

Euthymios the Athonite, Greek-Georgian and Georgian-Greek Translator - and Metaphrast?*

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The word *Metaphrast* has turned up several times in scholarship when dealing with the prolific, tenth-eleventh-century translator Euthymios the Hagiorite, also called Euthymios the Iberian (i.e. the Georgian; d. 1028), now especially known for his Greek version of the *Barlaam and Ioasaph* (or *Josaphat*) story (henceforth *Barlaam*).¹ Euthymios' texts were even called "Metaphrastic" by scholars who had only scarce knowledge of the fact, which we now know, that there were numerous verbal correspondences between the *Barlaam* of Euthymios and the almost contemporary Metaphrastic menologion (a liturgical collection containing - in ten volumes - 48 non-abridged saints' lives).² Euthymios was

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¹ On the life of Euthymios, see R. Volk, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*. 6, 1-2, *Historia animae utilis de Barlaam et Ioasaph* (PTS 60-1), Berlin 2006, 2009, here 6, 1, pp. 1-95; B. MARTIN HISARD, *La Vie de Jean et Euthyme et le statut du monastère des Ibères sur l'Athos*, *REB* 49, 1991, pp. 67-142. On scholars naming the translation of Euthymios a "metafrase" or him a "Metaphrast", see *The Balavariani: a tale from the Christian East*, transl. by D. M. Lang, with an introd. by I. V. Abuladze, Los Angeles 1966, pp. 38-9; Saint John Damascene, *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, with an english transl. by G.R. Woodward & H. Mattingly, introd. by D. M. Lang (Loeb classical library), Cambridge MA 1967, pp. xx-xxi and xxxi; and the discussion VOLK, op. cit., pp. 59-61; *Mélanges Bernard Flusin*, éd. par A. Bingeli & V. Déroche (Travaux & mémoires 23/1), Paris 2019, pp. 353-364.

² Interconnection between the Greek *Barlaam* and Greek hagiographic/ Metaphrastic texts was noticed early, though with unclear understanding of the relationship, see e.g. the

obviously a *metaphrástes*, a “translator,” turning at least 170 Greek texts into Georgian; but was he also a *metaphrastés*, a “rewriter” (with a stress on the ultimate, not the penultimate syllable), like Symeon Metaphrastes?³ Enormous steps have in the last decades been taken towards clarifying the interrelation between these two men, who produced the by far mostly copied (and presumably read) Byzantine narrative texts from the Middle Byzantine period (158 extant manuscripts of the Greek *Barlaam*; 700 manuscripts and fragments of volumes of the Metaphrastic collection).⁴ Much has been done to disentangle their interconnection, but much is still in need of clarification. This concerns not least relative dating, textual dependency, and manners of rewriting/translating. Once such issues have been settled, clearer interpretations may be reached as to what characterized these enormously popular rewritings/translations in terms of narrative features, linguistic characteristics, and – not least – their shared phrases and idioms. The present article is an attempt to get just a bit further on that way.

The most valuable material for viewing connections between Euthymios and the Metaphrastic collection has been adduced by Robert Volk, the most recent editor of Euthymios' Greek *Barlaam*.⁵ In articles published prior to the edition, Volk traced the deep interdependency between Euthymios' *Barlaam* and more than forty Metaphrastic texts.⁶ The same observations, with some additions,

summing up in D. M. LANG, St. Euthymius the Georgian and the *Barlaam and Ioasaph* Romance, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African studies* 17, 1955, pp. 306-25, esp. pp. 323-5. On the Metaphrastic menologion and Symeon Metaphrastes, see A. EHRHARD, *Überlieferung und Bestand der hagiographischen und homiletischen Literatur der griechischen Kirche* (TU 50-2), Leipzig – Berlin 1936-52, and Ch. HØGEL, *Symeon Metaphrastes: rewriting and canonization*, København 2002.

³ On the difference in stress between μεταφράστης “translator” and μεταφραστής, the nick-name of Symeon Logothetes, see N. ΤΟΜΑΔΑΚΗΣ [N. TOMADAKES], Εἰς Συμείωνα τὸν Μεταφραστήν, *EEBS* 23, 1953, pp. 113-38, here 115-6. On the number of translations produced by Euthymios, counted by Kekelidze, see M. TARCHNISHVILI, Die Anfänge der schriftstellerischen Tätigkeit des Hl. Euthymius und der Aufstand von Bardas Skleros, *Oriens christianus* 38, 1954, pp. 113-24, here p. 115, and VOLK, *Die Schriften*. 6, 1 (cited n. 1), p. 81.

⁴ These figures come out of Volk, *Die Schriften*. 6, 1 (cited n. 1), pp. 240-495; Høgel, *Symeon Metaphrastes* (cited n. 2), pp. 130-4, respectively.

⁵ Volk, *Die Schriften*. 6, 2 (cited n. 1); among older editions, Woodward, Mattingly, Lang, *John Damascene* (cited n. 1), is the most accessible.

