CHAPTER 6

The *Apophthegmata Patrum* in the Slavonic Context: A Case Study of Textual Doublets

*Karine Åkerman Sarkisian*

1 Introduction

“Every telling is a retelling,” the comparative literature scholar Maria Tymoczko points out.1 This observation is just as valid for the monastic stories preserved in the collections of *Apophthegmata Patrum* (*AP*) as for the Irish myths to which she refers. It is very much also applicable to the Russian tradition, the Eastern inheritor of the textual reception by the Slavs, as this essay will highlight.

It is well known that translations from the Greek formed the initial nucleus of Russian literature and determined its development over several centuries to come. The corpus of Greek texts transmitted to the Slavs was painstakingly selected to align with the objectives of Christianization, an effort that started in 863 in Moravia, where two brothers from Thessalonica, Cyril and Methodius, were sent from Byzantium in response to a request from the Moravian Prince Rostislav. They introduced a script known today as Cyrillic (derived from the Glagolitic alphabet) in order to make available to the Slavs Scripture and other works indispensable for the Orthodox liturgy. The language of those writings is now called Old Church Slavonic. Although the missionary effort initially aimed at the West Slavs, the translation activity was redirected to the Bulgarians after the Latin mission had conquered the Moravian region. The subsequent advance of the Turks (after 1018) eventually resulted in the transmission of these South Slav translations (Bulgarian and Serbian) to Kievan Rus’, i.e., the East Slavs. Thus, Christianity arrived in Rus’ accompanied by a selection of central writings translated into Old Church Slavonic, the literary language which all Slavs at that time could understand.

The specific literary context in which the monastic sayings of the *AP* were conveyed to this new audience signals the ideological importance of these coll-

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lections. This becomes even more apparent when we bear in mind the suggestion that the AP may have been translated by Methodius himself. An intriguing reference to translation of “books of the fathers” in the Vita Methodii has sparked the desire to identify those books. But as the Vita does not disclose any details, the challenge of attributing translations to Methodius has become a matter of debate.

Nevertheless, this early reception of Greek texts, consisting overwhelmingly of monastic stories from the AP as well as Byzantine hagiography, came to serve as a powerful ferment for later canonical works, such as the works of Nikolaj Gogol, Nikolaj Leskov, Leo Tolstoy, and Fedor Dostoevsky, to mention but a few. Echoing the voices and the spirit of distant and dimly perceived times, these apophthegmatic and hagiographic stories continue to exert an influence upon more recent writers.

The remarkable literary heritage of the AP, shared by all ancient Christian communities, was the result of indefatigable work of many generations of scribes, who selected from the abundant material of stories and filtered these sayings through their minds, hearts, and souls. This work of devotion reached the Slavs in the Middle Ages, and it continues down to the present time. The epistemic context of that monastic practice, and other formative factors such as book-making, that might have had an impact on the genesis of the AP and its further reproduction and transmission, are issues that have intrigued scholars and are still current today. One of many challenges in this area is to discern the mechanisms and principles by which texts were selected centuries ago.

Previous research has focused on large-scale matters such as trying to identify the original core of the AP collections, or has compared compositional elements and content of the extant manuscripts. As for the Slavonic material,
questions concerning the sources of the translations have also been of major importance. This research on provenance and on the relationships within the complex body of transmitted texts is indispensable for further research.

A study of the reception of the *AP* presents a number of difficulties, since we are dealing with a genre that is characterized by its fluid and complex nature, caused by the rich variability of its textual representations. Digital advances in the last decades, especially corpus linguistics, have been a game-changer for philology and linguistics, much as the microscope was for the natural sciences, to cite the comparison used by the esteemed linguist Professor Vladimir Plungjan.6 One such tool, developed under the direction of Professor Samuel Rubenson at Lund University, is the relational database and web-based dynamic library “Monastica,”7 accompanied by analytical tools in the “Apophthegmata Patrum Database” (APDB). As a growing dynamic library, it makes text witnesses available by gathering the *AP* material in all its linguistic representations: editions, manuscript transcripts, and translations, as well as scholarly literature on the *AP*. As an analytical tool, it enables the comparison of different linguistic traditions and facilitates the identification of textual relations. After having been furnished with digital analytical tools, the database will offer new possibilities for resolving questions on the intricacies of the *AP* landscape.

Already at present, however, the database can cluster data which proves useful for comparative studies and a deeper analysis across linguistic borders. For instance, a number of interesting observations have been made in *AP* material. This essay examines a puzzling phenomenon of repetitions within the Slavonic *AP* material. What is the reason for such repetitions, or doublets; why and how did they originate? Is it possible to establish whether they are unintentional? Might the analysis of phenomena such as this throw new light on how a new anthology would have been compiled? Perhaps answers to these questions convey a deeper understanding of the transmission of the *AP* in general, and of the reception in a specific linguistic milieu in particular. The analysis of a particular case—one and the same story presented twice in the same codex—will allow us to address questions of a more general nature.

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6 The comment was made during a presentation at Uppsala University, May 14, 2018.
7 https://monastica.ht.lu.se.
Due to their potential for edification and to inspire virtue, the narratives of the *AP* were especially well suited to conveying the missionaries’ purposes. “The legacy of the desert has been, perhaps, even stronger within Eastern Christianity than in West,” Douglas Burton-Christie claimed. It would seem that the East Slav community was particularly susceptible to the monastic spiritual wisdom condensed in the *AP*. Once they reached the newly converted audience, the sayings and stories of Byzantine ascetics were received unconditionally and whole-heartedly. Collections of apophthegms and hagiography became immensely popular. They were copied, disseminated, and eventually rearranged into new narrative collages, and thus came to exist in multiple anthologies and miscellanea, representing an extraordinarily vital and fluid tradition.

