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ESTHER'S GLAGOLITIC ANCESTRY

Lingua fortior linguistica

The tradition of the Old Testament book of *Esther* is in all respects marginal to the tradition of the Bible in Slavonic: geographically so are both the Croatian Glagolitic translation from Latin and the translation of the Short Version, which surfaced in Ruthenian Cyrillic manuscripts at the end of the 14th century,¹ chronologically so² is the translation of the Long (*Septuagint*) Version by Maxim the Greek, which entered the printed Bibles,³ and liturgically so is the book of *Esther* itself in the Orthodox tradition, because it is excluded from the liturgical Old Testament lessons (it is not included in the *Prophetologium*).

Transmission traumatises texts, altering their context or size (by accident, compilation or selection), their wording (by accident, collating or copy-editing), or their substance (by purposeful editing); these traumas inevitably result in conflicting versions of one and the same text. The more marginal a Slavonic text is to Orthodox observance, the less frequently it is transmitted, and the less frequently it is transmitted, the more difficult it is to diagnose the cause of the

⁽¹⁾ Francis J. Thomson, *The Slavonic Translation of the Old Testament*, in *Interpretation of the Bible*. Ed. Jože Krašovec. Slovenska akademija znanosti in umetnosti - Sheffield Academic Press, Ljubljana - Sheffield 1998, pp. 780-781.

⁽²⁾ Its first imprint (in the *Ostrog Bible*, 1581) precedes the demise of Slavonic (marked by Avraamij Firsov's translation of the *Psalter* into Russian, 1683) by just a century.

⁽³⁾ Francis J. Thomson, *The Slavonic Translation...*, cit., pp. 789.

traumas. The corpus of Slavonic texts may be estimated to number about 8,000,⁴ i.e. to be comparable in number to the corpus of Greek patristic texts. Their transmission has generated an estimated 800,000 extant manuscript books (incl. fragments) of the 10th through 20th centuries; imprints, including Old-Believer imprints of the 19-20th centuries, of course, considerably increase that volume.

Of the translation of the Short Version of *Esther*, Lunt and Taube⁵ list 31 witnesses to the full text plus 2 chance fragments, copied between ca. 1390 and ca. 1600, marginal figures, indeed. All of them are of East Slavic provenance and all can be derived from a single source, the *pervospisok*,⁶ to be located in Ruthenia ca. 1350.⁷ Of the witnesses Lunt and Taube used for their edition and study we shall consider the following:

Text type QT

Q S.-Peterburg RNB Q.I.2, ca. 1410

T Moskva RGB Troice-Sergieva Lavra 2, ca. 1390⁸

Text type VW

V Vilnius MACB 52/224, 16th c.

W Warszawa BN BOZ 105, ca. 1490

Other text types

S S.-Peterburg RNB Q.I.838, ca. 1500

Tn Moskva RGB Tixonravov 704, 16th c.

⁽⁴⁾ Rounded from *Clavis patrum græcorum*, 1-5. Ed. Maurits Geerard. Brepols, Turnhout 1974-1987, original Slavonic compositions estimated to make up for items not translated.

⁽⁵⁾ Horace G. Lunt - Moshe Taube, *The Slavonic Book of Esther: Text, Lexicon, Linguistic Analysis, Problems of Translation*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1998, pp. 11-12. The scholarship prior to this edition is reflected in Irina Lysén, *Kniga Esfir'. K istorii pervogo slavjanskogo perevoda*. Uppsala 2001.

⁽⁶⁾ *Ivi*, p. 16.

⁽⁷⁾ These circumstances have stirred controversy as to dating and locating the translation. The various views are most succinctly reviewed by Francis J. Thomson, *Made in Russia: A Survey of the Translations Allegedly Made in Kievan Russia*, in *Millennium Russiae Christianae. Tausend Jahre Christliches Rußland, 988-1988*. Ed. Gerhard Birkfellner. Böhlau, Köln - Weimar - Wien 1993, p. 309.

