MARK THE CALLIGRAPHER:
CLOSING THE CIRCLE

William R. VEDER, Deerfield

St Methodius and his омиксис (VM XV) wrote in Glagolitic, but over a millennium of dictatorship of Cyrillic has effaced most of its traces. Reconnecting the divergent and often conflicting Cyrillic versions of one and the same Glagolitic text to their origin is a task of prime importance to the history of Slavonic, which so far only Šafařík 1854 seems to have recognized. No one in the present state of Slavic studies is better equipped to take up his lead than Anica Nazor and her colleagues at the Staroslavenski institut. To her and them I submit as a point of departure the story of Mark the calligrapher in Scete in the late 4th century who, distracted by another calling, failed to finish his omega.

Of the translations that can be attributed to St Methodius, the Scete Patericon1 (Systematic Collection of Apophthegmata patrum, CPG 5562) lends itself best to a pilot study of the task ahead: its identification with the στολιζουσκυ θανατησζ of VM XV leaves little, if any room for doubt,2 its witnesses have not undergone the erratic recollation with Greek manuscripts, which so mars the tradition of Biblical and liturgical translations,3 and its manuscript transmission can be accurately and reliably explained: The protograph α, brought to Bulgaria in 886 by the disciples of St Methodius, was copied once at Pliska (Ф, from which depend the Preslav Glagolitic copies αγε), probably no later than 887, and then taken to Ohrid (in transport losing both its beginning and its end); there it was used for transcriptions into Cyrillic until the capture of the city by Hairuddin Pasha in 1395. The Preslav Glagolitic copies were taken to Kiev in 971, where they were transcribed into Cyrillic starting in 1036; their fate was shared by the Ohrid Cyrillic transcriptions о and ε (an explicating edition of the translation), but it is not yet clear, whether they arrived there together with the Glagolitic books from Preslav.

---

1 This is the name by which the Systematic Collection (divided into 22 thematic chapters) is known in Slavonic; it aptly reflects the prominence in the text of the monastic centre of Scete in the Wādī Natrun SW of Alexandria (Egypt).
2 On the στολιζουσκυ θανατησζ and the attribution to St Methodius, see NIKOLOVA 1995, VEDER 2007; the latter also provides the most reliable overview of the transmission of the Slavonic translation.
3 The tradition of the Scete Patericon provides a single instance of recollation with a Greek MS different from the translator’s exemplar in the Cyrillic hyparchetype κ.
Below, I present *Scete Patericon 14:11* in a lineated collation of the three Glagolitic hyparchetypes αγε and the three Cyrillic hyparchetypes ock (condensing the readings of multiple witnesses into one by choosing among the available variants the most explicit spellings), as well as the six independent Cyrillic witnesses to the Glagolitic archetype ω (condensing into a single W’ the readings of W568 which differ in this apophthegm only in spelling), cf. the stemma in Fig. 1, accompanied by a brief identification of the manuscripts. I divide the text into consecutively numbered verses.

### Fig 1: Stemma codicum of the Scete Patericon 14:11

1. **A**
   - Α
   - Α'
   - Α² Α³

2. **B**
   - b
   - b'
   - b² b³

3. **C**
   - c
   - C¹ C² C³

4. **K**
   - k
   - K²

5. **W**
   - W
   - W²
   - W³
   - W⁴
   - W⁵
   - W⁶
   - W⁷
   - W⁸

---

The inventory of the chapters is numbered by GUY 1993–2005 according to the most developed state of the text, e.g. cod. Moskva GIM Sin. gr. 452 (Russian translation: VISSARION 1874, Bulgarian: STEFANOY 1994), which in chapter 14 (*On Obedience*) has this story as nr. 11; the earlier, less developed state, preserved in the Latin and the Slavonic translation, has it as nr. 5.

W¹ and W⁵ are edited by VAN WIJK 1975; on W⁶, cf. PILEVA 2003.

