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SOME ASPECTS OF SLAVONIC GOSPEL MANUSCRIPTS
AND THEIR GREEK COUNTERPARTS

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§0. The acceptance of Christianity in the fourth century by Constantine the Great, and his building Constantinople as New Rome, began a new era, an era that radically changed the face of Christianity. From being the religion of a persecuted minority that guarded its literature in secret, Christianity became, as the official religion, an important part of the Roman Empire, with the Emperor himself commissioning copies of the Scriptures for use in the churches he was planning to build in Constantinople. A further impetus was given to the routine copying of the gospels whenever emperors engaged in extensive church building, since every new church would require new service books.

The Byzantine Emperor was not only the head of the State, but also the head of the Church, and his autocracy in both fields spread throughout the Byzantine Empire, resulting in the dissemination from Constantinople of service books of the standard type, which were then carefully copied when the need arose. Although the gospels had originally been read from codices containing the continuous texts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, during the reign of Justinian certain of these lections were written down in a separate codex in the order in which they were read, commencing with the lection for Easter Sunday, the first half of the prologue to the gospel of John (J i:1-17). This type of service book is now called the Byzantine gospel lectionary, and the high degree of uniformity that we find in extant examples, from the eighth century manuscripts to the modern printed editions, bears witness to the firm control of the Church and the care of the copyists.

At first the Byzantine gospel lectionary provided the lections for the most important festivals of the Church, but gradually lections for other days were incorporated. The fact that the Greek Byzantine gospel lectionary reached its most developed form by accretion is demonstrated by the discovery that different strata of lections contain differing types of text. We are also able to see the process in operation, since some copyists wrote additional lections at the end of an existing codex. Later copyists then placed the lections in their correct place when the codex was re-copied.

In some cases, however, manuscripts reached a distant part of the Em- 77

pire, and there they were copied and re-copied without being influenced by later manuscripts from Constantinople. In such circumstances they preserved an earlier stage of the Byzantine lectionary than that current in the capital and they may also preserve an earlier form of the text. In particular, where a Byzantine gospel lectionary had been written in a language other than Greek, the extent to which future copyists understood Greek and had access to Greek service books influenced succeeding generations of lectionaries.

Although lectionaries were usually copied from lectionaries, there are also continuous texts of the gospels extant in Greek, from the eighth century onwards, which contain lection notes in the margins, and also those which have lists of lections at the beginning or at the end. Such lection notes and lists could have been used to supplement lectionaries, or even to compile them completely, and so could have played an important part in the transmission of lections. In addition, some service books include lections or directions for what must be read, and these too could have played their part in the compilation of lectionaries. Amongst such service books are copies of the *Typicon* of Hagia Sophia, the "Great Church" of Constantinople.

It seems to be generally accepted that the first translation from Greek into Slavonic made by Constantine-Cyril by the time he left Byzantium for Moravia in 863 A.D. was that of a gospel lectionary, and scholars are therefore interested in discovering what kind of Greek lectionary that was. J. Vrana has considered that Sl. Z 1* (Assemanianus) is the nearest extant Slavonic lectionary to the Slavonic prototype, while L.P. Žukovskaja has raised the question of whether Sl. Z 1021 (GIM, U-379) could be closer to the first translation into Slavonic. The former follows the Greek Z esk type, having only gospel lections, while the latter follows the Greek Z^{ta} k type, having lections from both the *Apostolos* and the Gospel.

It is the purpose of this particular paper to compare and contrast the characteristics of the Greek and the Slavonic gospel lectionaries, without introducing lectionaries containing lections from the *Apostolos*. In general gospel lectionaries seem to follow their own line of development unaffected by the parallel line of development of lectionaries containing lections from both *Apostolos* and Gospel. Indeed, the Z^{ta} types show some characteristics indicating a later development than that of the gospel lectionaries, and require a separate investigation.

A study of the similarities and differences between Greek and Slavonic lectionaries not only sheds light on the transmission of the Slavonic version

of the New Testament, but is also of value in interpreting the evidence of the Greek lectionaries, and in assessing the value of the Slavonic version as evidence of the Greek from which it was translated.