⁽⁸⁾ *Svodnyj katalog slavjano-russkix rukopisnyx knig, xranjaščixsja v Rossii, stranax SNG i Baltiki, XIV vek*, 1. Ed. Anatolij A. Turilov. Moskva 2002, nr. 65.

kap 'equals two... talents'.¹³ The latter claim, based exclusively on this text, begs the question, why Tn did not recalculate. Surely, the simplest explanation is that the Glagolitic letter φ (probably slanted, φ) was misread as ε (see further below 16).

5 Three discordant readings confirm the suspicion that Glagolitic numerals may underlie the Slavonic text of *Esther*: they involve the numeral '10', i.e. the Glagolitic letter φ , which renders both Greek η and Slavonic *i* and is ordinarily transcribed into Cyrillic as и (numerical value '8').

5.1 (*title*) '10th book' is rendered as книги и(есидли) Q : книги десатыха TS : книги глѣмыа VW (surely a substitution for и read as a conjunction).

5.2 (3:13) '13th' is rendered г^ии T (corrected to г^и) : г^и QVWSTn.

5.3 (9:15) '14th' is rendered д^ии Tn : д^и T (in correction¹⁴) : д^и QVWS.

Secondly, we consider consonants:

6 Conclusive proof of a Glagolitic text at the origin of the transmission is furnished by the confusion of Cyrillic $\tau \leftrightarrow \delta \leftrightarrow \nu$ = Glagolitic $\sigma \leftrightarrow \omega \leftrightarrow \psi$ (i.e. 'two loops joined by a line or curve'). This is attested in the following cases: 1:6 оу^триномъ QTS : оу^тромъ VW, 4:11 днеш- QT : в^нѣш- VWS, 5:1, 7:7, 7:8 днеш- QTVW : в^нѣш- S, 8:5 оправ^ни QTSTn : обр^ати VW.

7 Supporting evidence for a Glagolitic text at the origin of the transmission is furnished by seven more types of confusion of consonants (which do not presuppose much damage by wear and tear):

7.1 Cyrillic $\nu \leftrightarrow \mu$ = Glagolitic $\psi \leftrightarrow \varphi$ (i.e. 'two loops with something below') in 17 м^лстѣ QT : в^лстѣ VWS; here, too, belong Cyrillic $\delta \leftrightarrow \mu$ = Glagolitic $\omega \leftrightarrow \varphi$ and Cyrillic $\text{ж} \leftrightarrow \mu$ = Glagolitic $\omega \leftrightarrow \varphi$ (i.e. 'two loops with something above') in 4:7 да в^си ты QTVWS : на в^си Tn, 5:6 да же Tn : да м^л QTVWS.

7.2 Cyrillic $\rho \leftrightarrow \zeta$ = Glagolitic $\rho \leftrightarrow \zeta$ (i.e. 'a loop with something below') in 9:1 в^рази all \leftarrow *в^ра^гзи; the misreading is compoun-

⁽¹³⁾ *Ivi*, p. 103.

⁽¹⁴⁾ The preposition of the numeral $\bar{\rho}$ surely reflects the Glagolitic (= Greek) ordering of numerals of the second decade, well attested in e.g. the *Izbornik of 1073*.

ded by the confusion of the following Cyrillic $\mathfrak{z}_1 \leftrightarrow \mathfrak{u} = \text{Glagolitic } \mathfrak{z} \leftrightarrow \mathfrak{u}$ (i.e. ‘a loop with a triangle above’).

7.3 Cyrillic $\Delta \leftrightarrow \mathfrak{c} = \text{Glagolitic } \mathfrak{a} \leftrightarrow \mathfrak{z}$ (i.e. ‘a curve with something below’) in 1:20 $\mathfrak{c}\mathfrak{p}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{m}\mathfrak{o}\mathfrak{t}\mathfrak{y}$ QT : $\mathfrak{d}\mathfrak{r}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{g}\mathfrak{o}\mathfrak{t}\mathfrak{y}$ VTn and W (with $\mathfrak{c}\mathfrak{p}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{m}\mathfrak{o}\mathfrak{t}\mathfrak{y}$ added in the margin); this also accounts for the haplography of $\mathfrak{c}\mathfrak{a}$ $\mathfrak{d}\mathfrak{b}$ - in 1:5 $\mathfrak{i}\mathfrak{s}\mathfrak{p}\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{l}\mathfrak{n}\mathfrak{i}\mathfrak{s}\mathfrak{h}\mathfrak{a}$ $\mathfrak{c}\mathfrak{a}$ $\mathfrak{d}\mathfrak{n}\mathfrak{i}$ Tn : $\mathfrak{i}\mathfrak{s}\mathfrak{p}\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{l}\mathfrak{n}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{s}\mathfrak{h}\mathfrak{e}$ $\mathfrak{d}\mathfrak{n}\mathfrak{i}$ QTVWS.