In a specific medieval manner of text borrowing, these collections served as a sort of reservoir, providing native authors with passages, chapters, and even plots for their own storytelling. There are many convincing testimonies of such borrowings in Old Russian literature, when scribes who compiled the life of a local saint reused not only the narrative structure, but also details and events from the earlier, translated accounts. Extensive excerpts from the *AP* were “borrowed” by Slavic hagiographers when writing lives of Russian saints.

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9 For a reconsideration of monastic institutions as agents of Christian and secular formation, see Larsen and Rubenson, eds., *Monastic Education in Late Antiquity*.


11 Francis J. Thomson would dismiss such a thought, highlighting that until the fourteenth century “the monastic inheritance was primarily ascetic rather than spiritual and the monastic ideal was misinterpreted to be the Christian ideal” and that “as opposed to the situation in the West, the conversion of Russia brought literacy not learning, sciolism not education; what the Church offered Russia was: a translated, impoverished, vulgarized Hellenism, inferior to the original” (“The Nature of the Reception of Christian Byzantine Culture in Russia in the Tenth to the Thirteenth Centuries and its Implications for Russian Culture,” in idem, *The Reception of Byzantine Culture in Medieval Russia*, no. 1 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 118–123).

12 See for example Karine Åkerman Sarkisian, “Žitie Onufrija Pustynnika v rukopisnoj tradicii srednevekovoj Rusi” (PhD diss., Uppsala University, 2007).
The *AP* collections, along with similar anthologies of stories and maxims, came to constitute a separate genre in Russian literature called *pateriki*—the plural form of *paterik* ‘paterikon.’ Within these collections, monastic sayings often were transmitted alongside hagiographic material, sometimes resulting in uncertainty about the classification of these literary compositions. That is why scholars, when discussing genres in early Russian literature, had to stress that *paterika* should not simply be considered hagiographic collections, since in addition to the lives of saints they include vignettes of influential ascetics. In fact, unlike hagiographic works which offer a *vita* (the saint’s deeds, death, and miracles), *paterika* predominantly record isolated (albeit momentous and impactful) episodes from the lives of exemplary monks. Nevertheless, the singular and remarkable genre of *paterika* still escapes comprehensive definition.\(^{13}\)

On account of their compositional inconsistency, Mixail Speranskij likened this kind of collection to a string of pearls in which every single pearl, being its own unit, is related to the adjacent one only by an external idea of selection, guided either by a resemblance, a certain moral conception, or simple alphabetical principle based on the name of the elder.\(^{14}\) Therefore in a new string, the pearls could easily be replaced or omitted, and new ones could be inserted, borrowed from different anthologies. We are faced, then, with an overabundance, a vast variety of miscellanies, which were already preserved in multiple copies within the Byzantine tradition.\(^{15}\) Unsurprisingly, the complexity increases with the transmission of translated texts, since their rearrangement in a new linguistic environment leads to further intricacy and variety of the compilations.

The study of *paterika* limited to the scope of one particular literary system makes it difficult to distinguish collections that originated in the source language from those which emerged within the receiving culture. The Italian Slavist Raffaele Caldarelli distinguished among the Slavonic reproductions of *paterika* those he termed *primaries*, that is collections that were shaped before they reached the Slavs, and *secondaries*, that is rearrangements based on already circulating primaries and other contemporaneously existing Slavonic


material and which therefore represent the next generation of AP collections. This type of distinction is of a more theoretical significance, rather than an actual reconstruction, since the reality was inevitably much more intricate and is now much less discernible. Nevertheless, a schematization such as the one presented below can be a way to render a messy world depictable and in a certain sense susceptible to analysis.

Five translated collections are usually considered as primaries: Azbučno-Ierusalimskij (the Alphabetical Jerusalem), Skitskij (the Scete Paterikon), Rimskij (the Roman), Sinajskij (the Sinaitic) and Egipetskij (the Egyptian), since they are presumed to represent translations of preexisting Greek compilations. The first two reflect the two main types of the Greek AP tradition, known as the alphabetical-anonymous and the systematic collections. Interestingly, these two collections possibly represent two different stages in the Slavonic reception of the AP since the Skitskij Paterik is thought to have been translated during the first phase of the mission, i.e., in Moravia, whereas the Azbučno-Ierusalimskij was rendered during the subsequent Bulgarian phase of the mission at the beginning of the tenth century. The remaining three collections represent anthologies based on translations, mainly from Greek works such as the Pratum spirituale of John Moschus (in Sinajskij Paterik, 10th cent., Bulgaria); the Historia Lausiaca, the Historia monachorum in Aegypto and De gentibus Indiae et Bragmanibus by Palladius of Hellenopolis (in Egipetskij Paterik, 10th to 11th cent., Bulgaria); and Gregory the Great’s Dialogues (in Rimskij Paterik, 9th cent., Moravia). Unfortunately, textual witnesses representing AP anthologies are often simply catalogued as paterik collections, or take their title from the first chapter of that particular collection, which complicates their mapping and identification.