§1. In general, the characteristics of the earlier Slavonic gospel lectionaries appear to be very much the same as those of the earlier Greek lectionaries, and the resemblance is particularly noticeable by the time the Glagolitic script had been transliterated into Cyrillic letters. Cyrillic MSS used Greek uncial letters (helped by extra letters) of a type to be found in Greek uncial lectionaries. The initials, vignettes and decorative bands found in the Slavonic manuscripts can usually be found in one or other of the Greek codices. Nevertheless, when we investigate the lectionaries in detail we find that certain characteristics of the Slavonic lectionaries are not commonly found in Greek lectionaries. They are not however completely absent, and appear to be vestigial forms which had been largely superseded in Constantinopolitan usage by the time the extant Greek lectionaries were written.

On the other hand earlier Slavonic lectionaries do not always agree amongst themselves in certain respects, but similar variations can be found in Greek lectionaries.

Finally, there are some variants from the Byzantine norms found in Slavonic lectionaries that have not been found in Greek, and some types of Greek lectionaries that have not been found in Slavonic.

The first group of characteristics were probably to be found in the Greek lectionary which had served as the model for the Slavonic archetype; the second group makes it clear that the copyists were continually checking their text against Greek lectionaries; but the third group indicates that there were some developments in the Slavonic field that developed independently of Greek influence, while other developments in the Greek field do not seem to have been taken up by the Slavonic scribes.

§2. The characteristics of early Slavonic gospel lectionaries lead to the conclusion that their archetype was a Saturday-Sunday lectionary in which the lection for each day was called the gospel for the day, and the rubric included the Chapter Number of the Ammonian Section in which the pericope commenced. The Sundays between Easter and Pentecost were counted as if Easter Sunday were number one, and Pentecost number eight, while the first week was called the 'shining (or light) week', and the next the 'second week after Easter', and so on, until the 'seventh week after Easter'. each Saturday being included in the week. There followed sixteen Saturdays and Sundays 79

from Matthew and a further eighteen Saturdays and seventeen Sundays before the pre-Lenten period commenced with the Sunday before Carnival.

All of these characteristics except the name 'the shining week' are to be found, to a greater or lesser extent in Greek lectionaries, and represent relics of early forms. Even the term 'the shining week', instead of the usual Greek name 'the week of renewal (or rebirth)' may have been a completely superseded name for the first week. The term *lamprophorou* for the following Sunday is found in some early Greek lectionaries and in Theodore's *Constitution* of Studion, instead of the usual *Antipascha* meaning 'Instead of Easter'. All these terms appear to be due to the custom of Baptism on Easter Saturday in the Early Church being shifted to the following week, so that the participation of the newly baptised in their first Communion Service on Easter Sunday, dressed in the shining white robes of purification, was transferred to the following Sunday (cf. the term *In albis* of the West).

The problem with the *Synaxarion* (the cycle which extends from one Easter Sunday to the following Easter Saturday) is the fact that the date of Easter varies from year to year, and so the number of Saturdays and Sundays of Matthew and Luke vary with it. When lections for Sundays were added to more simple forms of lectionaries at a date earlier than the extant Greek lectionaries, the Sunday after Pentecost (the Octave of Pentecost) was the first to be chosen from Matthew, and the lection read on the fifth Sunday of the New Year (which began at the Autumn Equinox) was the first one chosen from Luke. Later, Matthean lections were chosen in *Bahnlesung* (i.e., in the gospel order of the pericopae) to be read until the New Year, the Lucan lections, also in *Bahnlesung*, to complete the period before Carnival. It would seem that the number of Sundays chosen was eventually found to be insufficient in certain years, and extra lections were added. This took place before Saturday lections were incorporated in the lectionaries. In the Greek lectionaries there is hardly any exception to the use of a Matthean pericope known, by reason of its subject, as the *Canaanitess*, being used whenever an extra lection is needed, be it in the Matthean or in the Lucan period. There exists, however, a valuable family of continuous gospels, known as the Ferrar Group, which is an important witness to a pre-Caesarean text, whose lists and rubrics give a Lucan pericope (L xix:12-26) to be read in the Lucan period, and it is this pericope that we find in the earliest Slavonic lectionaries.

