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Theoria and Optasia in the Old Church Slavonic Translations of the Life of St Anthony the Great*

Abstract. The focus of the present paper is the terms θεωρία and ὀπτασία presented in the Greek text of *Life of St Anthony the Great* by St Athanasius of Alexandria and their translation representation in the Old Church Slavonic versions of the text. The terms are approached diachronically, i.e. in through history of Classical and post-classical Greek literature, thus providing the necessary cultural background for their usage and context. Each term, then, is commented in its exact attestation in the *Life*, providing also the corresponding translations and their wider context. The translation renderings are further analyzed in perspective of the lexical material in the classical Old Church Slavonic corpus as well as with material from texts and sources, thus aiming at contextualizing them in wider lexicological perspective.

Keywords: Anthony the Great, hagiography, Old Church Slavonic translations, patristics, Greek-Slavonic lexical correspondences

The *Life of St Anthony the Great* or *Vita Antonii* (BHG, 140; *PG*, vol. XXVI, col. 835–978; SC, 400[1]; *VA* onwards) by Athanasius Alexandrinus is regarded as one of the foundational texts for Christian monasticism as a cultural phenomenon and movement. It is beyond any doubt that Anthony (?251–356)[2] was not the first monk – according to the numerous written accounts by the early authors,

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[1] Athanase d'Alexandrie, *Vie d'Antoine*, ed. et trans. G.J.M. Bartelink, Paris 1994 [= SC, 400] (cetera: Athanasius).

[2] *Православная Энциклопедия*, http://www.pravenc.ru/ [29 V 2020]. Cf. also G. Bardy, *Antoine (Sainte)*, [in:] *DSAM*, vol. I, Paris 1937, col. 702–708; K. Heussi, *Der Ursprung des Mönchtums*, Tübingen 1936, p. 70–78; B. Lohse, *Askese und Mönchtum in der Antike und in der alten Kirche*, München–Wien 1969, p. 190–197; M. Dunn, *The Emergence of Monasticism. From the Desert Fathers to the Early Middle Ages*, Oxford 2003, p. 1–15; W. Harmless, *Desert Christians. An Introduction to the Literature of Early Monasticism*, Oxford 2004, p. 57–84.

as well as confirmed by the very text of the *Vita* (ch. 3)[3]. Life of Anthony, though, quickly exceeds the limits of the literary genre and becomes the example of an ascetic vita – introducing not only the practices, but also the aesthetics of the genre that later was developed in the monastic milieu. *VA* is sure to have been written soon after the death of the 'first *athletes*' (around the mid-4th c. AD), it is quickly translated in Coptic, Aramaic, Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopian, Georgian and Latin. The *Vita* is later considered not only as a hagiographic narrative *par excellence*, but also as a basis for the flourishing monastic culture, ideology and their proliferous literature from the later centuries.

As such an early source, it could be expected that *VA* presents a foundational set of spiritual terminology, which monasticism uses to verbalize, think and transmit the realties and ideas it reaches to. This terminology, in the first place, can reveal interesting connections with the world of the Late Antiquity which is the philosophical and cultural background on which early Church literature develops. On the other hand, Christianity itself creates a self-sufficient ideology which is to flourish and be elaborated in the coming centuries, reaching practically both new experience and a new philosophical perception of the spiritual life. The monastic and spiritual terminology *of* and *in* the *Vita* is absorbed in the specific language that Christianity employs, especially in the later authors. This is particularly true about the Greek text of the *Vita* and its Latin translations[4] and probably about the Old Slavonic ones, too.

This **research aims** at looking deeper into the translational techniques and the lexical parallels of the known Old Church Slavonic translations of the *Vita Antonii Magni* based on its Greek text. The semantic group that will be in focus in the present paper is the monastic and spiritual terminology which constitutes an important part not only of the later Slavonic literary tradition but also of the cultural and religious life of *Slavia Orthodoxa*. The precise scope of the present paper is limited to the terms denoting spiritual visions.

For this purpose, the researched field is approached both by means of classical philological tools such as *contextual analysis*, *linguistic analysis of the style [of the author*, *translator*, *etc.]* but also with the lens of the anthropology that this type of literature constructs, the cultural shift that it provokes, creating a new paradigm of identity.

The Old Church Slavonic translations of *VA*

VA is translated in Old Church Slavonic quite early; the earliest translation is known to have been accomplished in the time of Presbyter John and it is often

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[3] For the historical relevance of the *Vita*, cf. H. Dörries, *Die Vita Antonii als Geschichtsquelle*, Göttingen 1949, p. 359–410.
[4] Cf. specifically L.T.A. Lorié, *Spiritual Terminology in the Latin Translations of the Vita Antonii. With Reference to Fourth and Fifth Century Monastic Literature*, Nijmegen 1955.

attributed to him[5]. There are two other separate translations confirmed in the literature on the subject, considered to have emerged in the 14th century. The text of the *Vita* itself is attested in 52 Bulgarian, Serbian, Vlachomoldovian and Russian manuscripts, which are divided into five different versions by P. Petkov[6]. In this paper, though, I am going to follow the standard classification in three translation as accepted by the scholarship so far. Those translations could be presented briefly as follows:

a. **First translation** is considered to have originated in Preslav during the first Bulgarian Kingdom, its earliest copy could be found in the Zographou Monastery collection, N. 19 (dated to the 80s of the 14th century)[7]. This copy is characterized by the use of two *jers* (with a tendency to reduce the usage to only one), two nasal vowels with a moderate tendency of mixing them, no vocalisation of the *jers*, almost regular omission of the *l-epentheticum* and writing of ѣ on the etymological place of ꙗ[8]. The text from this copy, kindly provided to me by P. Petkov, is the one used in the present paper. Another copy of this translation is in the manuscript N. 195 from the Khludov collection, edited and published by K. Kostova[9]. Special attention to the language of this manuscript was dedicated by A. Dimitrova[10], who found numerous old traces and lexical matches with what is considered to be the Preslav lexical core. One of the major characteristics of this group is the omission of chapters 51–60 of the *Vita*. This translation is considered to be the earliest one[11] and previous to the Metaphrastic redaction which the *Vita* has undergone in Greek environment[12].