The Azbučno-Ierusalimskij Paterik (AIP), following the Greek alphabetical-anonymous collection, is divided into two parts. The first part consists of a preface and an alphabetical series, the Azbučnyj Paterik, containing 467 stories and sayings attributed to 112 ascetics whose names are arranged according to the Greek alphabet. The second part, the Ierusalimskij Paterik, opens with its own preface, followed by a list of contents for the subsequent seventeen chapters (forty in some manuscripts) on monastic virtues. The main body of text presents 473 anonymous accounts (in which the elders are not named), dis-

18 This part of the AIP is ed. Caldarelli, Il Paterik Alfabetico-Anonimo.
tributed thematically into the seventeen chapters. A few witnesses for the AIP have an additional part or a supplementary dossier, which includes 122 apophthegms (or, in abridged versions, 27, 23 or 19 episodes).

According to Caldarelli, the first two parts have a relatively stable tradition, in which the macrostructure especially persists. He concludes that the alphabetical-anonymous derived collection represents the “normal form,” and that its structure results from the transformation of a systematic collection into an alphabetical-anonymous one.19 His understanding of the AIP as derivative of the systematic collection is supported by William Veder, who posits that without the Skitskij Paterik the AIP remains incomplete in its coverage of the monastic experience.20

It has been suggested that the Skitskij Paterik, edited by Veder,21 was the earliest collection to reach the Slavs, since several scholars have attributed its translation to Methodius himself.22 The Slavonic designation Skitskij is a scholarly convention23 that refers to Scetis, a monastic settlement in Lower Egypt whose organisation, practices, and beliefs are reflected in the systematicon, more so than those of other monastic communities.24 In his encyclopaedic edition of the Skitskij Paterik, Veder constructed a hypothetical “hyparchetype” of the Slavonic systematicon as most representative of the original state of this type of AP. He considered its content and structure as close to the Latin translation

19 Raffaele Caldarelli, Il Paterik Alfabetico-Anonimo.
22 Veder is more specific: Methodius translated it during his mission to Moravia between 863 and 885, more precisely in 880 (Scete Paterikon, vol. 1, pp. 31–32). Indications within vocabulary and morphology of the Skitskij Paterik prompted Veniamin Preobraženskij in his 1909 dissertation to suggest that the Skitskij Paterik was translated into Bulgarian during the earliest, Methodian period of transmission of the AP (Slavjano-russkij skitskij paterik: Opyst istoričeskogo i bibliografičeskogo issledovanija (Kiev, 1909), 151–157; cited from Pope, “Did Methodius Translate,” 21). This view was followed by Nikolaas van Wijk (see Pope, ibid., 24).
23 Yet in 1975, van Wijk, when working on his edition of the Skiskij Paterik, entitiled the Slavonic collection Ἀνδρῶν ἁγίων βίβλος because he was convinced that an extant Greek anthology with the same name represents an abridged version of the collection Mega Leimonaron, described by Photius, patriarch of Constantinople, in his renowned work Bibliotheca. See Klementina Ivanova-Konstantinova, “Ob odnoj rukopisi XIV v. Pogodinskogo sobranija,” Trudy Otdela Drevenruссkoy Literatury, 25 (1970): 297, and Svetlina Nikolova, Pateričnite razkazi, 12.
24 Veder refers to Bousset and Jean-Claude Guy in his Scete Paterikon, vol. 1, p. 17.
of Pelagius and John.\textsuperscript{25} Veder’s edition recreates the archetype of the \textit{systematicon} in two representations: in Cyrillic (\textit{textus receptus}) and in its Glagolitic transcription (\textit{textus reconstructus}). This edition supplies also an English translation of the Slavonic \textit{systematicon}, supplemented by variant readings documented in a number of extant manuscripts. Moreover, the Greek text is printed parallel with the Latin.

The collection as presented in Veder’s edition has 1197 apophthegms divided into the twenty-one chapters of the \textit{Scete Paterikon}, each corresponding to a Christian virtue. Within each thematic chapter, the accounts are organized alphabetically by name of the ascetic, followed by anonymous sayings. Thus, in its main part the \textit{Skitskij Paterik} corresponds to the systematic collection of the \textit{AP}. It also includes additional, partly non-apophthegmatic sections, most of which are identified by the editor; these are foreign to the \textit{systematicon} and consequently absent from the \textit{PJ} translation of the Greek systematic collection.\textsuperscript{26} Further evidence of transcription errors, found in several manuscripts, allowed Veder to suggest that these were transcribed from Glagolitic protographs.

Comparing the archaic and particularly the ecclesiastical lexicon of the \textit{Sinajskij Paterik} with the vocabulary of the \textit{Nomocanon}, which is attributed to Methodius, Tat’jana A. Ivanova concluded that Methodius must have translated the \textit{Sinajskij Paterik} in the ninth century.\textsuperscript{27} The oldest surviving Slavonic witness is the manuscript GIM, Sinod. 551, dating from the 11th or 12th century, which contains a collection of apophthegms which the Slavs later (probably in the 14th or 15th cent.) designated as \textit{Sinajskij}.\textsuperscript{28} The first part of this Slavonic collection (episodes 1 to 301) represents the Greek \textit{Pratum spirituale} of John Moschus. The remaining chapters (episodes 302 to 336) are extracts from the \textit{Books of the Holy Men}, the \textit{Alphabetical-Anonymous Collection}, and the \textit{Historia monachorum in Aegypto} attributed to Rufinus of Aquileia (345–411).

