Translation in Russian Contexts

Culture, Politics, Identity

Edited by Brian James Baer and Susanna Witt

First Published 2018

ISBN: 978-1-138-23512-0 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-1-315-30535-6 (ebk)

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DOI: 10.4324/9781315305356-2

NEW YORK AND LONDON

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Karine Åkerman Sarkisian

In the Saami version of the canonical account of the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem (beginning in Mark xi 2, Bible of 1713), the donkey on which Jesus rides into the city is replaced by a calf of a reindeer—a more familiar animal to the Saami audience (see Wilson 2008, 75). This can be seen as an instance of domesticating translation (Venuti 2008) or dynamic equivalence (according to Nida 1964), a practice that has been questioned by some scholars. Debating the issue, some critics claim that such an approach results in violations of historicity (see Zogbo, 2011, 25).[1] Nevertheless, similar examples and other evidence of conscious text manipulation suggest this to be a widespread practice among medieval translators. The object of this study, consisting of a hagiographic story of Byzantine provenance in several linguistic traditions, also contains such deviations from the source text, which are often explained as translation errors. The chapter argues that certain deviations can be considered as deliberate choices on part of the medieval translator. Unheeded or neglected translation behaviors become apparent only when collating translations of the same text in different cultural contexts. The study focuses on translation features of the Byzantine Vita (Life) of St. Onuphrius at the time of its reception by medieval Slavs. The main question that will be addressed is whether lexical discrepancies can be considered translation strategies within the transmission of this text into a new cultural context.[2]

It should be noted that the study of the translation of medieval manuscripts presents a whole set of challenges specific to the period, partly because it is only in exceptionally rare cases that the protograph—i.e., the specific source text of the translation—can be identified and partly because researchers can never be certain that the full range of material is available and that every significant manuscript has been taken into account. Indeed, this is impossible in most cases. Within the Slavic tradition knowing when, where, or by whom a medieval translation was made is the exception rather than the rule. It is also known that a significant number of works were translated more than once, which is the case with the text under investigation. The very nature of manuscripts, which are

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copied, recopied, and redacted by several anonymous scribes, each of whom leaves subtle clues as to his own linguistic individuality, occasionally contaminating versions of the text by consulting multiple versions of the account, is yet another factor that makes it difficult to determine the archetype (or the "ideal source text") of a redaction or the original of a translation. This complicates the common notion of a simple opposition between original and translation. In addition, it is not always possible to distinguish clearly between a translation and a redaction of a medieval Slavic text, especially when one takes into consideration the fact that the scribe or editor of the text might have consulted a Greek original for reference. Thus, for the purposes of the present study, a distinction between translation and redaction is not very helpful with regard to medieval manuscripts, in particular within the confines of a specific text tradition.

Since the distinction between a translation and a redaction is often debatable, this study offers a methodological approach that views text reception as a continuous process and translation as a collective and coherent series of manipulations of a certain text with the aim of bringing the narrative to a new audience. Accordingly, the study identifies and explicates lexical features that unify and distinguish manuscript branches at various stages in the cultural appropriation of the Onuphrius narrative up to the seventeenth century. It is important, therefore, to distinguish cases of conscious manipulation from pure misspellings and mistakes. Instead of comparing the source texts' single representation in a concrete manuscript in the target language, the study takes into consideration evidences of text manipulation on the part of an editor or a translator within groups of text witnesses. The suggested approach is by no means indisputable, but it is a way of identifying features of text adaptation at the various stages of transmission to a new cultural environment.

Several scholars have shown that medieval translators actually did reflect on and articulate the challenges of their work, taking as their starting point different approaches to the *word* and its dichotomy *aisthéon* 'signans'—*noéton* 'signatum' and later *glagol* 'word'—*razum* 'sense' (Matkhauzerova 1976; Bulanin 1995, 27; Franklin 2002). In the context of translation this opposition concerned *form* and *sense* (i.e., *meaning*), with the sense being primary. Nevertheless, the greater importance attributed to sense did not contradict the prescriptive word-by-word approach within the ambiance of a prevailing idea of the word as a primordial and eternal concept (Vereshchagin 1997, 37). John the Exarch emphasized that principle in the tenth century:

> [. . .] if the striving for an exact translation of the word leads to a distortion of the meaning of the text, then an exact, literal translation should not be used, but, on the contrary, equivalence of meaning should be preferred to the sameness of the form.
>
> (Matkhauzerova 1976, 33)[3]

Since the ideal of preserving both form and sense when bringing an utterance to another culture is unattainable, medieval translators were constrained to the practical aim of semantic equivalence, "focusing on how to render individual words, or, at best, small syntactic units" (Franklin 2002, 210, 215).