b. **Second translation** of the *Vita* is attested mainly among the Southern and Eastern Slavic people. The full text of this translation follows the copy attested in manuscript N. 4/8 from the Rila Monastery collection (Panegyricus Vladislavi from 1479), ff. 323r – 396. The text of this copy, kindly provided

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[5] Cf. more about the colophon containing the information, which this opinion is based upon, and some of the scholar discussion on the subject in: A. Santos Otero, *Die altslavische Überlieferung der Vita Antonii des Athanasius*, ZKg 90, 1979, p. 98; З. Витиħ, *Житие светог Антонија Великог према српским средњовековним рукописама*, Београд 2015, p. 9–15.

[6] П. Петков, *Славянските преводи на Житие на св. Антоний Велики от св. Атанасий Александрийски*, [in:] *Трети международен конгрес по българистика 23–26 май, 2013 г., София. Кръгла маса „Кирилометодиевистика"*, София 2014, p. 126–140. I express my gratitude to the author for having provided me with the texts of each of the version which I use in my research.

[7] I express my gratitude to the brotherhood of the monastery for providing me with digitalized copies of the *Vita*.

[8] П. Петков, *Славянските преводи…*, p. 128.

[9] К. Костова, *Правопис и фонетика на преславските текстове*, Велико Търново–София 2000.

[10] А. Димитрова, *Синтактична структура на преводната агиография*, София 2012.

[11] К. Иванова, *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Balcano-Slavica*, София 2008, p. 443–443.

[12] T. Helland, *The Greek Archetypes of the Old and Middle Bulgarian Translations of the Life of Saint Anthony the Great*, Pbg 28.4, 2004, p. 17.

by P. Petkov, is used in the present paper[13]. Its linguistic characteristics refer to what is usually found in the 14th century texts, Petkov's hypothesis of an Athonite origin, though, needs further elaboration and research. T. Helland finds this translation to have originated from a premetaphrastic Greek original or from a text belonging to the so-called by him mixed metaphrastic group[14].

c. *Third translation* – represented by only one manuscript – N. 43 from the Serbian Orthodox Church Museum collection in Belgrade, p. 1–47. It was firstly identified by K. Ivanova[15], later confirmed by T. Heland[16] and published by A. Dimitrova in an online data-base of Old and Middle Bulgarian texts[17]. Dimitrova dedicates a special attention to its language in a separate paper[18]. This translation represents the text in the most homogenous and smooth manner, it's considered to have been accomplished not earlier than the 14th c. According to T. Helland, the text was translated from an original, belonging to the so called "metaphrastic vulgata"[19] of the *Vita* among its Greek tradition.

The exact lexicological relations between the three translations have still not been an object of a thorough scholarship. The Second and the Third translations show some clear traces of the 14th century literary production that still need to be investigated in the context of the style and translation techniques. The present paper is hoped to contribute at least partially to understanding better the place of these texts among the Medieval Church Slavonic literacy.

The focus of the present paper is some of the terms denoting spiritual visions attested in the *Vita*. Here I am going to present the variants attested in the three Old Church Slavonic translations of *VA* and to analyze them in the wider context of the medieval Slavonic translations of Greek texts.

The translation solutions are first analyzed in the context of the classical corpus of Old Church Slavonic monuments (10th–11th cc.) and then in view of the corpus of texts attested in later manuscripts. Thus, the paper aims not only at better understanding the origin of the terms in focus, but also at systemizing their reception in the Old Church Slavonic literary environment.

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[13] I could also examine the digital copy of the *Vita* in this manuscript thanks to the project Digital Archive 'Bulgarian Manuscript Book' of the Faculty of Slavic Studies in Sofia University.

[14] T. Helland, *The Greek Archetypes*…

[15] К. Иванова, *Археографски бележки от книгохранилища на Югославия*, ЕЛ 27.4, 1972, p. 51–57; eadem, *Житие на Антоний Велики*, [in:] *Старобългарска литература. Енциклопедичен речник*, ed. Д. Петканова, София 2003, p. 174–175.

[16] T. Helland, *The Greek Archetypes*…, p. 14.

[17] http://histdict.uni-sofia.bg/textcorpus/show/doc_55 [12 IV 2021].

[18] А. Димитрова, *Третият превод на житието на св. Антоний Велики*, [in:] *Светци и свети места на Балканите*, vol. I, София 2013 [= СЛ, 47], p. 92–107.

[19] Those are the manuscripts W and Z according to Bartelink's classification (cf. Athanasius: p. 81, 92–93).

Terms for spiritual visions in *VA*

Spiritual visions are rather often manifestations of the spiritual growth in the ascetic life. Even though that later the monastic and generally Christian literature refers to them with certain skepticism, early ascetic texts contain abundant examples of such stances and experiences. Visions differ from contemplation as practice but still remain closely connected with it as much as both testify for certain dynamics in the inner life of the ascetic and its spiritual growth. In the *Vita*, particularly, they are denoted with the Greek terms θεωρία, ὀπτασία and φαντασία that are often rendered with similar lexemes in Slavonic. In this paper, I will focus on the first two terms as the similarity between their Slavonic correspondences is the closest. The third one and its place in the *Vita* is going to be examined on another occasion, due to its specific philosophical background in the classical Greek literature and its interesting outcomes in the Old Church Slavonic translations.

