




Zofia A. Brzozowska (Łódź)

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5951-3781>

WHO COULD ‘THE GODLESS ISHMAELITES FROM THE YATHRIB DESERT’ BE TO THE AUTHOR OF THE NOVGOROD FIRST CHRONICLE? THE *APOCALYPSE OF PSEUDO-METHODIUS* IN MEDIEVAL SOUTH AND EAST SLAVIC LITERATURES*

In the medieval cultural circle of the Orthodox Slavs (*Slavia Orthodoxa*), i.e. those who upon the adoption of Christianity in the Eastern rite were directly influenced by the Byzantine civilization, the *Apocalypse of the Pseudo-Methodius*, originally written in Syrian in the second half of the 7th century¹, enjoyed an unprecedented popularity. It is evidenced, above all, by the appearance of as many as three independent translations of the discussed text into the Church Slavic language. Moreover, over the centuries, several paraphrases and interpolated redactions of the *Apocalypse* were created in the *Slavia Orthodoxa* area.

* This article has been written under the research project financed by the National Science Centre (Poland), decision number: DEC-2016/23/B/HS3/01 891 (*Muhammad and the Origin of Islam – Stereotypes, Knowledge and Notions in the Byzantine-Russian Culture*) and the research project financed by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (National Program for the Development of Humanities, module Universalia 2.2), entitled *The Novgorod First Chronicle – Polish Translation and Scientific Account of the Oldest Chronicle of Novgorod the Great* (22H 16 0368 84).

¹ М.В. КРИВОВ, *Откровение Псевдо-Методия Патарского как отражение народных взглядов на арабское нашествие*, BB 44, 1983, p. 216; P.J. ALEXANDER, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*, Berkeley 1985, p. 13–51; S.P. BROCK, *Two Related Apocalyptic Texts Dated AD 691/2*, [in:] *The Seventh Century in the West-Syrian Chronicles*, ed. A. PALMER, Liverpool 1993, p. 222–242; G.J. REININK, *Die syrische Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius*, vol. I, Louvain 1993 [= CSCO, 540], p. VII–XL; vol. II, Louvain 1993 [= CSCO, 541], p. V–LXI; R.G. HOYLAND, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw it. A Survey and Analysis of the Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian Writings on Islam*, Princeton 1997, p. 263–267; L. GREISIGER, *The Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius (Syriac)*, [in:] *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History*, vol. I, 600–900, ed. D. THOMAS, B. ROGGEMA, Leiden–Boston 2009, p. 163–171; *Apokryfy Nowego Testamentu*, vol. III, *Listy i apokalipsy chrześcijańskie. Apokryfy syryjskie. Historia i Przysłowia Achikara. Grota skarbów. Apokalipsa Pseudo-Metodego*, ed. M. STAROWIEYSKI, Kraków 2017, p. 200–238 (see there for further literature).

The work also had an undeniable impact on native Slavic authors, whose texts contain many – more or less accurate – quotations and borrowings from the work attributed to Methodius of Patara.

Based on the analysis of the linguistic features of the text, scholars unanimously believe that the first Church Slavic translation of the *Apocalypse* was written quite early. It was probably done in Bulgaria during the reign of Symeon I the Great, i.e. at the end of the 9th century, or in the first three decades of the 10th century². It was based on the so-called ‘first Byzantine (Greek) redaction’, created at the beginning of the 8th century³. The oldest Slavic translation should be associated with the group of intellectuals from Preslav. Some sources even go as far as to suggest that the text by Pseudo-Methodius was translated by someone from the *milieu* of John the Exarch, one of the most eminent Old-Bulgarian writers⁴. The *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* therefore entered the Slavic literature on the wave of intense translation activity, initiated by Symeon the Great, the ruler who was undoubtedly

² В. ИСТРИН, *Откровение Мефодия Патарского и апокрифические видения Даниила в византийской и славяно-русской литературах*, vol. I, Москва 1897, p. 121–155; S.H. CROSS, *The Earliest Allusion in Slavic Literature to the Revelations of Pseudo-Methodius*, S 4, 3, 1929, p. 332, 338; V. ТЪРКОВА-ЗАИМОВА, А. МИЛТЕНОВА, *The Problem of Prophecies in Byzantine and Bulgarian Literature*, BS 25, 2, 1984, p. 504; F.J. THOMSON, *The Slavonic Translations of Pseudo-Methodius of Olympus Apocalypsis*, ТКШ 4, 1985, p. 144; А. МИЛТЕНОВА, *Цикълът от историко-апокалиптични творби в Драголювия сборник – произход, източници, композиция*, СЛ 25/26, 1991, p. 140; М. ЙОВЧЕВА, Л. ТАСЕВА, *Преславска лексика в превода на Псевдо-Методиевото Откровение*, Pbg 18, 3, 1994, p. 44–51; ЕАЕДЕМ, *Двата старобългарски превода на Псевдо-Методиевото Откровение*, КМс 10, 1995, p. 23; А. НИКОЛОВ, *Наблюдения върху цикъла старобългарски историко-апокалиптични творби от X–XI в.*, Pbg 21, 1, 1997, p. 92; М. SKOWRONEK, *О списку “Апокалипсиса” Псевдо-Методия (“Откровения Мефодия Патарского о последних временах”) Государственного архива в Бухаресте*, Pbg 35, 3, 2011, p. 83; V. ТЪРКОВА-ЗАИМОВА, А. МИЛТЕНОВА, *Historical-Apocalyptic Literature in Byzantium and Medieval Bulgaria*, Sofia 2011, p. 34, 40–41; J. STRADOMSKI, *Rękopisy i teksty. Studia nad cerkiewnoślowiąską kulturą literacką Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego i Korony Polskiej do końca XVI w.*, Kraków 2014, p. 147; J. ПЕТКОВ, *Altslavische Eschatologie. Texte und Studien zur apokalyptischen Literatur in kirchenslavischer Überlieferung*, Tübingen 2016, p. 189.

³ В. ИСТРИН, *Откровение...*, vol. I, p. 25–69; P.J. ALEXANDER, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition...*, p. 52–60; R.G. HOYLAND, *Seeing Islam...*, p. 295–297; W.J. AERTS, G.A.A. KORTEKAAS, *Die Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius. Die ältesten griechischen und lateinischen Übersetzungen*, Louvain 1998 [= CSCO, 569], p. 7–18; P. UBIERNA, *The Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius (Greek)*, [in:] *Christian-Muslim Relations...*, p. 245–248; C. BONURA, *A Forgotten Translation of Pseudo-Methodius in Eighth-Century Constantinople: New Evidence for the Dispersal of the Greek Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius during the Dark Age Crisis*, [in:] *From Constantinople to the Frontier. The City and the Cities*, ed. N.S.M. МАТНЕОУ, Т. КАМПИАНАКИ, Л.М. БОНДИОЛИ, Leiden–Boston 2016, p. 260–276 (see there for further literature).

⁴ М. ЙОВЧЕВА, Л. ТАСЕВА, *Преславска лексика...*, p. 44–51; ЕАЕДЕМ, *Двата старобългарски превода...*, p. 40; М. SKOWRONEK, *О списку...*, p. 82; V. ТЪРКОВА-ЗАИМОВА, А. МИЛТЕНОВА, *Historical-Apocalyptic Literature...*, p. 41; J. STRADOMSKI, *Rękopisy...*, p. 148.

fascinated with the culture of Byzantium and who wanted to implant as many of its civilizational achievements in Bulgaria as possible⁵.

The circumstances of adapting the work in question in the area of *Slavia Orthodoxa* seem to belie the notion that the work attributed to Methodius of Patara is one of the principal texts on the clash of the Christian world with the followers of Islam, whose popularity in the culture of medieval Europe was supposed to increase in times of growing military threat from the Muslims: Arabs and later Seljuq and Ottoman Turks. At the turn of the 9th and 10th centuries, the Southern Slavs were not threatened by direct attacks of the Ishmaelites (to use the phrase that appeared in the pages of the *Apocalypse* and many other works of Eastern Christian provenance). At most, the attention of the Bulgarians could have been drawn at that time by the Arabs' invasions against the lands of the neighbouring Byzantine Empire, e.g. the attack on Thessalonica, inhabited to a large extent by the Slavic population, launched by the fleet of Leo of Tripoli in 904⁶.

Interestingly, the Old Bulgarian translation of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* quickly became known in Serbian, Rus', and even Moldavian literature. This is evidenced by surviving manuscripts that contain the text of the work in question. The manuscript from the Hilandar monastery on Mount Atos (No. 382/453, former No. 24), dating back to the end of the 13th or beginning of the 14th century, is usually considered the oldest and most representative of them. It represents the Serbian redaction of the Church Slavic language, while retaining certain linguistic features of the Bulgarian protograph⁷. There are also several subsequent South and East Slavic copies:

⁵ M.J. LESZKA, *The Monk versus the Philosopher. From the History of the Bulgarian-Byzantine War 894–896*, SCer 1, 2011, p. 55–57; IDEM, *Symeon I Wielki a Bizancjum. Z dziejów stosunków bułgarsko-bizantyńskich w latach 893–927*, Łódź 2013 [= BL, 15], p. 29–34.

⁶ А. НИКОЛОВ, *Наблюдения...*, p. 92; V. ТАРКОВА-ЗАИМОВА, А. МИЛТЕНОВА, *Historical-Apocalyptic Literature...*, p. 78; M.J. LESZKA, *Symeon...*, p. 106–115; IDEM, K. MARINOW, *Carstwo bułgarskie. Polityka – społeczeństwo – gospodarka – kultura. 866–971*, Warszawa 2015, p. 98–100. Cf. M.J. LESZKA, *Wątek arabski w stosunkach bułgarsko-bizantyńskich VII–X w.*, [in:] *Rzymianie i barbarzyńcy. Religia – polityka – kultura. Materiały V Kongresu Mediewistów Polskich*, vol. VI, ed. T. WOLIŃSKA, M. OŻÓG, K. KOLLINGER, Rzeszów 2019, p. 15–25.

