1 Introduction

William R. Veder’s Iterum in alterum abiturum erat (1999) is a thought-provoking monograph on the beginnings of text transmission in Church Slavic. It offers full critical editions with detailed textological commentaries on the Prologue to the Gospel Homiliary by Constantine of Preslav, the treatise On the Letters as well as the text On the Script, which, according to the author, “has not before been recognised as a text separate from the treatise On the Letters, but merely as an excerpt version of it” (p. 8).

In the present contribution I would like to comment on the Prologue to the Gospel Homiliary (P). Whereas Veder concentrates on the textological aspects of P, I will try to argue that a more linguistic approach can contribute to a better understanding of some of the problems involving the reconstruction and development of the text of P.

The body of the text of P is generally regarded as composed in dodecasyllabic verse (sections 2: 1-36 and 3: 1-4, i.e. the Alphabet Proper and its doxology). Apart from verse, there is also some material in prose: the title (1: 1-5) and the author’s colophon (4: 1-54). I will concentrate on the verse, although linguistic evidence from the title and the colophon will also be taken into account.

Veder’s reconstruction of P is based on 43 manuscripts of Russian provenance. The oldest witness of P is labeled S (Simodal’ny spisok, i.e. Moskva, GIM, Sin. 262), for which Veder accepts a date between ca. 1150 and 1200 (p. 17). Of the remain-
ing manuscript testimonies the oldest date from the fifteenth century and nearly half are very recent indeed (17th-18th/19th centuries; see in particular Marti 1997: 140, n. 74). The filiation is established as follows (pp. 52-53):

- Hyparchetype α, transmitted by 5.
- Hyparchetype β, transmitted by 17 manuscripts, all of them labeled “RU” and dated between 1400 and 1800.
- Hyparchetype γ, transmitted by two manuscripts (Ar and US), both labeled “RU” and dated “1600-1700”.
- Hyparchetype δ, transmitted by 23 manuscripts, labeled “RU”, “Pskov” or “UA” and dated between 1450 and 1800.

According to Veder, the original text must have been composed in Glagolitic between 886 and 893. It was established on the basis of the facsimile in Kuev (idem: 185-189) and in the right column below, the text of the dodecasyllabic part of P “may aspire to restate that autograph” (p. 182). Thus, the reconstruction of P “as may be based on the facsimile in Kuev (1974). In the right column below, the text of the dodecasyllabic part of P was established on the basis of the facsimile in Kuev (idem: 307-309). Unfortunately, Kuev’s own edition (idem: 185-189) is very unreliable. Supralinear signs other than the little have not been included and verse-final punctuation marks have been simplified to a single period.

Veder’s reconstruction of P (pp. 153-157) is presented in two different forms

2 Text
Taking into account the chronology of the manuscript witnesses, it is justified to consider S to be the prime source for the reconstruction of P, although, of course, it can never be the only source to rely on. Note that S has to be regarded as a “faithful copy of α” (p. 182) and that the text of α is fully based on S.

The text of P in S and in 37 other manuscript testimonies has been published by Kuev (1974). In the right column below, the text of the dodecasyllabic part of S was established on the basis of the facsimile in Kuev (idem: 185-189). Unfortunately, Kuev’s own edition (idem: 185-189) is very unreliable. Supralinear signs other than the little have not been included and verse-final punctuation marks have been simplified to a single period.

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**Prologue to the Gospel Homily by Constantine of Preslav (2, 1-36 and 3, 1-4)**

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(cf. p. 59): a Cyrillic “construct” in normalised orthography (based on SJS and Leskien 1990) and a Glagolitic reconstruction “in the non-jotted, monographic style, and a Glagolitic orthography that underlies the text of the Cyrillic archetypes.” For convenience, I chose to reproduce the former in the left column below.
The reconstruction starts from the insight that each verse should contain twelve syllables. Any emendation or choice between different readings which does not result in dodecasyllabic verse, has to be rejected. The majority of the verses clearly indicate, among other things, that all syllables containing reduced vowels in weak position should be counted: cf. in 2: 1, 3, 5-8, 10, 13, 14, 16-22, 24-28, 30, 31, 33-36, and 3: 2.