The antiquity of this Lucan Sunday pericope is confirmed by the fact that when an extra lection is needed it is read on the sixteenth Sunday, and continues

the *Bahnlesung* of the Lucan Sundays, although (like the *Canaanitess*) it is not always written in this place, but sometimes as the seventeenth Sunday. The pericope which is obliged to change its position when the extra Sunday lection is needed is L xviii:10-14, and since it does not continue the Lucan Sunday *Bahnlesung* but continues the Lucan Saturday *Bahnlesung* when written as the sixteenth Sunday, it seems probable that it was added as a regular member of the system at the same time as were the Matthean and Lucan Saturday lections, while the Lucan pericope L xix:12-26 remained an extra lection for use when needed. However, the Matthean pericope, Mt xv:21-28 (the *Canaanitess*), used when an extra Sunday lection was needed at the end of the Matthean period, eventually replaced the earlier Lucan pericope L xix:12-26 as the additional pericope, also in the Lucan period. It, too, is to be found in some Greek lectionaries as the sixteenth Sunday and in others as the seventeenth.

The fact that the Lucan pericope has been preserved in two peripheral areas of the Byzantine Empire, namely Sicily (with Calabria) and Macedonia, so far apart that it is hardly likely that one would have obtained it from the other, indicates that both had preserved an earlier custom for which no evidence remains in the extant manuscripts copied in areas in close touch with Constantinople over the centuries.

A closer look at this pericope in the Slavonic lectionaries reveals that verse 25 is not to be found in Sl. Z 1*, Sl. Z 4* (Pop Jovan's Gospel), nor in Sl. Z 52* (Jerusalem Orthodox Church 19), but Sl. Z 21 (Vraca Gospel) and Sl. Z 31 (Putna Gospel) do include the missing verse, as, indeed, do the continuous texts Sl. 1 (Zographensis), Sl. 2 (Marianus), Sl. 10 (Nikola's Gospel), Sl. 27 (Dobromir's Gospel), and many more. It is of particular interest that Tischendorf's critical apparatus gives the Greek gospels D (VIth century), W (Vth century) and the Ferrar manuscript 69 as witnesses to this omission, showing a textual as well as a liturgical connection between the early Slavonic lectionaries and the Ferrar Group. This is one example of the way in which common divergence from the norm in the lection system may lead us to group together textually related manuscripts.

The evidence considered so far, therefore, makes it possible that the archetype of the earliest Slavonic lectionaries was based on a translation of an earlier example of a Greek Saturday-Sunday lectionary than those now extant. Many of its characteristics, however, are preserved in a comparatively small number of lectionaries, such as the tenth century Z 704*, and the thirteenth century Saturday-Sunday Ferrar Lectionary Z 547*.

§3. Nevertheless, the majority of these characteristics would also be simply those which would appear if a list of lections had been used together with a continuous text, each pericope being translated in turn. A list would have been available at the beginning or at the end of continuous texts in the ninth century, and also in liturgical books, such as the *Typicon* of Hagia Sofia in Constantinople. It is also possible that the archetype was obtained from one of these sources and that other sources were used during the copying process when additional material was required.

In fact, the Greek lectionaries with which we would compare their Slavonic counterparts must themselves be the final stage of a long line of development. This must have contained the use of a list at some time, judging by the great degree of uniformity in the broad sense, coupled with the nature of the divergences from the norms. The use of Chapter Numbers in the rubrics points directly to the use of lists, since they serve no useful purpose once the lectionary has been compiled. The conservatism of the copyists meant that these numbers were often copied and re-copied, but there was a tendency for them to be lost gradually over the centuries, only to re-appear if a scribe had to turn to a list and a continuous text to add an extra lection or replace a lost page in his exemplar.

