Two fragments of Suida's *Lexicon* in Dosoftei's *Parimiile preste an*

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Le prophetologium est un texte liturgique, un recueil de péricopes bibliques, la plupart extraites de l'Ancien Testament, destinées à être lues à l'église, aux vêpres des grandes fêtes de l'année. Le spécifique de la structure du texte de Dosoftei, Parimiile preste an (Iaşi, 1683), consiste à l'insertion, dans le texte du prophetologium qu'il traduit, de toute une série de fragments d'origines diverses, parmi lesquels deux extraits du Lexicon de Suidas, célèbre encyclopédie byzantine composée probablement vers la fin du X^e^ siècle. On va suivre dans cet article l'insertion textuelle de ces fragments et leur spécifique en ce qui concerne le contenu et la manière de traduction.

Mots-clés : Dosoftei, textes liturgiques, péricopes bibliques, histoire de la langue roumaine

1. The Prophetologion (*prophetologion* in Byzantine culture and *parimejnik* in Slavonic) is a type of liturgical book presumed to have appeared in Constantinople in the eigth century as part of the Church reforms; it is a Lectionary appointed at Vespers and consists in fragments of the Old Testament, especially of the Prophets' books, as well as of the historical and sapential ones. There are certain presumptions according to which the Slavonic variant was translated by Chiril and Metodiu in the ninth century. A specific feature of its history comes from the fact that until the Modern Era it has never been printed, being perpetuated exclusively by means of manuscripts, both in Byzantine and Slavonic tradition. A second feature which confers this text a unique character lays in the fact that the Prophetologion, unlike the other types of Lectionaries (the Gospel, the Acts of the Apostles), is not used any more in the Church practice. There are only few local uses in Serbian and Bulgarian Church which makes the scholar's interest towards it rather poor.

The printing of Dosoftei's *Parimiile preste ani* in Iasi in 1683 is not surprising even in the said context (the information gathered insofar on the history and circulation of this kind of lectionary reveals that Dosoftei's Prophetologion is the only complete lectionary of this kind printed before the Modern Era) since it is obviously part of the program aiming to translate into Romanian and publish the most important religious books within the process of affirmation of the Romanian as language of church service (though, most probably, the Prophetologion was not used in the Romanian church during the service in Romanian language which also explains the small number of Romanian Prophetologions that were all kept as manuscripts, except for Dosoftei's book). The comparison between the structure

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and content of the *Parimiile preste an* and the structure and content of Byzantine and Slavonic manuscripts, as they are presented in the critic editions published so far, shows that the text of the Moldavian Metropolitan Bishop represents, in what concerns the Biblical periscopes, text organization and even most of the ritual insertions, a translation of and equivalent text (Greek, most likely, or Slavonic), and not – as ascertained in the specialty literature – an own compilation according to the model of a Prophetologion, eventually based on Nicolae Milescu's translation of Septuagint from which Dosoftei might have taken the fragments of the Old Testament[1].

The comparison with critical editions of Byzantine and Slavic Prophetologions shows, on the other hand, the degree of originality that characterizes *Parimiile preste an* consisting of insertions in the Prophetologion, based on thematic criteria, of other types of texts different from the Bible: original poetic texts, hymns (rarely, hymns are present in some manuscripts of the Byzantine Prophetologion), oracular texts (prophecies of Sivila Eritrea, processing according to chapters 15-16 of the Institutionum Divinarum by Lactantius Firmianus, fragments of Suidas's *Lexicon*), all placed before the Canon dedicated to the Feast of the Annunciation. Their integration in the Prophetologion (which means: overcoming the frames and restrictions imposed by this kind of liturgical text) seems to indicate that the Prophetologion's destination intended by Dosoftei was aiming less to a public reading during the Vespers, and rather to a private, individual reading.

