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“The Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom and Saint Basil of Caesarea in the Slavonic Tradition in the Church Books in XI-XV”. Published by University of Dmitry Pozharsky University. Russian Foundation for support of education and research. Moscow, 2015.

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Abstract

Unique in the Slavonic studies in Russia and abroad, the monograph focuses on textological research of the Slavonic translation of the liturgy attributed to the most ancient times. The 1960s generated discussions and debates about the initial translation of the liturgy into the Slavonic language, primarily in the works by Josef Vašica and Antonín Dostál, Slavist scholars from Czech Republic. The conversations and debates about the topic, however, did not focus on the hand-written church books where the liturgical text was recorded, rather historically approached the Christianisation of the Slavs. The question under discussion remained unanswered, and discussion what liturgy was translated by Saint Cyril and Methodius was more likely to give rise to controversy.

The book attempts to make painstaking enquiries into textology of the most ancient liturgies in XI-XV centuries, which enabled us to discover archaic versions of the initial translation and to reveal how many translations there are and where they were made from the Greek sources. On approximately one hundred hand-written church books, it proves that the most ancient translation of the Byzantine liturgies was made by the pupils of Cyril and Methodius, rather than the missionaries themselves, in late IX century in the west of the First Bulgarian Empire. In Kievan Rus, there were both the most ancient translation and the second, Preslav, translation made in the East Bulgaria in X century. After liberation from the Byzantine conquest, XIII century saw the next version made by the south Slavs, which was not known in Rus since the liturgical reforms, with particular historic reasons behind them, were not influenced by the south Slavs as in 1299 Vladimir, not Kiev, due to the Tartar invasion, had become the Metropolis. All these made the liturgy subject to alterations: the liturgy included Proskomedias adopted from the Serbian Kórmchaia Book, although the liturgical text was not edited in accordance with the Greek source.

In XIV the liturgy underwent several changes imposed by the Athos liturgical reform, which aimed to unify the process how the liturgy was performed by all Orthodox Slavs. Although the Athos version of the Devine Liturgy was adopted in Rus at the turn of XIV-XV centuries, in late XIV century, nevertheless, Saint Euthymius of Tarnovo, Patriarch of Bulgaria,

and Cyprian, Metropolitan of Kiev, made an attempt to make changed into the Divine Liturgy. Thus, the Cyprian edition of the Divine Liturgy, apparently the-then most popular in the Russian hand-written tradition, formed a basis for print edition in 1602, while in the south-Slavonic tradition the Athos edition gained ground and served as a basis for the first print editions in Targovishte in 1498 and Venice in 1519.

The monograph consists of five chapters. The first chapter offers a methodology for investigating the liturgy. The second chapter provides an overview of the ancient period of the liturgy; the third chapter, the liturgy of the Second Bulgarian Empire (1185-1396); the fourth chapter, liturgical alterations adopted after the Athos reform in late XIV century. The fifth chapter considers lexical variations in all versions of the Divine Liturgy. Lastly, the conclusion presents research outcomes and provides a historical overview of the liturgical versions made by the Slavs in the context of the history of the Old Slavonic translations from Greek.

The supplement offers a critical edition of the liturgical text based on all the translations of the liturgy discovered by the author. Unique and unprecedented, the book offers for the first time the Devine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom, while the Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil sees its second publication, with the first one made by an archpriest M.I. Orlov in 1909, which aims to correct the publication principles and to collate many ancient lists which were unknown to Orlov. Besides, the book offers liturgical laws, i.e. texts which regulated the procedure how the liturgy was performed in XIV century.