Within this context, semantic rather than formal equivalence became the central issue in early translating activity. Given the codifying nature of the first renderings from the Greek to the Slavic context, the very first translators had an ambiguous mission: in addition to conveying the true word, Cyril and Methodius had a "term making" assignment (*terminotvorchestvo*, according to Vereshchagin, 1997). Their followers and subsequent writers, while rendering hagiographic texts, continued this foundational work. Medieval translators encountered a full range of translating challenges: from the rendering of sacred names and abstract concepts to mundane attributes of the source culture, which sometimes did not have an equivalent in the target language.[4] How did they approach this kind of translation challenge? Can the material studied give the present-day reader any clue to the decision making of a medieval translator?

In studying early Slavic translations, a synthesis of text-critical methods and linguistic analysis has become *de rigueur* and is considered the most reliable way of resolving complex questions of historical philology regarding the dating and lineage of early translations. Thus questions of attribution—establishing the authorship, authenticity, place, and linguistic affiliation of a translation—have come to dominate Slavic historical philology and to predetermine researchers' priorities. Mapping linguistic features of a particular region and identifying local vocabulary and the area over which specific lexemes were current provides scholars with lexical data that serves as a reliable tool in the attribution of translations. Taking as its starting point theoretical perspectives developed within contemporary translation studies and based on a previous text-critical study of the Slavic tradition of the Life of Onuphrius, this study focuses on medieval translation in its own right, discussing puzzling textual elements, which may have been overlooked or dismissed in the past as mistakes or occasionalisms.

The Life of the Byzantine St. Onuphrius the Hermit was probably first written in the fourth century, and certainly no later than the first half of the fifth, and was subsequently transferred to all cultures of early Christianity.[5] "The Life," which became highly popular throughout the Christian world, probably reached the Slavs in the eleventh or twelfth centuries within the body of hagiographic literature adopted from Byzantium.[6] The story was obviously very well-liked by the Slavs, as it was copied and recopied as late as the nineteenth century. It takes the form of travel notes made by a certain monk Paphnutius, who recorded his pilgrimage to the desert. His account of Onuphrius is only one of the

episodes contained in "The Life," and Onuphrius himself is one of eight hermits and ascetics whom Paphnutius encountered in the desert. Thus, the Vita hardly corresponds to the established canons of the hagiographical genre; rather, it resembles a sequence of edifying stories from the *Skitskii Paterik* (*The Scete Paterikon*).[7] Indeed, the scholarly literature on the *Life of Onuphrius the Hermit* repeatedly points out the close connection between certain episodes in it and the stories in the *Scete Paterikon*. Moreover, it is claimed that one chapter from the *Paterikon* was interpolated into the *Life of Onuphrius*. This conclusion, drawn by specialists in the Greek and Latin traditions of St. Onuphrius (Nau 1905; William 1926), is confirmed by the Slavic material (Pak 2001; Åkerman Sarkisian 2007) and is significant for the exposition that follows.

Three narratives of Onuphrius' Life are known among Slavs: (a) the pilgrimage of Paphnutius (*Peregrinatio Paphnutiana*)—the primary and the most widespread tale of the saint, (b) the history of his birth and childhood (*Legenda*)—a secondary and rare construction, and (c) a hybridized version of the previous two, which does not seem to have been preserved in Greek. Unless otherwise stated, reference in this chapter is to the *Peregrinatio*. To date, over a hundred Slavic manuscripts of the Vita hav e been identified, representing at least three South Slav translations (two Serbian from the fourteenth century and one Bulgarian from the fifteenth century). Even more redactions, including East Slav (Russian, sixteenth-century) revisions, have been established.[8]

Scholars who studied early Slavic translations confirm that the current practice of medieval translations from Greek into Church Slavonic may be characterized as verbatim, producing a text as close as possible to the original (Uspenskii 2002, 56–58). The approach of literal translation is known as *kata poda* (in Greek 'following in the footsteps'), *verbum verbo, fidus interpres, metaphrase* (in John Dryden's sense), *formal equivalence* (Nida 1964), or *gloss translation*, and is, moreover, characteristic not only of Slavic translations. According to Vereshchagin (1997, 22), it is the main translation technique in 98% of cases referring to Gospel translations. He proposes the term *poslovnyi* relating to single word correspondence—i.e., one word in the target text corresponds to one word in the source text. Such reverence toward the original text was the norm for translations of the scriptures. Simon Franklin argues instead for a distinction based "on the balance of choices between '*true words*' and '*equi-valence*' within the word-by-word (or small unit by small unit) sequence" rather than the conventional distinction between "free" and "literal" translation (Franklin 2002, 215). Indeed, Eugene Nida (1964, 22) stated the "basic conflict in translation theory" as a fundamental difference between "two conflicting 'poles': (1) literal vs. free translating, and (2) emphasis on form vs. concentration on content."