3.1 Jers

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3 Commentary

3.1 Jers

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S is very faithful in rendering the jers correctly. The only verses where we have to restore a weak jer are 2: 2 (всена), 3: 3 (всена) and 3: 4 (всена), thus yielding in all three cases the required metre. On the other hand, the secondary jer in 335-36 (2: 32) has to be eliminated (cf. 335-36 (2: 10) in order to obtain twelve syllables.

Variant spellings of jers in S are found only in instr.sgn. ен - енъ (2: 1), where the period at the end of the first line of the Alphabet Prayer suggests a misreading by the copyist, and линий (3: 4) versus линия (4: 53-54). Third person endings always have -и (въздыхнет 2: 5, козеть 6, късть 8, etc.), which, of course, is due to the Russian linguistic background of the scribe. This also holds for cases of instr.sgn. endings in -ъ (see section 3.4 below). In 2: 34, the й reading вьздаръ (with final -ъ clearly visible on the facsimile) must form the basis for the reconstruction. Other readings (especially attested in γ and θ) are clearly secondary, pointing either to an alternative word formation (type вьсана вьздаръ), or a misinterpretation on an orthographic or a morphosyntactic level (type вьсана / вьсана вьздаръ).

The reconstruction deviates in two instances from what is to be expected. First, the secondary jer in 357 (2: 23) is not found in any of the Cyrillic archetypes and conflicts with the reconstructed prefix вълъ (нотъ вълъ) in 2: 19, 33, 34, 36 (cf. Diels 1963: 86). I think Vaillant offers a better solution for the lacking syllable in verse 23: “лъре въслънъ, ou plutôt, comme les formes en нъ sont assez récentes [...], извършени, déterminé: „(το) qui m'as délivré de la malice du Pharaon“, c'est-à-dire du paganisme” (1963: 78, n. 3). Second, leaving out the jer in песна (2: 4) is problematic because it would be the only instance of absence of a weak jer. I think we have to rely on the evidence of S (песна) and look for another explanation, which restores the metre. A plausible solution has to take into account that the genitive-accusative construction was not obligatory at the oldest stage of the language. Nahtigal's proposal (1943: 56) to reconstruct Господи Дому песна невъзлръ makes perfect sense and explains how the verse could have been misunderstood when subsequently the genitive became obligatory.

3.2 Пресънти + асс.?

Verse 2: 15 is problematic because the й reading disrupts the metre. I agree with Veder (p. 68) that we have to rely on the йотъ readings твъръ instead of твъръ. However, by interpreting (пощиротъ) твъръ as an acc.pl.f. form ("Thy mercies"), Veder is forced to assume that the author used пресънти with an accusative which is at variance with the syntax of the verb as attested elsewhere (3: S III, 1982: 374, сб. пресънти). It also confronts the reconstruction with a major problem in 2: 18, where the firmly established reading (пресънътъ mys/)
prosodiam) пользоваться в 3, γ и δ has to be considered inferior to a hypothetical accusative form пользоваться, constructed on the basis of (prosodiam) пишут (δ теса) in β, which is to try opinion clearly a secondary interpretation. I think we have to stick to the solution of Nahlig (followed by Kuev 1974: 158 and Vaillant 1963: 77, n. 9), who proposed that the reconstructed τρεα in 2: 15 is a short gen.sg. form (cf. Diels 1963: 116, 208 for “die nicht ganz seltenen Formen wie gsg. f. τρεα” in Old Church Slavonic).