1. Θεωρία

In Classical Greek this term used to denote the sending of state-ambassadors to oracles or games (θεωροί). The other meaning it is attested with is 'being a spectator at a theater or games' (e.g. in Sophocles' *Oedipus rex*, Plato's *Crito*, Aristophanes' *Eirene*) as well as 'spectacle' (Aeschilus, Aristophanes, Plato's *Leges*), 'viewing, beholding' (Herodotes, Isocrates, Aristophanes). Probably it is from the latter that more specific and abstract notions of 'contemplations, consideration' (Plato, Epicurus, Aristotle's *Metaphysics*) and 'theory, speculation' (Polibius et al.) have been developed[20]. Here it's interesting to mention Lorié's observation that [*t*]*hough Plato is deeply engaged in discussing his eternal ideas he does not use the word* θεωρία *to express this purely intellectual speculation. To him* θεωρία *chiefly means scene, spectacle, show, going to a show, entering on a specific enquiry*[21]. René Arnou dedicates an extensive overview of Platonic contemplation, starting from its pre-origin. Outlining the influence of Socrates, for example, he summarizes that contemplation is a vision, but this vision comes from the inner life, depending on the exercises of the purificatory virtues. This intimate desire of the souls, that leads to this purificatory labor through which the νοῦς come to contemplating the ideas, corresponds to the desire in them that provokes the search in the realm above[22]. Later, Aristotle's opinion was that there was nothing more pleasant than the contemplation and that happiness was hidden in the 'pure thought' (EN, K, 7sqq, 1177sqq)[23]. For Aristotle, continues Lorié, θεωρία or the contemplation is

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[20] Following *LSJ*, http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/lsj/ [12 IV 2021].
[21] L.T.A. Lorié, *Spiritual Terminology*…, p. 144.
[22] R. Arnou, *Contemplation chez les anciens philosophes du monde Gréco-Romain*, [in:] *DSAM*, vol. II.2, Paris 1953, col. 1719.
[23] *Ibidem*, col. 1725.

an active property to God; man cannot contemplate the divine, but can only apply himself to contemplation as much as he himself has something divine in him (the νοῦς, his mind)[24].

Contemplation as knowing God was introduced by Philo of Alexandria who believed contemplating God was possible because God was manifesting Himself, and also because of the "divine seed" (σπέρμα τὸ νοητὸν) received by a purified human mind (νοῦς καθαρώτατος)[25]. As for the meaning 'contemplations of divine things', the term was used freely firstly by Plotinus, although the lexeme he preferred mostly in order to render this idea was θέα[26].

Later in Patristic language[27], the word extended its semantic field in the following directions. Firstly, it preserved the notion of more general and subjective perceptions such as 'seeing, beholding', 'vision', 'spectator'. The second semantic group encompasses more metaphoric meanings, connected with intellectual perception such as 'reason, inquiry', 'intellectual learning', 'theory, speculation, science' and also '(Platonic) speculation'. A separate third group is constituted by more spiritual connotations – it is here that the meaning of 'spiritual contemplation' is extant (not always distinguished form the Platonic one), as well as its connections with prayer, actions, and the communion. Meanings connected with the Christian exegesis could be differentiated in a separate group – there θεωρία refers only to the 'vision of prophets and apostles, comprehensible and interpretable only by minds that are separated from the earthly cares'[28]. Here are also some more *technical* notions related with the spiritual meaning of the Scriptures (especially in the Antiochian school); some of the Alexandrian and Cappadocian Fathers regard it alongside with the allegorical interpretation of the Word (ἀλληγορία)[29]. Among the Greek Fathers the first that used frequently θεωρία were Clement of Alexandria and Origen. Sometimes the term is comprehended as identical by meaning to γνῶσις although the latter used to cover the whole sphere of religious knowledge whereas the former denoted 'the same knowledge at its highest perfection'[30]. Lorié notes that Clement and Origen, similarly to Plotinus, are one of the first authors that postulated the oppositions θεωρία – πρᾶξις, τὸ θεωρετικόν – τὸ πρακτικόν,

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[24] It's worth underlining, though, that our contemporary perception of 'mind' mostly as the rational human thinking is not exactly what νοῦς was referring to.

[25] Philon, *De praemiis et poenis*, 6; *Quis rerum div. heres*, n. 13. R. Arnou, *Contemplation*…, col. 1726.

[26] L.T.A. Lorié, *Spiritual Terminology*…, p. 145.

[27] G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic Lexicon*, Oxford 1961.

[28] Cf. e.g. ἡ τοῦ προφήτου ληφθεῖσα διάνοια πρὸς τὴν θεωρίαν (Thdr. Mops. Nah. I: I (M.66.404D)), also: πού γε τὰς οὕτω φοβεράς τε καὶ ἀπορρήτους θεωρίας δυνατὸν ἦν αὐτοῖς ὑποδέχεσθαι μὴ τῷ λογισμῷ πρότερον κατὰ τὸν τῆς θεωρίας καιρὸν ἐξισταμένοις τῶν παρόντων (*ibidem*, 401D).

[29] Cf. more in A. Solignac, *Theôria*, [in:] *DSAM*, vol. XV, Paris 1991, col. 547–548.

[30] L.T.A. Lorié, *Spiritual Terminology*…, p. 145.

βίος θεωρετικός – βίος πρακτικός. Later, these dichotomies are further elaborated (rather following Origen) by Evagrius Ponticus in his ascetic theory.

In the Classical Old Church Slavonic corpus[31], the Greek term θεωρία is translated with видъ, видѣнїе, позоръ and свѧтость. Among them, in Codex Suprasliensis θεωρία is attested as:

- видъ as 'ability to see, perception'

  277.14 νοεραῖς ἀναβιβαζόμενος βαθμίσι νομοθεσίαν καὶ θεωρίαν разоумьнꙑими възводнмъ степеньми законоположенїе. и видъ

  344.14 ὑπὸ τῆς τοῦ πνεύμτος θεωρίας въспѧть влѣкѫ же сѧ пакꙑ доуховьнꙑимъ видомъ

  345.13 ἡ θεωρία ἡ κατὰ τὴν συκῆν вида смоковьнааго

In the first two examples, it could be argued that видъ renders the idea of perception, rather than the 'ability to see'. In the last case, on the other hand, θεωρία expresses the divine meaning toward which the fig tree directs. This type of interpretation is attested in the early exegesis. In all these occasions, though, the Old Church Slavonic translation does not seem to be quite accurate in rendering the Greek contextual meaning of the passages.