Referring to early Slavic translations, literal translation was, however, a general norm, and therefore applicable to the translation of liturgical and hagiographical texts, as well. This strategy preserves as far as possible the structure of the Greek language, not only at the syntactic level, but even at the level of derivational morphology, which sometimes allows for the reconstruction of the text of a lost Greek original by means of the reverse translation of a text that has been preserved, for example, only in the Slavic tradition.[9] This principle of literal translation was applied also in the translation of the Vita of St. Onuphrius. The example that follows (Table 1.1) represents a small segment of the Vita that clearly illustrates the basic—*verbum verbo*—practice of the translation used in "The Life."[10]

Table 1.1 Excerpt from Life of St. Onuphrius illustrating literal translation practice.

Greek	*kai*	*anastas*	*eporeuthēn*	*epi*	*tessaras*	*hēmeras*	*eis*	*tēn endoteran*	*erēmon*
	and	after getting up	[I] walked	for	four	days	into	the inner	desert
ChSl	*i*	*v"stav"*	*idokh"*		*chētȳri*	*dni*	*v"*	*vni͡utr'ni͡ui͡u*	*pustȳni͡u*
	and	after getting up	[I] walked		four	days	into	the inner	desert

Greek	*mēte*	*artou*	*mēte*	*hydatos*	*metalabōn*
	neither	bread	nor	water	ingesting
ChSl	*ni*	*chlěba*	*ni*	*vodȳ*	*vkusiv"*
	neither	bread	nor	water	ingesting

Greek	*tē*	*de*	*tetartē*		*hēmera*	*epistas*	*spēlaiōi*	*semnōi*
	the	[enclitic]	fourth		day	reaching	cave	large
ChSl	*v"*		*chētvērtȳĭ*	*zhē*	*dn'*	*doidokh"*	*vērt'pa*	*vēlika*
	on		fourth	[enclitic]	day	[I] reached	cave	large

Greek	*emeina*	*pros*	*tēn thyrida*	*krouōn*	*epi*	*hōran*	*mian*
	[I] abode	at	the window	knocking	for	hour	one
ChSl	*prēbykh"*	*u*	*okont͡sa*	*tl"kȳ*	*i͡ako*	*chas'*	*edin"*
	[I] abode	at	the window	knocking	about	hour	one

Greek	*ep' elpidi tou*	*kata*	*tēn synētheian*	*tōn adelphōn*
	in the hope that	in accordance with	the custom	of the brethren
ChSl	*naděi͡asi͡a*	*po*	*obȳchai͡u*	*mnish'skomu*
	hoping	in accordance with	custom	monastic

Greek	*monachon tina*	*exelthein*	*kai*	*aspasasthai*	*me*	*auton*
	a monk	come out	and	greet	me	he
ChSl	*chērn't͡si͡u*	*izȳiti*	*i*	*t͡sēlovaniē dati*	*mi*	
	monk	come out	and	kiss (greeting)	me	

(*Continued*)

Table 1.1 (Continued)

Greek	*krousantos*	*de*	*mou*	*kai*	*mēdenos*	*apokrinomenou*
ChSl	when knocked *tl'knuvshu* when knocked	[enclitic] *zhē* [enclitic]	I *mně* I	and *i* and	nobody *nikomuzhē* nobody	answered *otvěshtai͡ushtu* answered
Greek		*aneōxas*		*tēn thyran,*		*eisēlthon*
ChSl		opening *otvěrz'* opening		the door *dvēri,* the door		[I] entered *vnidokh* [I] entered

[And after getting up I walked four days to the inner desert without ingesting bread or water. On the fourth day, I reached a reverent cave. I abode at the window knocking about one hour hoping that a monk might come out and give me a greet according to the monastic custom. When I knocked and no one answered me, I opened the door and went inside].

On the whole, the Slavic text shows a translation technique aimed at rendering the Greek original in a maximally exact manner, with only consideration of grammatical idiosyncrasies, such as the absence of the category of definiteness and the fixed syntactic position of clitics[11] in Church Slavonic. Greek syntactic constructions in the last two sequences are rendered with a high degree of precision but not uncritically, thus, accusativus cum infinitivo in *monachon tina exelthein kai aspasasthai* corresponds to dativus cum infinitivo in the Slavic translation: *chērn'tsi͡u izyīti*, and the genitive construction *krousantos de mou kai mēdenos apokrinomenou* of the Greek text to dativus absolutus *tl'knuvshu zhē mně i nikomuzhē otvěshtai͡ushtu* of the Slavic text.