⁷ К. ИВАНОВА, *За Хилендарския препис на първия Симеонов сборник*, СЛ 5, 1979, p. 57–58; V. ТАРКОВА-ЗАИМОВА, А. МИЛТЕНОВА, *The Problem of Prophecies...*, p. 504; F.J. THOMSON, *The Slavonic Translations...*, p. 144; А. МИЛТЕНОВА, *Цикълът...*, p. 140; F.J. THOMSON, *The Symeonic Florilegium – Problems of Its Origin, Content, Textology and Edition. Together with an English Translation of the Eulogy of Tzar Symeon*, Pbg 17, 1, 1993, p. 40, 50; М. ЙОВЧЕВА, Л. ТАСЕВА, *Преславска лексика...*, p. 44; ЕАЕДЕМ, *Двата старобългарски превода...*, p. 23; М. SKOWRONEK, *О спуске...*, p. 79; V. ТАРКОВА-ЗАИМОВА, А. МИЛТЕНОВА, *Historical-Apocalyptic Literature...*, p. 41; J. STRADOMSKI, *Rękopisy...*, p. 147; J. РЕТКОВ, *Altislavische Eschatologie...*, p. 189. The text has been published twice: В. ИСТРИН, *Откровение...*, vol. II, p. 84–101; П.А. ЛАВРОВ, *Апокрифические тексты*, СОРЯС 67, 3, 1899, p. 6–22.

- Berlin State Library, Vuk Karadžić Collection, No. 54 (48) (early 14th century)⁸;
- State Historical Museum in Moscow, ГИМ, Син. 591 (15th to 16th centuries)⁹;
- National Library in Belgrade, НБС 40 (third quarter of the 16th century)¹⁰;
- National Library in Belgrade, НБС 149 (17th century)¹¹;
- Institute of Russian Literature, St. Petersburg, ИРЛИ РАН, Богосл. 64 (19th century)¹².

In 2011 Małgorzata Skowronek, a Palaeoslavist associated with the University of Łódź, published the text of yet another copy of the oldest Church Slavic translation of the *Apocalypse*, found in manuscript No. 741 from the National Archives of Romania in Bucharest. This manuscript, dated at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries, is a unique testimony to the knowledge of the work of Pseudo-Methodius in Moldavia¹³.

The first Church Slavic translation of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* is usually referred to by researchers as ‘free’. Its author focused on conveying the general meaning of the original, paying less attention to finding exact equivalents of individual Greek words in the Church Slavic language. On the other hand, regarding the factual aspects, the analysed translation is characterised by relative faithfulness to the first Byzantine redaction¹⁴. A comparison of the content of the text found in the manuscript No. 382/453 with the Greek version allows, however, to identify several interesting innovations, reflecting the worldview of the Bulgarian translator from the beginning of the 10th century.

And so Byzantium, called the ‘Empire of Greeks, that is, Romans’ in the first Byzantine redaction, in the Slavic text becomes the ‘Hellenic, that is, Greek Empire’¹⁵. Describing the peoples that attacked the Christian empire before the

⁸ F.J. THOMSON, *The Slavonic Translations...*, p. 144; М. ЙОВЧЕВА, Л. ТАСЕВА, *Двата старобългарски превода...*, p. 24; М. SKOWRONEK, *О списке...*, p. 80; J. РЕТКОВ, *Altslavische Eschatologie...*, p. 189. This version of the source has been published in: Х. МИКЛАС, Л. ТАСЕВА, М. ЙОВЧЕВА, *Берлински сборник. Среднобългарски книжовен паметник от началото на XIV в. с допълнения от други ръкописи*, София–Виена 2006, p. 285–331.

⁹ F.J. THOMSON, *The Slavonic Translations...*, p. 144; М. ЙОВЧЕВА, Л. ТАСЕВА, *Двата старобългарски превода...*, p. 24; М. SKOWRONEK, *О списке...*, p. 79; J. STRADOMSKI, *Rękopisy...*, p. 147; J. РЕТКОВ, *Altslavische Eschatologie...*, p. 189. The text has been published: Н. ТИХОХРАВОВ, *Памятники отреченной русской литературы*, vol. I, Санкт-Петербург 1863, p. 268–281.

¹⁰ М. ЙОВЧЕВА, Л. ТАСЕВА, *Двата старобългарски превода...*, p. 24; М. SKOWRONEK, *О списке...*, p. 81, 88.

¹¹ М. SKOWRONEK, *О списке...*, p. 79–80; J. РЕТКОВ, *Altslavische Eschatologie...*, p. 189.

¹² Е.В. ЛИТВИНОВА, *Списки “Откровения Мефодия Патарского” в Древлехранилище ИРЛИ*, ТОДЛ 37, 1983, p. 383; J. РЕТКОВ, *Altslavische Eschatologie...*, p. 189.

¹³ М. SKOWRONEK, *О списке...*, p. 74–115.

¹⁴ F.J. THOMSON, *The Slavonic Translations...*, p. 147–148; М. ЙОВЧЕВА, Л. ТАСЕВА, *Двата старобългарски превода...*, p. 23; М. SKOWRONEK, *О списке...*, p. 82–83; J. STRADOMSKI, *Rękopisy...*, p. 147.

¹⁵ Cf. A. NIKOLOV, *Empire of the Romans or Tsardom of the Greeks? The Image of Byzantium in the Earliest Slavonic Translations from Greek*, Bsl 65, 2007, p. 31–39.

arrival of the Ishmaelites, defined in the Byzantine version as Turks and Avars (Τουρκοι καὶ Ἀβαρεις)¹⁶ – a reminiscence of the Avar attack on Constantinople in 626¹⁷ – the Bulgarian translator associates them with ethnic groups that directly threatened the Slavs: Avars and Hungarians/Madjars (УВЪРСКО И ОУГОРСКО)¹⁸. However, not much attention is paid to the ethnicity of the Ishmaelites themselves. While the first of the two passages of the work in which the ethnonym 'Arabs' (τῶν Ἀράβων) appears is translated faithfully (АРАВЬ)¹⁹, the other, however, is omitted²⁰. The translator quite consistently states that the area from which the sons of Ishmael came is the Yathrib desert (ЮВЪТЪРЫВЪ; ВЪ ПОУСТИНОУ ЮФРИВЪ; ѿ ПОУСТЫНИЮ ЮТРИВА)²¹. Only at one point in the narrative, for reasons unknown to us, does Yathrib become a mountain²².

Several changes sneaked into the descriptions of the natural environment in which the Arabs–Ishmaelites lived, as well as their customs. The Old Bulgarian translator, perhaps trying not to offend the sensibilities of his readership, took pains to moderate the text. Several copies of the work (No. 382/453; ГИМ, Син. 591; НБС 40) omit the information that these nomads have a habit of going out nude²³. The mention that the Ishmaelites eat 'meat of camels prepared in skins', which was probably meant to disgust the reader, becomes a description of a tasty-sounding dish: camel meat cooked with broad beans (ЯДЪХУУ МЕСА ВЕЛЬВЛЮЖЪА ВЪ БОБОУ ВАРЕНА)²⁴. Interestingly, the author of the Slavic translation did not find the term ὄναρος difficult – it was correctly conveyed described as 'wild donkey' (ДИВЫИ ВСЕЛЬ)²⁵. Gazelles, on the other hand, became desert deer (СРЪНИ ѿ ПОУСТЫНИ)²⁶. It is also surprising that the Bulgarian translator says that the Ishmaelites are not warriors but children of the desert – here, in the Greek text we find an observation that they are not barbarians who rule like tyrants²⁷.

¹⁶ PSEUDO-METHODIUS, *Apocalypse (Greek)*, 10, 5, [in:] PSEUDO-METHODIUS, *Apocalypse & An Alexandrian World Chronicle*, ed. B. GARSTAD, Cambridge Mass.–London 2012 (cetera: PSEUDO-METHODIUS), p. 36.

¹⁷ П. АЛИКСАНДЕР, *Псевдо-Методий и Эфиопия*, АДСВ 10, 1973, p. 21.

¹⁸ СѢГО ѿЦА НАШЕГО ЮПА ПАТАРЬСКААГО МЕФОДИЯ ОУКАЗАНИЕ ИСТОЮЕ Ш ЦРНИХЪ И Ш ПОСЛЕДНИХЪ ЛѢТЪХЪ, VII, [in:] В. ИСТРИН, *Откровение...*, vol. II (cetera: Slav1), p. 92. Cf. А. ШАХМАТОВ, *Повесть временных лет и ее источники*, ТОДЛ 4, 1940, p. 92; М. ЙОВЧЕВА, Л. ТАСЕВА, *Преславска лексика...*, p. 44–45; ЕАЕДЕМ, *Двата старобългарски превода...*, p. 23.

¹⁹ PSEUDO-METHODIUS, 7, 1, p. 20; Slav1, IV, p. 88.

²⁰ PSEUDO-METHODIUS, 13, 15, p. 58.

²¹ Slav1, III, p. 87; VIII, p. 93.

²² Slav1, IX, p. 95.

²³ PSEUDO-METHODIUS, 5, 3, p. 14.

²⁴ PSEUDO-METHODIUS, 5, 3, p. 14; Slav1, III, p. 87.

