii] *they hid me* (and not "have searched for me", as it is clear from the following text of *SL*). Why the authorities of Thessalonica were so opposed to the potential mission of Cyril to the Slavs? The historical context of the Second Bulgarian kingdom provides no explanation beside a vague reference to the background of Greeks's animosity towards the Slavs, thus presenting this plot device as rather rude. It looks differently against the late seventh-century background and in the context of Syrian missionary activity: the metropolitan of Thessalonica was still (before the Sixth Ecumenical Council) in communion with Syrians of anti-Chalcedonian stock but was hardly happy with that. Thus, he would have been recognised as the legitimated metropolitan by a Syrian missionary, whereas latter's missionary activity would have not been especially welcomed by the metropolitan. Such more profound meaning would correspond better to the highly artificial aesthetic construction of the legend.

[xiv] *The great Prince Desimir of Moravia, and Radivoi, the Prince of Preslav, and all Bulgarian princes*. Both mentioned persons are completely unknown from other sources. The title "prince" (кнезь = ἄρχων) is the normal title for the heads of the Slaviniae. Desimir ("the one who is seeking the peace") and Radivoi (≈ "joyful warrior") are quite widespread Slavic names, but, taken together, they form a pair of oppositions (and this fact provokes some doubts in historicity of both). Preslav is a town (not fortified prior to the early 9th cent.) in the First Bulgarian kingdom, about 45 km south of its capital Pliska; Preslav itself served as the capital from 893 to 972. The localisation of Moravia presents some difficulties given that there are two different tributaries of the Danube called Morava (or even three, because the southern tributary called itself Great Morava is composed from two rivers, and Morava is called each of them, now Southern Morava and Western Morava). In our context, the prince of Moravia is one of the *Bulgarian* princes. This seems to be at odds with the localisation of Moravia on the northern river Morava which flows into the Danube near Bratislava (Slovakia), far to the north of the kingdom of Asparukh. The Czech and Slovakian Moravia is the traditional localisation of the bishop see of Methodius; this view still stands firmly in the consensus of the scholars of Central European origin[114]. This consensus was challenged in 1971 by a Hungarian historian Imre Boba[115], and there is now a growing community of the scholars who localise the Methodian Moravia on the southern river Morava, which flows to the Danube east of Belgrade—that is, in the region of the late antique diocese of Sirmium (now Sremska Mitrovica) in northern Serbia. It is worth noting that the current debates are focused on the ninth-century situation, with a very little attention to the eighth century. The geography of *SL* plainly

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[113] The relevant bibliography is partially summarised, e.g., by Boris Uspensky, Glagolitic Script as a Manifestation of Sacred Knowledge, *Studi Slavistici* 10 (2013) 7-27 (18).

[114] S., among the most recent publications, F. Curta, *Southeastern Europe in the Middle Ages: 500–1250*, Cambridge Medieval Textbooks; Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006, 126-134; *idem*, Η (Μεγάλη) Μοραβία, in: Π. Σοφούλης, Α. Παπαγεωργίου (eds.), *Μεσαιωνικός Σλαβικός Κόσμος*, Athens: Ηροδότος, 2014, 105-124; M. Betti, *The Making of Christian Moravia (858–882). Papal Power and Political Reality*, East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450–1450, 24; Leiden—Boston: Brill, 2014, 27-34 *et passim*.

[115] I. Boba, *Moravia's History Reconsidered. A Reinterpretation of Medieval Sources*, The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1971; for the modern proponents of this view (more or less modified), s. especially Charles R. Bowlus's publications, e.g., Nitra: when did it become a part of the Moravia realm? Evidence in the Frankish sources, *Early Medieval Europe*, 17 (2009) 311-328, with detailed previous bibliography after Boba's 1971 monograph.

localises its Moravia somewhere in the Bulgarian realm, along with Preslav and "all Bulgarian" "principalities", which is hardly compatible with northern Moravia but easily compatible with the southern one. The catching areas of the southern Morava and Vardar are adjacent to each other; therefore, the Bregalnitsa region (located in Vardar's catching area) is not far from the region of the southern river Morava.

[xv] *the town of Raven on the river Bregalnitsa*. There are a number of written sources in Slavonic (but excluding the most important long Slavonic *Lives* of Cyril and Methodius!) that mentions some missionary activity of Cyril at the river Bregalnitsa (a tributary of the river Vardar) in the modern state Macedonia. Only *SL* attributes this activity to a Cyril who is not the brother of Methodius. Of course, this situation produced among the scholars, first of all, an infinite discussion about the reality of the "Bregalnitsa mission" of Constantine-Cyril. To the second half of the 20th cent., this mission was taken as a historical fact mostly by Bulgarian and Macedonian scholars, whereas the majority of Slavists considers it as a later legend[116]. The only source that adds the name of the town to the name of the river is *SL*. In 1984, the excavations leaded by Blaga Aleksova (1922–2007) resulted in discovering a great church complex with a cathedral at the place where a small river Zletovica flows to the river Bregalnitsa near the village Krupište *ca* 70 km north of the city Strumica. If the town of Raven on Bregalnitsa has had any historical existence, it must be identified with this archaeological site[117]. The site has three layers: a Roman 5th-cent. military *castrum*, a 6th-cent. Byzantine Christian settlement with a church (destroyed presumably by the Avars *ca* 580), and, finally, the cathedral dated by Aleksova to the late 9th–10th cent. The site is easily identifiable with the town indicated by Theophylact of Ochrid (bishop from 1088 until his death between 1108 and 1126) in his *Historia martyrii XV martyrum* (*BHG* 1199) as the place where the relics of three from the fifteen were translated from Strumica *ca* 886, soon after the baptism of Bulgaria under Boris-Michael followed with the discovering of the relics in Strumica in the 860s[118]. The strong adversaries of the reality of the Bregalnitsa mission were not especially successful in explaining the motive of such translation (which provoked a scandal in Strumica and turned out to be a difficult procedure for the secular and ecclesiastical authorities). The site on Bregalnitsa is the locality in regard to what hagiographical analyses of *SL* and the dossier of the Fifteen Martyrs must be continued jointly, because *SL* its present form (more exactly, as the common archetype of the available manuscripts), from the viewpoint of critical hagiography, is an etioligical legend about the origins of the Bregalnitsa church centre. If this centre was first established by a pre-Cyrillomethodian "heterodox" mission, the attention to this place from the side the first Bulgarian baptised king becomes easily explainable: there would have been a necessity of replacing with a new cult (that of the fifteen martyrs as the first Chrisitian enlighteners of these lands) the former cult commemorating the conversion to a competing tradition of Christianity. The problem is, however, that before the annexion of these lands by Bulgarian khan Presian in 839–842, the region of Bregalnitsa was occupied by the Slavs without the Proto-Bulgarian element, whereas *SL* calls the *Slavic* inhabitants of the area "Bulgarians"[119]. Theoretically, there are two alternative and (relatively) simple resolutions of this problem compatible with a pre-9th cent. date for *SL*: something in the available text of *SL* is a later addition, either localisation near Bregalnitsa (instead of some other locality where the symbiosis of the Proto-Bulgarians with the local Slavs existed already in the 7th or 8th cent.) or the mentions of Bulgarians as a Slavic people throughout the text of *SL* (which, in this case, would have been produced by a later editor—most probably, at the time when *SL* was transformed into an ideological text of the Second Bulgarian kingdom; cf. above, endnote iii).