At the same time, deviations from that norm are occasionally observed in the Vita, some of which might be seen as mistakes made by the translators.[12] The following example reveals the problem of distinguishing errors committed by translators from errors by copyists:

> Greek: *En mia tōn hēmerōn spoudēn epoiēsamēn eis tēn esōteran genesthai erēmon*
> [One day I (1 sg.) felt willingness to go to the inner desert]
> ChSl: *V ēdin ot dnii potshtanie s'tvorikhom" v" vnutr'ni͡uiu iti pustȳni͡u*
> [One day we (1 pl.) felt willingness to go to the inner desert]

This case of number disagreement of the verb in a story narrated by one person about his journey to the desert—the first-person plural of the Slavic instead of the first-person singular of the Greek text—can be found in a large number of manuscripts. Despite this fact, it is not possible with any certainty to claim it as an error of translation. Since several earlier

manuscripts contain the correct form of the verb, the error could have originated from the pen of a copyist.

On the other hand, errors committed by a copyist, such as omissions, insertions, misspellings and misunderstandings, are more common and relatively easier to identify. For instance, depicting the death of Onuphrius, Paphnutius narrates how he entombed the body of the saint in a rock, which was like a cistern: *iakozhe rov* (in Greek: *heurōn petran epikoilon hōsei lakkon*). A group of East Slav (Russian) manuscripts (early sixteenth century) renders the same section by inserting the letter *n*: *iako zhernov*, distorting the meaning of this phrase to 'like a millstone.' It is clear that this mishap arose while the text was being copied as this reading appears in later Slavic (Russian) manuscripts. The hypercorrection is perfectly understandable bearing in mind the current practice of *scriptura continua*, a way of writing without spacing between the lexical units of the text. The Russian copyist may have erroneously segmented the sequence *iakozherov* in *iako *zherov* (instead of the perfectly correct *iakozhe rov*), amending it with the *n* to *iako zher<u>n</u>ov*.[13]

A clear case of corrupt readings of a toponym from the Greek text is found in the episode recounting Paphnutius's meeting with Onuphrius.[14] In his account of his withdrawal into the desert, Onuphrius names the coenobitic monastery (of communal living) where he was educated among a hundred monks, which is actually the only biographical data recorded in the Vita. It refers to the ancient city of Hermopolis Magna (the largest city of Upper Egypt), known as Heremoupolis, where the monastery in question, Erete, was located (Timm 1984–1992, 1, 208). The Slavic translation of that passage represents variants of: *v" manastyr̄i narit͡saēměm" ereti erim opolitov ermolita zakona fivait'skyā strany̅.*

The name of the monastery, Eriti, can be easily identified, while the geographical information regarding the location of the monastery, containing a chain of non-existent words followed by "law" and "land of Thebaion," is stylistically cumbersome and is difficult to understand: *erim opolitov ermolita zakona fivait'skyā strany̅.* All Slavic manuscripts (except one South Slavic) reflect vain attempts to render the place name.

Actually, it turns out that this toponym, common in monastic literature, is rendered in a distorted form already in the Greek tradition.[15] Moreover, the meaning is corrupted in several ways, and the distortions seem to have occurred in four stages:

a) A loss of the syllable -po- in *Heremolitou*, instead of Heremopolitou (the genitive of Eremopolis). Bios 1940–41: *en . . . monastēriō kaloumenō Eriti tou Hermolytou nómou tēs Thēbaïōn chōras*.
b) The incorrectly segmented *Erem-o(po)letou*. Divided binomial variants of possessives, such as *erim opolitov/ipolitov ermolita* (also

relative adjective *opolit͡'stse*) of Slavic manuscripts could reflect a line break *Herem-opolitou* in certain Greek manuscripts. Thus, it seems that the divided form occurs initially in Greek copies, and from there is conveyed into the Slavic translations.

c) The corrupt double toponym *erim opolitov ermolita* might reflect the practice of correcting remarks; here the gloss *Heremopolitou* (referring to the defective *Hermolitou*) of a Greek or a Slavic manuscript may have been interpolated into the text later by the copyist.

d) The incorrect interpretation of the noun *nómou* (here in the genitive: *nómou tēs Thēbaïōn chōras*) led to the meaningless Slavic translation *zakona fivait'skyā strany̅* in the latter part of the phrase under discussion. The problem here probably arose as a result of the graphical similarity of the two Greek nouns *ho nómos* (genitive *nómou*—'law') and *ho nomós* (genitive *nomoû*, which refers to a district in Egypt—i.e., nome),[16] due to an inaccurately placed or incorrectly interpreted accent mark. The noun *nomós*, as a term denoting province-division in Egypt, was apparently unfamiliar to the Slavic translator, which led to the incorrect *zakona fivait'skyā strany̅*. It is even more likely that the incorrectly rendered Greek genitive (*nómou* instead of *nomoû*) resulted from the inattentiveness of the scribes of the Greek copies and was thus translated by the Slavic translator, who had no reason to doubt the text of the Greek original. This assumption, however, needs to be verified by comparing a considerably larger number of Greek copies.[17]

There is another place name in the Vita called the Scete desert, corresponding to *tēn Skētin* (in the accusative case) in the Greek manuscripts. In the Slavic manuscripts it is rendered in two ways: as the proper name *Scete* in Serbian copies[18] (in full accordance with several of the Greek sources), and as the common noun *scete*, turned into the plural *sk'ty̅* in Bulgarian as well as in East Slavic[19] copies.[20] Thus, the examples bear witness to a division of the meaning of the toponym, which probably took place already by the time of the Bulgarian translation. The earliest records of the toponym Scetis as a proper name date from the fourteenth century (SRIa, 200).