7.4 Cyrillic $\lambda \leftrightarrow \rho = \text{Glagolitic } \mathfrak{a}$ (or \mathfrak{a} , as in the *Preslav Glagolitic alphabet*) $\leftrightarrow \mathfrak{b}$ (i.e. ‘a stem with a loop to the right’) in *title* $\mathfrak{e}\mathfrak{s}\mathfrak{i}\mathfrak{d}\mathfrak{l}$ - Q : $\mathfrak{e}\mathfrak{s}\mathfrak{d}\mathfrak{e}\mathfrak{r}$ - VW : $\mathfrak{e}\mathfrak{s}\mathfrak{f}\mathfrak{i}\mathfrak{r}$ - TS and 9:8 $\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{d}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{d}\mathfrak{n}\mathfrak{i}\mathfrak{a}$ VWTn : $\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{d}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{r}\mathfrak{n}\mathfrak{i}\mathfrak{a}$ QTS.

7.5 Cyrillic $\mathfrak{n} \leftrightarrow \mathfrak{p} \leftrightarrow \mathfrak{b} = \text{Glagolitic } \mathfrak{p} \leftrightarrow \mathfrak{r} \leftrightarrow \mathfrak{w}$ (i.e. ‘a stem with something at the top right’) in 1:3 $\mathfrak{c}\mathfrak{t}\mathfrak{r}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{n}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{m}\mathfrak{z}$ all \leftarrow * $\mathfrak{c}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{t}\mathfrak{r}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{p}\mathfrak{o}\mathfrak{m}\mathfrak{z}$, 8:5 $\mathfrak{o}\mathfrak{p}\mathfrak{r}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{v}\mathfrak{i}$ QTSTn : $\mathfrak{o}\mathfrak{b}\mathfrak{r}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{t}\mathfrak{i}$ WV.

7.6 Cyrillic $\mathfrak{n} \leftrightarrow \mathfrak{x} = \text{Glagolitic } \mathfrak{p} \leftrightarrow \mathfrak{y}$ (i.e. ‘a hook with a loop’) in 1:10 $\mathfrak{n}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{r}\mathfrak{n}\mathfrak{y}\mathfrak{n}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{n}\mathfrak{o}\mathfrak{v}\mathfrak{i}$ T : $\mathfrak{x}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{r}\mathfrak{n}\mathfrak{y}\mathfrak{n}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{n}\mathfrak{o}\mathfrak{v}\mathfrak{i}$ VWS : $\mathfrak{x}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{r}\mathfrak{v}\mathfrak{y}\mathfrak{n}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{n}\mathfrak{o}\mathfrak{v}\mathfrak{i}$ Q : $\mathfrak{x}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{r}\mathfrak{v}\mathfrak{y}\mathfrak{n}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{n}\mathfrak{o}\mathfrak{v}\mathfrak{i}$ Tn, 4:5 $\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{f}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{x}$ - Tn : $\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{f}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{n}$ - QTVWS, 4:9 $\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{f}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{x}$ - S : $\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{f}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{k}$ - Tn : $\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{f}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{n}$ - QTVW, 4:10 $\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{f}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{x}$ - STn : $\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{f}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{n}$ - QTVW.