[xvi] *letters*. What Slavonic alphabet is meant, Glagolitic or Cyrillic? If *SL* is a pre-12th cent. document, the answer is unobvious (if *SL* is a late Bulgarian document, the question is meaningless, because Bulgaria in this epoch knew only Cyrillic). G. M. Prokhorov's interest in *SL* was provoked with the apparently Christian Oriental (and non-Byzantine) shape of the Glagolitic letters[120]; *SL* points out to Oriental direction even without our "Syriac"

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[116] Liliana Graševa's entry contains the main bibliography up to the early 1980s: Л. Грашева, Брегалнишка мисия [L. Graševa, Bregalnitsa mission], in: П. Динеков (ed.), *Кирило-Методиевска енциклопедия*, т. 1, Sofia: Св. Климент Охридски, 1985, 237-243; the same in Russian: *eadem*, Брегальницкая миссия Константина-Кирилла и Мефодия [The Bregalnitsa Mission of Constantine-Cyril and Methodius], in: Г. В. Степанов (ed.), *Проблемы изучения культурного наследия*, Moscow: Наука, 1985, 22-29.

[117] S. the definitive publication of these excavations leaded by Blaga Aleksova: Б. Алексова, *Епископијата на Брегалница — прв словенски црковен и културно-просветен центар во Македонија* [B. Aleksova, *The Bishopric on Bregalnitsa — the First Slavic Ecclesiastical and Cultural Centre in Macedonia*], Prilep: Институт за истражување на старословенската култура, 1989 (in Macedonian, with a detailed summary in Engish). Blaga Aleksova strongly believed in the reality of the "Bregalnitsa mission" and, therefore, identified the site near Krupište with the town Raven of *SL*.

[118] The cult of these fifteen martyrs still needs some further studies; cf., for the actual textological problems: E.-S. Kiapidou, Critical Remarks on Theophylact of Ohrid's *Martyrdom of the Fifteen Martyrs of Tiberiopolis*: the Editorial Adventure of a Text from the Middle Ages, *Parekbolai* 2 (2012) 27-47 (Eirini-Sophia Kiapidou is now preparing a completely new edition of the unique manuscript); for a part of historical problems: D. Cheshmedjiev, Notes on the cult of the fifteen Tiberioupolitan martyrs in medieval Bulgaria, *Studia Ceranea* 1 (2011) 143-156.

[119] I am grateful to Alexey Mstislavovich Pentkovsky for pointing me out this difficulty.

[120] Прохоров, Глаголица…

hypothesis. It is, of course, very tempting to interpret *SL* as a story about the invention of the *Glagolitsa* (Glagolitic alphabet). The possible connexions of the Glagolitic alphabet with the other graphic systems still need to be studied on the level of the presently available scholarship, that is, taking into account, on the one hand, the recent findings and studies of particular elements of the *Glagolitsa* (resulted from the 1975 discovery of the "new" oldest Glagolitic manuscripts in Sinai), and, on the other hand, the theoretical approach to the history of the missionary alphabets developed in the 1980s by T. Gamkrelidze but never used by the Slavists[121].

xvii *I taught them a little, but they themselves learned a lot.* An important motive within the "New Moses / New Covenant" imagery; s. endnotes iv and ix.

xviii *they will preserve for God the right faith.* A succinct but clear expression of the eschatological conception of *SL.* A number of Middle Bulgarian parallels are known[122]. The Slavic Bulgarians replaced here the Last Roman Emperor, who is the traditional messianic figure in the post-Arab Christian apocalyptic literature (including the *Apocalypse* of Ps.-Methodius, translated into Slavonic, at least, trice)[123]. This tradition of the historical apocalyptics (without mentioning the Bulgarians or the Slavs) emerged in Syria and in Syriac language but became international very soon, already in the early 8th cent. An affinity of *SL* with this large literary flow is *per se* almost irrelevant to the search of its *Stiz im Leben.* The eschatological message proper to *SL* consists in the idea that the northern tribes which were normally considered as Gog and Magog (cf. endnote v about the Slavs as the cannibals) turn out to be the true collective messianic figure instead of the Last Roman Emperor. There is a relatively early Syriac ("monophysite") historical apocalypse whose eschatological expectations are compatible with those of *SL—Apocalypse of John* preserved (in Syriac original and Arabic version) within the Syriac *Gospel of the Twelve Apostles*[124], which is written, according to J. W. H. Drijvers, between 692 and 705[125]. The Last Roman Emperor is replaced there with "The Man of the North" (ܓܒܪܐ ܕܓܪܒܝܐ) who will gather around himself all the peoples of the earth and establish the peace (p. 106/107); he will appear as one of the "kings of the north" (p. 100/101)[126].

3.6.   Reconstruction of the Corrupted Place

3.6.1. Zagrebin's Attempt and Textological Considerations

To the early 1990s, there was no commonly accepted understanding of the corrupt place. Given that the word сьчици is remotely recalling the Slavic word дъщици having the meaning

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[121] თ. გამყრელიძე, *წერის ანბანური სისტემა და ძველი ქართული დამწერლობა. ანბანური წერის ტიპოლოგია და წარმომავლობა* [T. Gamkrelidze, *Alphabetic Writing and the Old Georgian Script. A Typology and Provenience of Alphabetic Writing Systems*], Tbilisi: თბილისის უნივერსიტეტის გამომცემლობა, 1989 (in Georgian, but the same book contains a slightly shortened Russian translation).