²⁵ PSEUDO-METHODIUS, 11, 3, p. 38; 11, 17, p. 46; Slav1, VIII, p. 93; IX, p. 95. Cf. М. ЙОВЧЕВА, Л. ТАСЕВА, *Преславска лексика...*, p. 50; ЕАЕДЕМ, *Двата старобългарски превода...*, p. 43.

²⁶ PSEUDO-METHODIUS, 11, 17, p. 46; Slav1, IX, p. 95.

²⁷ PSEUDO-METHODIUS, 11, 17, p. 46; Slav1, IX, p. 95.

The question of the second translation of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* into the Church Slavic, independent of the one discussed above, is rather poorly examined and has long failed to attract the interest of researchers. It was not until the 1970s that Pirinka Penkova pointed out that in two late Rus' manuscripts (ГИМ, Син. 154, a copy of the so-called *Russian Chronograph* from 1512 and the Copenhagen Royal Library codex 147, containing the text of the historiographical compilation from 1676) a translation of the work attributed to the bishop of Patara can be found, different from that in the codex from the Hilandar Monastery on Mount Atos (No. 382/453)²⁸. Analyzing its linguistic features, Francis J. Thomson, Maria Yovcheva and Lora Tasseva came to the conclusion that this translation was based on the oldest variant of the first Greek redaction (without later interpolations), was made in Bulgaria, most probably under the reign of tsar Peter I (927–969), and can be associated with the Preslav circle²⁹. Very soon this work, like the first Slavic translation, had to find its way to Rus' – in the *Russian Primary Chronicle*, the oldest Kiev historiographical text, compiled in the form that has survived to our days in the first decades of the 12th century, there are two fragments under the date of AM 6604 (AD 1096), which paraphrase the text of the *Apocalypse*, manifesting a number of similarities with both the first and the second translation³⁰. The issue of the scope of dissemination of the second Church Slavic translation in Old Russian literature is, however, one that requires further, in-depth studies.

This is where the question arises as to why, with one translation of the historic text in question already at their disposal, Preslav authors from the circle of tsar Peter I undertook the effort of reinterpreting the *Apocalypse* into the Church Slavic language. The answers are likely to be found in the formal specificity of both translations. The author of the second translation tried to convey the message to his readers as close to the original as possible. Not knowing about the existence of the Syrian text, he chose the earliest Greek version available to him for translation and rendered it as accurately as he could³¹. The effects of his efforts can be seen in many

²⁸ П. ПЕНКОВА, *Българските преводи на Псевдо-Методиевия летопис през XI–XIV в. и разпространението им в Русия*, СЛ 2, 1977, p. 102–113.

²⁹ F.J. THOMSON, *The Slavonic Translations...*, p. 144–151; М. ЙОВЧЕВА, Л. ТАСЕВА, *Преславска лексика...*, p. 44; ЕАЕДЕМ, *Двата старобългарски превода...*, p. 23–25, 40. Cf. А. НИКОЛОВ, *Наблюдения...*, p. 92; М. SKOWRONEK, *О списке...*, p. 80–83; V. ТЪРКОВА-ЗАЙМОВА, А. МИЛТЕНОВА, *Historical-Apocalyptic Literature...*, p. 41–42; J. STRADOMSKI, *Rękopisy...*, p. 147–148; J. PETKOV, *Altslavische Eschatologie...*, p. 190.

³⁰ А. ШАХМАТОВ, *Повесть временных лет...*, p. 92–103; П. ПЕНКОВА, *Българските преводи...*, p. 109; V. ТЪРКОВА-ЗАЙМОВА, А. МИЛТЕНОВА, *The Problem of Prophecies...*, p. 504; F.J. THOMSON, *The Slavonic Translations...*, p. 152–154; V. ТЪРКОВА-ЗАЙМОВА, А. МИЛТЕНОВА, *Historical-Apocalyptic Literature...*, p. 219; J. STRADOMSKI, *Rękopisy...*, p. 148; J. PETKOV, *Altslavische Eschatologie...*, p. 190.

³¹ П. ПЕНКОВА, *Българските преводи...*, p. 106–110; F.J. THOMSON, *The Slavonic Translations...*, p. 144–148; М. ЙОВЧЕВА, Л. ТАСЕВА, *Двата старобългарски превода...*, p. 23; V. ТЪРКОВА-ЗАЙМОВА, А. МИЛТЕНОВА, *Historical-Apocalyptic Literature...*, p. 41–42.

places in the translation: here, Byzantium is called the same as in the Greek version – the Greek/Hellenic, that is Roman Empire (цѣство Греческое, еже естъ Римъско)³², while the barbarians who threaten it are Turks and Avars (Тѣрци и Шери)³³. The area from which Ishmaelites came is consistently referred to as the Yathrib desert (шт пвстына Штривскиа)³⁴.

However, in several places, most likely as a result of misunderstanding the meaning of the original or for reasons of morality, the Bulgarian author made some changes to the text. Like the author of the translation from the Symeon era, in the section devoted to the everyday life of the Ishmaelites he omitted information that they went out in the nude. He also mentioned that they eat prepared camel meat³⁵. As for the author of the first Slavic translation, Ishmael's sons were, in his opinion, not warriors, but children of the desert³⁶.

The analysis of the second translation of the *Apocalypse* into the Church Slavic is further hindered by the fact that it was preserved only in late Russian manuscripts. In several places, therefore, it is unclear whether the change we see was the doing of the 10th-century Bulgarian translator or the 17th-century Russian copyist. This objection concerns a fundamental issue, i.e. the impression that remains after reading the text (in its present form) that for its author the ethnonym 'Arabs' was an abstract and incomprehensible concept. It is clear, however, that when explaining fragment 7.1, the Slavic author did not understand to what people it referred to and wrote down its name in a distorted form (Н'рава)³⁷. Passage 13.15, which in the first Byzantine redaction reads: *Egypt will be devastated, Arabia will be burned with fire, the land of Abran [Hebron – Z.B.] will be desolate, and the sea-coast will be at peace*, in the second Slavic translation takes on an interesting form: Шригепт шпвстѣтъ, Арабѣ шгнем изгоритѣ, земля Рѣская шпвстѣтъ ѿ рати и приморская оумирит'са³⁸. The Slavic scribe (most likely a Russian copyist), having faithfully conveyed the mention of Egypt and Arabia, in place of Hebron, which caused interpretation problems to the Byzantine authors, inserted the familiar Russian Land! It is also difficult to decide at what stage of the work on the text the Greek ὄναγρος became a wild man (члѣкъ дивни)³⁹. As we remember, the author of the oldest Slavic translation was aware of the fact that it was an undomesticated

³² Мѣодія еписк Падаринскаго, ш царствинѣ, IX, 7, [in:] F.J. THOMSON, *The Slavonic Translations...* (cetera: Slav2), p. 162.

³³ PSEUDO-METHODIUS, 10, 5, p. 36; Slav2, X, 5, p. 163. Cf. П. ПЕНКОВА, *Българските преводи...*, p. 112.

³⁴ Slav2, V, 2, p. 158; XI, 1, p. 164; XI, 16, p. 165.

³⁵ Slav2, V, 3, p. 158.

³⁶ Slav2, XI, 17, p. 166.

³⁷ Slav2, VII, 1, p. 160.

³⁸ PSEUDO-METHODIUS, 13, 15, p. 58–60; Slav2, XIII, 15, p. 167.

³⁹ Slav2, XI, 3, p. 164; XI, 17, p. 166. Cf. М. ЙОВЧЕВА, Л. ТАСЕВА, *Двата старобългарски превода...*, p. 34, 43.

type of a donkey. Perhaps the author of the second translation left the Greek term here (forms *онагрѣъ*, *анагрѣъ*, *инагрѣъ* are confirmed in the Church Slavic texts)⁴⁰, while the later Russian copyist, having come across an unknown word, introduced a correction, changing the original meaning of the text.

Interestingly, in the first half of the 14th century, another Slavic translation of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* was written in Bulgaria. According to some researchers, the origins and dissemination of this text should be associated with the then increasing pressure of the Ottoman Turks on the Balkans (in 1354 they conquered the first bridgehead in Europe – the Gallipoli Peninsula) and the consequent revival of eschatological sentiment among the South-Slavic population. Most probably, the translation was done in the then capital city of Bulgaria, Veliko Tărnovo, in the *milieu* of the local school of writing. It was based on the first Byzantine redaction⁴¹. It has survived until our times in several copies:

- State Historical Museum in Moscow, ГИМ, Син. 38 (the so-called *Priest Philip's Codex*, made for the Bulgarian tsar John Alexander in 1344/5)⁴²;
- State Historical Museum in Moscow, ГИМ, Син. 682 (Rus' manuscript, 15th century)⁴³;
- Serbian manuscript of the Hilandar monastery on Mount Atos, No. 179 (16th century)⁴⁴;
- Russian State Library in Moscow, РГБ, 304.I.770 (beginning of the 16th century)⁴⁵;
- There are also several later Russian copies (17th to 19th centuries)⁴⁶.

As Francis J. Thomson points out, the third Slavic translation of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* is characterized by remarkable faithfulness to the Greek text on which it was based⁴⁷. Thus, the peoples who had attacked Byzantium before

⁴⁰ ЕАЕДЕМ, *Преславска лексика...*, p. 50.