A dubious gloss is found in one of the initial sections of the Vita. The noun *tharsikarios* appears only once and is thus a *hapax legomenon*, used by the desert hermit Timothy, when he tells Paphnutius about his occupation as a weaver in his secular life. This form represents the untranslated Greek word *tharsēkarios*, which might be unknown to the Slavic translators. In fact, it is still difficult to find an explanation of this noun in modern dictionaries. However, the Greek edition Bios 1940–41 explains the noun, stating that "another Greek manuscript has registered *linuphikos*" instead of *tharsēkarios*, which means some kind of woven fabric, tissue, or flax.

The list of all unintentional errors, misspellings, blunders, omissions, misunderstandings, and failures could be extended, but this is not the aim of this survey. It is much more interesting for the purposes of this study to consider instances of conscious strategies applied by translators or editors in their effort to convey a story to a new audience.

Thus, the Vita translations sometimes exhibit deviations from the source text that cannot be explained linguistically. However, a lexical examination of the hagiographical corpus formed by the *Life of Saint Onuphrius* reveals a few variants that, at first sight, appear unmotivated, and that are difficult to explain as translation mistakes. Instead, translational phenomena of this type can, most likely, be considered as conscious translation strategies and explained with the help of concepts from contemporary translation studies.

A comparison of several target texts of the Vita reveals puzzling lexical transformations. In an initial passage of the narrative, the pilgrim Paphnutius meets a desert hermit, a man covered in long hair as if wearing a garment, who appears at sunset among a herd of animals. He turns out to be the hermit Timothy mentioned earlier. The Greek text of "The Life" describes Timothy's appearance in the midst of a herd of buffaloes: *Plēroumenēs de tēs hēmeras ekeinēs, etheasamēn agelēn boubalōn erchomenēn kai adelphon en mesōi autōn peripatounta*. The Coptic text, published in English translation, contains not buffaloes, but antelopes: "Afterwards, when the sun was setting, I looked up and I saw a herd of antelopes coming from a distance—with the brother running with them, naked" (Vivian 1996, 173), while the Slavic tradition reveals two readings: one of buffaloes of the Greek text (in the absolute majority of manuscripts), and another of camels, which is found only in two manuscripts. Considering that the episode is borrowed from the stories of the Egyptian hermits in the *Scete Paterikon*, it is logical to compare these translations with the corresponding piece in the *Paterikon*. The *Paterikon*[21] describes the weaver (though unnamed here) surrounded by camels. This appears to be an example of the principle of adaptation or *domesticating translation*,[22] replacing text elements that are exotic for the receiving culture with more familiar notions. Thus, assuming that the *Paterikon* represents an earlier composition, a chain of domestications may be suggested beginning with the original herd of camels of Egypt being eventually transformed into buffaloes within the Greek hagiographical discourse and scattered throughout neighboring communities.[23]

Nevertheless, irrespective of this fact, as we find both camels and buffaloes in the same linguistic tradition it is obvious that domesticating is not applied consistently, which might be a matter of various translations made at different points of time. In its turn, if that is the case and keeping in mind that camels reflect a primary stage of the narrative (from earlier camels in the *Paterikon* to subsequent camels and buffaloes in "The Life"), one can presumably suppose that domesticating is a later

phenomenon in the reception of a text in a new culture. Moreover, it seems to be secondary in nature, rather arbitrary, not regular at all. This assumption implies a methodological gain for the intricate issue of dating translations (at least in the Slavic philology). But to be reliable this supposition must be proved on a larger number of instances in a separate study.

Another example of the domesticating strategy is found in the late Slavic version of the Vita (the hybridized one), which could have reached the Slavs via Latin as the Greek tradition lacks this version. In this depiction of a white-haired older hermit, whom the narrator Paphnutius meets after burying Saint Onuphrius, the simile “milk” is used to describe his hair: “white as milk.” Due to the lack of a Greek correspondence to this version, the Latin parallel passage of “The Life” was consulted. The same elders’ hair is depicted there with the metaphor “snow”: “white as snow.” Perhaps “milk” as a metaphor for whiteness was considered more idiomatic for the Slavic audience than snow. An example from a passage in the Bible that likewise uses the metaphor “white as snow” was commented on by Eugene Nida when arguing for dynamic equivalence in translation with respect to the receptor language. This would appear to be an accepted adaptation technique also in translations of the scriptures, revealing various ways of rendering the metaphor, such as “white egret feathers,” or “white as fungus,” and so on (Nida 1974, 4). It is obvious that such phenomena are impossible to isolate without comparing several text witnesses within the transmission tradition of a medieval text.

