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Non-Autonomy in Old Slavonic Miscellanies: South Slavic Metaphrastic Translations in the Miscellanies of Hesychast and Anti-Latin Contents

This chapter spotlights two medieval hagiographies, initially appearing in Byzantine linguistic context and eventually allocating to Old Slavonic manuscripts as translations.¹ Originally belonging to a Greek collection of saints' lives aligned by church calendar, the texts were translated and placed in the thematic miscellany manuscripts together with other Old Slavonic writings of various genres.² The novel codices came to diverge in the aims, topics, and structure from the originals to which the texts belonged. The Slavonic miscellany manuscripts maintained overarching themes and prioritized specific subjects within their volumes. The texts were eventually repurposed in the new manuscripts by the will of their translators, compilers, and scribes, albeit in two distinct ways. This chapter will focus on the texts' diverse paths in the process of their transmission and acquisition of new meanings in the new settings.

The multifaceted process, including texts' inter-lingual and material transitions, is more complex than initially appears. It likely includes communities rather than individuals. The translators, compilers, and scribes may have worked synchronously (or not) in the various phases of the process. The inspiration for the rendering of texts into another language by translators may have had no links with their posterior material transmission by scribes. Undoubtedly, the original ideas of the Greek versions of these narratives appealed to those who instigated their translation. The translation process may have been disconnected from the manuscripts' compilation. If this is the case, compiler(s), who may have been the same as scribe(s), could have spotted the

1 This chapter is a revised version of the paper presented at the international conference *Translatio – translation and transfer of language, culture, literature*, held in Venice in May 2022 and hosted by Ca' Foscari University of Venice, in the organization of the project “Modes of Modification,” based at the University of Oslo. The chapter is part of broader research under the umbrella of the project “Retracing Connections: Byzantine Storyworlds in Greek, Arabic, Georgian, and Old Slavonic (c. 950–c. 1100)” (M19-0430:1, <https://retracingconnections.org>), where I have studied the translation of the Metaphrastic *Menologion* into Old Slavonic. I am grateful to the Riksbankens Jubileumsfond for the opportunity to conduct this research. The chapter could not have been completed without the generous provision of manuscripts by the Monks of Hilandar Monastery (Mt. Athos, Greece) and the Hilandar Research Library at The Ohio State University (Columbus, Ohio, USA). I owe special thanks to Mary-Allen (Pasha) Johnson from the Hilandar Research Library.

2 For “thematic manuscripts”, see Andrist (2020, 305–346).

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features introduced during the translation, which turned these texts into desirable readings for specific new audiences. Compilers must have known the novel contexts where the texts were to be placed. Scribes may have added a word or two to the already extant translation, by which they became interpolators.

Narratology and translation studies explain this process in the following way. They teach us that medieval texts cover a long path from their original authors to the actual readers who hold them in their hands (O'Sullivan 2003, 199). What an original author has in store for a text may not correspond to what posterior readers experience when encountering the same text. The texts mature over time and change their contexts. With the context transformation, their secondary purposes, functions, and consumption may also be reshaped. In this scheme, translating from one medieval language to another adds several new phases to the transmission process (O'Sullivan 2003, 200).

Besides the reader-focused approach, the material transmission must be viewed as another essential aspect of their afterlife. Medieval texts were contained in manuscripts. The manuscripts' production significantly determined the texts' reception and transmission (Busby 2002, 58). Their lives depended on the ink and hands of scribes, the legibility of the script of a given manuscript, the quality and size of writing material, the layout and space allotted for the texts, and the manuscripts' binding. All these factors could, intentionally or accidentally, influence the texts' existence.

Another significant feature of the texts' afterlives is the potential for their translatability. Once the texts cross the original linguistic confines and enter the interlingual sphere, do they inevitably lose their comprehensibility and get "lost in translation"? According to some scholars, some words and phrases in a language find no equivalents in other languages. From "Nothing is Translatable" to "Everything is Translatable", the fierce debates that linger on give some hope that the crucial interlingual step is still possible to surmount (Apter 2006).

The new meanings that the texts acquire once they transit to their new linguistic areas and new book covers appear challenging to explain in light of the complex theories. Nevertheless, the task of this chapter is to follow up on this path. The chapter will reflect on the interlingual transition and inquire into the post-translation whereabouts of the texts in their new environments. The two Byzantine texts written in Greek, the *Martyrdom of Varos* (BHG 1863) and the *Martyrdom of Eustratios, Auxentios, Eugenios, Mardarios, and Orestes* (BHG 646), translated from a prominent Byzantine collection of saints' lives, the Metaphrastic *Menologion*, into Old Slavonic, present the core of the study.³ These translated Byzantine stories about saints traveled across territories and linguistic areas, maintaining their relevance despite the multiple transitions and the time-lapse.

3 On the Metaphrastic *Menologion* of Symeon Metaphrastes, see Høgel (2002a, 2002b, 2014, 2020); Papaioannou (2017); Ehrhard (1897).

The texts emanated from the Metaphrastic *Menologion*, which included the lives of saints and martyrdom accounts for the entire calendar year, divided into ten volumes. The collection followed a fixed structure, beginning with 1 September – the start of the Byzantine calendar year – and ending with August (Høgel 2002a, 11). Nearly every day incorporated the reading of the lives of saints (Høgel 2002a, 11). Two volumes of the *Menologion* were dedicated to September and October, and November, December, and January included double volumes. Finally, the months of February to May were enfolded in a single volume, while June to August covered another volume (Høgel 2002a, 11). This structure of the *Menologion* exemplifies one of its essential characteristics. Such an alignment implies that the texts were mainly read on the feast days of the saints whose lives and deeds they described. The *Martyrdom of Varos* (BHG 1863) appeared on 19 October within this format, while the *Martyrdom of Eustratios and Companions* (BHG 646) occurred on 13 December.