7.7 Cyrillic $\mathfrak{u} \leftrightarrow \mathfrak{v} = \text{Glagolitic } \mathfrak{w} \leftrightarrow \mathfrak{z}$ (i.e. ‘a loop with a comb on top’) in 2:14 $\mathfrak{v}\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{v}\mathfrak{r}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{s}\mathfrak{h}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{i}\mathfrak{o}\mathfrak{u}\mathfrak{i}$ TVWS : $\mathfrak{v}\mathfrak{r}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{v}\mathfrak{i}\mathfrak{o}\mathfrak{u}\mathfrak{i}$ QTn.

8 If more evidence were required, it can be found, as in **2** above, in the discordant treatment of the single Glagolitic letter \mathfrak{z} which in Moravian and Preslav Glagolitic rendered both Greek θ and φ . In the title,¹⁵ we find the letter both untranscribed ($\mathfrak{e}\mathfrak{s}\mathfrak{i}\mathfrak{d}\mathfrak{l}$ - Q : $\mathfrak{e}\mathfrak{s}\mathfrak{d}\mathfrak{e}\mathfrak{r}$ - VW) and transcribed ($\mathfrak{e}\mathfrak{s}\mathfrak{f}\mathfrak{i}\mathfrak{r}$ - TS), and in 2:16 ($\mathfrak{t}\mathfrak{e}\mathfrak{v}\mathfrak{e}\mathfrak{f}\mathfrak{z}$ QTSTn, corrected to $\mathfrak{t}\mathfrak{e}\mathfrak{v}\mathfrak{e}\mathfrak{z}$ in the *Gennadian Bible* of 1499) we find a second form of transcription, i.e. only of the crossbar with the two loops $\mathfrak{c}\mathfrak{o} \rightarrow \mathfrak{t}$ ($\mathfrak{t}\mathfrak{e}\mathfrak{v}\mathfrak{e}\mathfrak{t}\mathfrak{z}$ WV).

9 The last of the consonants is epenthetic λ after palatal labials, which, like any mark of palatality (see **12** below) is foreign to Moravian and Preslav Glagolitic: the discord in 2:4 $\mathfrak{o}\mathfrak{y}\mathfrak{l}\mathfrak{y}\mathfrak{o}\mathfrak{v}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{s}\mathfrak{h}\mathfrak{e}$ QS : $\mathfrak{o}\mathfrak{y}\mathfrak{l}\mathfrak{y}\mathfrak{o}\mathfrak{v}\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{s}\mathfrak{h}\mathfrak{e}$ T shows that QS transcribed, while T followed the usage of his exemplar.

⁽¹⁵⁾ For the other 54 occurrences of the name *Esther* Lunt and Taube do not provide data on spelling of the θ .

11 The high incidence in QTS (up to 60%) of the Cyrillic letters γ and δ in all positions (e.g. 7:7 $\gamma\sigma\tau\zeta$ T, 9:22 $\delta\rho\gamma\gamma$ Q) must be interpreted as reflexes of the Glagolitic monograph в . This interpretation finds support in T's corrections to conform to Cyrillic usage $\gamma \rightarrow \text{'}\gamma$ on the first two pages of his copy.

12 The discord $\lambda \leftrightarrow \text{IA} (\text{А})$ and $\gamma \leftrightarrow \text{Ю} (\text{Ж})$ signifies that in some cases scribes failed to mark the vowels for jotation (or palatality of the preceding consonant), required by Cyrillic but absent from Glagolitic + and в : 1:8 волю QTS : $\text{вол}\overline{\lambda}$ V : $\text{вол}\delta$ W, 2:4 дировъ all for * идировъ or * идировъ , 1:19, 2:4, 2:9 оулюб- QVWSTn : оулюб- T (with $\text{o} \leftarrow \text{в}$), 2:12 идкоже QTS : ды WV. This interpretation finds support in three cases of excessive marking: 2:4 оулюби QS : оулоби T (with $\text{o} \leftarrow \text{в}$) : юлоби VW, 2:10 повѣда VWSTn : вѣда Q : вѣда T, 9:19 распрд- ценици QTWS : распрдцици VTn. Here, too, belongs the shortening of the suffix in 1:3 цртвиѡ TVWS : цртвѡ Q, which is, in fact, nothing more than a syncope of *jer* in $-\text{в}\text{'}\text{а}\text{+}$.