3.3 Adnominal dative
One of the features of the author's grammar is, as Veder (p. 63) rightly points out, the use of the adnominal dative; cf. in 3 (дивиденции) выплаченного и невидимого (2: 3), в средние ли (2: 5), на архитектуре высоком (2: 6), к западу озера (2: 7) and most probably also по соседству очутителю (2: 30). On the other hand, Veder stresses that the adnominal dative was not an exclusive feature, referring to the use of the genitive in verses 1: 2, 1: 5, 4: 48-49 and 4: 52-53. Thus, reconstructing an adnominal dative in other verses is only justified as long as there is no compelling evidence: which points to a genitive. In the case of 2: 9, Veder's reconstruction святый святых ли is indeed the best possible solution (p. 66). As for 2: 31, I doubt whether there is enough evidence for the substitution of the implausible dual νομος in 5 by κοσμος in the original text (p. 75) instead of νομος, which is firmly established in the β and δ readings. The same holds for 2: 2 and 2: 29. In verse 2: 2, 5 as well as γ and δ point to a gen.sg. reading БЕССУ ТЕВАИ. Veder's reconstruction дат. sg. БЕССУ ТЕВАИ is based on only a part of the manuscript witnesses of β (cf., e.g., P5, 5/1, 3/2, U3, U4, VII, V/2, where we find gen.sg. forms in -εια/-εια/-έια). Moreover, cases of БЕССУ in β can also be interpreted as innovating gen.sg. forms that are attested in Russian already from the beginning of the 13th century onwards (Tkadlčík 1992: 364, Zaliznjak 1995: 111). In verse 2: 29, there is no manuscript evidence in support of a dat.pl. reading ВИСТОКШАЛЪНЬ; we either find short forms (as in 5 and β) or long forms (δ) of the gen.pl. The reconstruction of the verse must be either

3.4 Traces of "Glagolitisms"?
The relationship between 5 and α can be established, according to Veder (p. 182), on the basis of the following considerations: “As the MS exhibits no trace of Glagolitisms and eliminates the distinction of γ and ζ [. . .], it must be considered an apograph of the Cyrillic archetype α, which belongs to an earlier textological generation, removed from the earliest possible date of 5 an arbitrary 50 years, i.e. before ca. 1100”. It is true that 5 does not distinguish between γ and ζ in the text (cf. стабър 2: 9 and азъ съ 2: 15, 28), but the copyist did not neglect the difference between the two graphemes at the most crucial points: verse 2: 8 begins with χιλιος and the next one with χιλιος. This, however, does not necessarily mean that the assumption of a lack of Glagolitic traces in 5 is invalid. In fact, I doubt whether undeniable Glagolitic traces can be found in any of the Cyrillic archetypes, including α, whose text fully corresponds with 5 (see section 2 above). I will discuss all variant readings, which are ascribed by Veder to a Glagolitic antigraph:

- The β reading προλογъ instead of προλογъ (1: 1-2) does not have to be explained as a misreading of Glagolitic θ (p. 61); spillings with προ- instead of προ- (cf. also προλογъ in manuscript witness 3Z2) are also attested elsewhere (5Rα XI-XVII 18, 1992: 261-262, ed. προλογον). The instr.sg. ЧИСТОПЛАТЪНЬЕГЛОЗЪ in 5 reflects the regular North Slavic ending -ъглъ as opposed to -ъгъ in South Slavic (cf. also ЧИСТОПЛАТЪНЬЕГЛОЗЪ 1: 3-4, but различъмъ 2: 35). The β reading ЧИСТОПЛАТЪНЬЕГЛОЗЪ substitutes the long ending in the adjective, whereas the noun displays the effect of further phonetic developments in East Slavic (replacement of strong jers and hardening of final -m). There is no need whatever to assume “problems with reading the Glagolitic desinence of ЧИСТОПЛАТЪНЬЕГЛОЗЪ” (p. 84), neither in α (“α interprets the θ as θ”) nor in δ.
The 3 reading of verses 4: 39-41 and 42 is as follows: въ славѣ бываетъ, <шарі падбь, шемь вь небь, вь шемь неба неба. In the reconstruction Veder (p. 85) opts for трплявъ, as preserved in the 3 reading, instead of стрплявъ. At the end of 4: 42 he reconstructs нами можемъ скажь, which is based on 3, not on 3, where the participle is replaced by ни. If we follow the proposed reconstruction, there is still no need to suppose that "both а and 3 exhibit problems reading the participle: а reads the 3 as 3, while 3 simply substitutes a finite form" (p. 86).