The translation of the \textit{Rimskij Paterik} has also been ascribed to Methodius. Aleksej I. Sobolevskij analysed the language of the Church Slavonic translation in relatively late manuscripts containing the \textit{Rimskij Paterik}. Using manuscript
RNb, Pogodin 909 from the sixteenth century, he identified the Rimskij Paterik as the only collection that could have been translated by Methodius himself. Sobolevskij observed that manuscript Sinod. 265 (15th or 16th cent.) best preserves the original translation of this collection, since he found that the 14th-century South Slav manuscripts RNb, Q.i.275 and Viln. Publ. Bibl. 3 showed signs of later reworking. He also noted that the Slavonic translation of the Rimskij Paterik was made from the Greek translation of the Latin original.

As we have seen, in their attempts to identify the Corpus Methodianum, scholars have attributed different paterika to Methodius. These results of separate and independent studies corroborate the assumption that the term “books of the fathers” (Greek paterika biblia), in the plural, must refer to several works. One may assume that at least three later paterika, namely the Skitskij, Sinajskij, and Rimskij, may have been part of that collection of books intended to convey Christian virtues to Slavic proselytes.

The Egipetskij Paterik covers almost the whole of the Historia monachorum in Aegypto, with the exception of two chapters, the De gentibus Indicis et Bragmanibus, excerpts from the Historia Lausiaca (also known as the History of the Monks of Egypt and Palestine) attributed to Palladius, and two excerpts from the alphabeticum. Igor’ Eremin established that the Slavonic translation was made from a Greek version of the Historia monachorum in Aegypto. Mario Capaldo likewise found strong indications of a Greek prototype containing the same elements, albeit in a different order.

Once they reached a new environment, the primary types of AP collections gave rise to new generations of paterika by conflating and interpolating similar monastic texts conveyed from Byzantium. Among the secondaries, or derivative collections, which were probably assembled in Slavic lands using available paterika, hagiography, Synaxaria, and other works, the most pertinent from the

29 Aleksej Sobolevskij, Rimskij Paterik v drevnem cerkovno-slavjanskom perevode (Kiev, 1904), 4.
30 Sobolevskij, Rimskij Paterik, 2.
31 This position is summarized in Pope, “Did Methodius Translate,” 3. There is no scholarly agreement what “books of fathers” could mean. Some scholars believe the term might have been inserted later, while others reject the paterikon theory, considering apophthegms and stories of Egyptian desert monks as less relevant to the Cyrillo-Methodian mission in Moravia (cf. Pope, 3).
early period are the following anthologies: the *Scaliger Paterik* (10th cent., Bulgaria), a collection of succinct aphorisms based on the *Skitskij Paterik*, but also containing fragments from the *Scala paradisi* by John Climacus and the *Egipetskij Paterik*; a florilegium titled *Izbornik* (1076, Bulgaria); the Slavonic Synaxarion *Prolog* (11th cent., Rus’); compiled principally on the basis of the Synaxarion, the *AIP*, and the *systematicon*. The *Svodnyj Paterik* (14th cent., Bulgaria) is a digest of the five basic *paterika* “and *historiae animae utiles* without any discernible system of ordering, nor any semblance of completeness of coverage.” Another important secondary is the *Kievo-Pečerskij Paterik* (Kievan Cave *paterikon*, 13th cent., Rus’), into which parts of the *Skitskij Paterik* are interpolated, but which also reflects the hagiographic *Historia religiosa* of Theodoret. The *Menaion* of 1552 should be mentioned as well, since it contains sections from the *AIP*.

### 3 Some Observations on the Slavonic Material

At the time of this study, the Slavonic material documenting the *AP* reception available in the database was quite limited: the database included Veder’s edited version of the *Scete Paterikon*, that is the systematic collection (henceforth *OS*, in accordance with the designation in the database); the index of the alphabetical part of the *AIP*, edited by R. Caldarelli; and transcriptions of several manuscripts kindly provided to Monastica/APDB by Veder. Manuscripts included in this study are:

- **A1** Belgrade, Public Library of Serbia, *ms Dečany 93* (1150–1250, Rus’)
- **W6** Belgrade, Museum of the Serbian Orthodox Church, *ms Krka 4/1* (1346, Bulgaria)
- **S1** Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek, *ms Scaliger 74* (1200–1300, Bulgaria)

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36 Veder, “The Slavic *Paterika,*” 368.
39 Information on date and provenance of the manuscripts here follows Veder, *Scete Paterikon*, vol. 1, pp. 37–46.
These text witnesses, selected with the stemma codicum established by Veder as a starting point, reflect different stages of the AP reception in terms of time and circumstance, namely both the primary stage and the derivative one. These manuscripts are particularly useful because they may have a more complete content, fewer lacunae, or reflect divergent branches of the Slavonic tradition, to judge from Veder’s stemma.

Some of these text witnesses already attracted the attention of scholars. The St. Petersburg manuscript (RNB Pogodin 267) was described by the Bulgarian scholar Klementina Ivanova-Konstantinova. Nikolaas van Wijk based his edition of the Skitskij Paterik on the Vienna manuscript, which he abbreviated as Mih (Mihanović codex) and considered as the main witness amongst three key sources. He used the manuscript from the Serbian monastery Krka, albeit only to clarify blurred passages. Van Wijk took into account also the manuscripts of Bulgarian provenance, Leiden UB Scal. 74 and Paris 10. To judge by the selection of manuscripts for his edition, van Wijk did not use (or perhaps did not have access to) manuscripts in Russian depositories.

