

ON THE TRANSMISSION OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE *PROLOGUE* TO THE *GOSPEL HOMILIARY* BY CONSTANTINE OF PRESLAV

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... ne reposita sint in fenestris otiosa
William R. Veder (1979: 11; cf. idem 1999: 192)

1 Introduction

William R. Veder's *Utrum 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 Prayer* 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* (*Sinodal'nyj spisok*, i.e. Moskva, GIM, Sin. 262), for which Veder accepts a date between ca. 1150 and 1200 (p. 17).¹ 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 *S*.
- Hyparchetype β , transmitted by 17 manuscripts, all of them labeled “RU”² and dated between 1400 and 1800.
- Hyparchetype γ , transmitted by two manuscripts (*Ar* and *U5*), 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 is localised in the Preslav area, “most probably in the former capital Pliska” (p. 180). The Cyrillic archetypes are considered to have all been executed in Kievan Rus’ between ca. 1050 and 1100 (pp. 182-183). It is assumed that we are dealing with four transcriptions from a Glagolitic codex, which was removed from the Preslav area to Kiev, probably in the year 971 (pp. 185-186). The Glagolitic codex itself “was, indeed, the author’s *autograph*” (p. 182). Thus, the reconstruction of **P** “may aspire to reconstitute that autograph” (p. 8).

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*: 307-309). Unfortunately, Kuev’s own edition (*idem*: 185-189) is very unreliable. Supralinear signs other than the *tittle* 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

(cf. p. 59): a Cyrillic “construct” in normalised orthography (based on *SJS* and Leskien 1990¹⁰) and a Glagolitic reconstruction “in the non-jotated, monographic δ , single $\mathbf{ь}$ orthography that underlies the text of the Cyrillic archetypes”. For convenience, I chose to reproduce the former in the left column below.

<i>Prologue to the Gospel Homiliary by Constantine of Preslav (2: 1-36 and 3: 1-4)</i>	
<i>Reconstruction Veder (1999: 153-155)</i>	<i>MS Witness S (Kuev 1974: 307-309)</i>
2	
1 а ³ Язъ словомъ симъ молю сѧ Богоу:	Язъ словомъ си · мѣ молю сѧ боу ·
2 б Боже всѧи твари и зиждителяю	Бѣ всеѧ твари и зиждителяю ·
3 в Видимъимъ и невидимъимъ,	Видимъимъ и невидимъимъ ·
4 г Господа Доуха послѧ живѧщаго,	Гѧ дѧ · послѧ живѧщаго ·
5 д Да въдѣхнеть въ срѣдце ми слово,	Да въдѣхнеть въ срѣдце ми слово ·
6 е Юже вждеть на оуспѣхъ всѣмъ,	Юже боудеть на оуспѣхъ всѣмъ ·
7 ж Живѧщимъ въ заповѣдхъ ти.	Живоушимъ въ заповѣдхъ ти ·
8 з Зѣло бо кстѣ свѣтильникъ жизни	Зѣло бо кстѣ свѣтильникъ жизни ·
9 з Законъ твои и свѣтъ стѣзамъ ми,	Законъ твои · и свѣтъ стѣзамъ ·
10 і Иже ищеть евангельска слова	Иже ищеть евангельска слова ·
11 и И проситъ дары твоѧ и прияти.	И проситъ дары твоѧ прияти ·
12 ѱ Дѣтъ ти во нѣнѣ словѣнско плема:	Летитъ во нѣнѣ · и словѣнско плема ·
13 к Къ крѣщению обратиша сѧ вси,	Къ крѣщению · обратиша сѧ вси ·
14 л Людѧ твои нареци сѧ хотѧще.	Людѧ твои · нареци сѧ хотѧще ·
15 м Милости твоѧ, Боже, просатъ зѣло.	Милости твоѧ · бѣ просатъ зѣло ·
16 н Нѣ мѣнѣ нѣнѣ пространо слово даждь,	Нѣ мѣнѣ нѣнѣ · пространо слово даждь ·
17 о Отъче, Сѣне и прѣсвѧтѧи Доуше,	Оче сѣ · и прѣсѣтѧи дѧше ·
18 п Просѧщѧюмоу помощь отъ тебе.	Просѧщѧюмоу · помощи ѿ тебе ·
19 р Ржцѣ бо свои выспрь въздѣю присно	Роуцѣ бо свои горѣ въздѣю присно ·
20 с Силѧ прияти и мѧдрость оу тебе:	Силоу прияти · и моудрость оу тебе ·
21 т Ты бо дакиши достоинномъ силѧ,	Ты бо дакиши · достоинномъ силоу ·
22 Ѱ Впостасъ же всѧкѧ ищѧши.	Впостасъ же · всѧкоу цѣлиши ·
23 ф Фараоша ма зѣловы избави,	Фараоша ма · зѣловы избави ·
24 х Херѧвскоу ми мѣсль и оумъ даждь,	Херѧвскоу ми · мѣсль и оумъ даждь ·
25 ѡ О чѣстѧнаѧ прѣсвѧтаѧ Троице,	О чѣстѧнаѧ · прѣсѣтаѧ троице ·
26 ѡ Печаль моѧ на радость прѣложи,	Печаль мою на радость прѣложи ·
27 ц Цѣломѧдрьно да начѣнѧ пѣсати	Цѣломоудрьно · да начѣноу пѣсати ·
28 ч Чюдеса твоѧ прѣдивѧнаѧ зѣло,	Чюдеса твоѧ · прѣдивѧнаѧ зѣло ·