- видѣнїе 'spectacle'
  445.28 διὸ καὶ ἔγαγεν αὐτὰς εἰς θεωρίαν тѣмꙵже и веде и на видѣнїе

- свѧтость 'holiness'
  338.14 καὶ τῶν τῆς θεολογίας καθ᾽ ὧν ἐξυβρίζει νόμων ὅλως ἐκπεσεῖται καὶ τῆς περιεργαζομένης ἀπελαθήσεται θεωρίας и богословьнааго охоулитъ закона. и вꙑшнꙗ ѥго охоулитъ. и пꙑтаѥмꙑꙗ гонезнетъ свѧтости

In John's the Exarch translation of *De Fide Orthodoxa* θεωρία is also translated as видъ and видѣнїе[32]. In *Bogoslovie* it is rendered as видъ meaning 'contemplation': ꙗкоже бо доубъ въ исходѣхъ водьнꙑихъ въсажденъ, тако и дша бж(с)твьнꙑимь понма писаннемь напонть сіа и плодъ ꙁьрѣлъ дасть, вѣроу правоуславьноу, и присноꙁеленꙑ листꙑ богосадьнꙑими дѣлꙑ. на дѣло бо

бл҃гонѕвольно и видъ невъзмоутьнъ ѿ ст҃ꙑнхъ писании въꙋнтаемъ сиꙗ 306b 9 – 307a 7; it's also translated as видѣние rendering "intellectual perception": сладостнии овꙑ соуть дш҃ьнꙑꙗ, а дроугꙑꙗ плътьнꙑꙗ. да дш҃ьнꙑꙗ соуть ꙗлькоже ꙗдиноꙗ соуть дш҃а[33].

In Symeon's Miscellanea from 1073, θεωρία is translated with видѣние in two occasions – in both cases the meaning rendered is connected with a spiritual experience and contemplation:

58c9–10 πνευματικὴν θεωρίαν дх҃вное видѣние

57b19–20 οἱ δὲ βίον ἔχουσι τὸ τῇ τοιαύτῃ θεωρίᾳ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἑστιᾶν ови же житие имꙗтъ ꙗже тацѣмь видѣниꙗмь очи кърмити.

On the other hand, it is also encountered as разоумѣние 'understanding', разоумъ and мꙑсль (134c6–7):

63a12 ὁ δὲ τῆς ψυχῆς ἐξαφανίσας τὴν λήθην καὶ τὴν ἄγνοιαν τὴν φυσικὴν διήνυσεν ἐκπρεπῶς θεωρίαν а юже отъ доуша погоуби забꙑть и невѣдѣние то юстьствьноюꙗ съвьрши разоумѣние лѣпотꙑ

226a22 κατὰ δὲ τὴν ἀκριβῆ θεωρίαν по ѕѣлоопꙑтьтьноꙋмоу разоумоу

Although θεωρία is not attested in the Miscellanea from 1076, it's related verb θεωρέω is encountered, it is translated with видѣти and разоумѣвати[34]. In the translation of book of Prophet Jezekiel it is rendered with видѣние, ꙗвление, (вожии) разоумъ, видѣние и разоумъ, дальнии разоумъ[35].

It is interesting to mention that the lexemes видъ, поꙁоръ are not encountered in the dictionary of St Kliment Ohridsky's original orations[36].

Data from the hymnography for now could be taken from A. Bonchev's dictionary where θεωρία as 'night dream' and 'contemplation, spiritual knowledge; theory' is attested as видѣние in the Lenten Triodion. In the *menaia* it is attested as вѣговидѣние (lit. 'vision of God', 'contemplation in prayer', Men. for March), вогоꙁьрѣние ('vision of God', 'focus in prayer', Men. for January), видъ ('seeing', 'looking', Horologion, evening service of the Compline), дѣание (i.e. дѣꙗние, 2nd Saturday of the Lenten Triodion), ꙁьрѣние[37].

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[33] *Терминологичен речник на Йоан Екзарх*, ed. И. Христов, А. Тотоманова et al., София 2019, http://histdict.uni-sofia.bg/trmdict/trm_search/ [12 IV 2021].

[34] М.С. Мушинская, Е.А. Мишина, В.С. Голышенко, *Изборник 1076 года. Второе издание, переработеное и дополненное*, vol. II, Москва 2009, p. 355.

[35] Т. Илиева, *Старобългарскят превод на Стария завет*, vol. III, *Старобългарско-гръцки словоуказател към книгата на пророк Иезекиил*, София 2013, p. 564.

[36] И. Христова, *Речник на словата на Климент Охридски*, София 1994.

[37] И. Христов, *Гръцко-църковнославянски речник*, София 2019, p. 399.

The last lexeme is used to render the Greek θεωρία in the Medieval Slavonic translation of the *Life of St Pachomius the Great* (according to its copies in the National Library of Bulgaria, N. 307, 105v–163v, Rila Monastery Collection, N. 4/8 (Panegiricum Vladislavi), 456r–483v, and Zographou collection N. 90, 140r–197r). In the corpus of translated works in Old Church Slavonic and later texts the same translation solution is encountered also in the Synodicon of Orthodoxy (Syn. Borili)[38], Gregory of Nyssa's *De hominis opificio*[39], John the Exarch's translation of *Dialectica*[40] and the 14th century translation of the *Dogmatica*[41], in the Areopagite corpus[42] and the Middle Bulgarian translations of abbas Dorotheus's works[43].