[122] Their monograph-length study is Тъпкова-Заимова, Милтенова, *Историко-апокалиптичната книжнина...*

[123] G. Reinink, Pseudo-Methodius und die Legende vom römischen Endkaiser, in: W. Verbeke, D. Verhelst, A. Welkenhuysen (eds.), *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages*, Mediaevalia Lovaniensia, Series 1, Studia 15; Leuven: Peeters, 1988, 82-111; reprinted together with other relevant articles in *idem*, *Syriac Christianity under Late Sasanian and Early Islamic Rule*, Variorum Collected Studies Series, CS831; Ashgate: Variorum, 2005.

[124] J. R. Harris, *The Gospel of the Twelve Apostles together with the Apocalypses of Each of Them*, Cambridge: At the University Press, 1900; only the *Apocalypse of John* is reprinted from Harris's edition by H. Suermann, *Die geschichtsthelogische Reaktion auf die einfallenden Muslime in der edessinischen Apokalyptik des 7. Jahrhundert*, Europäische Hochschulschriften, Reihe XXIII: Theologie, 256; Frankfurt am Main—Bern—New York: P. Lang, 1985, 98-109; will be quoted within the text with the references to the pages of Suermann's edition (p. txt/tr.).

[125] J. W. H. Drijvers, Christians, Jews and Muslims in Northern Mesopotamia in Early Islamic Times. *The Gospel of the Twelve Apostles* and Related Texts, in: P. Canivet, J.-P. Rey-Coquais (eds.), *La Syrie de Byzance à l'Islam. VIIe–VIIIe siècles. Actes du Colloque International. Lyon – Maison de l'Orient Méditerranéen, Paris – Institut du Monde Arabe, 11-15 sept. 1990*, Damascus: Institut Français de Damas, 1992, 67-74; reprinted in *idem*, *History and Religion in Late Antique Syria*, Variorum Collected Studies Series, CS464; Ashgate: Variorum, 1994.

[126] In my 1996 article I supposed that the same tradition is witnessed with the Syrian apocalypse in Arabic published by F. Macler, L'apocalypse arabe de Daniel publié, traduite et annotée, *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 49 (1904) 265-305; s. Лурье, Около «Солунской легенды»…, 36 and 49-53 (notes 63-64).

"(wooden) tablets", one part of the scholars (starting from Bp Porphyry[127]) created the whole reconstruction around this meaning, whereas the others (starting from Voronov and including Yordan Ivanov) have recovered the same word as сѫчьци "small rods/branches"; finally, there were the thirds (starting from Bil'basov) who refrained themselves from any reconstruction. In my 1994/1996 paper I proposed a fresh reading of the corrupted place as a poorly digested fragment of the Syriac original. Finally, Vyacheslav Zagrebin in his 2003 communication (published in 2006) proposed a new reconstruction based on Slavic languages.

My present reading of the corrupted fragment contains some precisions and additions to my own former attempt and, moreover, takes into account Zagrebin's attempt of reading the corrupt place in South Slavic languages[128].

We agree with Zagrebin in our understanding that any reading of the corrupted place must be formulated at first as a linguistic hypothesis which must be further verified or falsified in a historical study of the document. Linguistic arguments taken alone would be certainly insufficient even for reading the corrupted place. Thus, we both tried, first of all, to propose a linguistically acceptable but hypothetical reading. Unfortunately, Zagrebin left his work unfinished, and so, we know nothing specific about his historical analysis[129].

Zagrebin's hypothesis has an advantage of simplicity of its linguistic geography. He operates exclusively with the languages whose importance for the history of the text of *SL* is undeniable. To overcome this advantage, I had to explore a larger field of Slavonic translations from Syriac[130]. At least, now it would be hardly problematic to reject *a priori* the very idea of a Slavonic translation from Syriac.

Zagrebin's other methodological approaches seem to me more problematic, as it will be seen from the following.

Textological base

Given that *N* in the corrupted place (and not only there) rewrites the text, this mediaeval manuscript would not *directly* contribute to any reconstruction. However, Zagrebin ruled out as well all the nineteenth-century manuscripts. Therefore, his reconstruction is based exclusively on the two remaining mediaeval manuscripts, *S* and *T*, and maintains the illusion that their respective readings would have an equal authority from a textological point of view.

It is undeniable that better readings could be preserved in generally worse manuscripts, but the statistical rule points into the opposite direction: a reading from the better manuscript is *ceteris paribus* more plausible than that of the worse one. Thus, the manuscript tradition matters even for the reconstruction, and it is a methodologically weak point in Zagrebin's enterprise that he did not take it into account properly.

Taking into account the manuscript tradition as a whole, we have to consider the readings of *Sk* as more authoritative *a priori* than those of *Txp*.

Zagrebin's reconstruction

I quote Zagrebin's reconstruction against the background of the complete manuscript tradition:

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[127] Supported by Jagić (Die neusten Forschungen…, 300-301, Anm. 1) against Voronov.

[128] Загребин, К интерпретации…, 210-211. Zagrebin enumerates ten previous attempts of reconstruction based on Slavic and Greek languages and Hebrew (I think, his list is the most complete among the available ones; for instance, he mentions not only Barac but also his reviewer A. Olesnitsky with his different understanding based on Barac's reconstruction of Hebrew words) and adds to his list the eleventh attempt of mine. He states, nevertheless, when replying to my statement that all attempts of understanding this place from Slavic languages and Greek failed, that "...nobody has really tried to analyse each word [in the obscure place]. I know only thoughts expressed *en passant* about the meaning of one or another word" («…никто особо и не пытался анализировать каждое слово. Мне известны лишь попутно высказанные мысли о значении того или иного слова»).

[129] I know that he was accepting the scholarly consensus dating *SL* to the 12th century. He died earlier than I had time to discuss with him other cases of translation from Syriac into Slavonic and other facts of Syrian influence on the earliest Slavonic literature.

[130] Cf. a compact review in B. Lourié, Direct Translations into Slavonic from Syriac: a Preliminary List, in: C. Diddi *et al.*, FS Mario Capaldo (forthcoming).

свытькь [*S against* **kNTxp**] *счици с кокине [*casus generalis < Acc.*; *pl.* of кокинъ "red thread"[131]]
*супуле [*T against* **Skxp**] свезане/свезаноу [**STxp** *with a synonymous reading in* **k**]

* theoretically acceptable in Slavic languages but unattested forms.