⁴¹ В. ИСТРИН, *Откровение...*, vol. I, p. 156–174; S.H. CROSS, *The Earliest Allusion...*, p. 332; П. ПЕНКОВА, *Българските преводи...*, p. 107; F.J. THOMSON, *The Slavonic Translations...*, p. 144; А. МИЛТЕНОВА, *Цикълът...*, p. 140; А. НИКОЛОВ, *Наблюдения...*, p. 92; M. SKOWRONEK, *О списке...*, p. 83; J. STRADOMSKI, *Рѣкопису...*, p. 147–148; J. РЕТКОВ, *Altslavishe Eschatologie...*, p. 190.

⁴² П. ПЕНКОВА, *Българските преводи...*, p. 107; Е.В. ЛИТВИНОВА, *Списки...*, p. 384; F.J. THOMSON, *The Slavonic Translations...*, p. 144; J. STRADOMSKI, *Рѣкопису...*, p. 147; J. РЕТКОВ, *Altslavishe Eschatologie...*, p. 190. The text has been published: Н. ТИХОНРАВОВ, *Памятники...*, p. 213–226.

⁴³ П. ПЕНКОВА, *Българските преводи...*, p. 107; F.J. THOMSON, *The Slavonic Translations...*, p. 144; J. STRADOMSKI, *Рѣкопису...*, p. 147; J. РЕТКОВ, *Altslavishe Eschatologie...*, p. 191. This version has been published: Н. ТИХОНРАВОВ, *Памятники...*, p. 226–248.

⁴⁴ J. РЕТКОВ, *Altslavishe Eschatologie...*, p. 191. The text has been published twice: В. ИСТРИН, *Откровение...*, vol. II, p. 102–114; П.А. ЛАВРОВ, *Апокрифические тексты...*, p. 23–39.

⁴⁵ РГБ, 304.I.770, fol. 67–74. Cf. J. РЕТКОВ, *Altslavishe Eschatologie...*, p. 191.

⁴⁶ Е.В. ЛИТВИНОВА, *Списки...*, p. 382–390; J. РЕТКОВ, *Altslavishe Eschatologie...*, p. 191–192.

⁴⁷ F.J. THOMSON, *The Slavonic Translations...*, p. 148.

the Ishmaelites came are called Turks and Avars (Турци и Авари)⁴⁸. Yathrib is consistently referred to as a desert (до поустыниѧ Ѳфрївьскѧжж)⁴⁹. In keeping with the well-established style of the time, the 14th-century Bulgarian translator also retained many Greek terms in the original form (e.g. ὄναγρος – онагрѣ)⁵⁰, without attempting to find a Slavic equivalent for them⁵¹. Interestingly, like the authors of previous translations, he had some problems with determining the ethnicity of the Ishmaelites. Although passage 13.15 is translated quite faithfully (apart from the troublesome Hebron)⁵², in section 7.1 he replaced Arabs (τῶν Ἀραβίων) with Avars (Аварии), probably based on the similarity of the pronunciation of the two ethnonyms⁵³.

This is not the only change that can be found in the discussed text. As in the oldest translation of the *Apocalypse* into the Church Slavic language, Byzantium is called here the 'Hellenic, that is, Greek Empire' (црѣтво Ѳлинское сирѣчь Грѣчьское)⁵⁴. Ishmaelites eat meat of horses and camels (ядѣхжъ мясо коньское и камилиѣ)⁵⁵ and are barbarians, children of the wilderness, who cannot be considered mighty rulers that govern in a way that pleases God⁵⁶. However, the most important innovation of the 14th-century translator is the division of the final parts of the narrative into paragraphs and assigning them titles. One of them is *Concerning the Imprisoned Tartars* (О затворенныхъ тартарохъ) and it can be assumed that the Bulgarian author identified unclean peoples, confined – according to Pseudo-Methodius – in the north by Alexander the Great, with Tatar/Mongols⁵⁷.

The fact that there are three independent Church Slavic translations of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* is a proof of the unquestionable popularity of this work in the area of *Slavia Orthodoxa*. The material at our disposal, however, allows us to put forward yet another hypothesis: medieval Slavs, having included the work attributed to the bishop of Patara into their own historical and eschatological

⁴⁸ Сѣго ѿца нашего Методїа епископа Патарскаго слово о црѣтви азъкъ послѣднїиѧ врѣменѧ, и извѣстно сказанїе ѿ прѣваго члѣка, до скончанїа вѣка, [in:] Н. Тихонравов, *Памятники...* (cetera: Slav3), p. 220. Cf. РГБ, 304.I.770, fol. 72: Турци и Аварї.

⁴⁹ Slav3, p. 221.

⁵⁰ Slav3, p. 220.

⁵¹ F.J. THOMSON, *The Slavonic Translations...*, p. 148–149.

⁵² Slav3, p. 224: опущена же бждетѣ Аравїа огненѧ, а Ѳгупетѣ пожеженѣ бждетѣ. полморїе же лирно бждетѣ.

⁵³ PSEUDO-METHODIUS, 7, 1, p. 20; Slav3, p. 217. Cf. РГБ, 304.I.770, fol. 70': Аварии.

⁵⁴ Slav3, p. 218.

⁵⁵ PSEUDO-METHODIUS, 5, 3, p. 14; Slav3, p. 215. Cf. РГБ, 304.I.770, fol. 69: ѿдѣхъ мясо ко"ское, и камилиѧ.

⁵⁶ PSEUDO-METHODIUS, 11, 17, p. 46; Slav3, p. 222.

⁵⁷ PSEUDO-METHODIUS, 13, 19–20, p. 60–62; Slav3, p. 224. Cf. P. DZIADUL, *W oczekiwaniu na Paruzję. Myśl eschatologiczna w prawosławnym piśmiennictwie słowiańskim do połowy XVI w.*, Kraków 2014, p. 147.

discourse, made creative use of it, often modifying its content and adapting it to current realities. An interesting example of such an approach to the analyzed source text is the original Old Bulgarian abridged edition, preserved in the so-called *Priest Dragol's Codex* in the National Library in Belgrade (HBC 651/632), a Serbian manuscript from the middle of the 13th century⁵⁸. It was written at a time when there was no independent Bulgarian state and the areas that once formed part of it had been under the Byzantine rule from 1018. It was most probably compiled in the second half of the 11th century, in a period that was difficult for Bulgarians after the fall of the uprising of Peter Delyan (1041), when the empire's increased fiscal pressure was accompanied by invasions of steppe peoples (Pechenegs and Cumans/Polovcians) on Bulgarian lands⁵⁹.

There is no doubt that the Old Bulgarian abbreviated redaction is based on the oldest Slavic translation of the *Apocalypse*. The version of the work preserved on the pages of *Priest Dragol's Codex* is very similar to the text found in the manuscript of the Hilandar monastery on Mount Atos (No. 382/453)⁶⁰. It contains many elements characteristic of the translation of the work of Pseudo-Methodius from Symeon's time: Byzantium is consistently referred to as 'the Hellenistic, that is Greek Empire', Yathrib is called a desert in several places in the text, and once a mountain, onagers are wild donkeys (ДИВИ ѿСЛИ), gazelles are desert deer (СРЪНИ ѿ ПОУСТЪИНЕ), and the Ishmaelites are not warriors, but children of the desert⁶¹.

However, the work, included in *Priest Dragol's Codex*, differs significantly from its original version. Its author made significant abbreviations in the text of the *Apocalypse*, dispensing with those narratives which, in his opinion, were out of date or not necessary for any other reason. Thus, the initial part of the work by Pseudo-Methodius, mainly devoted to the biblical stories, was entirely removed. The first sequence of events described in the relic is a narrative about the imprisonment of 'unclean' peoples in the North by Alexander the Great. The contents of the first Slavic translation are quoted, albeit with abbreviations and paraphrases, from paragraph 10.6, where the invasion of the Christian lands by the

⁵⁸ V. ТАРКОВА-ЗАЙМОВА, A. МИЛТЕНОВА, *The Problem of Prophecies...*, p. 507; F.J. THOMSON, *The Slavonic Translations...*, p. 144; A. МИЛТЕНОВА, *Цикълът...*, p. 135; A. НИКОЛОВ, *Наблюдения...*, p. 93–94; M. SKOWRONEK, *О сниске...*, p. 79; V. ТАРКОВА-ЗАЙМОВА, A. МИЛТЕНОВА, *Historical-Apocalyptic Literature...*, p. 28, 47, 220; J. STRADOMSKI, *Rękopisy...*, p. 147; J. ПЕТКОВ, *Altislavische Eschatologie...*, p. 193.

⁵⁹ A. МИЛТЕНОВА, *Цикълът...*, p. 141; A. НИКОЛОВ, *Наблюдения...*, p. 95; V. ТАРКОВА-ЗАЙМОВА, A. МИЛТЕНОВА, *Historical-Apocalyptic Literature...*, p. 28, 220; J. ПЕТКОВ, *Altislavische Eschatologie...*, p. 193–194.

⁶⁰ A. МИЛТЕНОВА, *Цикълът...*, p. 140; V. ТАРКОВА-ЗАЙМОВА, A. МИЛТЕНОВА, *Historical-Apocalyptic Literature...*, p. 47–48, 220; J. STRADOMSKI, *Rękopisy...*, p. 147; J. ПЕТКОВ, *Altislavische Eschatologie...*, p. 193.

⁶¹ Стaго Метoдiя иcпискoупа Патрѣскаго oуказании oуказании истoиx в црѣхъ и в послѣднихъ днѣхъ и лѣ(т)хъ, [in:] V. ТАРКОВА-ЗАЙМОВА, A. МИЛТЕНОВА, *Historical-Apocalyptic Literature...* (cetera: Abbr.), p. 229–232.