In the reconstruction of the first letter of verse 2: 30, Veder suggests, but there is, of course, no need to ascribe this to a Glagolitic antigraph ("he probably read 33 and 33 as one word and rendered it by the single н").

Other Glagolitic traces are assumed for 2: 9, 15, 30, and 4: 45-46, where misreading (or even incompetence) is held to have triggered a different interpretation. However, we just do not know why 3 gave up in 2: 9 ("faced with the problematic cluster 33333333333333333", p. 60); note that the reading problem already begins in 2: 8. In 2: 15, the 3 reading носимъ as носимъ is attested only in a single manuscript witness (U5, belonging to 3), but the verses 2: 30-31 are highly corrupted (I should know that 33333333333333333). Veder observes (p. 68) additional arguments in order to explain the deviant text of 3 (in 33333333333333333 - I will not go into this matter (cf. most recently Zaliznjak 1999: 550-551, 565), but will concentrate on the reinterpretation of the initial word as a symbol for the letter 3, as attested in the manuscript witnesses of Rusian provenance. Veder reconstructs носимъ on the basis of the Cyrillic archetype 3, носимъ (corresponding with 3), 3, носимъ, 3: "the initial word must have been written with an initial 3 and without - 3, and the spellings with 3 and 3 are secondary attempts to come to terms with the ghost word носимъ (the inverse relation is next to impossible, considering the overall performance in the four Cyrillic texts)" (p. 75).

The spelling without - 3 is attested only in a single manuscript witness (U5, belonging to 3), but the verses 2: 30-31 are highly corrupted (I should know that 33333333333333333). Veder observes (p. 68) additional arguments in order to explain the deviant text of 3 (in 33333333333333333 - I will not go into this matter (cf. most recently Zaliznjak 1999: 550-551, 565), but will concentrate on the reinterpretation of the initial word as a symbol for the letter 3, as attested in the manuscript witnesses of Rusian provenance. Veder reconstructs носимъ on the basis of the Cyrillic archetype 3, носимъ (corresponding with 3), 3, носимъ, 3: "the initial word must have been written with an initial 3 and without - 3, and the spellings with 3 and 3 are secondary attempts to come to terms with the ghost word носимъ (the inverse relation is next to impossible, considering the overall performance in the four Cyrillic texts)" (p. 75).
Some of the writers of the manuscript witnesses of \( \gamma \delta \) obviously had no problem with copying a word of the type \( \text{мчесто} \) or, in the case of \( \beta \), \( \text{место} \). But others did. We find four different solutions:

- The easiest way was to replace it by an understandable form beginning with \( \text{м} \) and to accept that verses 29 and 30 now started with the same grapheme. This is what we find in \( \Delta \), in \( \varkappa \) belonging to \( \gamma \), and in parts of \( \beta \) and \( \delta \).

- The seven manuscripts belonging to the 0 group of \( \delta \) show how the former revision was taken one step further: \( \text{м} \) was replaced by \( \text{м} \) and verse 29 was simply thrown out.

- The \( \zeta \) group of \( \delta \) (nine manuscripts, with the exception of \( \pi \nu \)) came up with a remarkable solution by introducing \( \zeta(\gamma)\text{мчесто} \). One may wonder if this was a way of distinguishing the native pronunciation indicated by the grapheme \( \text{м} \) from \( \text{м} \) in verse 29.

- The most radical type of solution can be found in three manuscripts of the group \( \beta \delta \) (\( \kappa \theta \), \( \upsilon \), \( \pi \delta \), and \( \pi \) in \( \beta \)) belonging to the \( \gamma \) group of \( \delta \). To represent \( \text{м} \) they all introduced a totally new lexeme: \( \text{мъдрота} / \text{мъдръ} \). The old reading was simply replaced by the new one (\( \kappa \delta \), \( \pi \delta \)), or transferred to the previous verse (\( \upsilon \delta \), or even preserved in the same verse (\( \beta \)).