The complexity intrinsic to a tradition characterized by fluid transmission and continuous adaptation is well known. Apart from the resulting difficulties for text-critical studies, our case also has to take into consideration that Monastica/APDB is designed as a dynamic library with continuous improvements and additions, and thus will provide constantly changing figures and charts. The observations and figures presented here are based on the data and digital tools of Monastica/APDB accessible in autumn 2018. Even if perhaps not definitive, the results indicate critical issues to explore in further research.

A simple chart shows the number of segments found in each Slavonic manuscript in relation to the whole database:

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40 Ivanova-Konstantinova, “Ob odnoj rukopisi.”
41 In van Wijk’s edition, the manuscript has the number 264/62.
42 van Wijk, The Old Church Slavonic Translation, 41, 92, 94.
43 In order to enable correlation within the vast amount of data, the apophthegms of the database are segmented into small units. A segment is a text entity often smaller in size than the apophthegm. Furnishing every segment with a unique ID-number makes it possible to conduct quantitative analysis of large data, which can reveal interesting phenomena of the practices of reception.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Siglum</th>
<th>Manuscript</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>No. of segments</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A¹</td>
<td>Belgrade NBS Dec. 93</td>
<td>1150–1250</td>
<td>1736</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>Systematicon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A³</td>
<td>St. Petersburg RNB</td>
<td>14th c.</td>
<td>1638</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Systematicon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C²</td>
<td>Moscow RGB F 304–703</td>
<td>1350–1450</td>
<td>1389</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>Kievo-Pečerski Paterik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W⁶</td>
<td>Belgrade MSPC Krka 4–1</td>
<td>1346</td>
<td>1088</td>
<td>16,4%</td>
<td>Miscellanea: Svodnyj, AIP, vitae, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S¹</td>
<td>Leiden UB Scal. 74</td>
<td>1200–1300</td>
<td>618</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Scaliger Paterik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W⁵</td>
<td>Vienna ÖNB Slav. 152</td>
<td>1200–1300</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>Miscellanea: Scala paradisi (John Climacus), Quod semper mente versare debemus diem exitus de vita (Symeon Mesopotamites), De morte et iudicio (Theophilus of Alexandria)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within this sample, the oldest manuscript A¹ leads the chart with its 1736 segments that represent more than a quarter (26%) of the all segments in the database (6630), including all linguistic traditions hitherto entered. Second in “completeness” in terms of the number of apophthegms is A³, with 1638 segments representing 25% of the total. A preliminary textual analysis of this group of manuscripts reveals manifest errors, omissions, and other readings of significance, indicating the closeness of these two manuscripts, revealing the dependence of A³ upon A¹, which is in line with Veder’s classification. According to his stemma codicum, A¹ and A³ descend from the same archetype α. A¹ is proposed to be a direct copy of α, whereas A³ is thought to derive from an intermediary a’. It is evident that both A¹ and A³ might derive from the same defective antigraph, on account of an abrupt break that occurs both in apophthegm 11.28 of A¹ and apophthegm 9.28 of A³ (see Figure 6.1).

The same disruption, referred to as “a defect in the antigraph” occurs in manuscript A²—Moscow GIM Sinod. 3, which is not included in the group studied here (see Figure 6.2). The manuscript in question is a later copy from the 15th or 16th century, and it belongs to group A according to the stemma of Veder.

44 Veder, Scete Paterikon, vol. 1, p. 46.
45 It is important to point out that the designation of the apophthegms used here has been changed in the database Monastica/APDB to A.11.28 (A¹) and to A.9.28 (A³), respectively (30 September 2019).
As visible in both figures, manuscript A¹ has another omission in the beginning of the apophthegm, which can be reconstructed with the help of A² and A³: 

и́де къ ёдиному старцу гла. (went to an old man saying). This instance seems to support further the idea of Veder of an intermediary between A² and A³.

Moreover, as might have been expected, manuscript W⁶ appears very different from the remaining ones in this group, which presumably indicates either that it presents an independent translation, or more likely that it is translated from a different Greek source. The analysis presented in the subsequent section will reveal details of its composition that contribute to understanding the textual peculiarities of W⁶.
Textual Doublets within Slavonic Manuscripts: A Case Study

The most unexpected result of the database search was to find double occurrences of sayings within the same manuscript. Such doublets represent a retelling with recognizably identical components, such as structure, plot line, and other narrative features. Though usually modified by abridgement or change of certain details, the doublet retains the sense and message of the narrative.

The obvious explanation for duplicate apophthegms is to presume an accidental insertion of folia into the manuscript. This is the case with the A₁, the most comprehensive collection studied here, into which three folia were inserted.⁴⁶ But the explanation cannot be that simple in the case of the doublet found in manuscript W⁶, because the duplication does not occur on the accidentally inserted folia. The duplicate saying, which will be analysed below, occurs in different chapters of the compilation. Neither can this doublet be caused by the involvement of several scribes in the compilation of the collection.⁴⁷

Interestingly, although the doublet in question (apophthegm number 2248 in APDB) reflects a type of narrative that normally belongs to the chapter dealing with challenges of fleshly temptations faced by monks, in W⁶ it is found in two different chapters quite far from each other. The first occurs in chapter 9, entitled Pronouncements of the Aged Ascetics, the second one appears in the untitled chapter 22.

After having ascertained that this is indeed the same story told twice in manuscript W⁶, one can easily verify that it is not a case of identical copies. It is clear that the two passages are two narrations of the same story. The question arises whether these are different redactions of a single translation, or whether they reflect two independent translations of the same source text, or whether they reflect various source texts.