2. Suida's *Lexicon* (Suda or, as stated by other authors, Suidas) is a large Byzantine encyclopaedia, dating probably from the tenth century, a compilation based on sources that were lost. The first edition of the *Lexicon* is made by Demetrius Chalcocondylos (1499); it is followed by the editions of Aldus, Venice, 1514, reprinted in 1544. The first Latin translation belongs to Hieronimus Wolf (1564, 1581), and the first bilingual edition, in Greek and Latin, belongs to Aemilius Portus, Geneva, 1619.

Parimiile preste an includes two fragments of this encyclopaedia.

2.1. The first (III 139^{r}-139^{v}) is a rather large fragment (one page) in Slavonic, about the origin of which Dosoftei says nothing (be it an own translation or a translations taken from someone else). The hypothesis of an own translation is not hazardous, if we consider that the Bishop had good knowledge of Slavonic, a language into which he also made translations of dogmatic texts from Greek during

[1] The assumptions belong to N.A. Ursu (well known statement according to which Dosoftei would have reviewed consistently Milescu's translation, which was unsatisfactory, and would have picked up from it Old Testament fragments of the Prophetologion), Eugen Munteanu respectively (who thinks that Dosoftei used the model of a Slavonic Prophetologion).

[2] According to Mihai Moraru, *Manierisme formale. Acrostihul sibilin la Dosoftei*, in *De nuptiis Mercuri et Philologiae*, Editura Fundaţiei Culturale Române, Bucharest, 1997, p. 127: "The presence of these texts in Dosoftei's printing is motivated by the fact that the Sibylline Oracles, in medieval art and literature, had been connected with the prophets' texts [...]. In chronographs and interpretations, the sibylline oracles and figures are included in programs focused on Christ's birth announcement ".

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the Second Polish exile. In the *Lexicon*, this fragment stays under the entry Ἰησοῦς ὁ Χριστός καὶ θεός ἡμῶν. We hereinafter reproduce the fragment:

[139r] **From Súida's:**

**Въ дн҃и благочъсти́вагw ѵ҆стѵ́на цр҃а ба́ше нѣкто нача́лникь ѵ҆де́wмь и҆менемь Θеwдо́сїе. Йже ба́ше зна́ем҆ мно́гими и҆ самѹ́м҃ цр҃ви. И и҆мѣлше др҃га Христелни́на. Сре́бро кѳзнъца и҆менемь фнли́ппа. Бѣхѫ́же wбѡ́н писмени́ти sѣлw. Нѣко́гдаже порица́ѭщ҃ и҆де́инwви христїани́нь, wнев҃вѣре́нїн въ Ха҃ ба҃ на́шегw, ѿ́иже, вѣрѫ мн҃ и҆мѣи др҃же, ꙗкw и҆за́лw и҆звѣсти́хсѧ спасе́нїѧ съше́дш҃, ѿ ба҃ wц҃а, и҆въплъти́всѧ. Нъ наслѣтми пристра́стїе богатъ́ства, и҆сла́ва привр҃ѣменнаа. Вѣм҆ бѡ҃ а҆ще кръщ҃а́ѧ, несътвwра́тма патрїа́рха. Нѫ́ е҆ще да́ся ѳвѣри́ши wмнѣ йже е҆́сть и҆звѣще́нь, сли́ши ѿ ме́не, кр҃і́етсѧ въна́шем рѹ́дѣ сви́тwнь конди́чнїй въне́мже е҆гда ба́ше цѣла цр҃ковь Соломо́нwва, въ Йерѳсалїмѣ. Писwва́хѫсѧ свщ҃ници по҃и́мени кв҃ сѫ́ще чи́слwмь, почи́слѳ вѳквам҆. Йпочи́слѳ кни́гамь сто҃имь. (толи́кw бw кни́гь сто҃ихъ въве́тсѣн) и҆ е҆гда кто҃ ѿтѣ́х҃ кв҃ ѳмира́ше. Събира́хѫсѧ про́чїи, и҆сѫ́дwмь и҆жрѣвїе́мь йнwгw wбира́хѫ, и҆ и҆сплънѣхѫ мѣ́стw мрътвагw. Йта́кw прилѳчи́сѧ Христо́ви, и҆збра́тисѧ сѫ́дwмь тѣ́хъ ка҃ сщ҃никь и҆ е҆гда въсхwтѣша ѳпксати́ е҆гѡ҃, призва́ша ма́терь. (Іwси́фь бѡ҃ ѳже вѣше ѳмрль) Ивъпроси́ша х҃ и҆ и҆сповѣда́, ꙗкw ѿ́ца на́земли сн҃ь Мwи́сьи неима́ть. Нъ а҆гг҃ль бл҃гw вѣсти́ми, и҆ и҃ма е҆мѳ҃ наречѐ. Тѣмже дв҃ѫ породи́хъ, и҆ прѣби́х҃ порождє́ствѣ е҆гѡ҃ дв҃ож досе́лѣ. Йпризва́ше ба́би и҆ испита́вше, wбрѣто́ша та́кw. Да҃ ꙗ҆кwже ѳ вѣри́вшесѧ въписа́ше sѣлw диви́вшесѧ, сі́ще начърта́вше. Въ wнь си́ца дн҃ь скоича́са wн҃ си́ца сщ҃нїкь, и҆въне́гw мѣ́стw би́сть ѿ́вщимь на́шимь и҆зволе́нїемь і҃с сн҃ъ ба҃ живáгw, и҆дѣвї҃м Ма́рїѧ. Ицви́тшкьтъй си́рѣчь кѡ҆*дикь да́же до ий҃ѣ хранеа́нь е҆́сть҃ въцѣлости въпиверїа́дѣ sѣлw таи҆*стъ́внѣ, и҃менѐ сподоби́ша видѣ́ти е҆гw.[2]