Ishmaelites is recounted. Interestingly, the issue of their ethnicity is completely diluted here. In the text of the Old Bulgarian abbreviated redaction there is no mention that they are Arabs⁶². Perhaps we are dealing here with a conscious effort on the part of a Slavic writer, who aims to show the topicality of the message of Pseudo-Methodius and to juxtapose the events he recounts with the difficulties faced by his compatriots in the 11th century. It is worth noting that in his description of the oppression to which Christians were subjected under the rule of the 'sons of Ishmael', he included an extensive interpolation on the situation of the Bulgarian people under the rule of... Byzantines:

And there will be great perdition on earth. And one man from Sredets will set forth and another man from Thessalonica, and they will meet in Vetren, bearing the gold. And they will ask each other, 'Brother, how do I reach Thessalonica?' and the other one will ask, "How do I reach Sredets?" And both, having gold, will pour it on the ground, saying: 'Woe to us, brother, for the lands remained deserted. A sheep will have the price of an ox and an ox – the price of a horse, and a horse – 30 litras; and people will sell themselves for three or four golden coins and through hunger they will kill each other. Great hatred and abomination and lawlessness will come; the whole of the earth will be filled with injustice. Woe to us, brother, poor us, when these days come, there will be a great and inconsolable moaning because of all injustices amongst people and no one will be saved [from it].'⁶³

What is happening here, then, is rather remarkable. Although the basic message of the *Apocalypse* that Christians will be freed from the yoke of infidel invaders by the Byzantine emperor at the end of time is preserved, at the same time the dichotomy that constitutes the main axis of the work of Pseudo-Methodius: 'strangers / pagans / Ishmaelites' versus 'ours / Christians / Byzantines' is made somewhat unstable: it seems that in the passage quoted above, the 'sons of Ishmael' are Byzantines and their oppressed victims are Bulgarians⁶⁴.

The most interesting and at the same time the most difficult to interpret Slavic version of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* is probably its so-called 'interpolated redaction'. For more than 120 years, this text has been the subject of discussion among specialists, and many issues related to the circumstances of its compilation, date, content and source of inspiration for its individual parts, are still waiting to be resolved. There is probably one thing that raises no doubts: the interpolated redaction is an original work of the literature of the *Slavia Orthodoxa* area, which does not have a direct original in the Byzantine literature. However, as regards the time and place of the work's writing, Russian and Bulgarian scholars disagree⁶⁵.

⁶² Abbr., p. 229–232.

⁶³ Abbr., p. 250.

⁶⁴ А. МИЛТЕНОВА, *Цикълът...*, p. 141; А. НИКОЛОВ, *Наблюдения...*, p. 95–102; V. ТЪРКОВА-ЗАЙМОВА, А. МИЛТЕНОВА, *Historical-Apocalyptic Literature...*, p. 224; J. ПЕТКОВ, *Altislavische Eschatologie...*, p. 194.

⁶⁵ V. ТЪРКОВА-ЗАЙМОВА, А. МИЛТЕНОВА, *Historical-Apocalyptic Literature...*, p. 196; J. STRADOMSKI, *Bizantyjsko-słowiańskie pisma apokaliptyczno-eschatologiczne w zbiorach rękopisów cerkiewno-*

The former, following Vasily M. Istrin, who in 1897 released an exhaustive monograph on the Slavic versions of the *Apocalypse* and published three variants known to him: the first and the third Church Slavic translation of the text (the second one had not yet been discovered at the time) and the ‘interpolated redaction’⁶⁶, assume that the text is an Old Rus’ source, written in the 15th century⁶⁷. Bulgarian palaeoslavists, on the other hand, allow for the possibility that the text may be dated much earlier, sometimes locating it even in the 11th century. They suggest that the ‘interpolated redaction’ is a work of South-Slavic provenance⁶⁸.

Most probably, the basis for the compilation was the oldest translation of the work of Pseudo-Methodius into the Church Slavic⁶⁹. The Slavic author, however, approached the material he had at his disposal very creatively, introducing far-reaching interventions into it: abbreviations, interpolations, changes in the arrangement of the content. These interpolations, to which the redaction owes its name, are extensive, supplementing the message of the *Apocalypse* with many new elements, derived from other Byzantine works of an eschatological character, known in Slavic translation, such as the homily of Ephrem the Syrian on Parusia, *Daniel’s Apocalypse*, *Life of St. Andrew Salonite*, *Apocalypses Johannes prima et tertia*⁷⁰.

The interpolated redaction has been preserved in several dozen (mainly Russian) copies, the oldest of which can be traced back to the beginning of the 16th century. Here are the most important of them:

- National Library in Warsaw, BOZ 92 (early 16th century)⁷¹;
- Russian State Library in Moscow, РГБ, 304.I.769 (early 16th century)⁷²;
- РГАДА, 341/721 (16th–17th centuries)⁷³.

The discussed text also appears on the pages of many later Russian manuscripts (17th–19th centuries). This phenomenon can be attributed to the popularity of

-słowiańskich w Polsce, [in:] *Czas Apokalipsy. Wizje dni ostatecznych w kulturze europejskiej od starożytności do wieku XVII*, ed. K. ZALEWSKA-LORKIEWICZ, Warszawa 2013, p. 96; IDEM, *Rękopisy...*, p. 150–151; J. ПЕТКОВ, *Alt slavische Eschatologie...*, p. 194; J. STRADOMSKI, *Krzyż jako symbol władzy kosmicznej w bizantyńsko-słowiańskiej tradycji literackiej*, PFL 7, 2017, p. 209.

⁶⁶ В. ИСТРИН, *Откровение...*, vol. I, p. 175–232.

⁶⁷ Л.А. ДМИТРИЕВ, *Откровение Мефодия Патарского*, [in:] *Словарь книжников и книжности Древней Руси (XI – первая половина XIV в.)*, ed. Д.С. ЛИХАЧЕВ, Ленинград 1987, p. 284.

⁶⁸ П. ПЕНКОВА, *Българските преводи...*, p. 107–108; А. НИКОЛОВ, *Наблюдения...*, p. 92, 102.

⁶⁹ Л.А. ДМИТРИЕВ, *Откровение...*, p. 284; J. STRADOMSKI, *Rękopisy...*, p. 150.

⁷⁰ Л.А. ДМИТРИЕВ, *Откровение...*, p. 284; V. ТЪРКОВА-ЗАЙМОВА, А. МИЛТЕНОВА, *Historical-Apocalyptic Literature...*, p. 37–38; J. STRADOMSKI, *Rękopisy...*, p. 150; IDEM, *Krzyż...*, p. 210.

⁷¹ BOZ 92, fol. 231–259. Cf. J. STRADOMSKI, *Bizantyńsko-słowiańskie pisma...*, p. 96; IDEM, *Rękopisy...*, p. 151–160; IDEM, *Krzyż...*, p. 208.

⁷² РГБ, 304.I.769, fol. 18’–33’. Cf. J. STRADOMSKI, *Rękopisy...*, p. 151–160; IDEM, *Krzyż...*, p. 208.

⁷³ IDEM, *Rękopisy...*, p. 151–160; J. ПЕТКОВ, *Alt slavische Eschatologie...*, p. 194. The text has been published: В. ИСТРИН, *Откровение...*, vol. II, p. 115–131.

the *Apocalypse* among the Old Believers⁷⁴. In many *miscellanea* manuscripts we can also find fragments of the analysed work. Moreover, Pirinka Penkova is of the opinion that the text of the interpolated redaction (or of the related eschatological compilation) is in both manuscripts (ГИМ, Син. 154 and the Copenhagen Royal Library Codex 147 of 1676), containing the second translation of the work of Pseudo-Methodius into Church Slavic⁷⁵.

The Slavic interpolated redaction contains a text variant that is very far removed from the original version. Historical and narrative parts containing reminiscences of the Byzantine Empire's struggle with Persians and Arabs were removed or very abbreviated. Of the passages concerning the Ishmaelites, only passage 5.2–3, containing a description of their harsh life in the Yathrib desert, is relatively faithfully quote, along with a mention that they tended to walk around naked and eat cooked camel meat⁷⁶. Interestingly, in the interpolated redaction the ethnonym 'Arabs' is not used even once. There are also no other proper names that would make it possible to identify the people (or groups) with whom the author of the work in question associated the Ishmaelites. One can get the impression, however, that the threat from invaders of different faith was very much real for him. In those parts of the text that were borrowed by the Slavic author from other eschatological works and woven into the narrative of Pseudo-Methodius, a genuine fear of the Ishmaelites is evident, as well as the awareness of their military strength. For example, the text mentions that they would conquer the whole world and reach the walls of Rome, which they would besiege three times. The last assault would end with their victory⁷⁷. Although the name of Constantinople is not mentioned in the text, we may get the impression that the author of the interpolated redaction prophesies that the aggressors would manage to break through its gates, enter the city walls and reach the church of Hagia Sophia.

However, God would save the Christians gathered inside through his angel: tsar Michael, who came from Rome (the question of who was the prototype of this figure remains unresolved: the literature on the subject points to a number of different monarchs, from the Bulgarian prince Boris-Michael to the Byzantine emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos)⁷⁸. This ruler, whose character is an obvious expansion of the theme of the anonymous Byzantine emperor, who defeated the Ishmaelites in the original version of the work, expels the invaders, recovers the Holy Land for Christians, restores the clergy, rebuilds many cities and churches, re-establishes

⁷⁴ Е.В. ЛИТВИНОВА, *Списки...*, p. 382–390; Л.А. ДМИТРИЕВ, *Откровение...*, p. 284; J. РЕТКОВ, *Altislavische Eschatologie...*, p. 194–197.

⁷⁵ П. ПЕНКОВА, *Българските преводи...*, p. 107.