Non-Latin sigla: Glagolitic hyparchetypes; Latin sigla: Cyrillic hyparchetypes (bold) and witnesses (not bold); shaded: South Slavic; BG = Bulgarian, RU = Russian, SR = Serbian, UA = Ruthenian.
2

α  в' же имеа послушание велико. и в' пики. любовь же и старцы. да послушание
γ  в' же имева послушание веліе. и в' пикин. любовь же и старцы. да послушание
ε  в' же имева послушание велике и в' пикин. любовь же и старцы. да послушание
ο  в' же имева послушание велике и в' пикин. любовь же и старцы. да послушание
κ  в' же имева послушание велике и в' пикин. любовь же и старцы. да послушание
κ' в' же имева послушание велике и в' пикин. любовь же и старцы. да послушание
وع  в' же имева послушание велике. и в' пикин. любовь же и старцы. да послушание
ω  в' же имева послушание велике. и в' пикин. любовь же и старцы. да послушание

3

α  его. имева же и другихъ. о. ученьись и скрьбахю. како любовь
γ  его. имева же и другихъ. о. ученьись. скрьбахю
ε  его. имева же и другихъ. о. ученьись. и скрьбахю
ο  его. имева же и другихъ. о. ученьись. скрьбахю
κ  его. имева же и другихъ. о. ученьись. скрьбахю
κ' его. имева же и другихъ. о. ученьись. скрьбахю

4

α  и. паве всѣхъ.
γ  и паве всѣхъ.
ε  и паве всѣхъ.
ο  и паве всѣхъ.
κ  и паве всѣхъ.
κ' и паве всѣхъ.

5

α  придаша же единою къ нему старци. помыя же и изгна. и тѣлку въ всѣхъ.
γ  придаша же единою къ нему старци. помыя изъ изгна. и тѣлку въ всѣхъ.
ε  придаша же единою къ нему старци. помыя въ изгна. и тѣлку въ всѣхъ.
ο  придаша же единою къ нему старци. помыя въ изгна. и тѣлку въ всѣхъ.
κ  придаша же единою старци къ нему. и помыя изъ изгна. и тѣлку въ всѣхъ.
κ' придаша же единою старци къ нему. и помыя изъ изгна. и тѣлку въ всѣхъ.

7 Here, the witness W3 breaks off, owing to a loss of leaves.
W. R. VEDER, Mark the Calligrapher: Closing the Circle
SLOVO 56-57 (2006-'07)

Note the misreading of Glagolitic d as t (tetradi → tetrati) and l as d (tetradi → dlo).

606
The next step is to separate what is individual in the witnesses from what they received of St Method’s original translation (or its Glagolitic copy). This choice involves establishing the probabilities of change from a primary to a secondary state of the text (i.e. answering the question utrum in alterum abiturum erat?). The limits of probability can be established by reference to the Greek version, edited by Guy 1993–2005 (square brackets mark variant readings in the edition of Cotelier 1677 which more closely correspond to the Latin and Slavonic), complemented with the Latin version of before AD 560, edited by Rosweyde 1628. This is what such a textus receptus should look like in Cyrillic: 

9 Here, W replaces → слово.

10 COTELIER 1677 edited the alphabetic part of the Alphabetico–Anonymous Collection of Aposthegmata patrum (CPG 5560–5561), the source of the Systematic collection. In Cotelier’s edition, the story is identified as Marcus 1, indicating its place in the dossier M sub Marcus; the modern standard (RÉGNAULT 1976) is to identify it as 526, by its place in the entire alphabetico–anonymous collection (1–948 edited by COTELIER 1677; 949–1001 edited by GUY 1962; 1002–1765, partially edited by NAU 1905–1913).

11 Note that the Latin version, despite its antiquity and the fact that its translators both attained the rank of pontifex maximus, is by no means beyond reproach: it is erroneous (12), explicative (10) and otherwise verbose (2 4 5 13). Similar lapsus mark the performance of the Slavonic witnesses k and W.

12 Leaving aside all abbreviations and standardising all spellings to maximal discreteness.
W. R. VEDER, Mark the Calligrapher: Closing the Circle
SLOVO 56-57 (2006-'07)

1 'Ελεγον περὶ τοῦ ἁββᾶ Σιλουανοῦ, ὦτι εἰχεν ἐν Σκῆτει μαθῆτήν, ὄνοματι Μάρκον.
Dicebant de abbate Silvano, quod habuerit in Scythi discipulum, nomine Marcum,

2 ἡν δὲ ἐχον ὑπακοὴν μεγάλην, καὶ ἦν καλλιγράφως. Ἡγάπα δὲ αὐτὸν ὁ γέρων διὰ τὴν ὑπακοὴν αὐτοῦ.
et hic fuerit magnæ obedientiæ, quique etiam scriptor antiquarius erat. Diligebat autem eum senex propter obedientiam suam.

3 Εἶχε δὲ καὶ ἄλλους ἕνδεκα μαθητάς, καὶ ἠθλίβοντο ὦτι Ἡγάπα αὐτὸν ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦς.
Habebat enim alios undecim discipulos, qui contristabantur quod diligebat eum plus eis.