13 The discord $\lambda \leftrightarrow \text{и}$ reflects confusion of Glagolitic + with Cyrillic и : 1:14 тдрисѡ Tn : тирисѡ QTVWS.

14 The discord $\epsilon \leftrightarrow \text{o}$ reflects confusion of Glagolitic э and э : 1:14 сѣфарѡ QTS : сѣфарѡ VW, 7:5 ахасъвересѡ T : ахасъвересѡ QVWSTn, 9:30 иудѣемѡ QS : иудѣемѡ TVWTn.

15 The discord $\epsilon/\text{o} \leftrightarrow \text{ъ/ь}$ reflects confusion of Glagolitic э/э and э : 1:6 даже VWS : дажѡ QT, 1:9 женъскыи TVWS : жѣнъскыи Q, 1:11 взнегда QVWS : взньгда T, 2:9 нею TVWS : ню Q, 2:14 тогда VWS : тѣгда QT, 3:3 днѣ QT : днѣ VWS, 3:4 тѣ QWS : то[и] TVTn, 3:8 раздѣлени QVWS : раздѣльни T, 4:3 пладѣ QVWS : пладѣ T, 6:11, 7:10 мардох- T : мардѣх- QS, 8:14 взнатѣць QT : взнатѣце VW : взнатоць S, 9:22 комуждо TTn : къмуждо Q.

16 The discord $\epsilon, \text{ъ/ь} \leftrightarrow \text{и}$ reflects confusion of Glagolitic э/э and ѣ (see also 4 above): *title* сѣдер- VW : сѣфир- TS, 2:1 створенеѣ T : сѣтворенеѣ QVWSTn, 3:13, 8:14 погонѣц- QTS : погониц- VW, 7:1 питѣ QT : питѣ VWTn : пити S, 8:10 песменемѣ T : писменемѣ QVWS, 8:15 оушѣвѣ QT : оушивѣ VWS, 9:29 сѣфири[и] QTVWS : сѣфирѣ Tn.

17 The discord $\epsilon/\text{ь} \leftrightarrow \text{а}$ reflects confusion of Glagolitic э/э and ѣ : 2:8 поета corrected to поата T : поата S : поата QVW, 5:11 ѣсть TS : ѣсть QVW.

18 The discord ю ↔ Ѧ reflects confusion of Glagolitic є and ѣ¹⁸:
7:2 вола QTS : волю VW, 8:7 июдѣю QT : июдѣа VWS(Tn).

19 The discord ѣ ↔ ѣ1 and ѣ1 ↔ ѣ11 signifies that in some cases scribes failed to mark *jers* as tense, a marking required by Cyrillic but not by Moravian and Preslav Glagolitic: 2:7 стрѣа Q : стрѣа T, 8:2 нисѣже T : нисѣже QVWS.

20 The last of the vowels is epenthetic ѣ/ь in consonant sequences that infringe Slavonic phonotactic rules;¹⁹ they are foreign to Moravian and Preslav Glagolitic, which follow Greek orthography in spelling loanwords. As the data of Lunt and Taube on the spelling of the Hebrew names in the witnesses are sketchy (T has four spellings of *Esther* with epenthesis 2:8, 5:4, 7, 12 есѣфир-, two of them not in word-division), we can only give examples of discordant spellings: 3:1, 10, 9:10 амѣдафин- QT, but 8:5 амѣдафин- T : амдафин- Q and 9:4 амѣдафин- Q : амдафин- T. The seemingly consistent spelling of 1:10 вадвахфан-, 9:7 далфан-, 1:10 зъвихфар-, 1:14 карсон- and марсон-, 9:9 парма-, 9:7 парсан-, 1:10, 7:9 харвун- as well as мардоха- (54) without epenthesis surely reflects the Glagolitic spelling; the same must be assumed for the consistent epenthesis in ахацъверос- (28), which remains to be explained (could the first part of the name have been identified with that of king Ahaz?).