⁶ R. Volk, Urtext und Modifikationen des Griechischen Barlaam-Romans. Prolegomena zur Neuausgabe, *BZ* 86-7, 1993-4, pp. 442-61; ID., *Symeon Metaphrastes: ein Benutzer des*

went into the apparatus of Volk's edition.⁷ Volk's findings have given us a unique possibility of studying the common interests and perhaps similar working procedures of these two redactors/rewriters/translators and to evaluate the importance of this for our understanding of what (successful) middle Byzantine narrative texts were about. The first steps towards such evaluation were already taken by Volk, who in his articles interpreted a number of passages from *Lives* by Symeon Metaphrastes as episodes that in various ways repeated scenes from the Greek *Barlaam*.

But, valuable as Volk's results are, his interpretations of the specific texts have one serious problem, which concerns who copied who. The problems otherwise solved by Volk were many, and the fundamental work done in editing the *Barlaam* and unravelling the origins of fundamental misunderstandings in earlier scholarship is impressive. And yet, a few problems remained. In producing his edition of the Greek *Barlaam*, Volk had to oppose a number of assumptions, not least the common assumption among Byzantinists that the Greek *Barlaam* had not gone through the hands of Euthymios but was the work of either John of Damascus or was the translation of some lost Syriac intermediate version.⁸ All these ideas – some of them cherished along with surprising reluctance to accept quite obviously reliable information coming especially from Georgian sources – were put to rest by Volk, who finally produced the explanation to the “John” (not of Damascus!) appearing in some titles of the Greek version, as well as beyond any doubt assigning the Greek version to Euthymios.⁹ But Volk also worked on an assumption himself, which he never really questioned. Ever since accepting that the Greek *Barlaam* is not the work of John of Damascus (though producing the edition as a volume for a “collected works” of John of Damascus!), Volk continued to assume that the Greek *Barlaam* was earlier than the Metaphrastic texts, and that the many instances of interdependence between the two showed that it was Symeon Metaphrastes who had reused passages from Euthymios'

Barlaam Romans, *RSBNS* 33, 1997, pp. 67-180; ID., *Das Fortwirken der Legende von Barlaam und Ioasaph in der byzantinischen Hagiographie, insbesondere in den Werken des Symeon Metaphrastes*, *JÖB* 53, 2003, pp. 127-69.

⁷ See the *apparatus imitationum* in Volk, *Die Schriften*. 6, 2 (cited 11. 1).

⁸ Volk, *Die Schriften*. 6, 1 (cited 11. 1), pp. 37-54.

⁹ Volk, *Die Schriften*. 6, 1 (cited n. 1), pp. 1-95; on “John”, see *ibid.*, p. 85.

Barlaam and not vice versa.¹⁰ The situation was further complicated by the fact that during the immense editorial work that Volk had to do for his edition of the *Barlaam*, Volk distinguished – as had other editors on less firm ground – between two main manuscript traditions, in Volk’s terminology called family *a* and *c* respectively. One manuscript from the *a* tradition was at an early point chosen as offering the fundamental text for Volk’s edition, not least since it could be proven that the *a* branch is early, offering the earliest dated manuscript from the year 1021.¹¹ But during his work Volk acknowledged that the *c* tradition, despite its faults in terms of grammar and idioms, represented the earliest version, and, consequently, that the *a* version was a later revision, produced by Euthymios himself.¹² This acknowledgment, however, came late, and Volk’s edition still gives the *a* version, while his introduction, published three years later, explains that it is actually the *c* version, retrievable in the *apparatus criticus* of the edition, that is the earliest version.¹³ But having worked under this wrong assumption (that *a* was earlier than *c*), the *a* version had been used by Volk when comparing the Greek *Barlaam* with Metaphrastic texts, making the nature of the interdependence less clear. For this reason, and also due to certain single instances of closer wording in the *a* version to other external material used by Euthymios, Volk had felt certain that it was Symeon Metaphrastes who had reused several long, directly copied passages from Euthymios’ Greek *Barlaam*.

But a short publication by Grossmann from 2009 has showed him wrong in this assumption.¹⁴ Comparing pre-Metaphrastic, Metaphrastic, and *Barlaam*-versions of three passages that are close to identical in all three texts, Grossmann shows that Symeon Metaphrastes is always closer to both pre-Metaphrastic and *Barlaam*-versions, and that in the closely paralleled passages the *Barlaam* never contains anything from the pre-Metaphrastic text not found in the Metaphrastic.

¹⁰ All the arguments of Volk on this are highly complex, see e.g. Volk, Symeon Metaphrastes (cited n. 6), p. 86.

¹¹ This manuscript, Volk’s ms 57 (= B) served as basis for his edition, see Volk, *Die Schriften*. 6, 1 (cited n. 1), pp. 336–40.

¹² Volk, *Die Schriften*. 6, 1 (cited n. 1), pp. 582–94, especially pp. 587–90.

¹³ Volk, *Die Schriften*. 6, 1 (cited n. 1), pp. 584–7.

¹⁴ J. K. Grossmann, Die Abhängigkeit der Vira des Barlaam und Ioasaph vom Menologion des Symeon Metaphrastes, *JÖB* 59, 2009, pp. 87–94.

This proves beyond any doubt that it was Euthymios who reused passages from Symeon Metaphrastes, not vice versa.¹⁵

One consequence of Grossmann's assertion is that all Volk's analyses of how Symeon Metaphrastes reused passages from the Greek *Barlaam* have to be reversed. We now have to get used to the thought that it was Euthymios who heavily reused Symeon Metaphrastes' wording for his *Barlaam*. It was Euthymios who was an avid reader of the Metaphrastic texts and made long stretches of his translation of the Georgian *Balavariani* sound and appear "Metaphrastic". So, at least in this sense, former scholarship was right. Euthymios' *Barlaam* does sound like another Metaphrastes, for he included long direct quotations from Symeon Metaphrastes into his text.