The (approximate) translation of this fragment is as follows: During the reign of the faithful Emperor Justinian there was a Jewish leader named Theodosius, known to all and to the king himself, and had a Christian friend, a silver worker, with the name of Philip. They were both very educated. At that time the Jews did not believe the new Christians, since they did not believe in Christ, our God. But he had friends of faith, since the news about Christ who was truly the Son of God, the salvation of all world nations, came from God the Father, who incarnated. But he [the other] was subjugated to the love of money and fleeting glory because he had to baptize the patriarch of the undone. But in this respect he became sure that I was the chosen one. Listen to me. The Law Parchment which was in the temple of Solomon in Jerusalem at that time was hidden from our people. 22 priests were assigned by name, holy number, number of letters and number of holy books (that many holy books were accepted) and when one of those 22 died, acquaintances gathered and who was chosen by lot was put in place of the dead. And so Christ came to be chosen by lot together with the 21 priests. And when they wanted to

[2] Special thanks to Father Srdjan Stefanov, PhD student within "Dumitru Staniloaie" Faculty of Letters, for his precious help in deciphering the text.

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register him, they called [his] mother (Joseph was already dead at that time). And they asked her and she said that "My son has no father on earth. But the angel preached and told me his name. [...]" And they called for the midwives and asked them and found that it was so. In order to make sure, they wrote a lot, wondering, and they learned the same. Instead of the one who was named priest that day, based on our general will, Jesus the son of God and Virgin Mary was appointed that day. And this whole document, that is Kontakion, until now secret, can be found in Galilee; and I was allowed to see it.

The comparison with the full text shows that the page of the *Parimiile preste an* combines the summary translation with the omission process; therefore, from the text of Suidas only the reference to the divine origin of Jesus is kept, while all the rest is omitted.

2.2. The second piece, a translation of the last portion of the introduction Αὔγυστος in the *Lexicon*, falls under the same theme of the prophecies concerning the coming of Christ, justifying thus its placing before the canon of the Annunciation (immediately after the Slavonic fragment discussed above).