29	ш	Шестокрилатъимъ силъ примъ.	Шестъкрилатъ · силоу въспримъ ·
30	щ	Ществоужъ нъикъ по слѣдоу оучителю:	Ществоую нъикъ · по слѣдоу оучителю ·
31	ь	Имени кмоу и дѣлоу послѣдоуѣ,	Имени кю · и дѣлоу послѣдоуѣ ·
32	ѣ	Ивѣ сътворижъ евангельско слово,	Ивѣ сътворю · евангельско слово ·
33	х	Хвалъ въздаѣ Троици въ божьствѣ,	Хвалоу въздаѣ · трѣци въ божьствѣ ·
34	ж	Юже покътъ и всѣакъ въздрасть,	Юже покътъ всѣакъ и въздрасть ·
35	ю	Юнъ и старъ своимъ разоумомъ —	Юнъ и старъ · своимъ разоумомъ ·
36	ѡ	Иъзыкъ новъ, хвалъ въздаѣ присно	Иъзыкъ новъ · хвалоу въздаѣ присно ·
3			
1		Отъцоу, Съиноу и свѣтоу кмоу Доуху,	Отцоу сѣноу · и прѣстоуоу кмоу дху ·
2		Юмоу же чьсть и дръжава и слава	Юмоу же чьсть и дръжава и слава ·
3		Отъ всеѣа твари и дъхання	Отъ всеѣа твари и дъхання ·
4		Въ непрѣврдомънѣ вѣкы. Аминь.	Въ всѣа вѣкы · и на вѣкы аминь ·

3 Commentary

3.1 Jers

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 *S* 2: 1, 3, 5-8, 10, 13, 14, 16-22, 24-28, 30, 31, 33-36, and 3: 2.

S is very faithful in rendering the jers correctly. The only verses where we have to restore a weak jer are 2: 2 (**всѣа**), 3: 3 (also **всѣа**) and 3: 4 (**всѣа**), thus yielding in all three cases the required metre.⁴ On the other hand, the secondary jer in **ЕВАНГЕЛЬСКО** (2: 32) has to be eliminated (cf. **ЕВ[А]НГЕЛЬСКА** 2: 10) in order to obtain twelve syllables.

Variant spellings of jers in *S* are found only in instr.sg.n. **си · |мъ** (2: 1), where the period at the end of the first line of the *Alphabet Prayer* suggests a misreading by the copyist, and **аминь** (3: 4) versus **аминъ** (4: 53-54). Third person endings always have **-ъ** (**въдѣхнеть** 2: 5, **боудеть** 6, **късть** 8, etc.), which, of course,

is due to the Russian linguistic background of the scribe.⁵ This also holds for cases of instr.sg.m. endings in **-тъ** (see section 3.4 below). In 2: 34, the *S* reading **въз-драсть** (with final **-ъ** clearly visible on the facsimile) must form the basis for the reconstruction. Other readings (especially attested in γ and δ) are clearly secondary, pointing either to an alternative word formation (type **вѣсакъ въздрасть**), or a misinterpretation on an orthographic or a morphosyntactic level (type **вѣсакъ/вѣсакъ въздрасть**).⁶

The reconstruction deviates in two instances from what is to be expected. First, the secondary jer in **изъбави** (2: 23) is not found in any of the Cyrillic archetypes and conflicts with the reconstructed prefix **въз-** (not **възъ-**) in 2: 19, 33, 34, 36 (cf. Diels 1963²: 86). I think Vaillant offers a better solution for the lacking syllable in verse 23: “lire **изъбавивъ**, ou plutôt, comme les formes en **-ивъ** sont assez récents [...], **изъбавѣни**, déterminé: „(toi) qui m’as délivré de la malice du Pharaon“, c’est-à-dire du paganisme” (1963²: 78, n. 3). Second, leaving out the jer in **посли** (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* (**посъли**) 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, Доухъ посъли живащии**⁷ makes perfect sense and explains how the verse could have been misunderstood when subsequently the genitive became obligatory.

3.2 Просити + асс.?