A close comparison of these two apophthegms 9.9 and 22.14⁴⁸ shows that they undoubtedly represent two separate translations. The following chart illustrates different renderings, lexical as well as syntactical.

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⁴⁶ Veder, Scete Paterikon, vol. 1, pp. 37, 41.
⁴⁷ According to Veder, it is the work of a “single scribe, at the outset daunted by his task, [who] acquired a secure hand towards the end” (Scete Paterikon, vol. 1, p. 37).
⁴⁸ The designation of chapters and apophthegms used here has been changed in the database Monastica/APDB to C.7.1 and to G.1.14, respectively (30 September 2019).
The compared textual elements are shown in boldface.

Not all these differences are the result of a mere replacement of one word with more desirable vocabulary. This is true in some instances, such as the interchangeable designations мѫжъ (man) and чл҃къ (abbreviation of человѣкъ, human being) in example (4); or describing the narrator’s provenance in example (1) either by the ethnonym дѣвѧнинь (Theban) in нѣкто старець дѣвѧнинь (an old Theban) or by a genitive construction with an adjective derived from the toponym ‘Thebe’—етеръ ѡ дѣвѧнѣтокѣyczъ старецъ (one of the Theban elders). Moreover, the indefinite pronouns of both versions, нѣкто and етєръ (cf. the Greekἔτερος) are synonymous and stand alongside many other word...
pairs representing different lexical preferences, such as the following: воиньство and воѧ (host) in (3); aorist forms in the first person singular пораꙁи of пораꙁи (to strike, slay) and иꙁиꙁи of иꙁиꙁи (to slay, kill); present tense грѧдꙁи — second person singular of the infinitive грѧсти (to go, come to, approach) and приꙁиꙁи, the perfect of приꙁи (to come, arrive) in the second person singular of (4); or the nouns вѧжѧ (promiscuity, whoring) and любодѣаꙁиꙁи (fornication) in (5). The variation of syntactical wording—in particular the last example (7) which shows different interpretations of the final conclusive statement, expressed as an affirmation in 9.9 but as a rhetorical question in 22.14—suggests that we are dealing with two independent translations.

Consultation of other Greek parallels available in our database reveals textual features which indicate that this is not only a case of two different translations, but more likely of two different Greek source texts yielding independent Slavonic versions. These two Greek sources might reflect different types of the AP collections. The two versions of our saying are found in the edition of John Wortley50 (henceforth GN-Wortley) and in manuscript Athos Protaton 86, 5-39 (henceforth Athos Prot. 86) respectively.51 Both appear in the database:

8 W6, 9.9

ιαко аꙁь γαꙁδων εꙁε εϱεα εϱανηνካꙁа

(that I was the child of a Hellenic priest)

GN-Wortley

δη εγὼ ἤμην τέκνον ἱερέως τῶν Ἑλλήνων.

(that I was the child of a priest of the Hellenes)

W6, 22.14

ιαко аꙁь εꙁε γαꙁδων ἱερεια ὑµιλνεκαꙁα

(I was the child of a priest of idols)

Athos Prot. 86

Ἐγὼ ἤµην τέκνον ἱερέως τῶν εἰδώλων.

(I was the child of a priest of idols)

9 W6, 9.9

ἄνενην εꙁε εϱνενок

(Once, when I was little)

W6, 22.14

κεδꙁα εꙁε ἑϱκεὶν ὑµαꙁε εϱεεε εϱ

(When I was little, I sat in the temple)


51 For the Greek source text of this apophthegm, Athos Prot. 86 v.39 (= AP/GS v.44), see Monastica/APDB. The Greek text of this manuscript has also been edited by Britt Dahlman in Paradiset: Ökenfärdernas tänkespråk, den systematiska samlingen, vol. 5, Olika berättelser till skydd när otukten ansätter oss, ed. Britt Dahlman and Per Rönnegård, Silentium Apophthegmata 5 (Sturefors: Silentium, 2014).
10 W₆, 9.9

I saw my father coming into the temple.

(I saw my father going in)

11 W₆, 9.9

and he answered, I was in a certain village.

(and he said to him answering, I was in that land)

12 W₆, 9.9

and I raised contention

and I raised contention

and much rebellion

13 W₆, 9.9

and he said, In thirty days

(and he said, For/during thirty days)
The synonymous adjectives in example (8), ἐλληνίςκω (Hellene) in 9.9 and ἰδωλϊςκῶ (idolatrous, of idols) in 22.14, terms which normally mean “pagan,” could in all likelihood have emerged as translation variants on Slavonic soil, but it appears that these two lexemes have their origin in different Greek sources: one in the edition of GN-Wortley, ὅτι ἐγὼ ἤμην τέκνον ἱερέως τῶν Ἑλλήνων, and the second in Athos Prot. 86, ὅτι Ἐγὼ ἤμην τέκνον ἱερέως τῶν ἑλληνῶν. Likewise, in example (13) two synonymous types of temporal prepositional phrases...
expressing a limited period of time are found in the Greek sources. Ἐν τριάκοντα ἡμέραις and Ἐπὶ τριάκοντα ἡμέρας gave rise to two prepositional constructions in the Slavonic translations, with properly corresponding prepositions ἐν—въ and ἐπὶ—ꙁа, resulting in: въ· ἡ· ἡμέри (in thirty days) and въ· ἡ· ἡμέри (in thirty days). Despite being different prepositions, these pairs are semantically synonymous constructions in their respective languages, denoting the time taken to complete an action. In this subtle difference, too, the Slavonic translation follows the Greek source text, although the English translation unfortunately does not reflect it.