It is now certain that the *pervospisok* of Lunt and Taube was a Glagolitic manuscript, without doubt older than ca. 1350 and not of Ruthenian origin. What happened in Ruthenia between ca. 1350 and ca. 1390 is that the manuscript was discovered and read. This reading resulted in an interlinear or (less likely because it would cause displacement of text in the copies) marginal annotation in Ruthenian. The annotated manuscript was then copied, the better copyists (among them T) paying attention not only to the interlinear text, but verifying their copy against the Glagolitic original. The copies were

⁽¹⁸⁾ This Glagolitic letter is not attested in writing, but it must be reconstructed to account for the early confusion (quite massive in the early 10th c. Glagolitic transmission of the *Scete Paterikon*) with monographic є.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Horace G. Lunt, *Old Church Slavonic Grammar*. Seventh Revised Edition. De Gruyter, Berlin - New York 2001, p. 34.

at least five: 1 – T, 2 – Q, 3 – the antigraph of VW, 4 – the antigraph of S, 5 – the antigraph of Tn.

The scenario outlined above is by no means mere speculation: a typological parallel is offered by the protograph of the *Scete Paterikon*, which arrived at Pliska in the hands of St Methodius' disciples in 886. It was read by a Bulgarian (prince Boris-Michael?) and profusely annotated with Glagolitic marginal notes. The text with these notes replacing the original wording was copied in 886-887 (copy **♣**, on which depend all Preslav Glagolitic copies and their Russian transcriptions), and the protograph was then sent to Ohrid, from where eleven Cyrillic transcriptions up to ca. 1380 are extant: all to varying degree reflect these notes along with the original translation.²⁰

The five copies of the Slavonic translation of *Esther* bear testimony that even in the 14th century fluency in reading Glagolitic had not subsided in the East Slavic area. The latest attestation we have is that of the *Marian Mass*,²¹ transcribed from Croatian Glagolitic and adapted to Slavonic in the first half of the 15th century. For the 14th century we have the *Lestvica* of 1334²² and for the 13th century we have the *Vita of St Nephon of Constantia*,²³ transcribed at Rostov in 1219 from a 10th century Preslav Glagolitic copy of the text.²⁴

⁽²⁰⁾ William R. Veder, *The Scete Paterikon*. (Pegasus Oost-Europese Studies, 12). Pegasus, Amsterdam 2011, pp. 34-37.

⁽²¹⁾ František V. Mareš, *Moskevská Mariánská mše*, "Slovo", 25-26 (1976), pp. 295-362.

⁽²²⁾ Cod. Moskva RGB F.304 nr. 10.

⁽²³⁾ *Svodnyj katalog slavjano-russkix rukopisnyx knig, xranjaščixsja v SSSR, XI-XIII vv.* Ed. Sigurd O. Šmidt. Nauka, Moskva 1984, nr. 174.

⁽²⁴⁾ This manuscript belongs to a group of five Rostov manuscripts of the early 1200's (see Ol'ga A. Knjazevskaja, *O Rostovskix rukopisjax načala XIII veka*, in *Problemy istorii i dialektologii slavjanskix jazykov. Sbornik statej k 70-letiju... V. I. Borkovskogo*. Ed. Fedot P. Filin. Moskva 1971, pp. 145-153), which share idiosyncrasies in treatment of vowels and *jers* (see Ol'ga A. Knjazevskaja, *O sud'be reducirovannyx glasnyx ѣ, ѓ v Rostovskix rukopisjax pervoj treti XIII v.*, in *Lingvo-geografija, dialektologija i istorija jazyka*. Ed. Ruben I. Avanesov. Kišinev 1973, pp. 202-208, and Id., *Bukvy o, e na meste reducirovannyx glasnyx v Rostovskix rukopisjax načala XIII v.*, in *Lingvističeskaja geografija, dialektologija i istorija jazyka*. Ed. Ruben I. Avanesov. Erevan 1976, pp. 327-336). It is important to verify, whether the other four manuscripts, too, are direct transcriptions from Glagolitic.