Another consequence of Grossmann's findings is that the date of production of the Greek *Barlaam* no longer has to be squeezed in between the earliest possible date (by Volk and others placed around 975, when Euthymios is presumed to have started translating around the age of 20) and the latest possible date of the menologion of Symeon Metaphrastes (who by Volk is taken to have died in 987, but the year 982 is a more likely final date for the Metaphrastic activities).¹⁶ This

¹⁵ As Grossmann correctly argues (Grossmann, *Die Abhängigkeit* [cited n. 14], p. 94 n. 43), the Demosthenes passage, adduced by Volk as argument to the contrary (see Volk, *Urtext* [cited n. 6], p. 453), must be explained otherwise. The simplest explanation is that in his second version (the *a* version) Euthymios simply corrected the passage and made it reuse Demosthenes' words even closer, Grossmann's critic is briefly stated, but with no evaluation and with no mention of the consequences, in R. Volk, *From the desert to the Holy Mountain: the beneficial story of Barlaam and Ioasaph, in Fictional storytelling in the medieval Eastern Mediterranean and beyond*, ed. by C. Cupane & B. Krönung, Leiden 2016, pp. 401-26, here pp. 415-6.

¹⁶ In my publication from 2002, I deemed the year 982, the year that Symeon – it seems – lost favour at court, to be the end point of the Metaphrastic activities. If this (possible) event is disregarded, we have little possibility of indicating a safe end point. Symeon died in the reign of Basil II, but only the dirge by Nikephoros Ouranos excludes the years 982–7, the years of his imprisonment in Baghdad. Already in the year 990, Euthymios could in his own hand present a translation of a Metaphrastic text – the *Life of George*, see Volk, *Die Schriften*. 6, 1 (cited n. 1), p. 142; R. P. Blake, *Catalogue des manuscrits géorgiens de la bibliothèque de la Laure d'Iviron au Mont Athos*, ROC 28, 1931-2, pp. 289-361, and 29, 1933-4, pp. 225-71, here 29 (1933-4), p. 263. This important piece of information for dating the activities of Symeon Metaphrastes were unfortunately not included in Høgel, *Symeon Metaphrastes* (cited n. 2) and ID., *Symeon Metaphrastes and the Metaphrastic movement*, in *Ashgate research companion to Byzantine hagiography*. 2, pp. 181-96, but Euthymios' reference to Symeon from the year 990 only corroborates the idea that the Metaphrastic activities go back to the 980's or earlier, and that the year 982, as

solution leaves 12 (or even only 7) years for a process that could easily have taken the same amount of time: first, a massive translation by Euthymios and, then, an even more massive rewriting by Symeon, who in the meantime should have acquired an enormous liking for the newly produced *Barlaam*. Much easier is the solution, which we now know is correct, that Euthymios somehow encountered the Metaphrastic texts (and we shall return to this) as a young man, and that he at some point – along with his Greek-Georgian translation activities – decided to also translate the other way, from Georgian into Greek, taking recourse to Metaphrastic passages for his translation of the *Barlaam*; this could then have happened during the time that he was also translating Metaphrastic texts into Georgian. The translation of the Greek *Barlaam* was produced with access to at least a third of the 148 texts in the Metaphrastic corpus, which implies that the dating of the *Barlaam* should fall after the year 982 (the year in which it seems that Symeon lost favour at court and presumably stopped rewriting), and before 1021, the year of the first dated manuscript of the Greek *Barlaam*.¹⁷ Since this manuscript represents the subsequent *a* version, the first translation – the *c* version – must be from a somewhat earlier date, though the time elapsed between the two versions could have been anything from weeks to several years. Euthymios' father proudly presented a list of Euthymios' translations in a colophon, written in 1001-2, with no mention of the *Barlaam*, but since only Greek-Georgian translations appear here, the *Barlaam* would not have appeared in any case.¹⁸ Only in the *Life of John and Euthymios*, written in 1042 by George the Hagiorite, the later successor as hegoumen at Iviron, are two Georgian-Greek translations from Euthymios' hand mentioned: *Balahvar* (our *Barlaam*) and a work carrying the title of *Abukurra*.¹⁹ Euthymios resigned as hegoumen in 1019, according to George's biography in or-

indicated in the colophon of Eprem Mtsire and in the chronicle of Yahya ibn-Sa'īd, probably put an end to Symeon's work; on all this see Høgel, *Symeon Metaphrastes* (cited n. 2), pp. 61-88.

¹⁷ Volk, *Die Schriften*. 6, 1 (cited n. 1), p. 75.

¹⁸ The colophon of John is found in ms Athos, Μονή Ιβήρων, geo. 10, see BLAKE, Catalogue (cited n. 16), 28, 1931-2, pp. 339-44.