Not only lexical equivalents, but also omissions and additions of phrases and constructions of the Greek source, such as in examples (12), (14) and (16), are reflected in the Slavonic parallels. At the same time, these examples suggest the existence of a Greek version with the extended readings of 22.14: καὶ ἐξήγειρα πολέμους καὶ πολλὴν ταραχήν, found in MS Paris gr. 2474, the early representative of the Greek systematic collection, which gave rise to въ· въ· брани и многы́ мѧтєжѫ (and I raised contention and many rebellions) in example (12), or καὶ ἐξήγειρα ἀνέμους καὶ σεισμοὺς resulting in бѹрѧ· и трѫсъ (and I raised storm and earthquake) in example (14).

In addition, in examples (9) and (10), the author of the Greek version represented in GN-Wortley introduces in passing the place where the reported incident occurred: “Once when I was little, I sat and saw my father coming into the temple” (9.9). Athos Prot. 86, on the other hand, expresses it more explicitly, since here the narrator while a child observed the depicted scene, sitting in the temple where the reported course of events was taking place during one of his father’s visits: “When I was little, I sat in the temple and I saw my father many times going in” (22.14).

The approximate correlation between the Greek and Slavonic variants is challenged significantly by two examples, which disrupt the parallelism that we find elsewhere between 9.9. and GN-Wortley on the one hand, and 22.14 and Athos Prot. 86 on the other hand. The first dissimilarity appears in (10), where the words “many times” are added; and the second, in (11) with the use of the synonyms въси (village, country) in 9.9. and страну (country, village, place) in 22.14—here in locative въси or въси, and страну, respectively. The Greek versions also offer a synonymous pair: τὴν κώμην (from ἡ κώμη; ‘village, country town’) parallels τὴν χώραν (from ἡ χώρα; ‘land, country,’ as opposed to ‘town’) of GN-Wortley, a detail which runs contrary to our other examples. Nevertheless, the comparison of lexical features noted above allows one to conclude that different Greek originals might have been used as source texts for the two Slavonic translations in this doublet. The variance in the Greek seems to rely on different types of AP collections—the systematic and the
alphabetic-anonymous. Having been translated independently of each other, they could give birth to Slavonic translations such as those recorded in our doublet.

Moreover, compared with 22.14, the narrative in 9.9 seems rather abridged, reflecting a consistent revision of the dialogues by omitting discourse markers and by replacing the sequences of direct speech with reported speech, as illustrated in the two dialogues below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>W⁶, 9.9</th>
<th>W⁶, 22.14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Пóчно же и дpоутъи пришёдя р’е</td>
<td>и се дpоутъи пришёд и тъ клаpнъкше са елю реве же и тówо’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Likewise, another one having come, said,)</td>
<td>(and lo, having come, another one bowed to him and said to him,)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>а тý виккадоу пришёд</td>
<td>(Whence do you come?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(He then said,)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Тpё въ мори бык</td>
<td>(I was at sea.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(I was at sea.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Тpё и дpоутъи пришёд</td>
<td>и се тpетъи пришёд клаpнък са елю’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Then came another one)</td>
<td>(and lo, a third one came and having bowed to him,)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>реве же елю’</td>
<td>(said to him,)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Whence have you come?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>вн же р’е елк</td>
<td>(he then said to him)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(that in such a city there was a wedding)</td>
<td>(in such a city there was a wedding)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is evident that in 9.9 the conversation is creatively rewritten, resulting in fewer replies and references to the speaker, as is common in reported speech. The exchange of interlocutors here is presented without repetitions like “he asked,” “he said to him,” or “he then said” as in 22.14. Such expressions are absent from 9.9.

In addition, we should comment on the position of the doublets in question. This specific apophthegm normally belongs to the chapter on how to resist the demon of fleshly temptations, often entitled On Wars against Fornication. This is chapter 5 in GS-Guy\(^{52}\) and PJ. This thematic section is represented by the hypothetical reconstruction of chapter 5, according to Veder’s edition (here and in the database the chapter is designated as OS.5). As shown in the Chart 6.1,\(^{53}\) the reconstructed OS.5 is almost perfectly reproduced in chapter 11 of collection A\(^1\), represented in the early manuscript Belgrade NBS Dec. 93.

Chart 6.1 shows how the apophthegms of the hypothetic archetype of the Slavonic systematicon are distributed into the systematic collection, as reflected in A\(^1\) and in the compilation of W\(^6\).

Manuscript W\(^6\) by contrast adopts only two thirds of the content of the chapter on fornication. The chart above clearly shows that W\(^6\) takes the first third (1–16) and the last third of sayings in OS.5 (1–16 and 30–46) and omits the middle section (17–28). Furthermore, these two strings of sayings are arranged in two separate sections a significant distance apart, namely in chapters 6 and 22, respectively.\(^{54}\) Chapter 6 is accurately entitled Various Accounts for Strengthening those who Resist Wars of Fornication, whereas chapter 12 lacks any heading. At present, it is difficult to discern with certainty why the middle part of OS.5 was omitted and why the last third was moved to an isolated and unnamed section within W\(^6\). In any case, such a division of the chapter probably emerged by chance, possibly as a consequence of equally distributing the copying assignment amongst three scribes. We cannot exclude such a possibility, in view of the fact that three hands have been identified in the production of this manuscript.\(^{55}\)

Returning to the duplicate apophthegm analysed above, we find it in the penultimate position in OS.5, more exactly in 5.44. As we have already seen, in W\(^6\) one of the repeated accounts is certainly located in its proper position, i.e.,


\(^{53}\) The Alluvial Diagram is created with web tool RAWGraphs.