Published at the turn of the eleventh century, the Metaphrastic *Menologion* became prominent shortly after for numerous reasons besides its potential impact on the Byzantine calendar of saints.⁴ Symeon Metaphrastes, a notable Byzantine court official who initiated and managed the project around the collection, mainly reused the earlier, late antique hagiographies. In most cases, they came in greatly improved regarding their language and style.

The two texts examined in this chapter accurately illustrate the material originating from late antiquity, mainly of anonymous authorship. The version of the *Martyrdom of Varos* that appeared in the Metaphrastic *Menologion* (BHG 1863) relies on an earlier, anonymous version (BHG 1862) (Høgel 2002a, 181). With this and other texts' rewritings, Symeon Metaphrastes not only reached the literary norms of the time; he further advanced the appealing practice of *metaphrasis* in Byzantium. The *Martyrdom of Eustratios and Companions* in the *Menologion* version (BHG 646), on the other hand, was among the rare examples of texts directly taken from an old *Menologion* (Høgel 2002a, 191; Ehrhard 1937, 526–527).

Having obtained fame in the Byzantine context, the Metaphrastic *Menologion* soon drew the attention of non-Greek-speaking Christians. It was eventually translated from Greek into several other languages. However, the translation of the *Menologion*'s contents was delayed among the South Slavs (in the territories of Bulgaria and Serbia), at least in the first few centuries after the collection's emergence. Otherwise embracing “all things Greek”, the South Slavs did not demonstrate an equal interest in the Metaphrastic *Menologion* at the outset.

The complicated history of the South Slavic lands may have been among the reasons for the delayed transmission of the *Menologion*. Byzantium occupied Bulgaria's

⁴ The *Menologion* was not explicitly promoted in Byzantium before 1025. After this period, it became so widespread that its copies were produced with equal intensity until the end of Byzantium. The metaphrastic manuscripts comprise one-third of all the extant hagiographical Byzantine manuscripts today. Their number is around 700. See Høgel (2002a, 127–134); Høgel (2020, 270).

territory from the eleventh to the end of the twelfth century, which coincided with the original appearance of the *Menologion*. In this period, minimal literary production and translation in the Old Slavonic language occurred. No material evidence supports significant ongoing translation activities (Yovcheva and Taseva 2012, 288). The twelfth and partially the thirteenth centuries display a gap in our knowledge of the textual transmission from Byzantium to the South Slavic world because of the low manuscript preservation rates (See Ivanova 2008, 40; Fine 1991, 220). The South Slavic material is more consistently conserved only from the fourteenth century, overlapping with the cultural revival of both South Slavic entities, the Second Bulgarian Empire and medieval Serbia. At the same time, Mount Athos in Greece started to play a pivotal role in literary production, which supplied the Slavic lands; it is where the manuscripts discussed in this article come from. The dating of the earliest manuscripts that preserve the translations of the Metaphrastic *Menologion* into Old Slavonic aligns with these historical circumstances. One thirteenth-century South Slavic manuscript keeps a single text translated from the *Menologion*, and more material appears from the fourteenth century (Vuković 2021, 80–101).

It is likely more consequential than the late transmission of the Metaphrastic *Menologion* that the collection was not transmitted in its entirety among the South Slavs. Although the format of the *Menologion* and its alignment according to dates were among its most essential characteristics, the *Menologion* was only partially translated among the South Slavs. The collection experienced disintegration and modifications in the structure and contents. Besides a few examples demonstrating the opposite, most South Slavic manuscripts contained only individual translated metaphrastic texts. Their contents vastly differed from the original layout of the Byzantine Metaphrastic *Menologion*. Out of 148 texts in the Metaphrastic *Menologion* distributed in ten volumes, only 53 translated South Slavic texts are preserved in the manuscripts dating from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century.⁵ The South Slavs commonly copied from one up to four metaphrastic texts within the manuscripts of different purposes. They were followed by various other documents, usually not hagiographies and certainly not metaphrastic hagiographies.

5 A few manuscripts, which displayed the exact contents as in the Metaphrastic *Menologion*, covered only September. The fourteenth-century codex, Hilandar Metaphrast °2, which aligned the texts for the second part of September, was among a few manuscripts that adhered to the metaphrastic structure. Another manuscript dated to the fifteenth century, ZIIb20, from the Croatian Academy of Sciences in Zagreb, preserves the texts for the first fifteen days of September. This manuscript is considered a copy of a pair of Hilandar Metaphrast °2. Some scholars argued that these two manuscripts were part of the same cycle despite their dating to different centuries. The fact that they encircle only the month of September points to the amount to which the South Slavs covered the translation of the Metaphrastic *Menologion* while adhering to its original structure. Further research needs to examine whether this enterprise was conducted as part of an envisaged larger project. It is also worth investigating why the translation project if it existed as such, was abandoned after the translation of the September volume. See Čalija (2017); Ivanov (2019, 145–146); Ivanova (2004, 254, n. 10); Vuković (2021, 80–101).

These manuscripts are, in scholarship, defined as miscellanies, collections containing texts of various genres written by different authors compiled together. The detailed investigations of this category of manuscripts emerged in the last twenty years through the debates among scholars of different disciplines, such as Stephen G. Nichols, Siegfried Wenzel, Lucie Doležalová, Greti Dinkova-Bruun, Andrew Taylor, Eva Nyström, and others.⁶ Although their conclusions could be applied to various research areas, reaching for literature outside the confines of individual disciplines has been sporadic thus far. Scholars have recently re-acknowledged the differences in the contribution level regarding the definition of miscellany among scholars of different disciplines. The authors Bausi, Friedrich, and Maniaci admitted that in some research areas, such as Classical Greek, German, Romance, Medieval Latin, and Byzantine studies, the form, content, and meaning of miscellanies have already been thoroughly addressed with elaborations on many miscellany subvarieties, while in other research areas, the work is still at its very beginning (Bausi et al. 2020, Preface). The diversity in contributions accentuates the need for a more uniform approach in the definition and terminology.