A converse strategy in translation can be seen in the treatment of the toponym *Egypt* in a group of manuscripts of a Bulgarian recension from the fifteenth century.[24] The scribe appears to have deliberately avoided this very common place name in early Byzantine hagiography. In these manuscripts, all five occurrences of the toponym *Egypt* are consistently replaced, in four cases by the word *mir* (‘world’ and in one by *kel’i͡a* ‘cell’). The lexeme *mir* might be seen as representing *Misr*, the biblical name for Egypt, the derivation being *mir* < *Misr* < *Misrayim*, where *Misr* means ‘Egypt,’ and *-ayim* is the dual suffix, referring to the original meaning of the name having been ‘the two Egypts’—i.e., Upper and Lower (Zalizniak 2000, 45). However, this hypothesis is completely debunked by the example of *kel’i͡a*. All attempts to find a cultural or even ideological explanation for this phenomenon have been fruitless. Thus, the two arguments (the first, that the toponym was replaced deliberately, and the second, that this replacement is confined to one group of manuscripts) speak convincingly in favor of the active involvement of the scribe, be it the translator or the editor, who replaced the culturally marked, local term “Egypt” with general words, such as “world” or “cell.” This strategy endeavors to make the text universal by removing lexical localisms and cultural markers.

It is remarkable that, when the analysis is extended to include several linguistic traditions, various translation strategies become apparent. Thus, the date of the saint's death (12 June) is localized according to the date-formatting standard in each target-cultural context: in Coptic manuscripts the date is as 16 Paoni, in Armenian it is Margatsi 6, according to the local calendar, and so on. This strategy of *localization* as a basic principle of content management is of great importance in the cultural adaptation of the content of the transferred text. Curiously enough, one South Slav manuscript indicates the date according to two calendars, the Coptic and the Roman: *16 bo paūma po egūptěněkh 11 po rūmom ii͡unę mesęt͡sa*.[25]

However, in the Church Slavonic translation of "The Life," not all attributes of the source culture that may be perceived as exotic in the target culture are exposed to domesticating or globalizing strategies. On the contrary, in the description of the oasis where Paphnutius ended his wanderings, untranslated Greek words are merely listed in transliteration, such as *zinzifi* (*zízypha*[26] 'jujube'), *kitra* (*kítra* 'citrus fruit'), *mersiny* (*myrsínai* 'myrtle'), *rodia* (*rhodiá* rose or *rhóai* 'pomegranates'), and *finit͡si* (*phoínika* 'fig'). None of these exotic fruits is replaced with a plant or fruit more familiar to the Slavic reader. This is arguably not a matter of inconsistency on the part of the translator, nor is it a mere difference in the treatment of flora and fauna. Rather, it appears to be the result of a conscious strategy on the translator's part, although in this case the chosen strategy is the opposite of the principle of domestication outlined earlier—namely, *exoticization* (according to Venuti 2008, 160). These exotic lexical elements are concentrated in the final episode of the narrative, which describes the unusual, unearthly beauty of the oasis, which the pilgrim discovers in the midst of the lifeless desert, sun-parched, and full of perils. This depiction of a fragrant garden with its life-giving spring, wondrous vegetation, and fruit-bearing trees provides an image of paradise. For the purposes of this text, the image of the unattainable, unearthly paradise must be represented as desirable and attractive, yet also out of the ordinary, beyond reach, and exotic—hence the exoticism of its concrete details. This might serve as a reasonable interpretation of the use of such unlocalized words.

In their decisions and choices, medieval translators seemed to have been guided at times by the commission, displaying a hybrid conception of skopos, as elaborated by Hans J. Vermeer:

> The skopos theory thus in no way claims that a translated text should *ipso facto* conform to the target culture behaviour or expectations, that a translation must always "adapt" to the target culture. This is just one possibility: the theory equally well accommodates the opposite type of translation, deliberately marked, with the intention of expressing source-culture features by target-culture means.

> Everything between these two extremes is likewise possible, including hybrid cases.
>
> (Vermeer 2000, 231)

This study reveals a consciousness of the target audience on the part of these medieval translators, despite the strong pull of literalness, which was the dominant approach of the time, especially in regard to sacred texts.