Zagrebin understood свытькъ not in the common Slavonic meaning "scroll" but in the meaning "wrapping" attested to in Serbian (свитак). Therefore, his translation is the following:

(the bird brought in the beak) "a package: two tablets with alphabet tied in the middle [*or* in two] with read threads (drawstrings)".

Zagrebin's methodology implies several extremely weak knots that need to be realised.

First of all, he proposed, for the three severely garbled words, two (that is, 2/3) purely theoretical constructs: *счици "tablets" and *супуле "in the middle / in two"; both are nowhere attested to. This fact alone would make his reconstruction arbitrary beyond the permissible level. It is not alone, however.

The meaning of the first (ungarbled) word "package / wrapping" is not less problematical. Firstly, the word свитькь is quite common in Slavonic but with the meaning "scroll". Thus, Zagrebin supposes that a common word is here used in an uncommon meaning (moreover, not attested to in Bulgaria, the homeland of *SL*, but known from the Serbian language only). This is already an embarrassing assumption. It is combined, then, with another assumption, that this reading of *S* is the genuine one. The latter assumption seems to be not so difficult in Zagrebin's perspective where, for this word, we have no other choice than between the three manuscripts, *S*, *N*, and *T*; nevertheless, the agreement between *N* and *T*, which represent the two different branches of the manuscript tradition, against *S* makes Zagrebin's choice rather unnatural. It becomes even less natural when the reading of *k* (representing the same branch as *S*) is also taken into account. Zagrebin eventually supposes that (1) the reading of *S* is genuine, and (2) its meaning is not the standard one but another one, unknown in Bulgarian but attested to in Serbian. The probability that this is the case is equal to the product of the probabilities of (1) and (2), which results in a vanishing value.

Zagrebin's choice of соупоуль (< *супуле) [*T against* **Skxp**] could be corroborated with the reading of the genuine Konstantinov-Cinot's 1856 manuscript, which also has п and not г, unlike its editions and the other three witnesses. This evidence is, in turn, diminished by the witness of *p* which is a manuscript especially similar to *x* but containing г. Thus, Zagrebin's choice is textologically less probable than its alternative containing г in the place of п.

The plausibility of Zagrebin's reconstruction as a whole must be evaluated as the product of the probabilities of all his independent assumptions. The probability of such a construction is extremely weak[132]. It could certainly be useful for a brainstorm, but hardly for anything else.

Zagrebin's treatment of the *hapax legomenon* сборокъ (< *съборькъ according to Zagrebin) does not support his construction either. The word is intuitively understood as "collection" etc., but Zagrebin (following earlier researchers, especially Voronov) identifies its meaning with that of свытькъ in *S*, that is, to him, "wrapping / package" ("сверток; пакет"). This is another case of an unnecessary strong assumption. There is a more natural way of understanding *съборькъ within a Bulgarian text, namely, as a diminutive from съборъ ("gathering" etc. of any kind of objects, from some things to an ecclesiastical synod), where the masculine diminutive Slavonic suffix -ькъ /-*ŭkŭ*/ became -ъкъ /-*ăk*/ in Bulgarian (as we see in **Txp** but in the "unique *jer*" spelling; cf. also *S*). The same diminutive suffix became -окъ /-*ok*/ in Macedonian (as we see in *k*), and -акъ /-*ak*/ in Serbian (as we see in *N*). Therefore, instead of Zagrebin's way of understanding this *hapax* as an unusual word in an unusual meaning, we are allowed to understand it as a quite common word with a quite common suffix resulting in an ordinary meaning "small gathering / collection / kit".

3.6.2. A Syriac-Based Reconstruction

The common archetype of the available manuscripts

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[131] Thus, Zagrebin proposes a Slavic word and not directly Greek κόκκινος "red", as did before him Bp Porphyry, Voronov, Jagić, Y. Ivanov, and many others.

[132] As far as we are still discussing linguistic *hypotheses* concerning the text of *SL* (which are further to be evaluated with extra-linguistic means), we need to realise the mode of our hypothetical reasoning. Of course, the more suppositions we make, the less plausible our resulting hypothesis is. However, there is an important difference between the kinds of suppositions themselves. The worst, for the resulting hypothesis, case is when all of them are independent, because the resulting epistemic probability will be the product of all supposition's probabilities. This is the case of the main suppositions in Zagrebin's reconstruction. The situation would become better if the epistemic probabilities of our suppositions are conditional, that is, if they are about mutually connected events.

From the above analysis of the reconstruction by Zagrebin one can see how the textological considerations would affect my own approach. I will try to follow the majority readings. Thus, we can rule out from the very beginning the peculiar readings of *S* (свытькь) and *T* (соупоуле with п instead of г). The resulting text is the following:

сборокъ [*kNTxp against S*] сьчици/сьчице [*SkTxp with a partial support of N*[133]] скокине [*STxp ≈ k*] сьгоуле [*S almost identical to xp ≈ k with a partial support of T*] свезане/свезаноу [*STxp ≈ k*]

One can see that it is rather good witnessed in the manuscript tradition. This text contains five segments, among which the first and the latter are perfectly understandable Slavonic words. The fragment describes some collection (of still unknown things) which is tied.

The three segments in between recall several Slavonic words but do not coincide with any of them. A possible exception is сьчици/сьчице understood by Voronov and Y. Ivanov as сѫчьци /sǫčьci/ (< сѫкъ κάρφος, cf. Bulgarian сък) "small rods/branches". Petr Alekseevich Lavrov (1856–1929), who was a great specialist in the history of Bulgarian language, declined this interpretation as anachronistic (according to him, such a modern Bulgarian spelling would be too late for *SL*)[134]. Nevertheless, I found one case of such spelling in a sixteenth-century South Slavic manuscript[135]. The common archetype of the preserved manuscripts of *SL* could be not much earlier. Be this as it may, such an interpretation of one segment would hardly make our text much more meaningful.

The three obscure segments are the most unchangeable part of the whole corrupted place. Obviously, being a *lectio difficilior*, it was copied most carefully and deserves our confidence. The only important variant is п instead of г in соугоуле.

A conclusion that the corrupted place is unrecoverable from the Slavic languages and Greek remains unrefuted. But the only way to prove it is to recover this place from another language. There are historical reasons (to be discussed below) to look toward Syriac.

The three obscure segments when read in Syriac

An attempt to read a Slavonic text in Syriac would imply that, by some reason, it remained transliterated and not translated. This reason must be explained, too, but we have to start from reading.