⁷⁶ **СЛОВО СЪГОВО ѠЦА НАШЕГО МЕФОДИА ТАГАНЬСКАГО Ѡ ПОСЛЕДНИХЪ ЛѢТѢХЪ**, III, [in:] В. ИСТРИН, *Откровение...*, vol. II (cetera: Int.), p. 119.

⁷⁷ Int., V, p. 121.

⁷⁸ А. НИКОЛОВ, *Наблюдения...*, p. 98–102; V. ТЪРКОВА-ЗАЙМОВА, А. МИЛТЕНОВА, *Historical-Apocalyptic Literature...*, p. 54, 88–90; P. DZIADUL, *W oczekiwaniu na Paruzję...*, p. 137.

passages to the roads leading to Jerusalem and India, and also ensures the empire the last 30 years of peace and prosperity before the advent of the Antichrist and the end of the world⁷⁹.

Vassilka Täpkova-Zaimova and Anissava Miltenova noted that at the end of the 15th century another paraphrase of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* was written in the Balkans, entitled: *Sermon on the Ishmaelites of the Last Times*. It has probably survived until our times in only one manuscript of Bulgarian provenance, dating back to the 17th century, currently kept in the collection of the 'SS. Cyril and Methodius' National Library in Sofia (NLCM 1051). It can be assumed that the author of the book based it on the oldest Church Slavic translation of the work attributed to the bishop of Patara. The text of the NLCM 1051 manuscript is similar to the historical version in the manuscript of the Hilandar monastery on Mount Atos (No. 382/453). The Slavic author made significant abbreviations in the translation of the *Apocalypse*, preserving first of all the fragments in which the Ishmaelites appear. There is no doubt that the author of the paraphrase in question associated the 'sons of Ishmael' described by Pseudo-Methodius unequivocally with the Ottoman Turks, who at that time were conquering subsequent territories in the Balkans, at the expense of the Byzantine Empire and the South-Slavic states. This is evidenced first of all by the interpolations introduced into the text of the *Apocalypse*. In one of them, under a annual date of AM 6867 (AD 1359), we read about that invaders 'took the ford', meaning that they crossed to the mainland (most probably it is a reminiscence of the capturing of the Gallipoli Peninsula), and then conquered many areas from the West and seized Constantinople. Based on this reference, this paraphrase dates back to the period between 1453 and the end of the 15th century⁸⁰.

As we have mentioned above, references, borrowings and quotations from the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* can be found in many original literary works, written in the area of *Slavia Orthodoxa* in the Middle Ages. There is no space to discuss them in detail in this article. One of the most important and interesting is the *Tale of the Prophet Isaiah* (previously referred to as *Bulgarian Apocryphal Chronicle*), an old-Bulgarian compilation text written during the Byzantine rule in Bulgaria (in the second half of the 11th century or in the 12th century)⁸¹. The work of Pseudo-Methodius was probably also a source of inspiration for the Serbian monk Isaiah, who in 1371 completed the work on the Church Slavic translation of the works of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite at Mount Atos and decided to supplement his manuscript with a short description of the dramatic

⁷⁹ Int., VI–VII, p. 123–124.

⁸⁰ V. TÄPKOVA-ZAIMOVA, A. MILTENOVA, *Historical-Apocalyptic Literature...*, p. 548–556.

⁸¹ EAEDEM, *The Problem of Prophecies...*, p. 505; *Apokryfy i legendy starotestamentowe Słowian Południowych*, ed. G. MINCZEW, M. SKOWRONEK, Kraków 2006, p. 62; V. TÄPKOVA-ZAIMOVA, A. MILTENOVA, *Historical-Apocalyptic Literature...*, p. 278; I. BILIARSKY, *The Tale of the Prophet Isaiah. The Destiny and Meanings of an Apocryphal Text*, Leiden–Boston 2013, p. 37, 99, 263.

events that took place in the Balkans during that period, that is, the injustices suffered by the local population at the hands of the Ottoman Turks following the defeat of the South-Slavic army coalition in the battle on the Maritsa River⁸².

Another noteworthy phenomenon is the popularity of the work attributed to bishop of Patara among the authors of Old Rus' historiographic texts (the so-called *letopises*). As we have already mentioned, two quite extensive references to the *Apocalypse* can be found in the *Russian Primary Chronicle*, the oldest Kiev *letopis* compiled at the beginning of the 12th century. Both fragments are dated under AM 6604 (AD 1096) and have already been the subject of a comprehensive analysis of Alexei A. Shakhmatov⁸³. The first of them appears in the context of the attack of the Polovcians on Kiev:

The godless sons of Ishmael, who had been sent as a chastisement to the Christians, even killed with the sword some of our brethren. They came forth from the desert of Yathrib in the northeast. Four races of them issued forth: Torkmens, Pechenegs, Torks, and Polovcians. Methodius relates concerning them that eight nations fled when Gideon massacred them; eight fled into the desert, and four he massacred. Others say that they are the sons of Ammon, but this is not true, for the Caspians are the sons of Moab, while the Bulgars are the sons of Ammon. But the Saracens descended from Ishmael became known as the sons of Sarah, and called themselves Sarakyne, that is to say, 'We are descendants of Sarah.' Likewise the Caspians and the Bulgars are descended from the daughters of Lot, who conceived by their father, so that their race is unclean. Ishmael begot twelve sons, from whom are descended the Torkmens, the Pechenegs, the Torks, and the Cumans or Polovcians, who came from the desert. After these eight races, at the end of the world, shall come forth the unclean peoples shut in the mountain by Alexander of Macedon.⁸⁴

Another reminiscence of the work of Pseudo-Methodius is interwoven into the description of the conversation that the author of the chronicle had with a certain Novgorod citizen (Gyuryata Rogovich)⁸⁵. He told him about the northern tribes that his servant had encountered. The Kiev chronicler was reminded of the 'unclean' barbarians who were imprisoned in the mountains of the North by Alexander the Great:

⁸² *Dar słowa. Ze starej literatury serbskiej*, ed. A.E. NAUMOW, Łódź 1983, p. 125–127, 249–250; А. НИКОЛОВ, *Наблюдения...*, p. 96.

⁸³ А. ШАХМАТОВ, *Повесть временных лет...*, p. 92–103. Cf. S.H. CROSS, *The Earliest Allusion...*, p. 334–335; П. ПЕНКОВА, *Българските преводи...*, p. 107; F.J. THOMSON, *The Slavonic Translations...*, p. 152–153; L.S. СЧЕКИН, *The Godless Ishmaelites. The Image of the Steppe in 11th–13th century Rus'*, RHis 19, 1–4, 1992, p. 12–13; S. KOVÁCS, *The Origin of the Cumans in the Russian Primary Chronicle*, Chr 11, 2011, p. 125–134; P. DZIADUL, *W oczekiwaniu na Paruzję...*, p. 148; J. РЕТКОВ, *Alt-slavische Eschatologie...*, p. 197.

⁸⁴ *Лаврентьевская летопись*, Ленинград 1926–1928 [= ПСРЛ, 1] (cetera: *Лаврентьевская летопись*), p. 235; English translation: *The Russian Primary Chronicle. Laurentian Text*, trans. S.H. CROSS, O.P. SHERBOWITZ-WETZOR, Cambridge 1953 (cetera: *Russian Primary Chronicle*), p. 184.

⁸⁵ S.H. CROSS, *The Earliest Allusion...*, p. 336–337; L.S. СЧЕКИН, *The Godless Ishmaelites...*, p. 14–16; S. KOVÁCS, *The Origin...*, p. 131; P. DZIADUL, *W oczekiwaniu na Paruzję...*, p. 148; J. РЕТКОВ, *Alt-slavische Eschatologie...*, p. 197.

Then I said to Gyuryata, “These are the peoples shut up by Alexander of Macedon. As Methodius of Patara says of them, ‘He penetrated the eastern countries as far as the sea called the Land of the Sun, and he saw there unclean peoples of the race of Japheth. When he beheld their uncleanness, he marvelled. They ate every nauseous thing, such as gnats, flies, cats, and serpents. They did not bury their dead, but ate them, along with the fruit of abortions and all sorts of impure beasts. On beholding this, Alexander was afraid lest, as they multiplied, they might corrupt the earth. So he drove them to high mountains in the regions of the north, and by God’s commandment, the mountains enclosed them round above save for a space of twelve ells. Gates of brass were erected there, and were covered with indestructible metal. They cannot be destroyed by fire, for it is the nature of this metal that fire cannot consume it, nor can iron take hold upon it. Hereafter, at the end of the world, eight peoples shall come forth from the desert of Yathrib, and these corrupt nations, which dwell in the northern mountains, shall also issue forth at God’s command.’⁸⁶

A much less known relic of medieval Rus’ historiography is the *Novgorod First Chronicle*, which is probably the oldest existing historiographical work, created in an intellectual *milieu* of Novgorod the Great. The *Novgorod First Chronicle* is certainly an extremely valuable historical source, containing much important information on the history of Rus’ and Eastern Europe in the 11th–14th centuries. The older redaction of the said text is preserved in only one manuscript, the so-called ‘synodal’ manuscript from the 13th–14th centuries (ГИМ, Син. 786), covering the events from 1016 until 1352. In this work, under the annual date AM 6732 (AD 1223/1224) we find a richly detailed description of the first Mongolian invasion of Rus’ and the Battle of the Kalka River⁸⁷. The author of the *letopis* also attempted to explain to his readers who the invaders were and why God allowed them to bring such destruction to Christian lands. His narrative clearly resonates with the tone of the vision of Pseudo-Methodius, whose authority the Old Rus’ artist evokes directly:

The same year, for our sins, unknown tribe came, whom no one exactly knows, who they are, nor whence they came out, nor what their language is, nor of what race they are, nor what their faith is; but they call them Tartars and others say Taurmen, and others Pecheneg people, and others say that they are those of whom Bishop Methodius of Patmos bore witness, that they came out from the Etrian [Yathrib – Z.B.] desert which is between East and North. For thus Methodius says, that, at the end of time, those are to appear whom Gideon scattered, and they shall subdue the whole land from the East to the Efrant, and from the Tigris to the Pontus sea except Ethiopia. God alone knows who they are and whence they came out. Very wise men know them exactly, who understand books; but we do not know who they are, but have written of them here for the sake of the memory of the Russian Princes and of the misfortune which came to them from them.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Лаврентьевская летопись, р. 236–237; *Russian Primary Chronicle*, р. 184–185.