In the *Life of St Anthony* Old Church Slavonic translations, θεωρία is attested in the following contexts:

1.1. οἱ δὲ συνόντες ᾐσθάνοντό τινα θεωρίαν αὐτὸν βλέπειν (82)

Translation 1: си же разоумѣвше чюⷣжⷺ нѣкое видѣнїе. на горѣ сⷩ̈ вїдⷺше. 140r

Translation 2: соу́щїи же съ нимь, Ѻ҆щоу́щаахоу нѣкое видѣнїе зрѣти е҆мꙋ. 343r

Translation 3: ѡ҆нⷯ же разꙋваахⷤ(!), съматрѣжще видѣнїе нѣкое видѣти. 41r

In this passage all the three translations are in a huge extent identical. Here θεωρία is connected with the visions, that the saint receives as part of his ascetic life, i.e. it is related with his contemplative life. On the other hand, it is not explicitly marked whether the vision relates to God, his angels, or saints, or to an attack of the demons.

[38] А .Тотоманова, И. Христов, *Речник-индекс на словоформите в Бориловия синодик и придружаващите го текстове в ръкопис НБКМ 289*, София 2015, p. 187.

[39] Gregory of Nyssa, *De hominis opificio. О образѣ чловѣка. The Fourteenth-Century Slavonic Translation*, ed. L. Sels, Köln–Weimar–Wien 2009 [= BSPK.E, 21] (cetera: Gregorius Nyssenus), p. 107.

[40] E. Weiher, *Die Dialektik des Johannes von Damaskus in kirchenslavischer Übersetzung*, Wiesbaden 1969 [= MLSDV, 8], p. 304.

[41] Idem, *Die Dogmatik des Johannes von Damaskus in der kirchenslavischen Übersetzung des 14. Jahrhunderts*, Freiburg 1987 [= MLSDV, 25], p. 787.

[42] *Das Corpus des Dionysios Areiopagites in der slavischen Übersetzung von Starec Isaija (14. Jahrhundert)*, vol. IV.1–3, ed. S. Fahl, J. Harney, D. Fahl, Freiburg 2012, p. 1726.

[43] К. Димитров, *Авва Доротей. Слова. Среднобългарски превод. Гръцко-български словоуказател*, Велико Търново 2013, p. 497.

1.2. Ποτὲ γοῦν καθεζόμενος καὶ ἐργαζόμενος, ὥσπερ ἐν ἐκστάσει γέγονε, καὶ πολὺς ἦν ἐν τῇ θεωρίᾳ στενάζων (82)

Translation 1: вѣ бо оу҆бо нѣколи сѣда и҆ дѣлаа̇. ꙗ҆кы вѣше въ ꙁамышлени стена. 140r

Translation 2: Нѣкогда оу҆бѡ сѣде и҆ дѣлае, ꙗ҆ко въ и҆стоуплюни вы́сть. и҆ мно҇́ вѣ̇ въ ви́дѣни стена. 348r

Translation 3: иногда бо сѣда, ꙗко вь оужасѣ выстъ. и҆ много вѣ вь видѣнїи въꙁдышꙛ. 40r

In this passage the Greek text is rendered much more freely in Translation 1, combining somehow the translations of ἔκστασις and θεωρία. The translator seemingly is aware about the connection between the spiritual vision of the saint and the state he is while receiving it. The Old Church Slavonic term ꙁамышление rendered these two Greek terms, though it is hard to determine which exactly. It is more probable that ꙁамышление stands as a translation of θεωρία as far as ἔκστασις is almost definitely rendered as оужасъ in the eldest monuments of Old Church Slavonic literacy[44].

The term ꙁамышление itself is not attested in the vocabulary of the Classical corpus. It could be found, though, in Sreznevsky[45] and in A. Bonchev (in Menaion Praxos for October of 1096).

1.3. Ὦ τέκνα, βέλτιον, ἔλεγεν, ἀποθανεῖν, πρὸ τοῦ γενέσθαι τὰ τῆς θεωρίας (82)

Translation 1: О҆́че да оу҆не е̇сть ꙋмрѣти рекы. прѣжде даже не вꙛдеть раꙁоу-мноѐ. 140r

Translation 2: ѡ. че́да. лоу́че вѣше оу҆мрѣти прѣ́жде да́же вы́ти видѣнїю. 343r

Translation 3: ѡ. чада, оу҆не е̇сть оу҆мрѣти рече, прѣжде даже не выти видѣнїоу се́и̇. 41v

An interesting translation decision in this passage could be observed concerning the phrase τὰ τῆς θεωρίας (the things of/related to the vision) – rendered by

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[44] И.П. Петров, *Чудеса и изстъпления: Предварителни наблюдения върху старобългарските преводи на гр. Εκστασις и Εξιστημι/Εξιστανω*, [in:] *Българистични четения – Сегед 2017. Международна научна конференция Сегед, Унгария, 8–9 юни 2017 г.*, ed. G.L. Balász, M.B. Farkas, H. Majoros, Сегед 2017, p. 61–68; idem, *L'horreur de la vie et l'exstase de la vie: първоначални бележки върху екстатичната терминология в житието на св. Антоний Велики и славянските му преводи*, [in:] *Sapere aude. Сборник в чест на проф. дфн Искра Христова-Шомова*, ed. V. Savova, I. Trifonova, I. Petrov, P. Petkov, София 2019, p. 115–128.

[45] И.И. Срезневский, *Материалы для словаря древнерусского языка по письменным памятникам*, vol. I, Санкт-Петербург 1893, p. 930.

ρазоγминоε in Translation 1. A possible explanation for this solution, could be found in the renderings of the verb θεωρέω which often carries the meaning 'understand' and is thus translated with ρазоγмѣти – e.g. in the translation of the Book of the Twelve Prophets, Habbacc. 2:1 ιακоже ρазоγмѣти проρочьскама очима. Τοῖς προφητικοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς θεωρήσω[46]. The same translation solution is found also in John Exarch's translation of *De Fide Orthodoxa*. As it was presented above, it is also extant is Symeon's Miscellanea from 1073 and with some degree of uncertainty might relate to a certain translation technique of the Preslav circle. In the case in the *Vita*, though, the translation seems to be rather mechanical and incoherent to the surrounding context[47].