When some of the initial debates regarding the definition of miscellany emerged, scholars concentrated on whether the term “miscellany” implied a specific organization in a manuscript or its structure was of loose and provisional character.⁷ Some scholars argued that the term miscellany “does little to address the dynamics of individual examples and sheds little light on the relationship of the texts to their codicological contexts” (Nichols and Wenzel 1996, 3). The concern of these scholars is that the term may be misleading and suggests an arbitrary organization of the manuscript contents “in which there may be a clear organizing principle” (Nichols and Wenzel 1996, 3). According to Nichols and Wenzel, searching for a better concept than “miscellany” may be helpful (Nichols and Wenzel 1996, 3).

Some scholars proposed an alternative term, “anthology”, which implies a specific structuring. Anthologies are suggested to have better organization principles and more sophisticated aims. Other scholars argued for the uncertainty of “where an anthology, a miscellany, or even simply a compilation begins and ends” (Boffey 1996, 82). “Miscellaneous” manuscripts may not be as mixed or diverse as they appear at first sight (Shailor 1996, 153–167). They were seldom miscellaneous for the audiences and individuals who produced, read, and used them (Shailor 1996, 167). Labeling them as such reveals our inability to understand manuscripts in their primary cultural context (Shailor 1996, 167).

Besides the text-historical discussions that tackle the miscellanies and their contents,⁸ several recent publications contributed to the manuscripts’ codicological con-

⁶ Nichols and Wenzel (1996); Kelly and Thompson (2005); Taylor (2002); Nyström (2009); Dinkova-Bruun (2013, 14–33); Doležalová (2013, 139–165); Doležalová and Rivers (2013).

⁷ Herrin (1999); Labarge (1997); Kelly and Thompson (2005); Taylor (2002); Reiter (1996, 151–170).

⁸ Andrist (2020, 307) suggested that these are the “ideas and the content of the book.”

text or their physical features.⁹ They built upon the earlier scholarship; Friedrich and Schwarke introduced in their volume the debates on the concept of miscellany, starting with Cerquiglini, Nichols, and Wenzel (Friedrich and Schwarke 2016, 1–26). Maniaci and Andrist attempted to produce a coherent typology for describing complex codices by challenging earlier terminology and concepts such as “booklet”, “caesurae”, “codicological units”, “libelli”, “miscellaneous codices”, and similar terms (Andrist et al. 2013). The diversity of terms imposed the need for clarification and unification.

Besides the debates on the definition of miscellany, the scholars made a further distinction between composite and, as they call them, MTM (multi-text) manuscripts (Bausi et al. 2020). “Multiple-text” are those manuscripts planned and produced for a single project with one consistent intention and usually made of a single production unit; they are called “non-composite” manuscripts elsewhere. On the other hand, composite manuscripts consist of units that independently existed before they were bound together. Some scholars argue that the composite manuscripts may not be considered miscellanies after all.¹⁰

In this chapter, I focus, to a greater extent, only on those debates within the studies of medieval “miscellany” manuscripts that touch upon the “non-autonomy” of medieval texts within the manuscript contents. Namely, these studies maintain that the meaning of texts may be altered in a manuscript by the presence of other texts. In manuscript miscellanies, texts do not necessarily appear accidentally and autonomously next to one another (Müller 2013, 84). One of the proponents, Diana Müller (2013, 84), argues that not only does a clear organizational principle exist in the manuscripts of seemingly loose structure; texts take on new meanings depending on what other texts they are placed next to. In their recent contribution, Bausi, Friedrich, and Maniaci also suggested that “multi-text manuscripts acquire the new meaning and new features after single texts are grouped in one volume: this grouping enables a theoretically unlimited possibility of combinations” (Bausi et al. 2020, Preface, XI). Such a possibility allows texts to become non-autonomous within their new manuscript contents.

Following these studies, I propose exploring the non-autonomy of the South Slavic metaphrastic translations within their new manuscripts. Placing aside for the time being the complex issue of why the South Slavs abandoned the previous metaphrastic structure and allowed the Metaphrastic *Menologion* to disintegrate, I will focus on the several textual examples translated from the *Menologion*, which were accommodated within the contents of the Old Slavonic miscellanies in a meaningful way. The novel

⁹ Bausi et al. (2020); Andrist and Maniaci (2021, 369–394); Friedrich and Schwarke (2016); Maniaci (2018, 11–22); Brita and Karolewski (2021, 459–490). Within Slavic studies, see Miltenova and Birnbaum (2000); Birnbaum (2003, 15–64).

¹⁰ Like some scholars mentioned above, Peter Gumbert (2004, 17–42) distinguished between *miscellany* and *composite*. The former manuscripts are those written by a single person and in a single process.

codices likely displayed indicative agendas in the arrangement of their texts. The texts accordingly acquired new meanings within these manuscripts.

One of the manuscripts, Хил458 from Hilandar on Mount Athos, is referred to as an Ascetic-Hesychast Miscellany in catalogues. The other, Хил474, also from Hilandar, is called a Hesychast and anti-Latin collection.¹¹ The translated Old Slavonic *Martyrdom of Varos* (BHG 1863) was placed within the contents of the manuscript Хил458 as the only metaphrastic text. Similarly, the manuscript Хил474 enlisted the Old Slavonic *Martyrdom of Eustratios and Companions* (BHG 646) within its contents as a sole metaphrastic text to support its Hesychast or anti-Latin ideas. How did these texts come to support the novel concepts in their new contexts? How were the texts eventually recontextualized? The chapter will first investigate the manuscripts' overarching themes by studying their contents, providing a view "from the outside" towards the texts as containers of ideas. I further focus on translation and look at the texts "from the inside," inquiring whether the specific features of their translation form a rationale for copying these two texts in these Old Slavonic manuscripts.

