The Catechistic Homilies of Theodoros of Stoudios for Bishop Michael of Synnada and Bishop John of Chalcedon in the Serbian Orthography Manuscript Entitled “Theodoros of Studios” of the End of the 13th and Early 14th Century: Translative and Interpretive Approaches.

The translations of works in the Old Church Slavonic were part of a broader process of movement of the Byzantine civilisation and through this philological activity came the meeting and gradual merger between the Byzantine Empire and the Slavs, to be followed by the process of mimicry their final emancipation. At the beginning of this process, according to Tachiasos, independently of the contact of the Slavic world with great Byzantine centres, like that of Constantinople, the Monastery of Stoudios, the Monastery of Evergetidios and certainly of Mt Athos, where the reproduction of manuscripts took place, works mainly of the proto-christian and proto-

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1 I would like to thank Mrs Tatjana Subotin-Gulobović director of the Archaeographic Department of the National Library of Belgrade and Associate Professor in the History Department of the Philosophical School for her approval regarding the use of the manuscript: Беседе теодора Студита одломци as well as the photographs of the manuscripts.

2 The highlighting is ours.
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Byzantine era\(^3\) had been translated. In our case, however we are handling texts of the 8\(^{th}\) to 9\(^{th}\) century and in particular of Theodoros of Stoudios\(^4\), of an adversary of Iconoclasm, which during the time that the code was composed had long before ended.

At this point, reasonably, the following questions could be posed: What are the deeper reasons of choosing to translate the homilies of Theodore of Stoudios and particularly the two catechistic homilies? Could there be political and ideological implications? What are the historical contexts of the time during which the code is translated? What is the reception of these texts?

The methodological approach that we will follow moves along two structural axes:

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The first is based on the translatative theory and starts from the belief-view, which is also supported by Kentrotis, that the translation of a text constitutes transfer of a firmly concrete and, therefore, permanently offered or according to will repetitive text, that has been composed according to the rules of the source language, from the source language to the target language, and so to a text that a) is composed according to the rules of the target language, b) maintains the meaning of the original and c) can be checked anytime for its correctness and be corrected.

On the other hand, the second is based on the interpretive approach grounded on the theory of reception and particularly on the “Aesthetic of Reception” [Rezeptionsästhetik] where our attention focuses, as supported by Jauss, on the reader-text relation and the so-called reader’s expectation and not on the author-text relation that researchers had persisted on.

Let’s proceed now on the presentation of the manuscript that we deal with and especially its content, on its palaeographic characteristics as well as on the analysis of the two catechistic homilies approaching first of all the translatative and then the interpretive level. The codex number MS 4 entitled: Homilies of Theodoros of Studios, excerpts:

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teodora Студита одломци] which can be found in the National Library of Belgrade, is written on parchment and consists of 32 leaves. The language is Serbian – Raska orthography and the writing upright and symmetrical and there can be traced the hands of four writers. In reference to the content of the manuscript it includes homilies from the thematic cycle of the fasts, celebrative homilies and catechistic – funeral speeches for particular saints and obviously it is about excerpts that have been collected from two different codes⁷. One more manuscript with similar content, which does not include the two catechistic homilies that we work on, is Decani no. 87: [Дечани] of the same period of time⁸.

The “Theodoros of Stoudios” of the Chilandar Monastery Collection of homilies no. 387, according to Štavljanin, includes all the homilies, the celebrative and the excerpts that we mentioned, therefore it does not exclude the fact that it is about a single Collection in the writing of which more writers participated and obviously it constituted a source for the reproduction of the codes mentioned before⁹.

Proceeding to the translative approach of Theodoros of Stoudios catechistic homilies we can confirm through detailed parallel reading of the original with the paleoslavonic text the excellent accuracy of the translations of these catechistic homilies. In order to save time we will juxtapose indicative examples that reinforce our interpretation. In particular we

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realise immediately from the titles of the catechistic homilies that this is by far an accurate translation with only minor deviations in which the grammatical as well as the syntactical structures of the source language with the target language are observed. Also added to them obviously were the celebrations that they were destined to be read in and specifically the first in the celebration of the Transfiguration of Lord and the second in the Assumption of the Mother of the God.

In particular:

The first entitled in f.f 11 - 14: Ὑ πομинανη σώματι και ο ἐσπεριφή Μιχαήλ ἐν Λιτροπολίτῃ Συνάδων. Να πρόβραζήν. [Περὶ μνήμης θανάτου ἐν ὦ και περὶ τῆς κομιήσεως Μιχαήλ τοῦ Ἄγιωτοῦ Μητροπολίτου Συνάδων10. <Εἰς τὴν μεταμόρφωσιν>11]

Beginning: Βρατικε ὑ ὀμὴ αὐθίνη τρικτσκα κατ ἐκτὸς κελὸ ... [Ἀδερφοί καὶ πατέρες, πολλαὶ πανήγυρεις ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τοῦτο12...]