Thus, we immediately recognise two Syriac words in two of the three segments:

скокине /*skokine*/ ܣܩܘܩܝܢ, plural (*st. abs.*) of ܣܩܘܩܐ "segmentum, pars secta e corio etc."[136], viz. "leather ribbons", probably originally transliterated as *съкокинъ with further standard transformations of spelling in the South Slavic milieu;

сьгоуле /*sьgule* or *sgule*/ ܣܓܘܠܐ "bounch, cluster" (e.g., of grapes, dates, etc.)[137], probably originally transliterated as *съгоуло; but if the final -*e* in сьгоуле belongs to the original transliteration, the Syriac word had to be in plural, ܣܓܘܠܐ /*sgule*/.

Before turning to the third and the most important obscure segment we can notice that, in the Syriac context, one can suggest a plausible original for the word сборокъ, which looks in the

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[133] *N* has сь числи which is evidently derived from сьчици.

[134] П. А. Лавров, *Материалы по истории возникновения древнейшей славянской письменности*, Труды Славянской комиссии АН СССР, 1; Leningrad: Издательство Академии Наук СССР, 1930 [repr. The Hague—Paris: Mouton & Co., 1966], 158, fn. 8.

[135] A Serbian liturgical *menaea* for April and May, *Cod. Vindob. Slav.* 12; quoted in F. Miklosich, *Lexicon linguae Slovenicae veteris dialecti*, Vienna: W. Braumüller, 1850, 175, *s.v.* съчьць. The Serbian manuscripts of the works translated in Bulgaria (as it is the case of the *menaea*) often preserve in their spelling occasional Bulgarian features.

[136] R. Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, 2 vols., Oxford: Clarendon, 1879–1901, col. 2622.

[137] I owe this Syriac word to Sebastian Brock who has kindly corrected my first reading of this phrase at the very beginning of my research, in 1993.

Slavonic text not smooth enough (normally unusual with a diminutive suffix and not applied to inanimate objects). It could be best explained as a rather unhelpful (literalistic) rendering of a Syriac word which could mean both "plurality" etc. and "synod" (the latter meaning would be correctly rendered in Slavonic as съборъ):

> съборокъ: ܚܒܘܪܬܐ used in the meaning "pluralitas, plurale" but incorrectly understood in the meaning "congregatio, conventus, synodos, σύναξις"[138].

This Syriac word having an appropriate ambiguity allows understanding of съборокъ as "plurality / collection / kit", which is somewhat fitting with understanding of сьгоуле as "bounch(es)".

The above three promising steps toward a reconstruction based on Syriac encourage us to looking for a Syriac original for the third obscure segment (сьчици/сьчице) as well, although it is not readable out of hand in Syriac either.

Were it transformed into a Slavonic word (such as сжчьци but in later spelling) or not, it is somewhat Slavicised. Its present ending –ци looks as a Slavonic ending of plural. It would have appeared at any stage of the history of the text preceding the common archetype of the available manuscripts.

There is, nevertheless, one Semitic root that is fitting with our segment in a quite uniquely way. It was already pointed out by Barac, but he has read it as a Hebrew word[139]. I would propose a quite common Syriac word (whose common meanings are "threads; lock of hair") but taken in one of its multiple indirect meanings:

> сьчици/сьчице, derived from a transliteration of a Syriac word which was normally used in plural (*st. emph.* or *st. constr.*) in a rare meaning: ܨܘܨܝܬܐ or ܨܘܨܝܬ "downy plumes"[140]. This word, moreover, implied a wordplay with a very similarly sounding word ܨܘܨܝ "bird chirpling": the downy plumes turn out to be a very specific kind of beard speech.

> The original transliteration had to begin with *цоуци- (or the whole word was rendered as *цоуцици)—regardless of the pronunciation of the emphatic consonants in the corresponding dialect of Syriac but simply because of the correspondence between the graphemes ܨ and Slavonic ц,— with a subsequent replacement (typical for Old Slavic in different positions[141]) ц > ч.

This is the key word for the whole phrase. Its meaning "downy plumes" is attested to in Sergius of Reshaina's († 536) translation of Galen, where the phrase ܨܘܨܝܬܐ ܕܩܢܝܐ ܗܢܐ ("the flower tufts of this reed") renders in an explicative way the phrase τὴν καλουμένην ἀνθήλην ("the so-called flower tuft") of the original. In his explanation, Sergius, most probably, had in mind the passage of another author, Dioscorides, about the same topic, where the phrase ἡ... ἀνθήλη τῶν καλάμων ("the flower tuft of the reed") was used[142]. The phrase ܨܘܨܝܬܐ ܕܩܢܝܐ

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[138] Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, cols. 1772-1773.

[139] Барацъ, Кирилло-Меѳодіевскіе вопросы…, 355-356. Barac restored this segment as чицисъ and then read it as either цицисъ /*tsitsis*/ (according to the Jewish Ashkenazi pronunciation) or чичитъ /*čičit*/ (according to the Jewish Crimean and Karaimic pronunciation), that is, ציצית in the terminological meaning "tzitzit". The whole scene is interpreted by Barac as a prayer ritual with a tefillin (phylactery) and a taleth (a shawl with fringes, tzitzit), accompanied with a mystical vision of the dove.

[140] J. Payne Smith (Margoliouth), *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1903, 476. I must confess that, in my previous reconstruction, I took the explanation of this meaning from this dictionary without checking original Syriac evidence and, therefore, committed an error. The relevant meaning is here expressed as "*downy plume* of a reed", which I understood as "reed pen". In fact, judging from the *Thesaurus Syriacus* by R. Payne Smith, the meaning implied here was "*flower tufts* of a reed", or, even more precisely, simply flower tufts if they are similar to the plumes/feathers.

[141] Cf. А. К. Поливанова, *Старославянский язык. Грамматика. Словари* [A. K. Polivanova, *Old Slavic Language: Grammar, Dictionaries*], Moscow: Университет Дмитрия Пожарского, 2013, 74, 76.

[142] S. Bhayro, R. Hawley, G. Kessel, P. E. Pormann, The Syriac Galen Palimpsest: Progress, Prospects and Problems, *Journal of Semitic Studies* 58 (2013) 131-148, here 143. Cf. already (but still without the complete relevant context) A. Merx, Proben der syrischen Übersetzung von Galenus' Schrift über die einfachen Heilmittel,

suggests that the word ܝ_ܩܝܬܐ means any downy elongated fluffy tufts, similar to those of the reed but not necessarily of the reed. It is important that the object is elongated rather than spherical, because all other metaphorical meanings of ܝ_ܩܝܬܐ explore as well the similarity with threads or curls.