Before discussing the manuscripts' contents, a few details need to be explained. While the meaning of "anti-Latin" syntagm is clear, Hesychasm as a concept needs some further elaboration.¹²

As a movement that originated in fourth-century Palestine and Egypt, Hesychasm lingered in medieval Christianity until it attained its peak in the Byzantine monastic communities of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, including Mount Athos and other monasteries within Bulgaria and Serbia.¹³ Its establishment as an ecclesiastical and political doctrine in Byzantium and Bulgaria in the fourteenth century enabled the free entry of Hesychast ideas and compositions in Bulgaria (Hébert 1992, 5).

Hesychasm is primarily a theological concept developed by Gregory Palamas and Gregory of Sinai.¹⁴ Its practitioners sought divine quietness or silence (*hesychia*) through the contemplation of God in uninterrupted prayer. Such prayer involved the entire human being – soul, mind, and body; it was often an inner or silent prayer. The whole human body needed to participate in the prayer so that the human eyes could reach the vision of the uncreated light. In later centuries, a more rigorous physical performance was introduced to the doctrine, which included assuming a position where one controlled breathing, contracted the whole body, and fixed the eyes to-

11 The Hesychast and anti-Latin thematic definition of these manuscripts is noted in the description of manuscripts in the Ohio State University Library Catalogue. In her book, Klimentina Ivanova (2008, 148) reported the same manuscripts' definitions. According to Andrist (2020, 315), "It is crucial that at least 40% of the book consist of texts treating this subject to be considered a 'thematic codex.'"

12 On Hesychasm in general, see Johnson (2010); Meyendorf (1974); Strezova (2014).

13 The literature on Hesychasm in these areas includes Tachiaos (1966, 83–89); Popović (2011, 217–257); Hébert (1992).

14 For example, in his *Discourse on the Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ*, Gregory of Sinai compares the light perceived by a monk's prayer with the splendour of the light on Mt. Tabor. See Balfour (1986, 21–57); Popović (2011, 219).

ward the belly (Hébert 1992, 3). The goal of the Hesychasts was to reach salvation through the “permanent prayers, rigorous self-denial, and mortification of the body in their isolated cells, but also to tame the wilderness of the ‘desert’ or even to convert it into a ‘spiritual workshop,’ as Gregory of Sinai suggested” (Popović 2011, 221).

Some of the late antique Christian thinkers later utilized by the Hesychasts, such as John Climacus, stated that “the beginning of solitude is to throw off all noise as disturbing for the depth (of the soul) [. . .] A solitary is he who strives to confine his incorporeal being within his bodily house” (John Climacus, Step 27, 5–6). Hesychasm thus involved solitude, prayer, bodily experience and senses, the knowledge of God, and reaching the vision of the uncreated light. Some scholars argued that its meaning was not always clear. It included at least five different things: (1.) a solitary life, solitude, (2.) the practice of inner prayer, inward stillness or silence of the heart, (3.) union through repetition of the Jesus Prayer, (4.) the employment of a particular psychosomatic technique in combination with the Jesus Prayer, and (5.) the theology of Gregory Palamas (Lazarova 2004, 367–368). The Hesychast writings were characterized by an ornamented and exuberant writing style known as word-weaving (Hébert 1992).

As for the structure of the fourteenth-fifteenth-century manuscript containing the Old Slavonic *Martyrdom of Varos*, ХИЛ458 is a composite of two sections. Entitled *Sbornik* (‘Collection’), it has no beginning and end, and its two parts are dated differently: the first from the fourteenth to the fifteenth century and the second to the fourteenth century. The division of folia goes as follows: Part 1 takes folios 1–286, and Part 2 occupies folios from 287–447. As the *Martyrdom of Varos* appeared in folios 289–304, the text belongs to the second part of the manuscript, dated to the fourteenth century (Ivanova 2008, 148).

Studying composite manuscripts is never uncomplicated, especially if one is to rely on manuscript catalogues and not their own inspection of the manuscript. In this case, the examination of the manuscript contents may or may not be conducted at the level of the entire manuscript, as it is often conditioned by the dating of binding, which may become irrelevant in case of a later date. I pointed out earlier in the chapter that composite manuscripts may not be considered miscellanies after all.¹⁵ They are not single units but consist of self-contained parts, which may or may not display logical and visible links. These formerly independent codicological sections may have been put together later with intentions that might be completely different from those of their original parts. Their study requires the examination of the binder’s intention besides the separate inspection of the individual units and their original production and use.

The contents of this manuscript are described in the catalogue of the Ohio State University Library and, with less detail, in K. Ivanova, *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Balcano-Slavica* (Ivanova 2008). However, the catalogues vaguely specify where the com-

15 Peter Gumbert (2004, 17–42) distinguished between “miscellany” and “composite”. The former manuscripts are those written by a single person and in a single process.

posite manuscript's first part ends and the second part begins. Considering that the *Martyrdom of Varos* begins in folio 289, it is conclusive that the text stands close to the opening of the second part of the composite manuscript (Ivanova 2008, 148). The entire manuscript will be discussed in what follows because of the topical resemblance of the contents of the two composite parts (Ivanova 2008, 148).