¹⁹ For the date of the *Life*, see *Actes d'Iviron*. 1, *Des origines au milieu du XI siècle*, éd. diplomatique par J. Lefort, N. Oikonomidès, D. Papachryssanthou, avec la collab. de H. Métrévélī (Archives de l'Athos 14), Paris 1985, 1.10, and Martin-Hisard, *La Vie de Jean et Euthyme* (cited n. 1), p. 86; see also the discussion by Volk, *Die Schriften*. 6, 1 (cited n. 1), pp. 81-5.

der to dedicate himself to his translations. This gives, as stated by Martin-Hisard, two very active translation periods in Euthymios' life, ca. 975-1005 and 1019-28.²⁰ The *a* version of the *Barlaam* thus belongs to the latter period, whereas we have no safe indication as to when the earlier *c* version was produced.²¹ One argument for placing the *c* version in the early period is that this could explain the grammatical and idiomatic faults found in it.²² It would then have been produced in a period when Euthymios was possibly less secure in his command of the Greek language. So, as for the dating of the *Barlaam*, we may safely state that Euthymios produced it in or sometime before 1021, the earliest possible date being the point at which Euthymios mastered both languages involved, Greek and Georgian, but also the time at which he could have encountered the Metaphrastic texts (which are just as present in the early version *c*, as in the later version *a*, of the *Barlaam*). Euthymios came to Constantinople (probably) as a royal hostage during the reign of Nikephoros II Phokas, after his alliance in 964 with the *kouropalates* David of Tao-Klarjeti, a Georgian kingdom south of the central regions of Apkhazia and Kartveli.²³ He soon after left for the Bithynian Olympos with his father, and soon thereafter (and no later than 969) arrived at Mount Athos.²⁴ In any case, his earliest dated translations are from the year 977, from which Kekelidze deduced that his translation activities started no later than 975 and placed his year of birth in 955 (dating his translation years as starting at the age of 20).²⁵

²⁰ Martin-Hisard, *La Vie de Jean et Euthyme* (cited n. 1), p. 108.

²¹ The *c* version is dated to “kaum nach 985” (“hardly after 985”) in Volk, *Die Schriften*. 6, 1 (cited 1, 1), p. 86 (see also *ibid.*, p. 583), but this is only to make it fit in before Volk's supposed year of death of Symeon Metaphrastes in 987.

²² The grammatical mistakes were (wrongly, we now know) used to argue for a later date of the *c* family in Volk, *Urtext* (cited n. 6).

²³ Tarchnishvili, *Die Anfänge* (cited n. 3), p. 127; Martin-Hisard, *La Vie de Jean et Euthyme* (cited n. 1), pp. 87-8; Volk, *Die Schriften*. 6, 1 (cited n. 1), p. 78.

²⁴ On the arguments for the latter date, see LEFORT, dans *Actes d'Iviron* (cited n. 19), I.20.

²⁵ The date 977 comes out of a manuscript dated to the year 981, written by the copyist Sabai, containing a copy of a colophon from 977, penned by Euthymios' father John. The manuscript of 981 contains 24 Greek homilies translated into Georgian by Euthymios (2 by Gregory Nazianzos, 1 by Gregory of Nyssa, and 21 by Basil the Great). If the manuscript of 977 contained the same, two years seems a fair guess as for the time required for the translation, see Tarchnishvili, *Die Anfänge* (cited n. 3), pp. 116-9.

This means that Euthymios started translating well before Symeon Metaphrastes stopped metaphrasing, possibly even before he started. The two men therefore overlapped in their active periods. In any case, Euthymios could have worked on his translation of the Georgian *Balavariani* into his Greek *Barlaam and Ioasaph* anytime between ca. 975 and 1021, though he probably finished the early *c* version after 982, when the Metaphrastic collection had already been produced. But we do not know whether Metaphrastic texts circulated independently before 982, as they certainly did some decades later.²⁶

Euthymios, Iviron, And The Metaphrastic Collection

Euthymios and other Georgians at Athos stayed at the Great Laura until the year 979-80, at which point they moved to their own monastic setting, following the military success of Tornike, a fellow-monk whose assistance was required by the newly instated emperor Basil II (976-1025).²⁷ At this point, Euthymios had then already been active translating for some years. And his work was to continue in the Georgian monastery dedicated to John the Baptist, some decades later to be known as that of “the Georgians,” the Iviron monastery, of which Euthymios became the hegoumen in 1004. But despite Euthymios’ move far away from Symeon Metaphrastes and the imperial capital, a number of things continue to connect him and his institution to the Metaphrastic texts. In fact, several things besides the *Barlaam* indicate a very close contact between the literary activities of the Iviron monastery and the Metaphrastic menologion, and Euthymios is an important person in tying these things together.²⁸

Already in his early years of translation activity, Euthymios produced Georgian versions of Metaphrastic lives. As stated above, various inventories listing Euthymios’ translations were produced, not least by Euthymios’ father John, even if none of these are complete, especially concerning translated hagio-

²⁶ As found in the early exemplars of Ehrhard’s “vermischter Metaphrast”, Ehrhard, *Überlieferung* (cited n. 2), vol. 3, pp. 91-341.

²⁷ On this and the following information, see Martin-Hisard, *La Vie de Jean et Euthyme* (cited n. 1), pp. 87-93, with footnotes.