End: ὅτι ἡ ἡμείνα χάριν καὶ αἰώνια καλοῖς καὶ ὑπάρχειν ἡμείνα χάριν καὶ πανίκειν ἢμείνα /. […] ἀπαραι μετ` ἐλπίδος χριστής ἐνθέν, καὶ τυχείν βασιλείας οὐρανών, ἐν Χριστῷ θησοῦ τῷ Κυρίῳ ἡμῶν, ὡ ὑ δόξα καὶ τῷ κράτος., σὺν τῷ Πατρὶ καὶ τῷ ἀγίῳ Πνεύματι13 ...].

Where we identify the addition of the celebration during which it was read.

10 E. Auvray, S.P.N. et Confessoris Theodori Studitis, 78.
11 With the square brackets we distinguish the phrases that do not exist in the Greek text.
12 E. Auvray, S.P.N. et Confessoris Theodori Studitis, 78:1
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The second catechistic homily entitled in: f.f 14: ὁ οὐσπενήν Ἁγίανα σκότος Μητροπολίτα χαλκηδόνσκαλγό καὶ κακο χαλκηδόνσκαλγο γιὰ τὸ πάντα μακαὶ εἰς τὸ πάντα καὶ κακο. Ἡ ὁ οὐσπενήν σκότος ἐπὶ τῆς κοιμήσεως τοῦ Αγίου τοῦ Μητροπολίτου χαλκηδόνσκαλγο καὶ ὁ γνωστὸμεν ἄλλοι χαλκηδόνσκαλγο ἐν τῇ παλιγγενεσίᾳ. <Εἰς τὴν κοιμήσιν τῆς Αγίας Θεοτόκου14.>

Beginning: Βραδεὶ καὶ οὖρι ὀστηδνὰς ὠτ ἂς ἄν πρὸ ἄν ἀνθρώπη

[Aδερφὸι καὶ πατέρες, μικρὸν ἀποδημήσαντες ἀφ’ ἡμῶν ἐν ταῖς προλαβούσαις ἡμέραις15 ...

Interruption in f.16: ἦ σωκε ἡ οὐρεκέσην ἄγο [ἀλλ’ ὁμος τῇ ἀφόρτω ὁ Θεοῦ16 <δυνάμει>..

Following in a comment in the catechistic homily about the Bishop Michael of Synnada we find that the similar ending17 (ὁμιστέλεντον) that we see in the original is in use f.f. 12-13: Ἡπίνην ὀ̣ ἀμφιτής προκέκαλος ποκύσατε. Ἀροξῆν ἡ μορφα ποταπλιαστε. [...τινες ὡπὸ ἀστρατής ψαξζόμενοι ἐμπίμπρανται, ἀλλοι τε ἐν βαλάσσῃ καταποντίζονται18..]

Also with rhetorical questions:

f. 13 ἐν στράτῃ λὲ ἄλλα πρεζεγένας οὐκαζάνια ἐν τοῖς ἄλλις ἀλλὰ ἐν τῇ ἄλλῃ ἀποθετίζονται. Ρασοεξειμής ἕκαστὸς ἄλλοι ἕκαστος ἄλλοις ἀλλός τε ἐν βαλάσσῃ καταποντίζονται18..

Also with rhetorical questions:

[Ὅν φοβεῖ οὖν ἡμᾶς τὰ προειρημένα ὑποδείγματα; Ὡν ἐμποιεῖ ἡμῖν ἐννοούσι πως ἐν τῇ ὁρᾷ ἑκεῖν ἡ γλώσσα

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14 Ibid: 79
16 Ibid: 81: 36.
17 About “similar ending” see: R. Dean Anderson Jr., Glossary of Greek Rhetorical Terms, Peeters Leuven, 2000, 79.
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δεσμούμενη φωνείν οὐ δύναται, πῶς δὲ ἡ ψυχὴ διασπωμένη πρόεισιν ἐκ τοῦ σώματος?[19]

Continuing with unconnected pattern[20] (ἀσύνδετον):

f. 14: ἰπποκήδανημεν. ἐκ σαλωσίμῳ. ἐκ ἱμαλακής. ἐκ πολογισμῷῃ. ἐκ ωπῇρενομουγρῳ. ἐκ σαλωσίμῳ ... [... ἐν ἐξομολόγησιν, ἐν δάκρυσιν, ἐν προσευχαῖς, ἐν ὑπακοῆ, ἐν ταπεινοφροσύνῃ, ἐν τῇ εὐτόνῳ διακονίᾳ[21], ...].

Also one comment where the similar ending is used:

f. 14: ἢ τάκε μοσξείμ ζε στουγινί τε καὶ ζαλμίτι τάκε μοσξείμ ζε καλάζει καὶ οὑμολάζει ... [καὶ ώς ἰχώσμεν σκληρύνεσθαι καὶ κακύνεσθαι, οὕτως ἰχώσμεν ἀγαθύνεσθαι καὶ κατανύσσεσθαι.]