\(^{54}\) The designation of chapters has been changed in the database Monastica/APDB to A.6 and to G.7, respectively (accessed 30 September 2019).

\(^{55}\) See Veder, Scete Paterikon, vol. 1, p. 44.
in the second third of the untitled chapter 22. One would have expected to find the other one in chapter 6 of W⁶, to which it belongs thematically. But unexpectedly it is located in chapter 9, on fols. 49v–49v of the manuscript, which constitutes the saying's first occurrence in this collection. Chapter 9 bears the heading *Maxims of the Holy Fathers, also Very Useful and Lovely Accounts and Talks*. Thus, the first time our apophthegm occurs in this codex, it is embedded in a jumble of sayings assembled here for no apparent reason. Chapter 9 comprises 42 excerpts from identified as well as unidentified sources, and belongs to a large section between fols. 40v and 73r, comprising miscellaneous texts such as homilies, maxims, and questions and answers. The paratext reads, “Sayings of the holy fathers, stories, and conversations, very beloved and useful, from which we picked out and copied a small number for the sake of love and for the soul’s benefit...” Veder identifies the components of this section as excerpts from the *Compiled Paterikon* (the *Svodnyj Paterik*), the alphabetical-anonymous collection, a few saints’ lives, and what we might call *asectica varia.*

Chart 6.2 makes clear the flow of the sayings of chapter OS.5 into the Slavonic collections A¹ and W⁶. The chart also shows how our specific apophthegm OS.5.44 is borrowed by 11.37 of A¹ and further by W⁶, taking two positions in W⁶ (in 9.09 and 22.24) and representing two versions of the same story, as argued above.

Chart 6.2 illustrates how the apophthegms of chapter OS.5 are regrouped in collections A¹ (*systematicon*) and W⁶ (*miscellanea*).

From the unmethodical and in some way *ad hoc* compilation of chapters, sayings, lives of saints, and other compositional elements in this collection, it appears that its scribes did not have an organizational concept in mind when shaping this anthology. We have every reason to surmise that manuscript W⁶ represents an attempt to compile, rather than make a copy of a fixed collection. The contrary assumption is less plausible, as there are no signs that the copyist rearranged a poorly organized *Vorlage*. Instead, it seems that the compiler made use of several sources. Since at least three individuals were involved in assembling this Bulgarian codex in 1345/6, one might imagine that each of the copyists of W⁶ had contributed his own section, resulting in a splitting up of the chapter on fornication. It may have remained incomplete in the first attempt and may have been re-copied later in an attempt to finish it. But this apparently completed chapter is missing its middle section, and the first and third sections

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56 Veder, *Scete Paterikon*, vol. 1, p. 44.
find themselves in different parts of the codex. However, all three chapters that contain stories associated with issues of fornication, 6, 9, and 22, are thought to have been written by the same hand. Thus, the reasons behind such an irregular organization of the codex seem even more elusive.

A consultation of the Monastica/APDB database shows that our doublets reflect two main types of AP collections: saying 22.14, which is parallel to Athos Prot. 86, corresponds to the systematic collection, whereas apophthegm 9.9 reflects the anonymous collection as presented in the edition by Wortley. The database does not include any collection with a similar structure, nor is there in the database such a doublet in the witnesses of other linguistic AP traditions. Hence we can conclude that W⁶ probably represents a second generation of AP, most likely expanded without any clear concept or influence by other models.

5 Conclusions

A single case of “twin” apophthegms can reveal processes by which a collection was assembled, giving a glimpse of the compilation practices of medieval scribes who used AP material in the composition of new anthologies. It is important in its own right that two versions of an apophthegm, reflecting different AP traditions (the systematicon and the alphabeticon), were included in one particular Slavonic collection. It is obvious that conflation, interpolation, and contamination are features not alien to the Slavonic AP tradition which, as a relatively late one, shows no restraint in merging elements from diverse sources. The composition of W⁶ therefore illustrates how collections of the second generation could come into existence. Since W⁶ represents a distinct group, according to Veder’s classification, it is justifiable to argue that at the time of the formation of the secondaries, the compilers may well have disregarded or simply lost the distinction between the different types of anthologies within the apophthegmatic genre. Further studies may shed new light on this issue and deepen our understanding of how the fluid AP tradition was passed down through time and generations.

The study has also prompted the idea of an evolutionary diversity of the narratives distributed between different AP types. Perhaps a typology of variants (primarily in Greek, but also contrasted to the Slavonic) based on the correlation between distinctive readings and collection types (systematic and alphabetical-anonymous) might be discerned. Such a classification, if it is feasible, could facilitate the understanding of processes by which AP collections developed and diversified. It could also make possible the tracing of stages of text evolution by studying instances of excerpting, revising and retelling.
CHART 6.2 Dendrogram
This study raises general questions about the cultural transmission, on the one hand, and the stages in the evolution of a text, on the other. For instance, which processes guided the changes that our collections underwent, the diversification of variants and the correlation of these readings with a particular collection type. Is it possible to trace the evolution of this process of excerpting, revising and retelling? Further research on the peculiarities of the reception in various linguistic and cultural milieux will contribute to a deeper understanding of medieval textual networking.

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