[139^{v}] ***Din a lui Suida:***

Oti Avgust Chésari, deaca stătu împărat, mearsă la capiştea idoleascâ să-ntreabe pre Pythíia idolul cine va-mpărăţî după dînsul. Şi-i dzîsă: „Cucon evreu îm porunceaşte, a dumnădzăi fericiţ ce-mpărăţeaşte, această casă să lipsăsc şi la iad de-acmuş să lăcuiesc. Deci te du mîlcom din capiştile noastre." Şi ieşind de la vraje Avgust, au rădicat în Capetolie oltariu ş-au scris deasupra lătineaşte: „Oltariul acesta-i a-ntăi născutului Dumnădzău: O domos utos esti tu protogonu Theu"[**3].

The original version seems to have been Greek, this explains why the inscription, which we are told that was written in Latin, is reproduced by Dosoftei in Greek: *O domos utos esti tu protogonu Theu*. What is interesting is the attempt of the Metropolitan Bishop to resume the words of Pitie in verse: *Cucon evreu îm porunceaşte, a dumnădzăi fericiţ ce-mpărăţeaşte, această casă să lipsăsc şi la iad de-acmuş să lăcuiesc* (although the Greek version does not contain verses: παῖς Ἑβραιος κέλεταί με, θεοῖς μακάρεσσιν ἀνάσσων, τόνδε δόμον προλιπεῖν καὶ ἀοιδὸν αὖθις ἱκέσθαι)..

[**] Oti Augustus Cesar, when he was crown as an emperor, went to the gods' sanctuary to ask Pythia, the god, who would rule after him. And [she] said [to him]: „A Jewish child orders me, who is the ruler of blessed gods, to leave this house and go live in Hell from now on. So leave our sanctuaries peacefully." And after he left the sanctuary, Augustus built a sanctuary in the Capitolium and above it he wrote in latin: „This sanctuary belongs [is dedicated] to the first born God."

[3] Given that he only had access to the Cyrillic writings, Dosoftei reproduces the phonetic aspect of the Greek words. In Suida's text, that sentence is: o& bwmoV" ou[to" e*sti tou` prwtogovnou qeou` (cf. Suida, *Lexicon*, vol. 1, p. 411).

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If he translates by a Greek source, Dosoftei takes a certain freedom compared to the original by introducing phrases or terms with an explanatory role: „deaca stătu împărat", „Pythíia *idolul*".

What is intriguing here is the presence of the conjunction ὅτι, preserved in Greek. It would be inappropriate for us to say that it was mistaken by Dosoftei with a proper name (the Metropolitan Bishop had a good command of Greek). We would rather say that it is due to an error imputable to the typographer or the clerk of a possible autograph manuscript containing the text of the *Parimiile preste an*, although the question why would they have access to the Greek text still remains unanswered. Another hypothesis, equally hard to sustain for now, is the use of a Slavonic original which would have contained the conjunction in question.

3. The presence of the excerpts from Suidas's *Lexicon* in *Parimiile preste an*, a liturgical book specific to the Orthodox Church, raises several questions. First, there is the question whether they existed in the original document translated by Dosoftei or not. We would say no to this matter; the consultation of the monumental critical edition of the Byzantine Prophetologions and the few editions of Slavic Prophetologions made us conclude that these fragments were not part of the structure of the liturgical text. Without completely eliminating the extreme hypothesis of the existence of a Prophetologion manuscript, be it Byzantine or Slavonic, containing them, we would rather say that their presence in Dosoftei's Prophetologion must be attributed to the Metropolitan Bishop, who does this also with other types of texts (hymns, original poetic texts, processing according to other oracles).

Another question concerns the presence of the page in Slavonic; it either belongs to the Metropolitan Bishop or is taken from the Slavonic original, as the conjunction ὅτι.

The fact that Dosoftei knew Suidas's *Lexicon* may be relevant for another aspect: in his PhD thesis, Florin Florescu showed that the translator of Septuagint, the version of Ms. 45 (or maybe the editor?) use this dictionary-encyclopaedia[4] in order to clarify the meaning of some Greek words; one can speculate, therefore, the idea of a link between the authors of the two texts.

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[4] Florin Florescu, *Literalism şi traducere liberă în tradiţia biblică românească*, Doctoral thesis, Iaşi, 2011.

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