4 Καὶ ἀκοῦσαντες οἱ γέροντες [ἐλυπήθησαν].
Quod cum audissent vicini senes, quia senex plus eum cæteris diligebat, molestè tulerunt.

13 The replacement ΝΑ μαρκα → AG μαρκα has a greater probability than the inverse.
14 The replacement ιμ:→ ιμ:` has a greater probability than the inverse.
15 The replacement pis|~ii→ pis|c| has a greater probability than the inverse; cf also the hybrid forms πις| (W568) and πις| (Ε). The word occurs once more, in the D πις| (B:22, αγ unanimously; Greek unidentified). Could this be a hybrid form to πις|? Or must we assume the translator to have used both πις| and πις|? Whatever the answer, the second occurrence obviates speculation that πις| and πις| might be independent replacements of a grecism used by the translator.
16 The replacement Άρωραν → AG Άρωραν (and hence → ἀρωραν) has a greater probability than the inverse.
17 Here, W5 retains the first two letters Άρ of the numeral written in full; it is not impossible that the verbal expression is authentic.
18 The replacement τὴν → θ and → ς (γοκW536) has a greater probability than the inverse.
19 The replacement ΝΑ και → AG και (and hence → και and → της άλωνος) has a greater probability than the inverse.
20 After πανε, the replacement ίπεχα → ίπεχα has a greater probability than the inverse.
W. R. VEDER, Mark the Calligrapher: Closing the Circle SLOVO 56-57 (2006-'07)

5 Ἡλθον δὲ ἐν μιᾷ πρὸς αὐτὸν οἱ γέροντες. Λαβὼν [δὲ] αὐτοὺς ἐξῆλθεν, καὶ ἔκρουσε κατὰ κελλίων, λέγων:
Una autem die venerunt ad eum, quos assumens secum abbas Silvanus, egressus est de cella sua, et ceptit singularum discipulorum cellas pulsare, dicens:

priindže je iedumhjk k’j neumoh starbicj; poinm j’ je pja;21 izhjde je tažhjk b’ 

6 - 7 Ὅ δὲινα ἄδελφε, δεῦρο, ὅτι χρῆςο σε. Καὶ εἰς ἐξ αὐτῶν οὐκ ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ εὐθὺς.
Frater ille, veni, quia opus te habeo. Et unus ex his non est mox secutus eum.

priiadem je k’a xhjki marjko’b’ je tažnjk b’hjx ggaljla’ marjke’ 

8 - 9 Καὶ ἦλθην ἐπὶ τὴν κέλλαν Μάρκου καὶ ἔκρουσεν [], λέγων: Μάρκε.
Venit autem ad cellam Marci, et pulsavit, dicens: Marce.

priiadem je k’a xhjki marjko’b’ je tažnjk b’hjx ggaljla’ marjke’ 

10 Ὅ δὲ ἀκούσας τὴν φωνὴν τοῦ γέροντος, εὐθέως ἐπῆδησεν ἐξὸς καὶ ἔπεμψεν αὐτὸν εἰς διακονίαν. Καὶ ἠλεία τοῖς γέρουσιν.
Ille autem cum audisset vocem senis statim exivit foris, et misit eum ad quoddam ministerium. Abbas ergo Silvanus dixit senibus:

priiadem je k’a xhjki marjko’b’ je tažnjk b’hjx ggaljla’ marjke’ 

11 Ποῦ εἰσίν οἱ λοιποὶ ἄδελφοί, Πατέρες;
Ubi sunt caeteri fratres?

k’dje sk’tη prouia bratima’ otymh’

12 Καὶ εἰσελθὼν εἰς τὴν κέλλαν αὐτοῦ, ἐγνάληφησαν τὸ τετραδίον αὐτοῦ: καὶ ἦρεν

21 The replacement A ia → AG hγ is a greater probability than the inverse.
22 The replacement χάδα → κελία has a greater probability than the inverse.
23 The replacement γραδή → priindž and → ἐγνάδη has a greater probability than the inverse.
24 The syncope ἡνεδήντεξε → ἡνεδήνη has a greater probability than the inverse.
25 The displacement of ἐνει after priindž je (8) has a greater probability than the inverse.
26 The replacement μαρκε’ → μαρκεν and → μαρκε has a greater probability than the inverse.
Et ingressus est in cellam Marci, et invenit quaternionem, quem eadem hora inchoaverat, in quo litteram O faciebat.