Conclusions

The material of early hagiographic translations reveals that "conflict poles" (literal vs free rendering) claimed as inherent to the nature of the translation are not necessarily in opposition.[27] Medieval translators could practice a prescribed model of formal equivalence while occasionally applying elements of dynamic equivalence in order to achieve the desired aim of their translating mission. This chapter argues for the competency of medieval translators, their ability to bring the source text to the target language audience taking into consideration a whole range of translation strategies. These pioneers were presumably struggling with translation issues not unlike those of today, related to the task of navigating amid a variety of linguistic options in order to approximate the impact of the message in the target culture with the highest degree of affinity to the response in the source culture, as Nida (1964) put it. Such an understanding of early translation practice recognizes that "medieval translators constantly demonstrate their superior knowledge and abilities while assisting less able readers and hearers" (Discenza 2005, 128). Such an approach to medieval translation practice differs from the common view of translators of that period as not skillful enough to find equivalents, or as rendering some lexemes one way and other lexemes another way simply because they confused the names of animals and did not know the names of the plants at all. The tradition of the translated *Life of Onuphrius the Hermit* suggests that early translators, oriented though they were toward a strictly literal style of translation, nonetheless permitted themselves isolated but deliberate deviations from the established literalist norms. There is no reason to doubt that they pondered translation variants, applying ones that were consistent with their idea of the source text and its aim within the target culture. As we have seen, early translators, though they were restrained by a strict canon of fidelity to the source text, nevertheless positioned elements of the foreign text in the receiving readers' milieu or avoided doing so in an "ethnodeviant" (according to Lawrence Venuti 2008, 15) way.

Thus, translation strategies resembling what we today call localization, domestication, and exoticization appear to have been applied by medieval translators. Accordingly, the translator's priorities in choosing particular vocabulary can be seen as part of a conscious practice. Different

translation strategies represented practical choices for medieval translators as they do for contemporary translators, reflecting, perhaps, the very nature of text rendering across languages and cultures.

Notes

1 The question addressed by Lynell Zogbo (2011, 25) was: "[. . .] is it permissible for translators to substitute an animal such as a seal in the key phrase 'the lamb of God', in Arctic cultures where sheep are not well known?"
2 The name of the saint is rendered here in accordance with the conventional spelling tradition. Also, the epithet of Onuphrius varies in different sources, ranging from Onuphrius the Great to Onuphrius the Hermit, or even Onuphrius of Egypt.
3 The author is most grateful to Ralph Cleminson (Oxford), who helped with translations into English and offered very valuable comments and useful suggestions. My warm thanks to Julie Hansen (Uppsala), who read several drafts of this work and made numerous constructive suggestions. Special thanks to Johan Heldt (Uppsala) for detailed, critical comments. I also wish to acknowledge the contributions and influence of Susanna Witt, in particular her always unerring questions, though I wish to note that any mistakes are my own. Finally, I offer my deep gratitude to Brian Baer for his editorial help.
4 Francis Thomson reminds us of the terms of medieval translators' work: "Not only were translators labouring without dictionaries and grammars at their disposal, they were also frequently tackling works written up to five hundred (and by the fourteenth century one thousand) years previously in a language far removed from the contemporary Greek language which they knew" (Thomson 1988, 380).
5 The earliest evidence of the veneration of St. Onuphrius among the Slavs is provided by several sources: the Studite Typicon, translated in 1068–1074 (Pentkovskii 2001, 41), which prescribes that the saint should be commemorated at matins on 12 June; and likewise by representations of the saint in ancient frescoes and by graffiti with prayers. The earliest graffiti (1089–1091) are to be found on the walls of St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev (Vysotskii 1966, 47). There are also parchment fragments of a service to St. Onuphrius dated to the twelfth century and a large number of churches in the various Slavic lands dedicated to him.
6 The adoption of Christianity by the Slavs brought with it numerous works of Byzantine ecclesiastical literature, including hundreds of hagiographical texts (Kliuchevskii 1871; Sobolevskii 1903 [1989]; Fedotov 1946, 41 and others). The hagiographic genre, thanks to its moral and didactic character, was particularly suited to conveying the ideas of the Orthodox clergy to the newly converted Rus'.
7 *The Scete Paterikon* is the Slavic translation of the *Apophthegmata Patrum* (*AP*)—a collection containing early monastic sayings and tales of desert fathers for the purpose of moral education (see Veder 2012).
8 For an extensive overview see Åkerman Sarkisian 2007.
9 This was the case with the Life of St. Nicetas the Confessor, Abbot of Medikion, by Theosterictus (see Afinogenov 2001).
10 The Slavic text (Life) of the manuscript RGB, 304/I-39 and the Greek text (BHG 1379) of the edition in Hagioreitike Bibliotheke (Bios 1940–41), based on the manuscript (Athos, Megiste Lavra, cod. I 117, fol. 300v–315r) are cited.
11 For an exposition of the evolution of enclitics in a later period, see Andrei Zalizniak 2008.

12 A preliminary typology of errors in early Slavic translations is traced by Francis Thomson (1988), who at the same time exhorts "hypercritical detractors" to remember that early translations should be judged according to their historical context, paying tribute to the early translators as those who laid "the foundation of Slav literary culture" (Thomson 1988, 380). See also the Dmitrii Bulanin's remark to Francis Thomson's list of errors in Bulanin 1995.