⁸⁷ L.S. СЕККИН, *The Godless Ishmaelites...*, р. 20; P. JACKSON, *Medieval Christendom’s Encounter with the Alien*, HRes 74, 2001, р. 357; S. ΚΟΝΑΚΣ, *The Origin...*, р. 130; В.Н. РУДАКОВ, *Монголо-татары глазами древнерусских книжников середины XIII–XV в.*, Москва 2014, р. 20–44.

⁸⁸ ГИМ, Син. 786, fol. 95^v–96: То[ль] же лк[тѣ] по грѣхѣмъ нашимъ! придоша языци незнаемїи ихъ же добрѣ никто же не вѣсть кто соуть и ѿкоде изидоша! и что языкъ ихъ и котораго племене соуть

A similar narrative, perhaps borrowed from the *Novgorod First Chronicle*, can be found on the pages of several later Rus' historiographic works (i.a. the *Laurentian Codex* from 1377)⁸⁹. This issue still needs further study. At this point, however, we can conclude that the common feature of the fragments presented here is the pursuit of a specific modernization of the message of Pseudo-Methodius, including his vision into the description of events taking place in Rus' between the 11th and 13th century. What is more, the authority of the author of the *Apocalypse* often serves to legitimize attempts to explain the origins of the peoples with whom the inhabitants of Rus' had contact and to show their place in the history of the world. Thus, the nomads who threaten the Rus' state (Polovcians and Tatar-Mongols) are identified with the Ishmaelites, whose invasions on the lands of Christians are to be God's punishment for the latter's sins, while the mysterious northern tribes (Yugars) are to be associated with the "unclean people" imprisoned by Alexander the Great.

Translated by Katarzyna Gucio

Bibliography

Primary Sources

PSEUDO-METHODIUS, *Apocalypse (Greek)*, [in:] PSEUDO-METHODIUS, *Apocalypse & An Alexandrian World Chronicle*, ed. B. GARSTAD, Cambridge Mass.–London 2012, p. 2–71.

1st Church Slavic translation: Сѣго ѿца нашего ѿпа Патарьскаго Мефодия оуказаниѣ истое в црнѣхъ и в послѣднихъ лѣтѣхъ, [in:] V. ISTRIN, *Otkrovenie Mefodija Patarskogo i apokrificheskie videnija Daniila v vizantijskoj i slavjano-russkoj literaturach*, vol. II, Moskva 1897, p. 84–101.

и что вѣра ихъ. а зовоуть я Татары а нини г[лаго]л[ю]тъ Таоурмены а друзѣни Печенѣзи. нини же г[лаго]л[ю]тъ яко се соуть| о нихъ же Мефодии Патомьскыи еп[иско]пъ съвѣдѣтельствоуеуть| яко си соуть ишли ис поустына| Юстриевьскыя соуще межѣ вѣстокомъ и сѣверомъ. тако во Мефодии г[лаго]л[ю]тъ яко с кончанию времѣнъ явити[сѧ] тѣмъ яже загна| Гедеонъ и поплѣнати всю зѣмлю ѿ вѣстокъ до Юфранта и ѿ Тигръ до Поньскаго моря кролкѣ Сифония. Б[ог]ъ единый вѣсть кто| соуть и ѿколѣ изидоша. прѣмв[ѣ]дрии моу[жи] вѣдати я доврѣ кто| книги разоумѣють. мы же ихъ| не вѣмы кто соуть. нъ сѣ вѣписа|хомъ о нихъ памяти ради роускы|хъ кн[а]зѣ. и вѣды яже вы[сть] ѿ нихъ| нмъ. Cf. *Новгородская харатейная летопись*, ed. М.Н. ТИХОМИРОВ, Москва 1964 (facsimile edition). English translation: *The Chronicle of Novgorod 1016–1471*, trans. R. MICHELL, N. FORBES, ed. C. RAYMOND BEAZLEY, A.A. SHAKHMATOV, London 1914 (New York 1970), p. 64.

⁸⁹ L.S. СНЕКИН, *The Godless Ishmaelites...*, p. 21; P. DZIADUL, *W oczekiwaniu na Paruzję...*, p. 148–149; В.Н. РУДАКОВ, *Монголо-татары...*, p. 20–44; J. РЕТКОВ, *Altslavische Eschatologie...*, p. 198, 201.

- 2nd Church Slavic translation: **Мѣфодіа епискп Патаринскаго, ѡ царствіихъ**, [in:] F.J. THOMSON, *The Slavonic Translations of Pseudo-Methodius of Olymпи Apocalypsis*, “Търновска книжовна школа” / “Tarnovska knižovna škola” 4, 1985, p. 156–173.
- 3rd Church Slavic translation: **Сѣго ѿца нашего Мѣфодіа епискпа Патарскаго слово о црѣтви азвѣкъ послѣднихъ врѣменъ, и извѣстно сказаніе ѿ прѣваго члѣка, до скончанія вѣкѣ**, [in:] N. TICHONRAVOV, *Pamjatniki otrečennoj russkoj literatury*, vol. I, Sankt-Peterburg 1863, p. 213–226.
- Abbreviated redaction: **Сѣтаго Мѣфодія юпискоупа Патрѣскаго оуказани оуказаніе истое ѡ црѣвѣхъ и ѡ послѣднихъ днѣхъ и лѣ(т)хъ**, [in:] V. TÄRKOVA-ZAIMOVA, A. MILTENOVA, *Historical-Apocalyptic Literature in Byzantium and Medieval Bulgaria*, Sofia 2011, p. 227–256.
- Interpolated redaction: **Слово сѣго ѿца нашего Мѣфодія Таганьскаго ѡ послѣднихъ лѣтѣхъ**, [in:] V. ISTRIN, *Otkrovenie Mefodija Patarskogo i apokrificheskie videnija Daniila v vizantijskoj i slavjano-russkoj literaturach*, vol. II, Moskva 1897, p. 115–131.
- Lavrent'evskaja letopis'*, Leningrad 1926–1928 [= *Полное собрание русских летописей / Polnoe sobranie russkich letopisej*, 1]. English translation: *The Russian Primary Chronicle. Laurentian Text*, trans. S.H. CROSS, O.P. SHERBOWITZ-WETZOR, Cambridge 1953.
- Novgorodskaja charatejnaja letopis'*, ed. M.N. TICHOMIROV, Moskva 1964. English translation: *The Chronicle of Novgorod 1016–1471*, trans. R. MICHELL, N. FORBES, ed. C. RAYMOND BEAZLEY, A.A. SHAKHMATOV, London 1914 (= New York 1970).

Secondary Literature

- AERTS W.J., KORTEKAAS G.A.A., *Die Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius. Die ältesten griechischen und lateinischen Übersetzungen*, Louvain 1998 [= *Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientarium*, 569].
- ALEXANDER P.J., *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*, Berkeley 1985.
- ALEXANDER P.J., *Psevdo-Mefodij i Ėfiopija*, “Античная древность и средние века” / “Antičnaja drevnost' i srednie veka” 10, 1973, p. 21–27.
- Apokryfy i legendy starotestamentowe Słowian Południowych*, ed. G. MINCZEW, M. SKOWRONEK, Kraków 2006.
- Apokryfy Nowego Testamentu*, vol. III, *Listy i apokalipsy chrześcijańskie. Apokryfy syryjskie. Historia i Przysłowia Achikara. Grota skarbów. Apokalipsa Pseudo-Metodego*, ed. M. STAROWIEYSKI, Kraków 2017.
- BILIARSKY I., *The Tale of the Prophet Isaiah. The Destiny and Meanings of an Apocryphal Text*, Leiden–Boston 2013.
- BONURA C., *A Forgotten Translation of Pseudo-Methodius in Eighth-Century Constantinople: New Evidence for the Dispersal of the Greek Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius during the Dark Age Crisis*, [in:] *From Constantinople to the Frontier. The City and the Cities*, ed. N.S.M. MATHEOU, T. KAMPANAKI, L.M. BONDIOLI, Leiden–Boston 2016, p. 260–276.
- BROCK S.P., *Two Related Apocalyptic Texts Dated AD 691/2*, [in:] *The Seventh Century in the West-Syrian Chronicles*, ed. A. PALMER, Liverpool 1993, p. 222–250.
- CHEKIN L.S., *The Godless Ishmaelites. The Image of the Steppe in 11th–13th century Rus'*, “Russian History” 19, 1–4, 1992, p. 9–28.
- CROSS S.H., *The Earliest Allusion in Slavic Literature to the Revelations of Pseudo-Methodius*, “Speculum. A Journal of Medieval Studies” 4, 3, 1929, p. 329–339.
- Dar słowa. Ze starej literatury serbskiej*, ed. A.E. NAUMOW, Łódź 1983.