Similar occasions of θεωρία translated as "understanding, perception" are found in the *Izbornik* of 1073 (Symeon's/Svetoslav's Miscellanea) as in: 63a12 ὁ δὲ τῆς ψυχῆς ἐξαφανίσας τὴν λήθην καὶ τὴν ἄγνοιαν τὴν φυσικὴν διήνυσεν ἐκπρεπῶς θεωρίαν – а юже отъ доγша погоγби забъιть и невѣдѣнιе то ιεстьствьнοιε съвьρши ρазоγмѣниε лѣпотьι; 226a22 по ѕѣлооπъιтьтноγмоγ ρазоγмоγ – κατὰ δὲ τὴν ἀκριβῆ θεωρίαν. It is plausible, therefore, that this translation choice might be mainly typical for the monuments of the Preslav circle[48].

1.4. Ἀντωνίου δὲ μόνον ἡ εὐχὴ καὶ ἡ ἄσκησις, ἧς ἕνεκεν ἐν τῷ ὄρει καθήμενος, ἔχαιρε μὲν τῇ τῶν θείων θεωρίᾳ (84)

> *Translation 1*: Ἀντωνιέва же тъчιᴀ молитва бѣше. и въздρъжаниε εже дѣлѣ вь горѣ сѣда молѣше са. и ρадоваше са ꙋбо ρазоγмомь ὁ бжествныхъ. 141r

> *Translation 2*: Ἀнтѡнιꙋ же бѣше тъкмо млтва и постъ, иχже ρади на горѣ сѣде, ρáдоваашε сε оγбѡ въ бжтвныᴀ видѣнιй, 343v

> *Translation 3*: Ἀнтѡнιоγ же тъчιᴀ млтва, и пѡстъ бѣше. имиже ρад́и на горѣ сѣда, ρадоваше са оγбо бжтъвныιι||ми видѣнιми. 42r–42v

In this passage, again, it is the First Translation that renders a different solution for translating θεωρία in the phrase τῇ τῶν θείων θεωρίᾳ. As in 1.3., θεωρία here is rather connected with the verb θεωρέω as 'comprehend, understand'. Here, though, its translation with ρазоγмъ is particularly specific, because this Old

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[46] Р. Златанова, *Книга на Дванадесетте пророци с тълкования. Старобългарският превод на Стария Завет*, vol. I, София 1998.

[47] It should be also noted that in the Classical corpus, though, θεωρέω is always translated with *verba videndi*.

[48] Given the expected synonymity between θεωρία and γνῶσις (cf. supra, L.T.A. Lorié, *Spiritual Terminology…*, p. 145) an interesting confirmation is found again in the *Izbornik* of 1073, where γνῶσις is translated as ρазоγмъ in numerous occasions: 8r21, 226r12–13, 37r18, 38в10, 40бб, 118a2, 133a18–19, 133a29, 154в26, 159r4, 164r13, 168в25–26, 168r26, 199a7–8, 200бб, 201в14, 201в18, 204в11, 209б9–10, 210a2, 210a8–9.

Church Slavonic lexeme is used in translating other important terms not only of the monastic culture but in theology as well (especially that of St Athanasius of Alexandria) – mostly σύνησις and νοῦς[49].

2. ὀπτασία

Although not attested in the Classical Greek literature, the word appears in Anthologia Graeca (as 'vision'), in Septuagint (Dan. 9:23) and in Luke (1:22, as 'apparition'). It is related with the late Greek ὀπτάζομαι 'being seen', derived from one of the suppletive stems of βλέπω (Perf. Act. ὄπωπα, Aor. Pass. ὤφθην) (*LSJ*). In Patristic Greek ὀπτασία is attested with meaning 'vision, appearing (of God, Christ, saint, demon)'[50].

In the classical corpus of Old Church Slavonic monuments ὀπτασία is translated with видъ, видѣние, ꙗвление, обавление, where only видѣние is attested in the vocabulary of St Kliment Ohridsky's orations.

Codex Suprasliensis contains most of the extant translation variants of ὀπτασία:

- видѣние (and видъ only once in a passage where both mean "night vision")

  294.21 τότε τοίνυν Αἰθέριος ἀναστὰς ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕπνου καὶ τὴν ὀπτασίαν διακρίνας… καὶ τὴν ὀπτασίαν τοῖς πατράσιν ἀπαγγείλας тъгда оубо ѥѳѥрии въставъ отъ съна. и видѣние расꙋдивъ… и видъ от'цемъ повѣдавъ

  299. 21 δέχεται ἐναργῶς τὴν ὀπτασίαν φαίνεται γὰρ αὐτῇ καθ᾽ ὕπνους λέγων приꙗ авѣ видѣние ꙗви бо сѧ ѥи въ сьнѣ глаголѧ

- ꙗвление

  529. 22 ὁ τοίνυν ἁγιώτατος ἐπίσκοπος σὺν παντὶ τῷ κλήρῳ ἐκέλευσεν συβαχθῆναι ἐπὶ τὸ τὴν ὀπτασίαν ταύτην διηγήσασθαι с͠тꙑи ѥп͠пъ вьсемоу клиросоу своѥмоу повелѣ събьрати сѧ на сьповѣдание ꙗвьѥныꙗ того

- обавление

  299.13 καὶ τούτου ὑπὸ ἀγγελικῆς ὀπτασίας φανερωθέντος αὐτῷ δηλοῖ αὐτῇ λέγων и томоу отъ аг͠гѥльска обавлѥниꙗ облнченоу бꙑвъшоу. вьзвѣсти ѥи

In Symeon's Miscellanea of 1073 it is translated with видъ: видѣти вида аггелъ вожии ὀπτασίαν ἀγγέλων θεοῦ 256d19. In the Book of the Twelve Prophets, it is attested once translated as видѣние: Ma 3:2 (337a20) and кто постоитъ видѣнїе ѥго. It is encountered twice in the St Athanasius' Third Oration against the Arians translated as видѣние[51]:

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[49] И.П. Петров, *Помислите (λογισμοί) в житието на св. Антоний Велики и славянските му преводи*, ФФ 13.1, 2021, p. 19–36.