It remains necessary to decide to what extent lists were used by Slavonic scribes, and how much they had been used by the Greek scribes who had been involved in the various stages which culminated in any Greek model that may have been used by a Slavonic scribe in the production of a given Slavonic manuscript.

§4. There can be no doubt that the extra lection needed when the number of Sunday lections was insufficient must have at first been written at the end of existing volumes, and when Saturday lections were provided, no lection was chosen for the corresponding extra Saturday. At first when the extra lection was included in the body of the lectionary, together with the Saturday lections, no mention was made of what should happen on the extra Saturday, but eventually a rubric was included, stating that the reader could choose what lection he wished on that day. As early as the ninth century, some scribes wrote down their own choice, copied by later scribes. Judging by extant Greek manuscripts this was a rare occurrence, until the late tenth or early eleventh century, when Constantinople rationalised the lectionary, by, amongst other things, introducing the pericope L xv:1-10 for the Saturday which was the day before the Sunday prior to Carnival. This is the pericope imme-

diately before the one for that Sunday (L xv:11-32), and was clearly a deliberate choice.

The extant members of the Ferrar Group all state in lists and rubrics that the reader may choose which pericope he wishes for this Saturday, but the early Slavonic lectionaries Sl. 7 1*, 4*, 5*, 6*, 7*, 21, 26*, 31, 34, 45, 48, 49, 52*, all have the pericope L xi:5-13 for the extra Saturday whether they use the Lucan pericope of the Ferrar Group, or have exchanged it during copying for the *Canaanitess* under the influence of later Greek manuscripts, or have the one or the other as the sixteenth Sunday, or have it as the seventeenth. I have, as yet, found no example of this in Greek lectionaries, and it may, indeed, have been chosen especially for the Slavonic archetype. It may indicate that all the lectionaries containing it have descended from that archetype, whatever adaptations, revisions and accidental alterations have taken place on the way.

§5. If we consider the precise extent of each pericope in each of the early Slavonic 7 esk codices, we find some small differences which are also to be found in some Greek lectionaries:

1. In Sl. 7 1*, 6th Sunday of the New Year has L viii:27-39 (omits 36, 37), whereas others do not omit verses 36 and 37.
2. In Sl. 7 5* (Sava's Gospel), Sunday after Pentecost has Mt x:32, 33, 37, 39, 40, xix:27-30, whereas Sl. 7 1* has 38, 39 and others 38 only, instead of 39, 40.
3. In Sl. 7 6*, 15th Saturday after Pentecost has Mt xxiv:1-13 (omits 10-12), whereas the others do not omit verses 10-12.
4. In Sl. 7 7* (Archangel Gospel), Friday of the 5th week after Easter has J x:17-30, whereas the others end at verse 28a.
5. In Sl. 7 31, Friday of 6th week after Easter has J xiv:1-10a, whereas the others continue to verse 11a.
6. In Sl. 7 26* (Rila 1/12), thelections for the Vigils of the 1st week of Lent are included, whereas the others do not contain this section.

These and other examples indicate the continuing influence of Greek lectionaries.

§6. Although, as we have seen, some of the differences between the early Slavonic lectionaries are also to be found in Greek manuscripts, even as early as Sl. 7 5* and Sl. 7 7* differences were beginning to appear which were not due to Greek influence, and which were perpetuated in later manuscripts, especially in Russia where the scriptoria were more isolated

from continuing Greek influence. The most noticeable of these differences is the interchange of the pericope for the 6th and 7th Sundays of the Lucan period, which is to be found in Sl. Z 34* (Bojana Gospel) and Sl. Z 45* (Veles Gospel), and many weekday lectionaries, in addition to the above codices.

Another permutation of pericopae, that of the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Saturdays of Lent, is to be found in Sl. Z 5* but not in Sl. Z 7*, and also occurs in a number of other lectionaries, including Sl. Z 56 (Plovdiv Gospel), Sl. Z 21 and Sl. Z 13* (Rila 1/13), as well as weekday lectionaries.