Is this meaning applicable to our case? I think, yes, even though the flower tuft is certainly not the appropriate part of the reed for making pens.

In fact, Syriac has had no one-word term of the quill pen, analogous to Latin *penna*, even though such pens were used since, at least, the sixth century until the tenth or eleventh, when they became eventually replaced completely by the reed pens[143]. Neither ܐܒܪܐ "feather" nor ܟܢܦ̈ܐ "feathers; fins" (plural only) without additional epithets (such as ܐܒܪܐ ܕܦܪܚܬܐ "feather of a flying creature"[144]) had have such meaning[145]. Unlike this, for ܩܢܝܐ "a cane, reed" the meaning "reed pen" or "pen" was quite common.

This situation in Syrian culture could be better understood against the Byzantine background, where the complete lack of a term for the quill pen was natural because such pens have never become generally accepted[146].

Thus, if a raven[147] showed some plumes similar to the flower tufts of the reed it would have been very likely quills. Such a designation would be suitable for the quills both metaphorically (due to their similarity with the elongated flower tufts of the reed) and metonymically (due to their common quality with the reed of being a material for pens). It would have been easily understandable given that a name for a less common kind of pen was derived from that of the most common kind (reed pen). There was no, in Syriac, a common short term for the quill pens and, therefore, such a designation with a double poetical trope would have been at place (not to say that we cannot exclude that our reconstructed meaning was used itself as such term).

The understanding of the "downy plumes" as quills is fitting with the plot of *SL* in an extremely helpful way.

First of all, we obtain an explanation of the appearance of a bird and, maybe, especially of a raven. The raven quills are among the most suitable for pens, much better than the goose ones[148]. And, moreover, even though we know nothing definite about the pens used by the first

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Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft 39 (1885) 237-305, here 242; Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, col. 3382.

[143] W. H. P. Hatch, *An Album of Dated Syriac Manuscripts*, Boston, MA, 1946 [repr. Piscataway, NJ, 2002], 8-9.

[144] The phrase was used in the meaning "quill pen" according to Hatch, *An Album...*, 8.

[145] An one-word term for "quill" is mentioned by M. Sokoloff, *A Syriac Lexicon. A Translation from the Latin, Correction, Expansion, and Update of C. Brockelmann's* Lexicon Syriacum, Winona Lake, IN—Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2009, 1054b ("in phrase ܝ̇ ܕܟܬܒܐ **quill pen of scribe**"), but this is a mistake. Brockelmann's Latin original states quite correctly "calamus scriptorius" (C. Brockelmann, *Lexicon Syriacum*, Berlin: Reuther & Reichard, 1895, 514b) with a reference to a scribal notice ܢܣܝ ܕܝ ܕܟܬܒ understood by the editor—who saw himself what kind of pen was used—"trial of the *reed*-pen" (W. Wright, *Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum...*, Part III, London: The British Museum, 1872, 1195a). Cf., for "trial of the *quill*-pen", ܢܣܝ ܕܝ ܕܟܢܦܐ, literally "trial of the feather pen" (quoted in Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, col. 1354, with a reference to the same catalogue).

[146] "While in the West the *kalamos* began to be replace by the goose quill from the early Middle Ages onward, in Byz[antium] it remained dominant, and it is possible that goose quills were never used in Byz[antium]"; W. H[örandner], Pen, in: A. P. Kazhdan (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, vol. 3, New York—Oxford: Oxford UP, 1991, 1621-1622 (1621).

[147] And not the dove: *SNk* against ***Txp***. It is interesting to note that dove's feathers are not suitable (too soft) for preparing quill pens, whereas those of the raven are among the most suitable ones (s. below).

[148] I have no specific data about raven quill pens on the mediaeval markets but in the modern times swan and raven quills were considered as those of the highest quality (cf., e.g., "Penne da scrivere" in: F. Gera, *Nuovo dizionario universale di agricoltura...*, t. 23, Venice: G. Antonelli, 1844, 321). An anonymous gloss to a riddle about the alphabet by Aldhelm (*ca* 639–709) enumerates three possible writing devices, the raven or goose quills and the reed pen: "ignoramus [one says on behalf of the letters] utrum cum penna corvina, vel anserina, sive calamo, perscriptae simus" (Th. Wright, *An Essay on the State of Literature and Learning under the Anglo-Saxons*, London:

Slavic scribes, the fact that the Russian tradition from the very beginning knows only the quills and not the reed pens[149] reveals that the positions of the quill pens were strong enough even in the early period of Slavic writing.

Secondly, the pens are sharpened objects that could be more appropriate than the tablets for the next plot twist, when they penetrated into the body of Cyril.

If our suppositions above are true, the reason why the obscure place has not been translated is clear: such poetical pictures are never easily grasped by ordinary translators. But we still have to discuss our reconstruction further.

Let us notice that here, at the key point of our argumentation, we put forward two major suppositions: (S_1) that the quill pens would have been called (either occasionally or regularly) ܟܬܒܐ ܝܥܩܘ , and (S_2) that this word in this meaning has been used in the original of *SL*. These suppositions are not independent; therefore, our hypothetical reasoning is more plausible than that of Zagrebin[150]. Then, the plausibility of our hypothesis that both S_1 and S_2 took place is further increased, on the one hand, by the fact that the remaining obscure segments are easily readable in Syriac, and, on the other hand, by the fact that the resulting meaning is perfectly well fitting with the plot of *SL*—given that the sharp quills are suitable in three ways: for penetrating into the body of Cyril, for being brought by a bird (and especially a raven, not a dove), and for symbolising the letters of the future alphabet[151]. The resulting epistemic probability of our linguistic hypothesis will become even higher when we will look at the text of *SL* as a whole (s. below).

Translation of the corrupted place

Without pretending to present retroversion (and, thus, without pretending to re-establish the exact syntax of the Syriac phrase) and taken into account the Slavic word that follows the corrupted fragment ("tied"), one can come to the translation:

> (the raven threw from the beak) "a plurality/set of the downy plumes [*sc.*, (raven?) quills] tied with (leather) ribbons into the bunch(es)".

I would prefer the singular form "bunch" to the plural form "bunches", but the latter is more consistent with the (inconsistent) vocalism of the preserved text.