²⁸ The following presentation owes much to discussions with Stratis Papaioannou, whom I thank.

graphical lives.²⁹ The earliest dated manuscript containing translations by Euthymios of Metaphrastic texts is dated to the year 990 in the colophon, written in Euthymios own hand.³⁰ Euthymios' subscription to one text in the manuscript goes as follows: "The Passion of George by Symeon Logothetes, which is read in most churches in Greece, because the other one is obscure (apocryphal?)."³¹ This special attention paid to transferring the Metaphrastic language – along with other biblical and Greek patristic literature into Georgian obviously left Euthymios deeply familiarized with various forms of Hellenic wisdom and language, and his translation of the Georgian *Balavariani* into the *Barlaam* almost reads as a catalogue of this. And surprisingly enough, the Iviron monastery is actually the only ascertained holder of Metaphrastic texts that we know of before at least the reign of Constantine VIII (1025-8).³² No other piece of evidence on the fate of the Metaphrastic texts than the activities of Euthymios and some dated Iviron manuscripts including Metaphrastic texts have come out of the reign of Basil II, during which our sources tell us that Symeon Metaphrastes fell from favour, stopped working, and died. This, in itself, is surprising, given the enormous popularity that the Metaphrastic menologion later experienced, with more than 700 manuscripts (including fragments) extant today, most of these from the eleventh and twelfth centuries.³³

Given the fervent translation activities of Euthymios at Athos, one is left wondering why a productive copyist at Iviron, with the name of Theophanes, would be busy at the same time copying Greek Metaphrastic lives. We have to-

²⁹ To give an example, we do not find any indication in the lists of the translated Metaphrastic *Life of George*, singled out as a work of Euthymios in Athos, Μονή Ἰβήρων, geo. 10 (see above n. 18).

³⁰ BLAKE, Catalogue (cited n. 16), 29, 1933-4, pp. 263-4; see also n. 16 above. When writing my book from 2002, I did unfortunately not become aware of the immense importance of the Georgian material for the study of the Metaphrastic texts and manuscripts. Euthymios, in fact, provides us with an important *terminus ante quem* of Symeon Metaphrastes. This further confirms that Symeon stopped earlier, supporting the year 982 given by Yahya ibn-Sa'īd and Eprem; see Høgel, *Symeon Metaphrastes* (cited n. 2), pp. 61-88.

³¹ This is a translation of the French translation given in BLAKE, Catalogue (cited n. 16); see also foregoing footnote.

³² VOLK, *Die Schriften*. 6, 1 (cited n. 1), p. 87, writes that the *Barlaam* story was already known early (late tenth century) in Constantinople, but his only "evidence" is Symeon Metaphrastes, who may not even have had the possibility of reading the *Barlaam* story.

³³ Ehrhard, *Überlieferung* (cited n. 2), vol. 2, p. 306-659.

day two dated manuscripts of his from years 1004 (Vatican, BAV, Ottob. gr. 422) and 1011 (Athos, Μονή Κουτλουμουσίου, 25), presenting Metaphrastic texts in combination with other hagiographical texts.³⁴ Given the lack of evidence for interest in the Metaphrastic texts from anywhere else, the Iviron monastery seems to have been a Metaphrastic hub. All this seems to confirm the story, transmitted to us through a colophon written by Eprem Mtsire, another Georgian writer, that Symeon lost favour at court and that it was only after the death of Basil II that the menologion became published.³⁵ Until then it was, according to Eprem, “only read in the houses”.³⁶ Given all this Georgian evidence to the activities concerning the Metaphrastic menologion, it seems likely that Eprem’s “houses” could well be, or primarily point out, the monastic houses on Athos, primarily the Iviron. Further studies, not least into the Georgian material, will probably reveal more about this Georgian-Metaphrastic interrelation.

So, if Euthymios was heavily involved in reusing Metaphrastic vocabulary, he was certainly not the only one at Iviron paying special attention to these texts. We may even start asking how much the recognition, and later sanctification, of Symeon Metaphrastes was due to Georgian involvement. Two things point that way (though certainly yielding no proof); the surprising parallel faces of the Metaphrastic texts and Euthymios’ *Barlaam*; and the status of Georgian and especially Iviron affairs at the Constantinopolitan court.

In the *Life of John and Euthymios*, we get an account of Euthymios’ death. Since Emperor Constantine VIII, the brother and successor of Basil II, “loved Euthymios for his sanctity,” Euthymios came to Constantinople in 1028 to meet

³⁴ On ms Città del Vaticano, BAV, Ottob. gr. 422, see Ehrhard, *Überlieferung* (cited 11. 2), vol. 2, p.311 and vol. 3, p. 793; J. Irigoin, Pour une étude des centres de copie byzantins. Suite, *Scriptorium* 13, 1959, pp. 177-209, here p. 200 (only indicating “Vies de saints”); and Volk, *Die Schriften*. 6, 1 (cited n. 1), p. 80 n. 415. On ms Athos, Μονή Κουτλουμουσίου, 25, see Ehrhard, *Überlieferung* (cited n. 2), vol. 2, p. 311 and vol. 3, pp. 130-5 (this manuscript does not appear in the list of Irigoin). Another two manuscripts, also appearing in Irigoin’s list of Theophanes’ copies, namely Moskow, GIM, Sinod. gr. 162 and 15 (Vladimir 380 and 381) (dated to 1021-2 and 1023 respectively) may also contain Metaphrastic lives, see Ehrhard, *Überlieferung* (cited n. 2), vol. 3, p. 741.