The manuscript ХИЛ458 includes the following texts (*Hesychast miscellany*, Ohio State University Library catalogue): *On the Commandments of God*, by Athanasius the Great, various excerpts from the *Paterikon*, the *Life of Mary of Egypt*, *Homily on Repentance and Forgiveness*, by Ephraim the Syrian, *Questions and Answers on the Need of the Soul*, *Homily*, by Eusebius of Alexandria, *Homily for Thursday of the Passion Week*, by Eusebius of Alexandria, *Homily on Christ's Resurrection*, by Eusebius of Alexandria, *Homily on Beneficial Punishment* and *Homily on Repentance and Forgiveness*, by Ephraim the Syrian, *Homily on Annunciation* (25 March),¹⁶ the *Transfer of Martyr Stephen's Relics*, *Homily on the Transfer of Stephen's Relics* (2 August), by John Chrysostom, *Homily on the Transfiguration of Christ*, by John Chrysostom, *Homily on the Transfiguration of Christ*, by John of Damascus (6 August),¹⁷ *Resurrectional Canon*, the *Martyrdom of Varos*, *On Proclaiming the Holy Pascha*, by John Chrysostom, *Homily Against Those who Get Intoxicated*, *Homily on the End of Time and Christ's Second Coming*, by Ephraim the Syrian, *Homily on the Beggar and the Rich Man and Charity*, Theodore Studite's *Instructions*, Danil's *Homily on Andronicus and his Wife*, *On the Daughter-in-law who was Killed by her Father-in-law*, *Homily*, by Isaias, *Homily on the Holy Apostles Fast*, by John Chrysostom, a fragment of the *Life of Basil* (the end is missing), and Seven homilies by Ephraim the Syrian.

These homilies are written by various prominent authors, such as Athanasius the Great, Ephraim the Syrian, Eusebius of Alexandria, and John Chrysostom (K. Ivanova adds John of Damascus to this list), on various topics, such as repentance, forgiveness, the needs of the soul, the commandments of God, fasting, and beneficial punishment. The composite also contains homilies for the essential feasts, such as the Passion Week, Christ's resurrection, Annunciation, and the Transfiguration of Christ. Finally, it includes a few hagiographical pieces, the *Life of Mary of Egypt*, a fragment of the *Life of St. Basil*, the *Transfer of Martyr Stephen's Relics*, the *Homily on the Transfer of Stephen's Relics*, various excerpts from the *Paterikon*, Theodore Studite's *Instructions*, and the *Resurrectional Canon*. The discussion of how these individual texts contributed to the ascetic and Hesychast character of the manuscript must remain a subject of further research. In what follows, I will analyze how the *Martyrdom of Varos* advances these ideas and the overarching theme of the manuscript.

¹⁶ This text is mentioned only by Ivanova (2008, 148).

¹⁷ This text is also mentioned only by Ivanova (2008, 148). It remains to be seen whether two authors wrote these two texts with the same title or it is a single text whose different cataloguers confused the author.

Before that, let us go back to the contents of the fourteenth-century manuscript Хил474 from Hilandar, which presents a thematic compilation of polemical treatises with anti-Latin and Hesychast subjects.¹⁸ The manuscript is a non-composite, and its single scribe is noted as a monk Iōv (*Hesychast and anti-Latin collection*, Ohio State University Library catalogue). Entitled *Sbornik* ('Collection'), it contains the following texts: the *First Latin Collection*, by Gregory Palamas, *Chapters on Latins* by Nilus Cabasilas, the *Polemical Manual against the Latins* by Nilus Cabasilas, other "chapters" on Latin teachings and against the Latins, a testimony from the Holy Scriptures and the Holy Fathers on the Holy Ghost, the *Heresies of Barlaam and Akindynos in 41 Points*, with *Epistle* by Gregory Palamas, the *Disputes on the Christian Faith and Jewish Law*, from the time of Sophronius, an archbishop of Jerusalem, the *Apocalypse of John* (canonical text), *Homily on the Annual Rise of the Dust from John Theologian's Grave* (8 May),¹⁹ the *Readings of Prophet Isaiah* (9 May), *Homily on Slander*, by John Chrysostom, the *Martyrdom of Arthemios* (20 October), and the *Martyrdom of Eustratius and Companions* (13 December). Besides the works of Gregory Palamas, Nilus Cabasilas, and the excerpts from the Holy Scriptures, one may also find disputes on the Christian faith and Jewish law, Apocalypses, manuals against the Latins, and other related subjects. The *Martyrdom of Eustratius and Companions* is one of the few texts that relate to date. The date here probably does not matter, as the random texts that attach a date are not aligned chronologically. The manuscript is primarily thematic with its distinct, overarching subject.

The *Martyrdom of Varos* and the *Martyrdom of Eustratius and Companions* landed in the manuscripts from Hilandar by the compiler(s)' deliberate action and the logic of non-autonomy. The inner features of their translations provide an additional clue for their selection. Which sections could have been appealing to the would-be Hesychast and anti-Latin audiences? Were these the "translation effects" occurring during the translation, which may have caused their inflated appeal among the compilers? According to Mary Kate Hurley (2021, 1), the "translation effects" were the visible traces of the translation process, which could reveal the imagined political, cultural, and linguistic communities that consumed the text. Did the original (Greek) martyrdom stories contain portions of the text carrying ideas that supported the Hesychast and anti-Latin concepts? In the latter case, the translator would have worked with the scribe and the compiler on selecting the texts and rendering them into Old Slavonic, possibly as part of the same project. Both ways were legitimate for the texts to become non-autonomous within their new manuscript contents. Non-autonomy was the principle the compilers used to execute the conceived outcome of their miscellanies. They viewed the individual texts as belonging to a whole. Accordingly, they paid particular attention to those textual sections that represent the general manuscript's themes in each of them.

¹⁸ Ivanova (2008, 150); *Hesychast and anti-Latin collection*, Ohio State University Library catalogue; see Evangelou for the overview and bibliography about disseminating miscellanies with ascetical-mystical content in the Slavic world.

¹⁹ This text is mentioned only by K. Ivanova. See Ivanova (2008, 150).