Between that date and 1037, when acquisition of Glagolitic texts into Russian was undertaken systematically,²⁵ evidence of transcriptions from Glagolitic is abundant, the earliest extant being the *Pandect of Antiochus*,²⁶ the *Ostromir Gospel*²⁷ and the *Izborniki of 1073 and 1076*.²⁸

That the Slavonic translation of *Esther* was discovered and made accessible at so late a date is surely due to the fact that the book was liturgically marginal: its absence could have gone unnoticed for any length of time.²⁹ But the fact that it was identified at all points to a clear notion of the Biblical canon,³⁰ and the fact that it was made accessible by interlinear annotation shows that inquiry into the integrity of the Old Testament had started more than a century before the *Gennadian Bible* of 1499.

Lunt and Taube have done well to carefully separate the remnants of the earlier Slavonic translation from the 14th century Ruthenian annotation. The latter forms a substantial complement to the meagre 79 extant charters and inscriptions prior to 1400.³¹ Together with the 15th century Ruthenian narrative texts,³² it enhances our view of non-formulaic Ruthenian by a full two centuries.

To conclude this study, let us reiterate its methodological message. The conflict between Slavonic linguistics and textology must and

⁽²⁵⁾ William R. Veder, *Hiljada godina kato edin den. Životāt na tekstovete v pravoslavnoto slavjanstvo*. Kirilo-Methodievski naučen centār, Sofija 2005, pp. 409-419.

⁽²⁶⁾ *Svodnyj katalog...*, Ed. Sigurd O. Šmidt, cit., nr. 24.

⁽²⁷⁾ *Ivi*, nr. 3.

⁽²⁸⁾ *Ivi*, nr. 4-5.

⁽²⁹⁾ It could have shared the fate of the non-liturgical books of *1-2 Chronicles*, *Ezra*, *Nehemiah* and *Lamentations*, of which no trace of an early translation has yet been found (see Francis J. Thomson, *The Slavonic Translation...*, cit.).

⁽³⁰⁾ The earliest Slavonic lists of the Biblical canon are to be found in the *Izbornik of 1073*, ff. 252a-253a (John Damascene) and ff. 253a-254a (Gregory of Nazianzus).

⁽³¹⁾ Marija M. Peščak, *Hramoty XIV st*. Naukova dumka, Kyiv 1974.

⁽³²⁾ Julia Verkholtantsev, *Ruthenica Bohemica. Ruthenian Translations from Czech in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Poland*. Lit, Wien 2008.

can be resolved. All it requires is a single adjustment in the linguistic record: to separate apographs from autographs,³³ i.e. not to attribute to scribes who struggled to decipher their antigraphs the competence of authors who were committing their ideas to writing. Apographs cannot yield reliable data as to the linguistic competence of their scribes unless they are purged of everything retained from preceding transmission. Unpurged, they merely pollute the linguistic record.

РЕЗЮМЕ

Трансмиссия славянского перевода библейской книги *Есфирь* сохраняет плотный слой расходящихся чтений, которые убедительно объясняются как рефлексy глаголического антиграфа, по-видимому, к середине XIV в. снабженного подстрочными аннотациями на простой мове и затем не менее пяти раз транскрибированного на кириллицу. Убедительность объяснения намалает – необоснованный – навык толковать расхождения в чтениях на языковой основе. Но и последнее лишено убедительности, пока апографы трактуются наравне с автографами, без предварительного очищения от загрязнений трансмиссии.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die Überlieferung der slavischen Übersetzung des Buches *Esther* bewahrt eine kohärente Schicht unstimziger Lesungen, die überzeugend zu erklären sind als Reflexe einer glagolitischen Vorlage. Diese wurde wohl um die Mitte des 14. Jhdts. interlinear ruthenisch annotiert und danach wenigstens fünfmal kyrillisch umgeschrieben. Der Überzeugungskraft solcher Erläuterung abträglich ist die – unbegründete – Gewohnheit, unstimzige Lesungen sprachbedingt zu erklären. Letztere aber kann ebensowenig überzeugen, solange sie Abschriften wie Urschriften behandelt, ohne sie von den Verunreinigungen der Überlieferung zu reinigen.

⁽³³⁾ Let us bear in mind that there are no autographs in Slavonic before 1479 (the *History of the Translation of the Relics of St John of Rila* by Vladislav the Grammarian), save formulaic charters, inscriptions and notes.