Quills were normally sent in bunches, and so, my present reconstruction looks more natural than my previous one, where I was thinking about a "bunch" of reed pens—not to say that a connexion between the reed pens and a bird is not so natural as between a bird, especially a raven, and quill pens.

Ch. Knight, 1839, 79). A raven quill is meant, most probably, in an Old English riddle from the *Exeter Book* (*ca* 1000), riddle 89 (alias 93), vv. 28-29: "Now my [inkhorn's] treasure the enemy plunders / who once ran as the wolf's companion (wulfes gehleþan)"; "wolf's companion" could be either raven or eagle, but only raven was suitable as a source of quills (cf. already the commentary by F. Tupper, *The Riddles of the Exeter Book*, Boston etc.: Ginn and Co., 1910, 238). These parallels are important for the Slavic world as well, where the quality of the raven quills and raven's mythological background were not especially different.

[149] See Е. Ѳ. Карскій, *Очеркъ славянской кирилловской палеографіи* [E. F. Karsky, *An Essay of the Slavic Cyrillic Palaeography*], Warsaw: Типографія Варшавскаго учебнаго округа, 1901, 129-130; В. Н. Щепкин, *Русская палеография* [V. N. Ščepkin, *Russian Palaeography*], Moscow: Наука, 1967 [first publ. 1918–1920], 38.

[150] Namely, the epistemic probability of the situation when both S_1 and S_2 take place is $P(S_1 \cap S_2) = P(S_2 \mid S_1) \times P(S_1)$, where $P(S_1)$ is the probability of S_1 and $P(S_2 \mid S_1)$ is that of S_2 under condition that S_1 occurs [providing that the two events are somewhat connected with each other; otherwise $P(S_2 \mid S_1) = P(S_2)$]. $P(S_2 \mid S_1)$ is much greater than the probability of S_2 as an independent event, $P(S_2)$ (if S_1, as it is in our case, is a necessary but not sufficient condition for S_2). Thus, the resulting epistemic probability $P(S_1 \cap S_2)$ is not as much lesser than $P(S_1)$ as it would be in the case if S_1 and S_2 were independent.

[151] These three criteria are quite different but our hypothesis is fitting with all of them (unlike, e.g., the hypotheses about the tablets, which meet only one requirement from the three). This conjunction of the three independent criteria with whom our hypothesis fits is a powerful argument for its trustworthiness.

Text of *SL* as a whole

The Semitisms, even though they theoretically could appear in a text written in Slavonic or Greek, are important in our case in a specific way. They do not demonstrate that there was an original in Syriac, but, *if* such an original really existed, they *must* be present in our text. Their presence in the text is a necessary, whereas not sufficient condition for being a translation from a Semitic original.

Outside the obscure place, I can notice three kinds of such Semitisms in *SL*.

<u>Syntax</u>

The manuscript tradition of *SL* shows that all the mediaeval editors or scribes were uneasy with an enormous (for Slavonic) number of the "and" at the beginning of the phrases. They partially suppressed these conjunctions in different ways, as one can see from comparison of the manuscripts.

This is a striking hallmark of Semitic syntax (not specific to Syriac), which could appear in Greek or Slavonic (Slavic) texts only if they are translations (or stylisations). It is hardly explicable without acknowledging of a Semitic original, because such abundance of initial "and" sounds very annoying for both Slavic writer and reader. Therefore, it would be hardly justifiable even in a stylisation.

<u>Lexica</u>

The two following observations deal with the lexica and are more compatible than the previous one with understanding *SL* as being written in Slavonic or Greek. It is always easier to imitate vocabulary than syntax.

1. Regular (three times in a short text; underlined in the translation above) usage of the idiom "to descend to (toponyme)", which, in Slavonic, looks as a Biblicism but is normal in Semitic languages (cf. usage of ܢܚܬ "to go down/descend" in Syriac).

2. The second occurrence of the word гласъ ("voice"; underlined in the translation above) "I heard no <u>voice</u> about the Bulgarian land" sounds rough in Slavonic, even though the meaning of "speech/talk" for "voice" is possible[152]. We would expect here, however, rather "word" than "voice". But in Syriac we have the word ܩܠܐ, whose direct meaning is "voice" but another quite usual meaning is "word". Our translator's approach seems to be too literalistic.

A Greek intermediary?

Given that the most translated texts in Slavonic are translated from Greek, it is always inevitable to ask whether any given translated Slavonic text goes back immediately to a Greek original, too. Within the context of the present hypothesis, the most natural answer is "no"—due to the presence of letter ц in the part of the text which is considered as a transliteration. Normally, Semitic *ṣade* is rendered in Greek with *sigma*, which in Slavonic would result in *slovo* (and not *tsy*).

Nevertheless, one can theoretically suppose a quite unusual kind of translation, where *ṣade* would be rendered with some Greek consonant cluster used for rendering /*ts*/ (σσ, τσ or τζ). This possibility would be somewhat plausible, were *SL* showing any specific affinity with some Byzantine milieu. Otherwise, it is to be cut off with Ockham's razor.

3.6.3. Evaluation of the Linguistic Hypotheses on the Original Language of *SL*

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[152] Трубачев (ed.), *Этимологический словарь славянских языков*, issue 6, Moscow: Наука, 1979, 219, *s.v.* *golsъ.

It would be misleading to compare the present "Syriac" hypothesis with that of Zagrebin, given that the latter contains a series of extremely unlikely suppositions. Zagrebin produced the strictest variant of the "Slavic" hypothesis, but this is why his variant is the most unlikely. His linguistic rigour pushed him to make additional mutually unconditioned suppositions, and each of them contributed to decreasing of the likelihood of the whole construction near to zero.

Indeed, the two opposite interpretations of this fact are logically possible: Zagrebin either revealed the implicit problem of the whole "Slavic" approach or he simply chose a wrong path within a safe scholarly program. It would be more profitable, therefore, to judge my present "Syriac" hypothesis in comparison with the "Slavic" approach as such, without selecting any specific hypothesis. Such a comparison could be produced in a somewhat formal way, using the apparatus of the modern inductive logic with fuzzy calculi[153]. This procedure is too technical to be described here, but I will summarise below the main points.