In the Greek *Martyrdom of Varos* (BHG 1863), one particular episode in the narrative likely inclines toward Hesychast's ideas. The episode may have caught the eye of the translator as potentially beneficial and supportive of the ideas the manuscript aimed to promote. In the story of his martyrdom, Varos was a fourth-century Roman officer who lived in Egypt (*Patrologiae*, ed. Migne 1899, 1141–1160). He was secretly Christian and kept visiting martyrs-to-be in prisons and helping them. When one of the martyrs died for the faith, Varos stepped in his place and declared himself openly to be a Christian. His betrayal of the Roman government and army to which he belonged was perceived as atrocious because he was a prominent soldier. He was instantly punished through severe torture. The martyr was beaten up, tied to a tree, and hacked with knives and razors. He was eventually left to hang from a tree until he died. His body was then dragged through the town and thrown to the dogs. Another character, Cleopatra, was introduced in the story when his death occurred. Sometimes, this martyrdom is called the *Martyrdom of Varos and Cleopatra*.

She was a woman of Palestinian origin and a widow of an officer who lived with a small son. She secretly took the body of Varos after his death, anointed it, and put it in precious clothes. She kept the body for a while until she decided to return from Egypt to her country. However, she could not transfer the martyr's body unless she had first reported it to the presiding officer. She claimed she needed to take her husband's remains from Egypt. As he was a prominently ranked officer who merited burial in his homeland, she successfully argued in favor of the transfer. She hid the body of the martyr inside the coffin.

Having arrived in Palestine, she buried the martyr with great honour. When people started gathering around his grave, she decided to build him a church. She invested great effort and time in constructing a sacral object that served the martyr's recognition.

Cleopatra's son had reached adulthood by this time and was appointed a military officer. After the church was consecrated and Varos' relics transferred, the liturgy was served, followed by a banquet and a feast. While she was swamped with organizing the celebration, she insisted that the young man only took food or drink once the banquet was over to honour the martyr through fasting. After the feast was over and the day was already drawing to a close, Cleopatra's son fell ill after not eating all day. He was burning with a great fever and eventually died of it at midnight of the same day.

Falling into despair, Cleopatra fell on the ground, tore her hair, and wept for several days. She addressed the martyr Varos and asked what crime they committed to bring such bitter calamity to their lives. Then, she briefly fell asleep from exhaustion and grief.

A vision appeared to her in a dream. The saint, Varos, and her dead son materialized together. They shone like a bright light, dressed in white clothes with crowns on their heads:

Μικρὸν αὐτὴν ὕπνος ὑπελθὼν ἀνέπεισε, καὶ πάντα ἦν ὁ παῖς αὐτῇ φανεῖς σὺν τῷ μάρτυρι. Παρεστηκότα τε γὰρ ἑδόκει βλέπτειν τὸν ἀθλητὴν, καὶ ὡς υἱὸν ἰδίων τὸν αὐτῆς υἱὸν ἐγκεκολωμένον, ἢ ἀναβολῇ δὲ ἀμφοτέροις ἐξ ὑπερφυοῦς ἄγαν καὶ ὑπερλάμπρου. στέφανοί τε τὰς αὐτῶν ἐκόσμουσιν ἡδιστα κεφαλὰς. Καὶ οἱ στέφανοι, θεῖον αὐτῶν εἶπες τὸ κάλλος, καὶ ἡκιστα γλώσση ρητόν. (*Patrologiae*, ed. Migne 1899, 1157)

The sleep, falling upon her, crushed her a little. The whole [dream] was about her son, who appeared to her together with the martyr. He seemed to her to look upon the athlete standing by, embracing her son as if he were his own. The mantle of both was entirely supernatural and exceedingly bright. They nicely adorned their heads with crowns. You would have said their crowns were of divine beauty that language can barely express (own translation).

The emission of light and the white robes in which both vision characters were dressed recall some critical Hesychast *topoi* mentioned earlier. Through an intense bodily experience, Cleopatra could perceive the light through her dream vision. Terrible tragedy and pain eventually led to peace of mind and tranquillity. The passage discusses attaining what Hesychasts considered the highest aim of their practice. Cleopatra's pain was an analogy for the rigorous asceticism and the radical exposure of the body to extreme suffering.

Cleopatra continued conversing with the two in the dream and received consolation. The martyr Varos persuaded her that her son obtained glory and that she should feel content. He gave her further advice on how to comprehend her son's state and even be capable of perceiving him:

ἐγγισάτω καὶ ἔτι μᾶλλον ὁ παῖς, καὶ σοι κατ' ὀφθαλμοὺς ἀκριθῶς γενέσθω, ἵνα καὶ αὐτὴ καλῶς ἄρα μάθοις τὰ κατ' αὐτόν. (*Patrologiae*, ed. Migne 1899, 1157)

Let the young man approach a bit more and accurately materialize in front of your eyes so that you, too, can adequately comprehend things about him (own translation).

The text promises that obtaining knowledge of matters beyond earthly life is possible through rigorous bodily exposure to torment and mortification. Such comprehension comes if physical suffering combines with deep mental contemplation. The passage suggests the synergy of body and mind at the practical level. When translated, this episode must have left its readers convinced that pursuing such practice could lead to the highest goal of their teaching.

The translated Old Slavonic *Martyrdom of Varos* turned the discussed episode of the dream vision into the most powerful passage of the entire text:

Маль тѣ снѣ папѣѣ покой. и въсеко бѣше строкъ поѣ ѡвльса съ мнѣкѣ. прѣ шожѣа же мнѣшеса ѡтралца. И ѡко снѣ своѣго тоѣ снѣ въ на д[. .]ѣ имаща. ѡдеваніе же ѡбоимѣ, ѡ прѣѣстевнѣхъ зель и прѣѣвѣтлыѣ вещи. Вѣнци же [. .]ѣ главы сладостнѣ ѡуѣрашаа [. .]ѣ венца же, бжтвѣнѣжа м[. .]ѣ рѣкль бы кто доброшѣ. (Old Slavonic, MS Хил458, fol. 302r–302v)

Falling into a dream, she rested a little. And the entire [dream] was about her son, who appeared to her with the martyr. It seemed to her that [the martyr] walked in front of the athlete, having

her son as if he was his own. The clothing of both was very immaterial and very bright. They nicely adorned their heads with wreaths. You would have said that their crowns were of divine quality (own translation).