³⁵ Høgel, Symeon Metaphrastes (cited n. 2), pp. 127-30.

³⁶ In Georgian, სახლგებნა ზნა, translated as В домах, in К. С. Кекелидзе [K. S. Kekelidze), Симеон Метафраст по грузинским источникам, *Труды Киевской духовной академии* 2, 1910, pp. 172-91.

him.³⁷ As he was riding through the streets, a beggar came up to him, and as Euthymios was about to give him some money, his mule was frightened by the beggar's rags, started fleeing, and in the end injured Euthymios, who died soon after from his wounds. There is no reason to question the year of demise of Euthymios, such indications were always given with precision, but the manner of his death calls for some doubt. In biographies of famous writers, a blending of real experience with the fictional events found in the writer's works is a common feature. And Euthymios' horse ride and meeting with a beggar do recall closely enough scenes involving Ioasaph, the young protagonist of Euthymios' Greek *Barlaam*, for suspicion to arise. Could this be a tale of castles, beggars, and horse rides, invented to cast Euthymios as another saintly Ioasaph, and inserted to underpin the alleged easy access of Euthymios to the court of Constantine VIII? It is hard to tell, but Euthymios may have had access to Constantine VIII, even if contact with the Constantinopolitan court deteriorated at some point and certainly in the reign Romanos III Argyros (1028-34), who after the death of Euthymios recalled the privileges of the Georgians at Athos, due to Georgian involvement in revolts against him.³⁸ During the period between 1029 and 1035 (or 1041), Iviron went through a turbulent period, with a group of monks referred to as "the Greeks" taking over management of the monastery. It was only a year after the accession of Michael IV, in 1035 (with a final confirmation in 1041 by Michael V), that the rights of "the Georgians" again received imperial confirmation. The intervening loss of imperial support could also account for the problems that seem to have affected *Barlaam* manuscripts. As indicated by Volk, several of these manuscripts seem to have lost their first folio by deliberate removal.³⁹ The replacement in some cases provides an altered prologue, leaving out the name of Euthymios, possibly to remove any Georgian connection with the text of the *Barlaam*. In any case, there is some synchronicity between the return of the Georgians at Iviron to imperial benevolence in 1035/1041 and the first dated, "real" Metaphrastic manuscript. Our first dated Metaphrastic manuscript is from 1042, produced by (or for?) Niketas, chamberlain of Emperor Michael V.⁴⁰ In his colophon text on

³⁷ Martin-Hisard, *La Vie de Jean et Euthyme* (cited n. 1), pp. 124-6.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 70-1, for this and the following information.

³⁹ VOLK, *Die Schriften*. 6, I (cited n. 1), pp. 63-4.

⁴⁰ Ms Athos, Μονή Ιβήρων, 16, see the list of dated manuscripts in Ehrhard, *Überlieferung* (cited n. 2), vol. 2, p. 685-90.

Symeon Metaphrastes, Eprem Mtsire vaguely implies that the Metaphrastic texts were honoured again and their author raised to sainthood) sometime after the death of Basil II. This could have been in the days of Constantine VIII, Michael IV, or Michael V. Despite uncertainties but given their interconnection, a collusion between the faces of the *Barlaam* and the Metaphrastic menologion seems probable.

Euthymios' Use Of Symeon Metaphrastes

As we saw, Euthymios had access to what seems to be all Metaphrastic texts when producing his *Barlaam*. The 48 (or in fact 50)⁴¹ texts that he quotes from come from all ten volumes of the Metaphrastic menologion, and even if this “edition” of ten volumes may be later (our earliest extant volume from such a 10-volume version is, as stated above, from 1042), it is still fairly safe to say that Euthymios knew all of the Metaphrastic texts. But even if quoting from many of these, he certainly did not use all of them to the same extent or in the same way. The following is an attempt – mainly based on the data given by Volk – to delineate how Euthymios reused passages from Metaphrastic texts and for what purpose.

First of all, it should be noted that Euthymios used many other texts than the Metaphrastic for his *Barlaam*. The basic source text was of course the Georgian *Balavariani*, offering the main story with all its embedded tales.⁴² But as was long ago noted, Euthymios not only translated this, he inserted a number of quotations and embellishments from other texts. The amount of biblical quotations is clear evidence of Euthymios' familiarity with Scripture.⁴³ Also a wealth of patristic literature was used,⁴⁴ including the so-called *Apology of Aristeides*, which, inserted almost unaltered, offered a safely orthodox represen-

⁴¹ To the 48 texts listed by Volk, should be added the Metaphrastic Pseudo-Clementina and the *Life of Anthony*, which Euthymios may well have used in the Metaphrastic version almost identical with the original written by Athanasios of Alexandria, see Volk, *Die Schriften*, 6, 2 (cited n. 1), pp. 478 and 491.

⁴² ი. აბულაძე [I. Abuladze], *ბალავარიანის ქართული რედაქციები* [*Georgian versions of Barlaam*] (ძველი ქართული ენის ძეგლები 10), თბილისი 1957.

⁴³ See the “Bibelindex” in Volk, *Die Schriften*. 6, 2 (cited n. 1), pp. 465-75 and 6, 1, pp. 138-40.