These deviations from the Byzantine norm probably arose by accidental transpositions at an early date and were not corrected by subsequent copyists, but there are others which can be traced to developments in the nature of Pentecost, reflected in the lectionaries.

§7. Originally the Pentecost denoted the fifty days which commenced on Easter Sunday and concluded with the Descent of the Holy Spirit on the fiftieth day. This is seen in the numbering of the fifty days in the eighth century Z 563*, and others, in two members of the Ferrar Group and in the Palestinian Syriac lectionaries, and also in the counting of the weeks up to and including the seventh week that we see in the *Typicon* of Hagia Sofia, in the Slavonic lectionaries, and, vestigially, in some Greek lectionaries.

Later, the fiftieth day increased in importance as a festival in its own right, and was itself known as the Pentecost and the following day was celebrated as the Morrow of Pentecost, while the preceding day was celebrated as the Eve of Pentecost. This spread to the preceding week, which was then called 'the week before Pentecost'. and finally this became 'the week of Pentecost' in the Greek lectionaries. This had occurred by the eighth century.

There was also an extension of the festival of Pentecost to its Octave, first of all to the eighth day itself (the Sunday of All Saints), and then to all the intervening days. These were called 'after Pentecost' in Greek manuscripts. When weekdays were added for more weeks, the Morrow of Pentecost sometimes retained this name or else was called 'the Monday of Pentecost'. but the rest of the days of the first week were called 'Tuesday of the first week'. etc., since weekday lectionaries of this type were normally obtained by combining a Saturday-Sunday lectionary with a lectionary containing only weekday lessons. The resulting codex formed the archetype for future lectionaries.

Although these developments had already taken place in the Greek field by the time the Slavonic archetype was compiled, the model adopted by the Slavonic translators was the earlier one with the Eve of Pentecost called 'Saturday of the

seventh week', but the idea of the week after Pentecost being its Octave was already well-developed, and so, in Russia, in some manuscripts, the weekdays for the Octave were called 'Tuesday of Pentecost', etc. Such a manuscript is Sl. Z 97 (Moscow, GBL, Rum. 107). When further weekdays were added to such a manuscript during copying, the week which the Greek manuscripts called the second, the Russian manuscript called the first, and since the Saturdays and Sundays had been numbered according to the Greek system, the so-called first week began on the preceding Saturday, and the following weeks of the Matthean period continued to begin with the preceding Saturday. When lections began to be read from Luke, after the beginning of the New Year, the Greek system was followed, commencing with Monday of the first week of Luke. An example of such a lectionary is Sl. Z 141 (Mstislav's Gospel 1115-1117). Other Russian lectionaries have other variants of the Greek system.

South Slavonic manuscripts, being in closer contact with the Greek Church, followed Greek models more faithfully, adding the weekday lections to the earlier pericopae of the Saturday-Sunday system, whether they took the earliest Greek system, the alpha type, as in Sl. Z 101* (Miroslav's Gospel) and Sl. Z 102 (Moscow GBL, Grg. 9), or the second system, the S type, as in Sl. Z 127* (Vukan' Gospel) and Sl. Z 113* (Radomir's Gospel), etc.

§8. Both the earliest and second Greek type had at first utilised uncial, introducing minuscule letters only later. But at least by the beginning of the eleventh century, Constantinople had introduced a new, rationalised lectionary, the *koine* type, which was multiplied by very careful copying in large clear minuscule. This was a combination of the two previous types, but the numbering of Sundays was rationalised, so that every week began with Monday, the *Canaanite*. was always written as the seventeenth Sunday and a particular lection was always given for use on the extra Saturday when the *Canaanite* was needed (until then the choice had been left to the reader). This type does not appear to have influenced Slavonic lectionaries at all.

§9. We see, therefore, that on the one hand Slavonic lectionaries have preserved certain ancient characteristics better than the descendants of their Greek models, but on the other hand their innovations seem to have been fortuitous in comparison with the planned development of the Greek innovations, once the Slavonic archetype had passed into the hands of the copyists.