13 καὶ ἄκούσας [τοῦ γέροντος], οὐκ ἔστρεψε τὸν κάλαμον τοῦ πληρῶσαι αὐτό. Λέγουσιν οὖν οἱ γέροντες:

Et audita voce senis, non fixit, nec gyravit calamum ultra, ut impleret et claudet litteram quam in manus habebat. Et dixerunt senes:

14 Ὅντως ὅν σὺ ἀγαπᾷς ἂ, ἀββᾶ, καὶ ημεῖς [αὐτῶν] ἁγαπῶμεν, ὅτι καὶ ὁ Θεός αὐτὸν ἁγαπᾷ.

Vere, abba, quem tu diligis, et nos diligimus quoniam et Deus diligit eum.

The textus receptus shows internal morphological and lexical discrepancies. These testify to the fact that the original translation underwent change already at the hands of the makers of the hyparchetypes, which are of two kinds: the innovating Glagolitic φ (and α–ε) and the conservative Cyrillic о–ω; among them are two compilations, β and ε. The discrepancies must be dealt with before proceeding to the textus reconstructus ω.

(1) The most sweeping change is the replacement, in animated m nouns and pronouns, of AN → AG. The Cyrillic hyparchetype κ and the witnesses W have generalised the G; о and ε preserve A only in m (2 3 10) and α (5); in 14, following ιγροκε, even α, which generally preserves the most AN forms, succumbs to the pressure of the G. This process must have affected all hyparchetypes, because there is no trace left of AN in ὅγεινικα (1), ιδινογο (3) and ἱγροκε (14). In 13, γλαςταρῆς (εW) could be an expansion of original σταρῆς, but it could just

27 The expansion w → wо (and hence its omission) has a greater probability than the inverse.
28 Like the Latin translators before them, ckW chose to explicate m, i.e. with оаре. The array of witnesses suggests that the use of оаре to designate a littera in the initial phase of Slavonic text transmission may have had a wider currency than Croatian and Serbian alone (cf. also its use for ετσικι in the translation Д р г и т и р о в а от the scholia to Dionysius of Halicarnassus’ Ars grammatica, ed. VEDER 2005: 396–408, who short-sightedly labels it a ‘Western Balkan accent’).
29 The replacement ἀέξαρα → ζτροκαν has a greater probability than the inverse.
30 The Glagolitic hyparchetype β, a compilation also known as the Scaliger Patericon (cf. VEDER 2005: 111–112), omits 14:11 and is therefore not included in the stemma above.
31 The Glagolitic hyparchetype ε, a compilation also known as the Tixanov Patericon, is described in detail in VEDER 2005: 248–256.
as well be a simple repetition from 10; in the latter case, старица would be a fourth unanimous G reading of the hyparchetypes.

(2) For indeclinable άββικό we read L οτιμά (I) and V λεγω (14). Indeclinable Slavonic λεγω is elsewhere in the Scete Patericon best preserved in the NV, but in the oblique cases it either integrated into the A–declension (so most prominently β), or replaced → οτιμά (most prominently αγ) or → старица (most prominently ε). In I, we are obviously confronted with a rare case of unanimity among the hyparchetypes in replacing the L λεγω → οτιμά, unlike in 14, where at least W3 has preserved the V λεγω.

The latter shows that we cannot proceed without checking our findings against comparable data in the rest of the Scete Patericon, watching especially for recessive forms, i.e. those vulnerable forms in the translator’s text, which had little currency beyond the area of the original mission and were therefore most widely affected by the interference of the earliest copyists (as 3–6 below show, they are best preserved in the second half of the contents, where the urge to change unfamiliar items gave way to the urge to finish the copy).

(3) The name Mark (19) is preserved in the NA μαρκα in 10:9 (W2), 14:12 (W2), 17:6 (W4) and 18:20 (ο). A development μαρκω → μαρκά is unlikely, especially in view of the various misidentifications as μακάριη, so we must consider both NA μαρκω and AG μαρ’κα (I) as various replacements for the translator’s μαρκά. The V μαρκε (9) cannot be imputed to the Serbian witness W4, for this would imply its having replaced the correct μαρκα; as the miscorrection to N μαρ’κο (γο) and the omission (ε) show, the V μαρκα is more probably just one of three different solutions, applied already in the very first phase of transmission, to the crux of the translator’s grecism V μαρκα.