Verse 2: 15 is problematic because the *S* reading disrupts the metre. I agree with Veder (p. 68) that we have to rely on the $\beta\gamma\delta$ readings **твоѡ** instead of **твокиа**. However, by interpreting (**милости**) **твоѡ** as an acc.pl.f. form (“Thy mercies”), Veder is forced to assume that the author used **просити** with an accusative which is at variance with the syntax of the verb as attested elsewhere (*SJS* III, 1982: 374, s.v. **просити**). It also confronts the reconstruction with a major problem in 2: 18, where the firmly established reading (**просѣщюуоу моу/**

просащѣмъ) помощи in *S*, γ and δ has to be considered inferior to a hypothetical accusative form **помощь**, constructed on the basis of (просащѣмъ) **пищѣ** (δ **тебе**) in β , which is to my opinion clearly a secondary interpretation.⁸ I think we have to stick to the solution of Nahtigal (followed by Kuev 1974: 158 and Vaillant 1963²: 77, n. 9), who proposed that the reconstructed **твѡа** in 2: 15 is a short gen.sg. form (cf. Diels 1963²: 116, 208 for “die nicht ganz seltenen Formen wie gsg. f. **твѡа**” 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 *S* (**зидителю**) **видимымъ** и **невидимымъ** (2: 3), **въ срьдце ми** (2: 5), **на оуспѣхъ въсѣмъ** (2: 6), **въ заповѣдъхъ ти** (2: 7) and most probably also **по слѣдоу оучителю** (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 **свѣтъ стъсамъ ми** 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 **кю** in *S* by **кмоу** in the original text (p. 75) instead of **кго**, which is firmly established in the β and δ readings.⁹ The same holds for 2: 2 and 2: 29. In verse 2: 2, *S* as well as γ and δ point to a gen.sg. reading **въсѣа твари**. Veder’s reconstruction dat.sg. **въсен твари** is based on only a part of the manuscript witnesses of β (cf., e.g., *P5*, *S11*, *S12*, *U3*, *U4*, *V11*, *V12*, where we find gen.sg. forms in **-еа/-еа/-еа**). Moreover, cases of **въсен** 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 **шестокрилатымъ**; we either find short forms (as in *S* and $\beta\gamma$) or long forms (δ) of the gen.pl. The reconstruction of the verse must be either

шестокрилатыхъ силъ примъ or, alternatively, **шестокрилатъ силъ да въсприимъ** (see the discussion in Kuev 1974: 163).¹⁰

3.4 Traces of “Glagolitisms”?

The relationship between *S* 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 **ѣ** and **ѣ** [...], 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 *S* an arbitrary 50 years, i.e. before ca. 1100”. It is true that *S* does not distinguish between **ѣ** and **ѣ** in the text (cf. **стъсамъ** 2: 9 and **зѣло** 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 **зѣло** and the next one with **законъ**. This, however, does not necessarily mean that the assumption of a lack of Glagolitic traces in *S* 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 *S* (see section 2 above). I will discuss all variant readings, which are ascribed by Veder to a Glagolitic antigraph:

- The β reading **прелогъ** instead of **прологъ** (1: 1-2) does not have to be explained as a misreading of Glagolitic **ѣ** (p. 61); spellings with **пре-** instead of **про-** (cf. also **прилогъ** in manuscript witness *S/2*) are also attested elsewhere (*SRJa XI-XVII* 18, 1992: 261-262, s.v. **прелогъ**).
- The instr.sg. **чѣвчскѣмъ гласѣмъ** (4: 30) in *S* reflects the regular North Slavic ending **-ѣмъ** as opposed to **-омъ** in South Slavic (cf. also **костантинѣмъ** 1: 3-4, but **разоумомъ** 2: 35). The β reading **чѣвчскимъ гласомъ** 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 **-мъ**). There is no need whatever to assume “problems with reading the Glagolitic desinence of **чѣловѣчскѣмъ**” (p. 84), neither in α (“ α interprets the **ѣ** as **ѣ**”) nor in β .

Христолюбець въсѣхъ ...) is ambiguous: either acc.pl. (as on p. 86: “requesting the prayers ...”) or gen.sg.

9 юю in *S* must have originated from a misinterpretation of по слѣдоу оучителю in the preceding verse (gen.du. instead of dat.sg.).

10 The idea that the starting point of the reconstruction must be *принимъ* (found only in δ), and not *въспринимъ* (as in *S* and $\beta\gamma$), because “no prefixed forms of the verb *принати* are attested elsewhere in the *Alphabet Prayer* (cf. 2: 11 and 20)” (p. 74) suggests that *принати* and *въспринати* are synonyms, which is hard to believe. According to Veder, the variant reading *въспринимъ* was introduced as the result of a misreading of the original *шестокрилатънимъ*: “The $\alpha\beta\gamma$ texts must have, in fact, contained the pronominal desinence *-имъ*, because only its interpretation as a participle of *яти*, tautologous with *принимъ*, could have led to its replacement by an intensifying prefix to the verb”. To my opinion, this line of complex reasoning is too high a price to pay in order to justify a reconstructed dat.pl. form.

11 I was not able to consult *La* (β) and *Pn* (δ); cf. p. 17.

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