While correspondingly in the second catechistic homily for the Bishop John of Chalcedon we notice that the similar ending is used in a comment:

f. 16: δόξοι εἰς το ἐν σικκο ἔν τω λεηφο ...

[τὸ γάρ καλὸν καὶ κακὸν οὐκ ἐν τῷ τοιῶσθ' ἡ τοιῶσθ' ...]

While further on the similar ending that we find in the original:

f. 17: Ἑλλην, καὶ ἱουδαῖν, καραζῆς, καθῆς, ἱερών καὶ σκουθῆς...

[Ἐλλην καὶ Ἰουδαῖος, Βάρβαρος, Σκύθης, δοῦλος, ἑλευθερος 23.....]

From the interpretive point of view, Theodoros the Stoudite the abbot of Stoudios Monastery in Constantinople,

[19 Ibid: 77: 30-33.
20 R. Dean Anderson Jr., Glossary, 33

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played a very important role in the political and ecclesiastical life during the time of Iconoclasm defending the icon worshiping belief and writing an exceptionally large amount of speeches, letters and catechetical homilies.

The Catechistic speeches were homilies of didactic content, which were addressed in this case to the monks of the Stoudios Monastery and the regional monasteries that had direct relation of dependence from them. We are not absolutely sure when the Catechisms were conducted, but reports on the sources for this matter and specifically in Catechism 18: «...καθ’ ἐβδομάδα συνερχόμενοι τρίς, ἀλλ’ οὖν καὶ καθ’ ἐσπέραν συναγόμενοι καὶ οἶνει συμβουλευόμενοι καὶ συγκροτοῦμενοι καὶ συνασπιζόμενοι διὰ τοῦ λόγου τῆς κατηχήσεως».

However, at this point this that question arises is where does the choice of these specific catechetical speeches aim at that particular time? Bishop Michael of Synnada had close bonds with Theodoros of Stoudios had participated in the VI’ Ecumenical Council of Nice and at the same time with his theological identity had taken part in diplomatic missions (court of Khalifa Harun al-Rasid in Bagdad in 806). During the reign of Leon V’ the Armenian he was sent to exile due to his icon-worshiping beliefs and died on 23 of May 826. So did

John Bishop of Chalcedon or John the II’ Kamoulianos who was connected to Theodoros of Stoudios with whom they cooperated secretly during the reign of Leon the V’ and Michael III’. He was exiled and infected from a disease with high fever and rashes. Since the aim of these catechisms was the communication of the abbot with the monks this association with people and events created a tone of psychological influence\textsuperscript{27} and obviously acted as subconscious reminder of preaching type and in some way perhaps as an indirect manipulation of the audience’s reader’s expectation. Submerging in the content of the two texts, alongside with the reports on the virtues of the metropolitan bishops through rhetorical questions and vivid descriptions emphasises the “deceits” and transmits his dogmatic messages establishing the boundaries of the acceptable and the not acceptable. Also, it cannot have been a random choice for these two catechistic speeches to be read in two of the most important celebrations like the \textit{Transfiguration of Lord} and the \textit{Assumption of the Mother of God}, obviously wishing to give emphasis on this action of his. On the other hand, the historical context of the era obviously does not eliminate the fact that the selection of these translations could have happened on account of the existence of movements or of a wider climate of doubt, whose beliefs reminded of iconoclastic beliefs, like the Bogomils, groups that in the Serbian State were confronted with persecutions both from Stefan Nemania and Dushan according to testaments that survive from the sources: let’s not forget the stigma on my face testified, as mentioned by Konstantakopoulou, in Stefan Dousan’s\textsuperscript{28} 14\textsuperscript{th} century Code.

\textsuperscript{27} The highlighting is ours.
\textsuperscript{28} A. Konstantakopoulou, \textit{Αιρέσεις στα Βαλκάνια τον ύστερο Μεσαίωνα}, Series of the Undergraduate seminars 5, Ioannina 2000, 17-18.
Consequently this flashback to the icon-worshiping bishops and to Theodoros of Stoudios acting catalytically on the reception of audiences at the same time that the code was composed or preventing deviations from the orthodox (from the point of correctness and not of dogma) view of things.

To sum up, we can say that we are dealing with an accurately translated text that confirms the existence of exceptionally skilful translators, who not only handled the complex linguistic structures of the source and target languages, but also had the ability to deliver both the writing style and deepen in a semantic level. From an interpretive point of view the specific homilies were selected to pinpoint that the ideological and political implications of the Iconoclastic dispute obviously respond to the historical context of the time when the code was composed and could act as a means of “control” of the appropriateness of the religious beliefs and the formation of an appropriate climate for it.
f.f 11 Homily on Michael Bishop of Synnada from the manuscript number RS 4 entitled “Беседе Теодора Студита одломци” - National Library of Serbia.

f.f 14 Homily on John Bishop of Chalcedon from the manuscript number RS 4 entitled “Беседе Теодора Студита одломци” - National Library of Serbia.
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