13 Significantly, a few manscripts contain a correction of this misspelling in the margin (see RNB Pog.1321, BAN Arkh. D.84), whereas one manuscript (BAN Arkh. D.154) reflects the obvious evidence of erroneously inserted letter.

14 For a detailed analysis of place names in the Vita see Åkerman Sarkisian 2009.

15 This fact allows us to draw the conclusion that precisely the Greek text of the Life as preserved in Bios 1940–41 formed the basis for the version that was most widespread among the Slavs. Following this hypothesis and orienting ourselves on the earliest dating of the copies of the mentioned groups, it is relevant to date the occurrence of this translation to no later than the early fifteenth century.

16 Nome (in *nomós*) is of the districts into which Egypt was divided (Liddell and Scott 1999, 535), or an administrative unit, "district, region, nome (in Egypt, Babylon, Persia and with the Scythians)" (Dvoretskii 1958, II, 1138).

17 A tentative reconstruction of that section should be ". . . in a monastery named Erete, in (the city of) Hermopolis, in the nome (jurisdiction) of Thebaid" or "in the Hermopolis monastery of Erete, which is in the nome of Thebaid":

   In Greek: . . . *en monastēriō kaloumenō Eriti tou Hermoupolitou nomoû tēs Thēbaïōn chōras*.
   In Slavic: . . . *v" manastyr̄i narits͡aēměm" eriti ermopolitova noma fivait'skyā stranȳ*.

18 HM SMS 472 Hilandar fourteenth century; Mih. IIIc22 fourteenth century; RGB f.310–1254 fifteenth century.

19 See for example BAR Ms. sl.154 fifteenth century; RGB 304/I-39 fifteenth century, etc.

20 Both uses of the noun were established according to dictionaries. The common noun "*scete*" (given in plural) is explained in the encyclopedia of Brockhaus and Efron (1900, 200) as ". . . cells for secluded hermits, built in connection to larger monasteries and more or less removed from them." Further, it is explained as a singular name "*scete,*" "once meant definite seclusion and solitude, now often consists of a smaller number of brethren. [. . .] Former Scetes are now often called coenobium, i.e. communities, where the coenobites had everything in common." Sophocles' dictionary, on the other hand (Sophocles 1900, 995), contains only one definition of the toponym Skitis or Skētis: "a place in Egypt near Mareotes, on the borders of Libya."

21 The manuscript RNB Sol. 647/705 containing *Paterikon* is consulted.

22 Other terms, with analogous meanings, are current in the scholarly literature—e.g., *dynamic equivalence* (Nida 1964) in a sociolinguistic approach, aiming to produce the same effect in the translation as in the original text (contrary to *formal equivalence* or "gloss translation"), *naturalization,* in cultural translation studies (Carbonell 1996), *covert translation,* in contrastive study of discourse analysis (House 2007), and in *instrumental translation* (Nord 2006).

23 As regards the antelopes in Coptic manuscripts, their emergence seems to be caused by the semantic ambiguity of the noun *ho boúbalos* denoting in fact several animals or by the confusion of two externally similar proper nouns. Thus, both Greek words *ho boúbalos* "buffalo" and *hélaphos* "deer"

correspond to the same Coptic word *shosh* or *shash*, depending on the dialect (Crum 1939, 605). Some scholars argue for a confusion of two Greek words: *ho boúbalos* (-ou) "buffalo" and *he boúbalis* (-ios) or *he boubalís* (-idos) "antelope," which is reflected in Crum's Coptic dictionary (see Malevez 2011, 108). Thanks to Samuel Rubenson (Lund) for his advice about the Coptic reference.

24 Mss: BAR Ms. sl. 154; RNB Pog. 803 (2096); Dragomirna 1828 (739); NBKM 443 (650).

25 The date of the Onuphrius feast has varied over time among and within churches (East, as well as West). It has altered between June 10, 11, 12, and even 13 in the sixteenth century (see for instance Stieglecker 2001, 199–201), a circumstance which is also reflected in the saint's narrative of manuscripts.

26 Greek forms as they appear in the source text are given in brackets.

27 This statement is in some accordance with observations made by Palma Zlateva (1995), who argues that Tory's binary notions "adequacy" and "acceptability" are not polar opposites. Instead of an axis with "adequacy" and "acceptability" as its poles, she suggests another axis, or rather, a cline with "adequacy" as one pole and "mistranslation" as the other (see Zlateva 1995, 36).

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BAR Ms. sl. 154 (BAR = Romanian Academy Library, Bucharest)

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Hilandar HM SMS 472 (Hilandar = the Hilandar monastery, Mount Athos, Greece)

NBKM 443 Mih. IIIc22 (NBKM = SS Cyril and Methodius National Library of Bulgaria)

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