⁴⁴ See the “Index der nichebiblischen Quellen”, in Volk, *Die Schriften*. 6, 2 (cited n. 1), pp. 476-90.

tation of Christian dogma as well as apostolic history to ensure that the text would not fall under accusation of heresy (for introducing exotic saints or, even worse, new theological views).⁴⁵ Euthymios' use of these texts was treated in depth by Volk.⁴⁶ Volk's *apparatus fontium* also informs us on various use of patristic and hagiographical texts. But none of these coloured the *Barlaam* in a way that comes near Euthymios' heavy use of Symeon Metaphrastes, who of course due to the problems described above does not figure in Volk's *apparatus fontium*, but in his *apparatus imitationum* (listing instances of later reuse of the edited text). Following the analysis given above (based on Grossmann), his texts will here be analyzed as sources for Euthymios (and therefore properly belonging to the *apparatus fontium*).

Out of the 50 Metaphrastic texts that Euthymios quotes from, 15 stand out as being of special importance (in terms of amount of quotations but also in thematic weight).⁴⁷ These are, first, a number of texts connected to apostles and the apostolic age, namely the Metaphrastic *Lives* of the apostles Thomas, John, Philip, Matthew, and Luke. To this group could also pertain the Metaphrastic *Life of Gregory the Illuminator* (or, of Armenia), which also has an apostolic shape and theme, but it occurs more in conjunction with the rest of important Metaphrastic texts, namely the *Lives of Sergios & Bacchos*, *Thekla*, *Aikaterine*, *Polyeuktos*, *Martinianos*, *Paul of Thebes*, *Kyprianos & Justina*, *Hilarion*, and *Prokopios*. Quotations from these 15 Metaphrastic texts occur frequently and in passages loaded with thematic importance.

Before proceeding to analyze Euthymios' manner of using these 15 texts, a word of justification for disregarding the 35 other texts in this initial analysis. It seems likely that quotations from these 35 Lives – as well as from just about all the patristic and other hagiographical source material that Euthymios employed – came from (collections of) excerpts that Euthymios had access to or had produced himself, probably in order to reuse them at various places in his *Barlaam*. These quotations are too many and too verbally exact quotations from the Metaphrastic (and other) texts to have come purely from memory. But it is

⁴⁵ This is the text of chap. 27 of the *Barlaam*, Volk, *Die Schriften*. 6, 2 (cited n. 1), pp. 264-84; see the discussion in Volk, *Die Schriften*. 6, 1 (cited n. 1), pp. 122-35.

⁴⁶ VOLK, *Die Schriften*. 6, 1 (cited n. 1), pp. 96-138.

⁴⁷ The editions used here are the same as those listed in Volk, *Die Schriften*. 6, 1 (cited n. 1), pp. xv-xxvii.

unlikely that the quotations were retrieved directly from the Metaphrastic texts. The short quotations represent, just about in all cases, standard sentences on dogma and faith or standard scenes from hagiography (either of torture, questioning, asceticism, or devotion) that could in many cases have been culled for their gnomic expressiveness. All this makes it very unlikely that Euthymios retrieved them directly from their respective Metaphrastic texts when translating. Some sort of collection(s) of excerpts must have gone in between.

As for the 15 important texts, we find also a reuse of short quotations from these (which could also have been made first as excerpts) but also a number of long quotations, and in five key passages of the *Barlaam* we find text passages (sometimes slightly rephrased) from these texts used in what could be termed text mosaics.⁴⁸ These five sections of the *Barlaam* read as Metaphrastic quotations from several texts put together to form a unity. As an example, we may look at the passage from 2.181 to 3.35 of the *Barlaam* text, where a number of (sometimes longer) passages from the *Life of Gregory the Illuminator* and the *Life of Aikaterine* are intertwined and inserted to colour and flesh out a scene of pagan cult and sacrifice, under the threatening eye of a mad king.⁴⁹ Likewise, the long scene with the magician Theudas in chapter 29 of the *Barlaam* is produced through a similar mosaic, now with several passages stemming from the *Lives of Gregory the Illuminator*, *Martinianos*, and *Aikaterine* intertwined. Many of these passages have a gnomic character but given the close appearance of text bits from the same texts, Euthymios must have had either the respective texts, or excerpts stemming only from these, at hand. Other such mosaics are found at 30.32-85 (with intertwined text bits from the *Lives of Martinianos*, *Paul of Thebes*, *Kyprianos*, *Hilarion*, and *Thekla*) and 35.4-27 (produced with mixed text bits from the *Life of Gregory* and the *Life of Prokopios*). Finally, one mosaic is thematically speaking apostolic, and fittingly is constructed by mixing text extracts from Lives of apostles: the beginning of the *Barlaam*, i.e. chapter 1.1-30, represents a fine combination of excerpts from the *Lives* of the apostles Thomas, John, and Philip.

⁴⁸ All references made refer to Volk's text and *apparatus imitationum*; and the same information may be retrieved in his "Index der Testimonien (Benuçzer der Barlaam-Romans)", Volk, *Die Schriften*. 6, 1 (cited n. 1), pp. 491-4.

⁴⁹ The *Life of Aikaterine* is used alone for a similar purpose in 26,27-118.