[50] G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic…*, p. 967.

[51] П. Пенкова, *Свети Атанасий Александрийски (Велики). Трето слово против арианите. Изследване и издание на текста*, София 2016.

1466:14 (Migne 349): ὁ βλέπων τῶν ἀγγέλων ὀπτασίαν οἶδεν, ὅτι τὸν ἄγγελον εἶδε, καὶ οὐ τὸν Θεόν.

и видꙗ й видѣнїе аггельско, вѣсть ꙗко аггела видѣлъ е҃ а не б҃а

1716:11 (Migne 421): οἶδεν ὁ Ἀπόστολος ὃ πέποθεν ἐν τῇ ὀπτασίᾳ

Вѣсть ли апостоль еже поꙗтъ въ видѣнїи

The same correspondence видѣние is extant in the translation of the Areopagite corpus[52], Gregory of Nissa's *De hominis opificio*[53],

In A. Bonchev's dictionary two more translation solutions are attested: ѿкровение (Men. for November 12th canon, song 6) and воззрѣние (Sir 43:17)[54].

In the *Life of St Anthony*, the term is extant three times with a general meaning of 'vision, apparition (of a saint or an angel)'.

2.1. καὶ γὰρ τὴν τῶν ἀγαθῶν καὶ τῶν φαύλων παρουσίαν εὐχερὲς καὶ δυνατόν ἐστι διαγνῶναι, τοῦ Θεοῦ διδόντος οὕτως. Ἡ μὲν γὰρ τῶν ἁγίων ὀπτασία οὐκ ἔστι τεταραγμένη (35)

Translation 1: приходꙗть бо скверъннныхь й добрыхъ. оу҆добъ мощно е҆сть разоу-мѣти. бо҃у даꙗꙗщоу ст҃хъ видѣниꙗ̂ сице, нѣсть мощенъ. 127v

Translation 2: ꙗ̂бо злыхь же й бл҃гхь приш�е̂ствїе оу҆до́бь й възмо́жно е̂ позна́ти бо҃у пода́ющꙋ. сѝце е҃тыхь ꙋбо̀ видѣнїе нѣсть съмоу́щено. 332v

Translation 3: добрыим бо й злыимъ пришествиемъ, оу҆добно й мощно е̂стъ разоу-мѣти. бо҃у подажꙋщоу таковw, е҃тмь видѣнїемъ. нѣ съмꙗщенно 19r

In this passage all the three translations render the Greek term similarly. In the first translation τεταραγμένη is probably mistakenly given as мощенъ instead of съмꙗщенъ which is the exact correspondence of the Greek perfect participle, and which is the variant in the other two translations. One could assume, as well, that certain choice in the Slavonic translation might be due to a scribal error or a misreading in the Greek tradition. Although, as per the critical edition of G.J.M. Bartelink[55], no data can be taken as proving the later assumption, for now.

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[52] *Das Corpus des Dionysios Areiopagites…*, p. 1753.
[53] Gregorius Nyssenus, p. 117.
[54] И. Христов, *Гръцко-църковнославянски…*, p. 597.
[55] Athanasius, p. 230.

2.2. Τοιαύτη μὲν οὖν ἡ τῶν ἁγίων ὀπτασία (35)

Translation 1: тако ὖбω с͞тыхъ ꙗвленїе. 128r

Translation 2: таковὼ оу̑бо̀ и̑е̑ с͞тыхь видѣнїе 332v

Translation 3: таково ὖбо с͞тыимь видѣнїемь. 19r

In this passage only the first translation shows a more contextually elaborated solution rendering ὀπτασία with ꙗвленїе. This is explained by the fact that the only *varia lectio* in this place that G.J.M. Bartelink provides (in the pre-metaphrastic codex Vat. gr. 866 from the 11th–12th c.)[56] reads παρουσία instead of ὀπτασία, a term which would exactly correspond to ꙗвленїе. This excerpt, together with the previous one constitutes a part of St Anthony's sermon before the gathered monks. In his speech, Anthony instructs the brethren on how to recognize and distinguish between the apparition the good and those of the bad forces. In both of the passages, it could be observed that ὀπτασία was used to denote the good spiritual beings. My work with the text of the *Vita* so far has showed that another word was used to refer to evil forces, false visions etc., namely φαντασία – a term that I will analyze elsewhere.

2.3. οἱ δὲ συνόντες ᾐσθάνοντό τινα θεωρίαν αὐτὸν βλέπειν. Καὶ γὰρ καὶ τὰ ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ γινόμενα πολλάκις, ἐν τῷ ὄρει τυγχάνων ἔβλεπε καὶ διηγήσατο Σαραπίωνι τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ, ἔνδον ὄντι καὶ βλέποντι τὸν Ἀντώνιον ἀσχοληθέντα τῇ ὀπτασίᾳ (82)

Translation 1: си же разоумѣвше чюⷣжꙋ нѣкоꙷ видѣнїе. на горѣ сꙷ вⷣѣше. и̑ повѣдааше Серапиⷩꙷноу е̑п͞коу, въноутрь сꙋщоу. и̑ видꙗщоу и̑ ὖпразнившоу сꙗ видѣнїемъ. 140r