Despite being quite a faithful translation, this passage became the text's essential section through the context change. Its importance for the entire text and the manuscript is based on the ideas corresponding to the overall manuscript's theme. The translation itself was conducted adequately, for the most part, despite the occasional misunderstanding. The Old Slavonic version corresponded to its Greek original to the point where most Slavonic words followed the grammatical forms of Greek words. The section discussing the clothing of the saint and Cleopatra's son followed the phrase quite faithfully by introducing the Slavonic *ѿ* for the Greek *ἐξ* and the Slavonic *зели* for the Greek *ἄγαν*.

The translator achieved a powerful effect with the most critical words in the passage, *ὑπερλάμπρου* ('exceedingly bright'), which was accordingly translated into *прѣсвѣтлыѣ* ('very light') and the word *ὑπερφυσικός* ('supernatural'), translated as *прѣѣстественныѣ* ('immaterial', 'supernatural'). The former word satisfactorily communicated the idea of light to its Hesychast followers, and the latter word in the Old Slavonic version emphasized the "immaterial" aspect. The translator played around with the nuanced meaning of the words.

The text had the potential to contribute to the Hesychast ideas even in its original Greek. The translator may have spotted this potential before the text was translated. He may even have worked with the compiler(s) and scribe(s) to bring the text to the fore. The selection of the text, its translation, compilation, and copying in the manuscript may have been the phases of the same project. The text was likely explicitly translated for this collection.²⁰ The *Martyrdom of Varos* appears only in this manuscript in the South Slavic realm at this time. As the *Menologion* was not fully translated, a valid reason to select this text specifically for translation (among many others) could lie in this episode. By maintaining the light and immaterial elements in the text, the translator insinuated his imagined community of Hesychasts, turned the narrative into a shared past of the Hesychast community and those Christians before them, and may even have made a successful "translation effect."

The translation of the *Martyrdom of Eustratios and Companions* (BHG 646) and its compilation in the manuscript Хил474 have taken a different path. The Greek version of this text from the Metaphrastic *Menologion* incorporated several details that may have appealed to the future audience of the conceived manuscript with Hesychast and anti-Latin themes (*Patrologiae*, ed. Migne 1864, 468–505). The five martyrs of the story, Eustratios, Auxentios, Eugenios, Mardarios, and Orestes, suffered martyrdom under the emperor Diocletian in the fourth century at Sebaste, Lesser Armenia (now Turkey). They were, however, not a group. The narrative follows their declaration,

²⁰ The later copies of this text appear in the manuscripts from the fifteenth century (Vuković 2021, 87).

one after another, of their Christian faith, seemingly disconnected from each other, followed by each of their trials, tortures, and deaths. The five main characters meet at specific points, accidentally, in, or around the persecutions. However, they witness each other's trials and executions and are inspired by each other. Eustratios is imprisoned and tortured first but dies only at the end after the other four martyrs have already suffered.

The narrative revolves around the trials, their organization, and the specific conditions of martyrs in the court and prisons. The tortures presented in the report are different but equally brutal, from the martyrs being thrown into the fire and stretched on the rack to suffering salt water poured on their wounds.

The potentially appealing elements for the Hesychasts in this Greek text lurk behind the vivid descriptions of the body's exposure to torture and the incorruptibility of the bodily remnants (*ἀφθαρσία*). A section of the narrative describing the persecution and torture of one of the martyrs emphasizes:

Ἀλλ' οὐτε ἀλλοίωσις τις τῷ προσώπῳ αὐτοῦ ἐφαίνετο, καὶ ἦν θεωρῆσαι καὶ εἰκάσαι, ὡς ἐν ἄλλοτρίῳ τῷ σώματι τὴν τιμωρίαν ὑπομένοντα. (*Patrologiae*, ed. Migne 1864, 476)

But no change in the martyr's face was evident, and it appeared and looked as if he awaited the punishment in another person's body (own translation).

These lines suggest a mental practice where one detaches from the physical experience of torture and can even perceive his own body as if belonging to another person. When the officer further asks the martyr: "What is your feeling/thinking now, Eustratios?" he uses the word *φρόνημα*, which implies anything from the mind, spirit, thinking, purpose, or will, to feelings and senses (*Patrologiae*, ed. Migne 1864, 476). We encounter much of the body language in the sentence: *Τάχα ὡς εἰκοιεν ἡ τῶν φρενῶν ἐναλλαγή τῇ τοῦ σώματος σαθρότητι ἐπηκολούθησεν*. 'Perhaps, as it seems, the change of mind is followed by the weakness of the body.' (*Patrologiae*, ed. Migne 1864, 477) The interconnection of the mind and body is a prominent detail here. Readers are also provided advice on how not to distract the mental practice by bodily weakness.

When answering to the persecutor, *Εὐστράτος εἶπεν Βούλει πεισθῆναι πεπηρωμένε πᾶσαν τὴν τῶν αἰσθητηρίων ὄψιν ὅτι οὐδὲν ἀδυνατεῖ τῷ Θεῷ μου*. 'Eustratios wants to be convinced by all the senses that nothing is impossible for his God.' (*Patrologiae*, ed. Migne 1864, 477). The sensory element is a significant factor in the experience of God. The emission of light is illustrated in a passage when another martyr calls Eustratios a conspicuous star (*περιφανῇ ἀστέρα*; *Patrologiae*, ed. Migne 1864, 480).