There are, for *SL*, four major domains where the different approaches are to be compared:
1. Phonological: reconstruction of the Slavic phonemes and words originally presented in the obscure place;
2. Lexicological: reconstruction of the originally implied meanings of these words,
3. Contextual: appropriateness of the resulting reconstruction to *SL* as a whole;
4. Textological: the cause of the corruption of the text in the obscure place according to the respective hypothesis.

The likelihood of a given hypothesis is to be evaluated as a specific kind of probability which, in turn, is the product of two probabilities: its primary likelihood and its posterior likelihood. The primary likelihood is mostly subjective: it heavily depends on the *a priori* attitudes of a given scholar or a scholarly community. Needless to say, that *a priori* the "Slavic" approach has a very high likeliness, whereas the "Syriac" one very little, although not completely vanishing (because direct translations from Syriac into Slavonic are not to be excluded *a priori*). The posterior likelihood is an objective magnitude depending on the outcomes of the experimental or observational (as it is in our case) arrangements. The posterior likelihood is difficult (or rather impossible) to evaluate in a formal way as an absolute magnitude, but the posterior likelihoods of the pairs of alternative hypotheses could be compared with an inductive logical calculus.

The four levels above are nearly equally important for the comparison of the hypotheses, because all of them are very sensitive to the hypothesis chosen. This means, more formally, that the expectednesses of alternative observational outcomes are neatly different depending on the hypotheses.

The comparison at the level 2 (lexicological) needs no formal evaluation, because the two approaches meet there equally difficult obstacles. All of them need to interpret one or three habitual word(s) as a succinct (poetical maybe) description of a device that could not be described so briefly in a normal way. In the "Slavic" hypotheses, neither "tablets" nor "rods" could be related to the letters without providing a non-evident interpretation to what is stated plainly in the text. In the "Syriac" hypothesis, the "downy plumes" needs also to be somewhat interpreted for becoming "quill pens". At this point, we have certainly the weakest link of any available hypotheses, whereas this is nothing but the backside of the fact relevant to our level 4: why this place became so difficult for the Slavic translator and/or scribes. Thus, the comparison at the level 2 would not contribute to the resulting likelihood ratio of the two approaches.

[153] В. М. Лурье, *Солунская легенда:* оригинальное славянское произведение или перевод с сирийского? Количественный подход к оценке правдоподобности альтернативных гипотез [B. Lourié, *The Thessalonican Legend*: Original Work in Slavonic or Translation from Syriac? A Quantitative Approach to Evaluation of Likelihoods of the Alternative Hypotheses], *Материалы по Археологии и Истории Античного и Средневекового Крыма / Materials in Archaeology and History of the Ancient and Medieval Crimea* 6 (2014) 190-215.

Comparison at the level 1 (phonological) is more favourable for the "Syriac" hypothesis: it allows reading two segments from the three as ungarbled. Its "Slavonic" alternatives, at the best, allow such reading for only one segment (if it is read as "rods").

Comparison at the level 3 is favourable for the "Syriac" hypothesis in a very high extent. Not to say that the (raven) quill pens are especially appropriate not only for becoming symbols of the letters (as it is possible as well for—interpreted appropriately—"tablets" and "rods") but also for being brought by a raven and for entering—as sharp objects—into the body of Cyril. Moreover, the "Syriac" approach allows understanding other apparently Semitic features of the text and especially its syntax with so abundant initial "and", which would be almost inexplicable in an original Slavic document.

Comparison at the level 4 is favourable for the "Syriac" hypothesis, too, because the expectedness of a mistranslation (transliteration instead of translation) of a difficult phrase in a foreign-language original is always higher than that of a scribal or editorial error caused by misunderstanding of a description in Slavonic.

Thus, there is strong evidence in favour of the "Syriac" approach under the following condition: we compare posterior likelihoods of the two approaches taken aside all other considerations except the linguistic and philological ones. Of course, the question as a whole cannot be settled without further evaluations of the available hypotheses in other fields—first of all, those of history and critical hagiography. I hope to continue this study in these directions.

3.7. Conclusion: Further Directions

We have considered some philological and linguistic arguments in the favour of the hypothesis that *SL* is an early (eighth-century) document translated from Syriac. We repeated, moreover, the historical arguments available so far in the favour of the same conclusion (including my own 1996 arguments), but without any additional investigation.

This hypothesis on *SL*, if true, would require a reconsideration of the scholarly consensus in several other fields. It claims that some large-scale pre-Cyrillomethodian baptism of the Slavs and/or the Bulgarians did really take place.

The situation is very but not completely similar to that with the two baptisms of Kievan Rus' (the only one known to the Byzantine sources—under patriarch Photius somewhere in the 870s,—and the only one known to the Russian sources in 988; both are historical facts). Unlike the Russian case, the two baptisms of the Slavs and the Bulgarians would have been antagonistic to each other in such an extent that the memory of the first baptism was almost successfully deleted.

Therefore, *SL*, if it is indeed a pre-ninth-century document, must correlate to a great number of other facts. Only one group of such facts has been mentioned above (the existence of other Slavonic texts translated either from Syriac or from Greek but by Syrians). Other groups are related especially to the following fields: the origin of the Glagolitic alphabet, the paths of Christianity among the Slavs before the 860s, and, finally, the substrate of the ninth-century and later hagiographic legends where some pre-860s traditions are still traceable.

I can name, at least, one problem within these fields, where the scholarly consensus shifted since 1994/1996 in the direction favourable to our reading of *SL*. Now the viewpoint that the second khan of the First Bulgarian kingdom and a Byzantine *kaisar* Tervel (695–721) was a Christian, belongs to the scholarly mainstream[154]. There is nothing strange anymore in the "repeating Christianisations" which are known in many parts of the world.

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[154] Cf. my 1996 argumentation for Christianity of Tervel in Лурье, Около «Солунской легенды»…, 37-38; today it could serve as an addition to the much more detailed argumentation by Vassilka Tăpkova-Zaimova and Raya Zaimova: Тъпкова-Заимова, Р. Заимова, Тервел — Тривелиус — Теоктист [Tervel—Trebellius—Theoctiste], *Palaeobulgarica* 33 (2003) Nr 4, 92-98, and Vesselina Vachkova [The Bulgarian Theme in Constantinople's Monuments. (A new approach to the study of Bulgarian and Byzantine cultural memory), *Palaebulgarica* 32 (2008) Nr 4, 3-24].

The present study of *SL* must be continued, first of all, in the domain of critical hagiography, where *SL* is to be considered in the context of all other hagiographical legends directly or indirectly related to the conversion of Bulgaria[155].