- DMITRIEV L.A., *Otkrovenie Mefodija Patarskogo*, [in:] *Slovar' knižnikov i knižnosti Drevnej Rusi (XI – pervaja polovina XIV v.)*, ed. D.S. ЛИШАЧЕВ, Leningrad 1987, p. 283–285.
- DZIADUL P., *W oczekiwaniu na Paruzję. Myśl eschatologiczna w prawosławnym piśmiennictwie słowiańskim do połowy XVI w.*, Kraków 2014.
- GREISIGER L., *The Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius (Syriac)*, [in:] *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History*, vol. I, 600–900, ed. D. THOMAS, B. ROGGEMA, Leiden–Boston 2009, p. 163–171.
- HOYLAND R.G., *Seeing Islam as Others Saw it. A Survey and Analysis of the Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian Writings on Islam*, Princeton 1997.
- ISTRIN V., *Otkrovenie Mefodija Patarskogo i apokrificheskie videnija Daniila v vizantijskoj i slavjano-russkoj literaturach*, vol. I–II, Moskva 1897.
- IVANOVA K., *Za Hilendarskija prepis na pŕvija Simeonov sbornik*, “Starobŕlgarska literatura” / “Starobŕlgarska literatura” 5, 1979, p. 57–96.
- JACKSON P., *Medieval Christendom's Encounter with the Alien*, “Historical Research” 74, 2001, p. 347–369.
- JOVČEVA M., TASEVA L., *Dvata starobŕlgarski prevoda na Psevdo-Metodievoto Otkrovenie*, “Кирило-Методиевски студии” / “Kirilo-Metodievski studii” 10, 1995, p. 22–45.
- JOVČEVA M., TASEVA L., *Preslavska leksika v prevoda na Psevdo-Metodievoto Otkrovenie*, “Palaeobulgarica / Старобŕлгаристика” 18, 3, 1994, p. 44–51.
- KOVÁCS S., *The Origin of the Cumans in the Russian Primary Chronicle*, “Chronica” 11, 2011, p. 125–134.
- KRIVOV M.V., *Otkrovenie Psevdo-Mefodija Patarskogo kak otryaženie narodnych vzgljadov na arabskoe našestvie*, “Византийский временник” / “Vizantijskij vremennik” 44, 1983, p. 215–221.
- LAVROV P.A., *Apokrificheskie teksty*, “Сборник Отделения русского языка и словесности Академии наук” / “Sbornik Otdelenija russkogo jazyka i slovesnosti Akademii nauk” 67, 3, 1899, p. 6–22.
- LESZKA M.J., *The Monk versus the Philosopher. From the History of the Bulgarian-Byzantine War 894–896*, “Studia Ceranea. Journal of the Waldemar Ceran Research Center for the History and Culture of the Mediterranean Area and South-Eastern Europe” 1, 2011, p. 55–70.
- LESZKA M.J., *Symeon I Wielki a Bizancjum. Z dziejów stosunków bułgarsko-bizantyńskich w latach 893–927*, Łódź 2013 [= Byzantina Lodziensia, 15].
- LESZKA M.J., *Wątek arabski w stosunkach bułgarsko-bizantyńskich VII–X w.*, [in:] *Rzymianie i barbarzyńcy. Religia – polityka – kultura. Materiały V Kongresu Mediewistów Polskich*, vol. VI, ed. T. WOLIŃSKA, M. OŒÓG, K. KOLLINGER, Rzeszów 2019, p. 15–25.
- LESZKA M.J., MARINOW K., *Carstwo bułgarskie. Polityka – społeczeństwo – gospodarka – kultura*. 866–971, Warszawa 2015.
- LITVINOVA E.V., *Spiski “Otkrovenija Mefodija Patarskogo” v Drevlechranilišče IRLI*, “Труды Отдела древнерусской литературы Института русской литературы Академии наук СССР” / “Trudy Otdela drevnerusskoj literatury Instituta russkoj literatury Akademii nauk SSSR” 37, 1983, p. 382–390.
- MIKLAS H., TASEVA L., JOVČEVA M., *Berlinski sbornik. Srednobŕlgarski knižoven pametnik ot načaloto na XIV v. s dopŕlnenija ot drugi rŕkopisi*, Sofija–Viena 2006.
- MILTENOVA A., *Cikŕlŕt ot istoriko-apokaliptični tvorbi v Dragolovija sbornik – proizhod, iztočnici, kompozicija*, “Starobŕlgarska literatura” / “Starobŕlgarska literatura” 25/26, 1991, p. 135–144.
- NIKOLOV A., *Empire of the Romans or Tsardom of the Greeks? The Image of Byzantium in the Earliest Slavonic Translations from Greek*, “Byzantinoslavica. Revue internationale des études Byzantines” 65, 2007, p. 31–39.

- NIKOLOV A., *Nabljudenija vārhu cikāla starobālgarski istoriko-apokaliptični tvorbi ot X–XI v.*, “Palaeobulgarica / Старобългаристика” 21, 1, 1997, p. 91–107.
- PENKOVA P., *Bālgarskite prevodi na Psevdo-Metodievija letopis prez XI–XIV v. i razprostranienieto im v Rusija*, “Старобългарска литература” / “Starobālgarska literatura” 2, 1977, p. 102–113.
- ПЕТКОВ J., *Altslavische Eschatologie. Texte und Studien zur apokalyptischen Literatur in kirchenslavischer Überlieferung*, Tübingen 2016.
- REININK G.J., *Die syrische Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius*, vol. I–II, Louvain 1993 [= *Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientantium*, 540–541].
- RUDAКOV V.N., *Mongolo-tatary glazami drevnerusskich knižnikov serediny XIII–XV v.*, Moskva 2014.
- SKOWRONEK M., *O spiske “Apokalipsisa” Psevdo-Mefodija (“Otkrovenija Mefodija Patarskogo o poslednich vremenach”)* Gosudarstvennogo archiva v Buchareste, “Palaeobulgarica / Старобългаристика” 35, 3, 2011, p. 74–115.
- STRADOMSKI J., *Bizantińsko-słowiańskie pisma apokaliptyczno-eschatologiczne w zbiorach rękopisów cerkiewnosłowiańskich w Polsce*, [in:] *Czas Apokalipsy. Wizje dni ostatecznych w kulturze europejskiej od starożytności do wieku XVII*, ed. K. ZALEWSKA-LORKIEWICZ, Warszawa 2013, p. 92–98.
- STRADOMSKI J., *Krzyż jako symbol władzy kosmicznej w bizantińsko-słowiańskiej tradycji literackiej*, “Prace filologiczne. Literaturoznawstwo” 7, 2017, p. 205–215.
- STRADOMSKI J., *Rękopisy i teksty. Studia nad cerkiewnosłowiańską kulturą literacką Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego i Korony Polskiej do końca XVI w.*, Kraków 2014.
- ŠAČMATOV A., *Povesť vremennyh let i ee istočniki*, “Труды Отдела древнерусской литературы Института русской литературы Академии наук СССР” / “Trudy Otdela drevnerusskoj literatury Instituta russkoj literatury Akademii nauk SSSR” 4, 1940, p. 9–150.
- TĀRKOVA-ZAIMOVA V., MILTENOVA A., *Historical-Apocalyptic Literature in Byzantium and Medieval Bulgaria*, Sofia 2011.
- TĀRKOVA-ZAIMOVA V., MILTENOVA A., *The Problem of Prophecies in Byzantine and Bulgarian Literature*, “Balkan Studies” 25, 2, 1984, p. 499–510.
- THOMSON F.J., *The Slavonic Translations of Pseudo-Methodius of Olympi Apocalypsis*, “Търновска книжовна школа” / “Tărnovska knižovna škola” 4, 1985, p. 143–173.
- THOMSON F.J., *The Symeonic Florilegium – Problems of Its Origin, Content, Textology and Edition. Together with an English Translation of the Eulogy of Tzar Symeon*, “Palaeobulgarica / Старобългаристика” 17, 1, 1993, p. 37–53.
- TICHONRAVOV N., *Pamjatniki otrečennoj russkoj literatury*, vol. I, Sankt-Peterburg 1863.
- UBIERNA P., *The Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius (Greek)*, [in:] *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History*, vol. I, 600–900, ed. D. THOMAS, B. ROGGEMA, Leiden–Boston 2009, p. 245–248.

Abstract. The work of Pseudo-Methodius, whose creation (in the original Syrian version) dates back to ca. 690, enjoyed considerable popularity in Medieval Slavic literatures. It was translated into Church Slavic thrice. In all likelihood, these translations arose independently of each other in Bulgaria, based on the Greek translation, the so-called ‘first Byzantine redaction’ (from the beginning of the 8th century). From Bulgaria, the Slavic version of the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* spread to other Slavic lands – Serbia and Rus’. In the latter, the work of Pseudo-Methodius must have been known already at the beginning of the 12th century, given that quotations from it appear in the *Russian Primary Chronicle* (from the second decade of the 12th century). In the 15th century,

an original, expanded with inserts taken from other works, Slavic version also came into being, known as the 'interpolated redaction'. All of the Slavic translations display clear marks of the events that preceded them and the circumstances of the period in which they arose. Above all, the Saracens – present in the original version of the prophecy – were replaced by other nations: in the *Novgorod First Chronicle* we find the Mongols/Tatars (who conquered Rus' in the first half of the 13th century).

Keywords: *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, Church Slavic, Old Bulgarian literature, Old Russian literature, *Novgorod First Chronicle*.

Zofia A. Brzozowska

University of Łódź
Faculty of Philology
Department of Slavic Philology
ul. Pomorska 171/173
90-236 Łódź, Poland
zofia.brzozowska@uni.lodz.pl