4 Epilogue

The main object of Veder’s meticulous inquiry has been to provide the first coherent textual reconstruction of \( \pi \) based on every piece of documentary evidence that is available. This is not an easy task if we are dealing with 43 manuscripts, whose texts are tied up in several groups and subgroups that have been transmitted over hundreds of years. As Veder has demonstrated in great detail, a reconstruction of the text has to be established on the basis of each single manuscript witness, trying to sort out both its diachronic and synchronic dimensions: where does the tradition end and the input of the copyist start? The result is determined by the quality of the \text{Vorlage} as well as the competence and attitude of the copyist towards it. The scenario’s we can think of are numerous and finding the most plausible one needs the collective effort of scholars of different disciplines: paleographers, textual critics, linguists and historians. They should always take into account the insights gained by the others.

By the same token, it has to be recognised that each of the disciplines has its own goals. Thus, for instance, historical linguists are primarily interested in deciphering and interpreting the phonetics, grammar and lexicon of written records. It goes without saying that the picture of past speech reflected in manuscript witnesses is most often deceptive and distorted by the inadequacy of writing systems, conservatisms and simple mistakes. Things become even more complicated if we are dealing with written records that have reached us through successive copying. All this is evident for every serious scholar who has ever studied the language of manuscripts of the past. Kronsteiner’s disqualification of such work as “Handschriften-Fetischismus” or “Handschriften-Wahn” (1993) is to my opinion misguided because it confuses the chief aims of textual criticism with those of historical linguistics. Above all, it does not help along the interdisciplinary cooperation from which both fields of research can benefit.

Notes

1 The dating of \( S \) is, in fact, controversial. It is variously attributed to the 12th, second half of the 12th-13th, early 13th or 13th century (cf. Thomson 1986: 41, n. 1).

2 The geographical provenance of the manuscript testimonies of \( P \) is indicated on pp. 16-17 either by place names (three times “Pskov”) or “automobile identification” (mostly “RU” and three times “UA”).

3 In Glagolitic: \( \text{чч} / \text{чЧ} \) in 4: 50-51 (mostly \( \text{чч} \)).

4 The only other instance in \( P \) where \( S \) omits a weak jerk is in the same lexeme: \( \text{връск} \) (4: 33).

Note that the etymology of \( \text{сърдъ} \) in \( \text{сърдътвамъ} \) cannot be explained (4: 39-40); does not point to the reconstruction “\text{сърдъб}” (pp. 85, 221); cf. \( \text{С} \) (IV, 1997: 187, \( \text{сърдь} \)); Vasmer (III, 1987: 782, \( \text{сърдь} \)).

5 Note that \( S \) also has \( \text{ш} \) in \( \text{шлънкъ} \), in \( \text{шлънъ} \), in \( \text{шлъпъ} \); in \( \text{шлъгъ} \), as in Koers 1974: 189.

6 In sum, I see no reason to assume that \( S \) testifies of an “overabundant introduction of \( \text{ш} \)” [cf. section 2 above...]. Note that even in non-etymological positions in \( \lambda \), “is surely a mark of excessive Cyrillicisation” (\( \text{п} \), 191, n. 29).

7 \( \text{шъ} \) occurs in \( \text{ш} \) and \( \delta \) rather than “the more trivial reading” \( \text{шъ} \). (p. 64).

8 The reference to 2: 11 on p. 70 ("... the reception of \( \text{принима} \), established for 2: 11 and 15") is obviously irrelevant to the issue. Furthermore, the reception of \( \text{принима} \) in 4: 48-49 (\( \text{примемъ} \))

326 ON THE TRANSMISSION OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE PROLOGUE

TIME FLIES

327

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TIME FLIES

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