Finally, the Greek text included Jesus' prayer towards the end. Eustratios, before his persecution, finishes with the famous wording: *Κύριε Ἐλέησον!* 'Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me.' (*Patrologiae*, ed. Migne 1864, 505). The Jesus Prayer was one of the crucial elements of prayer in the Hesychast practice. The multiple sections of the Greek text mentioning the body, emotions, senses, mind, thinking, light, and bright-

ness could have made the text desirable reading for the future audience who would have a manuscript fostering Hesychast ideas in their hands.

The translated Old Slavonic version of this martyrdom responded, to a degree, to the multifaceted meanings of the various Greek words and phrases used in the text. The elements of the text that could have caught Hesychast attention remained evident, at times powerful while at other times muffled. For example, when the martyr Eustratios was sentenced to severe torture and ‘awaited the punishment in a body of another person’, the Greek word *ἀλλότριος* (‘of the other’, ‘of another’) was translated by a sound word, ‘foreign’ (*тужѣмь*).²¹ This passage’s grammatical forms entirely corresponded to their Greek original (past tense – infinitives – dative plural – accusative – participle). The phrase where Saint Eustratios was seen as a conspicuous star (*περιφανὴ ἀστέρα*) was also efficiently translated into a ‘light star’ (*свѣтлогъ звѣздѣ*), here invoking the light metaphor.²² However, when the judge asks Eustratios about his feelings/thoughts, the translator renders the word *φρόνημα*, of the multi-layered meaning, into *моудрованиѣ*, with a more limited span in comparison to the Greek word, referring only to thinking and reason.

While the Hesychast elements linger in the Old Slavonic translation, the text mainly disregards the potential anti-Latin character of the Greek version, which existed exclusively if the Latins were anachronistically linked with the officials of the Roman Empire. In this case, the repeated trial processes between the Roman officials and the martyrs would have been viewed as an element that provoked anti-Latin sentiments. Even if this was the strategy in the Greek version, such recognition is certainly absent in the Old Slavonic translation.

In the text’s opening, the Romans are referred to as ‘filled with Godless worship of idols’ in the Greek text. The text stresses that *Βασιλεύοντος Διοκλητιανοῦ καὶ Μαξιμιανοῦ πᾶσα ἡ τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἀρχὴ τῆς ἀθέου τῶν εἰδώλων ἐπεπλήρωτο λατρείας καὶ πάντες ἄνθρωποι ζήλω τῷ πρὸς ἀλλήλους λυττῶντες ἐπὶ τὴν τοιαύτην προέκοπτον θρησκείαν*. ‘All the men zealously strived towards this backward religion.’ (*Patrologiae*, ed. Migne 1864, 468). The text’s translation indeed contains the phrase *бѣзбожнѣ идольскѣ испльниа бѣ слоужбы*, which refers to the words above. However, when the ‘backward religion’ was to be pinned down again, the Old Slavonic text contains only the word *слоуженіе* (service). More importantly, in the opening of the text, instead of mentioning the authorities of the Roman empire (*ἡ τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἀρχή*), the Old Slavonic translation uses the phrase ‘Greek government’ (*грѣчьскаѣ властъ*). By this phrase, we understand that the translator(s) did not draw the equation between the Roman officials and their contemporary (medieval) Latins. The single words translated to Old Slavonic, which faithfully transferred the

21 Old Slavonic, Хил474, fol. 414r: *Бѣже видѣти и расмѡтрѣти іако въ тужѣмь тѣлесн моужкоу прѣтргѣтѣкающа.*

22 Old Slavonic, Хил474, fol. 416r.

meaning of the infamous epithets related to the leaders of the Roman Empire, such as ἀθεότηα into безбожіе, lost their relevance in connection to the anti-Latin emotions.

To include the text, which did not promote anti-Latin sentiments in its translation, in the manuscript with the anti-Latin themes appears bewildering. Nevertheless, it could be the Hesychast element of the text rather than the anti-Latin traits, which was perceived as its most significant aspect. The anti-Latin texts dominate in the opening of the manuscript's contents. The compiler may have wished to balance the end of the manuscript with predominantly Hesychast themes. In this Old Slavonic version, the text had the potential to touch the hearts of its Hesychast audience. It was possibly included in the manuscript thanks to the Hesychast rather than anti-Latin elements.

It leads us to think that the not-entirely-fitting *Martyrdom of Eustratios and Companions* could have been translated earlier than the compilation of the manuscript Хил474. The translation may not have been conducted specifically for this thematic manuscript but borrowed from an earlier manuscript. The text had at least several other manuscript copies as early as the fourteenth century (Vuković 2021, 88). Had the text been translated particularly for this collection, the translator would have possibly adhered more assiduously to answer the demands of this thematic manuscript.

If this is the case, the translator and the compiler did not work together on the project of Хил474. The translator had finished his translation work long before the compiler decided to gather the texts under the umbrella of this thematic manuscript. Since a few folios were left to fill the entire manuscript – the *Martyrdom of Eustratios and Companions* starts from folio 411r of the manuscript, which has a total of 426 folios, and the text is unfinished – its selection may have been a result of the need to fill the remaining pages with a text having a broadly fitting theme.

The two texts entered the discussed miscellany manuscripts by different paths. They went a long way from their initial places in the volumes of the Greek Metaphrastic *Menologion* to the Old Slavonic, fourteenth-fifteenth-century miscellanies with Hesychast and anti-Latin contents. In Byzantium, these texts were commonly read on the saints' feast days, as part of the commemoration of saints, or during the everyday meals in monasteries. Their purpose was to inspire monks and other followers to lead exemplary lives, as were those of the saints. When the texts were translated into Old Slavonic and placed in the miscellanies with specific new purposes, other textual features became relevant for their inclusion in the manuscripts. The fresh ideas highlighted in the texts were far from their original textual purposes. The texts thus came to be recontextualized and repurposed, either wholly or to a certain degree. They also became non-autonomous because the ideas and thoughts within their lines, enhanced or at least faithfully rendered by translations, fit into the manuscripts' overall themes.

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