Translation 2: соу́щїи же съ нимь, Ѻщоу́щаⷯоу нѣкоꙷ видѣнїе зрѣти е̑мꙋ. и̑бо̀ и̑ ꙗже въ Егѷптѣ бываемаа мнὼжицею въ горⷯѣ сꙷи зрⷯѣше. и̑ повѣдоваⷶше Сераꙅпïꙵꙍноу е̑п͞коу, въноу́трь соу́щоу и̑ зре́моу Антꙍнïа оу̑пра́жнꙗюща се въ ви́дѣнïи 343r

Translation 3: онⷯï же разꙋваахꙋ(!), сьматрⷯꙗще видѣнїе нѣкоꙷ видѣти. и̑бо вь Египтѣ бываꙅꙗщаа, мнⷯꙍгажⷯꙷи на горⷯѣ сⷯыꙷ вижⷯꙋ, повѣдааше Сераꙅпïꙍ-ноу е̑п͞коу. въноутрь бываꙅꙗщоу́, и̑ видꙗщоу Антꙍнïеви, оу̑пра́знившоу сⷣꙗ видѣнïемъ. 41r

In this passage, it could be noticed that neither of the Slavonic three translations render the difference between θεωρία and ὀπτασία. Special attention should be paid to the verb in the construction ἀσχοληθέντα τῇ ὀπτασίᾳ (participium

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[56] Athanasius, p. 232.

coniunctum after the Dative participle βλέποντι, governed by διηγέομαι – the formal verbum regens). The verb ἀσχολέω is rendered by пра҃здьновати 'to idle, to laze, to be free' in the classical corpus in its active form, while the medio-passive meaning is rendered with тъщати сѧ 'to hurry, to rush; to strive, to try, to make efforts'. In the passage above, all the translations approach these solutions somewhat differently. Translation 1 & 3 use ꙋпразнити сѧ 'to release, to free; to stop; to destroy; to find time', from the same root as пра҃здьновати. The verb used in Translation 2 ꙋпражнꙗти сѧ (non attested in the classical corpus) is imperfective and thus is more grammatically incorrect regarding the Greek text where the active aorist participle expresses a momentary or accomplished action. On the other hand, the first and the third translation use a past participle of a perfective verb, thus keep a formal closeness to the Greek original. This could be stated for the relation to the Greek text of all of the three translations, which somehow do not render clearly enough the meaning in this particular case.

Concluding remarks

From the passages regarded in this paper, it could be observed that only the First Translation renders θεωρία with ра҃зоумъ/ра҃зоумьное, and not only with видѣние. Similar translation solutions, as shown in the beginning, were characteristic for the Miscellanea of 1076. This solution is often encountered in early translations and texts from the Preslav circle, which only could confirm that the First translation pertains to the early translated texts of this circle. Such unestablished rendering of a term as important in the Christian spiritual terminology as θεωρία, could probably be explained with still undeveloped terminological system through which the contemplative communion with God could be expressed. Because of this lack of a strictly established terminology, the translation is more literal and does not render contextual hues while striving to reflect more strictly the Greek word (in this case the verb θεωρέω which could mean both 'see, look, contemplate' and 'understand'). In the Symeon's Miscellanea of 1073 and in Codex Suprasliensis, a larger set of translational equivalents is found; this could lead to the conclusion that at this time the terminological environment was still not unified, still developing it was rather focused on rendering the contextual nuances rather than establish a clear singular lexical equivalent of the Greek terms. It is noteworthy, though, that this term was in a way perceived and rendered with words denoting 'understanding' and 'perception', sometimes adequately to the surrounding context, but sometimes in a seemingly more mechanical manner. The Greek term *theoria* itself had still a long way in its conceptualization and lexical reception in the realm of Old Church Slavonic literacy. 'Contemplation' as a spiritual practice was a more abstract term than 'vision' which is more easily comprehensible and thus clearer as expression through language. On the other

hand, it could be summarized that in these Old Slavonic translations θεωρία was perceived and rendered with two semantic circles of terms, that more or less transmit the connection between 'seeing, vision' and 'understanding', without creating a new one-word Slavonic correspondence.

Here it's worthy to mention that in both Latin translation of the *Vita* this notion of θεωρία as contemplation lack equivalent, while the more concrete meaning of 'vision, the thing seen' is rendered with *visio*, *visus*, *apparentia* in the Anonymous translation and with *visio* and *revelatio* in the translation of Evagrius of Antiochia[57]. Probably this was the reason behind translating those two terms the same way. On the other hand, the data from A. Bonchev's dictionary (mostly from Menaion texts) reveal much more elaborated picture of translation solutions, which have caught considerably wider sphere of nuances. Whether genre specifics of a text dictated (and if so, in what extent) the translation accuracy and variability, is a question that needs a deeper research of its own.

Considering ὀπτασία, it is only the First translation that stays close to Codex Suprasliensis (in rendering the Greek term with ꙗвлєниє). In all other occasions, this Greek word is not perceived differently than θεωρία and thus not rendered with another lexical device than видѣние. Again, A. Bonchev's dictionary reveals a wider semantic circle of solutions that correspond to more contextually specific equivalents of the Greek term.

It is notable, also, that none of the attested translations use the lexeme видъ – probably reserved for more philosophically nuances texts.

Consequent research on the spiritual terminology of the *Vita* and its lexical relation with other Old Church Slavonic texts will probably clarify the equivalency of the Old Church Slavonic words and the Greek terms of the originals. Also, the question about the dependency between the text genres, the translational circles and the strategies of rendering the Christian terminology remains open. Approaching these issues will contribute to our understanding the cultural dialogue between Bulgarian kingdom and Byzantium, but also the way Christianity, and especially monasticism, was perceived and accepted in Slavonic environment through its specific language.

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[57] L.T.A. Lorié, *Spiritual Terminology*…, p. 152. The later Western writers, such as Jerome, Augustine, and especially Cassian, prefer using *contemplatio* for this more abstract notion, when not employing (now and then) *theoria* (*ibidem*, p. 160).

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