This latter text mosaic clearly echoes the aims behind the insertion of the *Apology of Aristeides*.⁵⁰ His text was to resound of apostolic imagery, making his Byzantine reader and listener instantly recognize in which setting to understand the text, i.e, as taking place in newly Christianized land. A similar aim could be thought of concerning the *Life of Gregory the Illuminator*, whose setting in Armenia (and with brief mention of Iberians, i.e. Georgians) calls attention to a possible local (national) interest from Euthymios' side in including excerpts from this text.

Euthymios hardly produced these text mosaics from Metaphrastic texts to engender any recognition or enjoyment of intertextuality. The Metaphrastic texts were quite new and perhaps even still under suspicion during the reign of Basil II due to the fate of Symeon Metaphrastes. And even if somebody would know the texts, it would require a reader or listener very familiar with Metaphrastic narratives to be able to recognize the procedure. Other passages, which display heavy reuse of material from only one text, could perhaps more be seen as recalling a certain text, even if the feeling must rather be that Euthymios simply worked in cento-like way, finding Metaphrastic material useful or aesthetically preferable for his purpose. The use of several text bits in a row from a single Metaphrastic text is seen at least in 2.34-153, where 8 text bits (3 of which very extensive) have been taken with practically no changes from the *Life of Sergios & Bacchos* (but intertwined with translated bits from the *Balavariani*, biblical and patristic literature, etc.). The same goes for the *Life of Martinianos*, used extensively in the passage 30.115-197; the *Life of Kyprianos* (32.98-152); the *Life of Paul of Thebes* (38.28 - 40.60); and the *Life of Hilarion* (40.97-116). Euthymios must, in all these cases, have had the Metaphrastic text at his side. The close reuse of quite long passages can only be the product of a direct retrieval from the source text (probably based on prior selection of the text for the specific purpose).

We know that Symeon Metaphrastes also used secondary sources (or other texts than the primary source text, in his case, for rewriting).⁵¹ This creates a

⁵⁰ Volk, *Die Schriften*. 6, 1 (cited n. 1), pp. 122-35.

⁵¹ W. Lackner, Zu Editions-geschichte, Textgestalt und Quellen der Passio S. Polyeucti des Symeon Meraphrastes, in *Byzantios: Festschrift für Herbert Hunger zum 70. Geburtstag*, hrsg. von W. Hörandner, J. Koder, O. Kresten & E. Trapp, Wien 1984, pp. 221-31. For a specific case of "documentary reuse" of a saint's own letter, see C. Høgel, The actual

slight similarity between Symeon and Euthymios, but a fundamental difference also distinguishes them on this point: Symeon included secondary sources into his rewritings but only to include additional information. His secondary sources offered him scenes or details on the saint(s) not available in his primary source text. Euthymios, on the other hand, reused text bits from the Metaphrastic text, not because they offered him any additional information but simply because he here found usable, readymade phrases. This procedure, not least because based on (collections of) excerpts closely resembles what has been observed in texts as Nicholas Kataskepenos' *Life of Kyrillos Phileotes* and other hagiographical texts written in the twelfth century.⁵² So, in this regard, Euthymios diverted from the working procedures of Symeon Metaphrastes and instead, it seems, paved the way for a new manner of writing Greek hagiography.

Conclusion

Euthymios could obviously be called a Metaphrast, that is a *metaphrástes*, in recognition of his many Greek-Georgian translations and of his big Georgian-Greek translation, his *Barlaam*. But he could also be called a *metaphrastés*, to the extent that his *Barlaam* ended up sounding very much like a Metaphrastic text by incorporating numerous quotations from Symeon's menologion. As for working methods, Euthymios' manner of piecing together text snippets, sometimes into whole mosaics, cannot be paralleled in the case of Symeon, who did use secondary texts but only such that offered additional historic material.

Euthymios' literary importance comes with the influence of Georgians not only on the life of Mount Athos but on the intellectual life in Byzantium. Not only did the story of *Barlaam and Ioasaph* become a widely read text, but the Georgian influence on bringing the Metaphrastic text to success seems to have been extensive, even if it is difficult to assess the exact nature of the Iviron's dedication

words of Theodore Graptos: a Byzantine saint's letter as inserted document, in *Medieval letters: between fiction and document*, ed. by C. Høgel & E. Bartoli, Turnhout 2015, pp. 307-16.

⁵² See *La Vie de saint Cyrille le Philéote, moine byzantin*, introd., texte crit., trad. et notes par É. Sargologos (Subs. hag. 39), Bruxelles 1964, pp. 32-7; M. Mullett, Novelisation in Byzantium: narrative after the revival of fiction, in *Byzantine narrative: papers in honour of Roger Scott*, ed. by J. Burke et al., Melbourne 2006, pp. 1-28, esp. pp. 16-7.

to the Metaphrastic enterprise through production of Greek manuscripts containing Metaphrastic texts, translations of these into Georgian, and recirculation of the same in the form of text bits in the *Barlaam*. But Euthymios and others at the Iviron certainly cherished these texts.

Thus, the results of Grossmann's analysis, which showed that it was Euthymios who reused Symeon Metaphrastes, not vice versa, have given us a much simpler chronology, a straighter transfer of texts between Athos and Constantinople, but also a starting point for fascinating insight into the workings and universes of the two most successful narrative writers in middle Byzantine literature.