(4) For κέλλα and κέλλιον (5 8 12), χαίζα is preserved in 1:68 (αγ), 16:28 (αB1), 18:37 (αB1) and 20:4 (ο). A development f χάικα → m χαίζα is as unlikely as a development κέλνα → χαίκα, so we must consider both f χάικα and κέλνα here as various replacements for the translator’s m χαίζα. The adjective μαρκοκεβ, which follows in 8, forms no obstacle: it agrees not only with the D χάικα, but just as well with the L χαίζα, and it is the latter form (recessive, because governed by the verbal prefix πρι–) which I propose to reconstruct here, eliminating the preposition κα and reading κα νηκ as κα νή.

(5) For αδελφός (6 11), the r–stem βρατρ– is preserved in 4:1 (W5), 10:2 (W5), 20:13 (W5) and 22:17 (W56). An augment βρατ → βρατρ– is less likely than a syncope βρατρ– → βρατ–, so we must consider βρατе and βρατиа here as

32 The r–stem is also preserved in adjectival forms, cf. VAN WIJK 1975: 81 (= W56).
unanimous early replacements for the translator’s ἐπάθρε and ἐπαθρίνα.

(6) For ὁντώς (14) and similar adverbial expressions, εὖ ῥέχοντά is preserved in 13:12 (ο), 15:4 (ο), 15:111 (W8), 18:4 (B245ο), 18:7 (ο) and J:2–3 (W8). A development ἰστήνα → ῥέχοντα is more than unlikely, so we must consider εὖ ῥέχοντά here as a unanimous early replacement for the translator’s εὖ ῥέχοντά.

With these considerations, we can now take the step to the Glagolitic textus reconstructus ο.34

33 Of ῥέχοντα, adjectival forms are preserved as well, cf. VAN WIJK 1975: 81 (= W8).

34 I print the text in a round Glagolica, commenting on details both of its character set (cf. the full discussion in VEDER 2008) and of its spelling.

35 If a monograph is preserved for ἐκ, there should be a monograph for ἐκ as well. I suppose that it may have looked like ἐκ with the loops closed, which would make it vulnerable to confusion with both ἐκ (cf. note 39) and ἐκ (in its shape ἐκ).

36 The lack of agreement among the witnesses suggests that epenthetic ἐκ was added individually in Cyrillic transcription (cf. also mark – in 189).

37 Alternation of Cyrillic ἐκ with ἐκ (most prominently ἐκ) suggests that the conjunction was not written with an α.

38 Following the convincing analysis of MIKLAS 2003, I write ἐκ for Greek ἐκ, reserving ἐκ for Greek ἐκ.

39 The word is spelled with an initial ' by W568 (in 2, all witnesses use the digraph ou); the seven other etymological vowels u are variously spelled, monographs being quite consistently used in eβτεχκ; and in 13, we read μεγαλωμάτων → μεγαλωματων. This suggests that the vowel u should be spelled with a monograph like ω, but in a shape vulnerable to confusion with both u and ω (cf. note 35).

40 If u ζ ε were written as monographs, γ would be the only digraph left in the character set. As it can be spelled in six ways (with α and α as its first and υ, υ as its second element), it would seem to be secondary to an original monograph. The character that suggests itself for this function is the left half of the digraph ω, which occurs in isolation only in the Munich Abecedarium (cf. MARTI 1999); it would provide a satisfactory explanation for the numerous vacillations αω/ω in the Scete Patericon (e.g. αωστω → αωστω, αωτω → αωτω, αωτω → αωτω, αωτω → αωτω), where the α-reading seems to reflect the upper part of that monograph.

41 For tense ἀστε, I propose to write ἀστε, following ΑΒο (211) and ευW5 (11).

42 How x should be written, remains a puzzle. If x was used to mark sacred words (as the frequent misreadings ξξ → οξ and vice versa suggest) and all other (as the evidence of ξξιξιξιξιξ suggests), why was the more frequent character eliminated? Or was the unmarked member of the pair rather x? The lack of agreement among the witnesses suggests that abbreviations were used sparingly. I reserve them for nomina sacra like ἐκ and terms of reverence like ἔκ.
A *textus reconstructus* of this type, to my mind, offers more plausible explanations for the fundamental divergences in the Cyrillic witnesses than any reference to scribal freedom and fallibility can. Still it remains to be agreed which additional adjustments are required in order convincingly to close the circle from diversity to unity.

**LITERATURE**


Apophthegm 14:11 of the Scete Patericon serves as a basis for discussing concrete problems of reconstructing a text written in the earliest form of the Glagolitic alphabet.

Key words: Apophthegmata Patrum, Glagolitic alphabet, St Methodius, text reconstruction

**Summary**

**Sažetak**

**Izvorni znanstveni članak**

**Autor:** William R. Veder

Deerfield, IL