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CIMMERIAN BOSPORUS**

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TWO HAGIOGRAPHIC NOTES

ST. SIMON – APOSTLE OF CIMMERIAN BOSPORUS?

The article is dedicated to two topics. One is the legend about Apostle Simon, who preached on Cymmerian Bosphorus according a 4th-c. tradition later forgotten and replaced by the legend about Apostle Andrew, where Simon was only one of his companions. The second part is concerning future critical edition of the Martyrium of St. Marina including classification of its manuscripts.

Keywords: hagiography, Byzantium, Apostle Simon, St. Marina, Bosphoros, Caucasus, Crimea, manuscripts, critical edition

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A Byzantine hagiographer Epiphanius the Monk, who visited in 815–820 southern, eastern and northern shores of the Black Sea searching for the relics of saints², describes in his ‘Life of Apostle Andrew’, somewhat unexpectedly, two tombs of apostle Simon found by him: “The Bosporans... showed to us... a shrine with the inscription of ‘Simon the Apostle’, immured in the basement of a very large church of Holy Apostles, with the relics, and gave from them to us; there is also another tomb in Nikopsis of Zikhia, with the inscription of ‘Simon the Cananite’, and it has also the relics”³. So, one tomb of Apostle Simon was in Nikopsis (near modern Novomikhaylovka in Krasnodar region), and the second one – in Bosporos (ancient Pantikapaion, modern Kerch in Crimea). Epiphanius himself does not solve in favor of the authenticity of one of these two places of entombment and of possible death of Apostle Simon.

However, we are faced not only with the question of priority of Nikopsis or Bosporos, but also with another : how Apostle Simon was associated with the Eastern Pontos Euxeinos. The Greek tradition, going back to the ‘List of the Apostles’ by Pseudo-Epiphanius, says nothing about his relationship with this region. The manuscripts of this ‘List’ themselves are not consensus toward Apostle Simon : either he preached in Mauritania and Africa and was martyred in Britain⁴, or else he was the second bishop of Jerusalem and died there or in Egyptian Ostrakene⁵. To Jerusalem bind Simon also his apocryphal acts (*CANT* 282–283), with the exception of Latin ‘Acts of Simon and Jude’ (*CANT* 284)⁶, which tell about his preaching in Persia and his death in Suanir, identified by some scholars with Suania-Svaneti (in modern Georgia)⁷. However, the text, which in its present form is not older than the second half of 6th s., was

² About him see G. KAHL, *Die geographischen Angaben des Andreasbios (BHG 95b und 102)*, Diss., Stuttgart, 1989; C. MANGO, *A Journey Around the Coast of the Black Sea in the Ninth Century*, in *Palaeoslavica*, X.1 (2002), p. 255–264.

³ “Βοσποριανοὶ... ἔδειξαν... λάρνακα, ἐπιγραφὴν ἔχουσα Σίμωνος ἀποστόλου, εἰς θεμέλια κεχωσμένην ναοῦ τῶν ἁγίων ἀποστόλων πάντο μεγάλου, ἔχουσαν λείψανα, καὶ ἔδωκαν ἡμῖν ἐξ αὐτῶν. ἔστιν δὲ καὶ ἕτερος τάφος εἰς Νίκοψιν τῆς Ζηκχίας, ἐπιγραφὴν ἔχων Σίμωνος Κανανίτου καὶ αὐτὸς ἔχων λείψανα” (*Греческие предания о св. апостоле Андрее. Том 1: Жизнь*, ed. А.Ю. Виноградов (= *Библиотека «Христианского Востока»*, 3), Saint-Petersburg, 2005, p. 145–146, 179).

⁴ A strange neighborhood of Mauritania and Britain could be explained by confuse of similar minuscule forms of *Μαυριτανία* and *Βριτανία*.

⁵ *Prophetarum vitae fabulosae, indices apostolorum discipulorumque Domini Dorotheo, Epiphanio, Hippolyto aliisque vindicatae*, ed. Th. SCHERMANN, Lipsiae, 1907, p. 112–113.

⁶ See *Passion de Simon et Jude*, texte traduit, présenté et annoté par D. ALIBERT, G. BESSON, M. BROSSARD-DANDRÉ et S.C. MIMOUNI, in *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens*, II, ed. par P. GEOLTRAIN et J.-D. KAESTLI (= *Bibliothèque de la Pléiade*, 516), Paris, 2005, p. 839–842.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 856, n. 30.

written most likely in the East (perhaps in Persia itself) and consequently on its way to the Latin West could undergo many distortions. Also Suanir is described there as a big city and not a country, having a famous Temple of the Sun⁸ – nothing of these things is known about Svaneti, nor about the Eastern Black Sea region in generally.

However, the existence of these Acts themselves indicates the presence of an alternative, «Eastern» tradition about the place of preaching and death of Apostle Simon. Another version of it we can find in so called second Syriac type of the 'Lists of the Apostles'⁹ : Greek, Latin and Armenian lists, with rare unanimity (5 of 6 lists of this type), tell about the martyrdom of Simon the Zealot in Bosporos (Bosporus, Bosphorus, Postoros). Which place is it?

Obviously, it is Bosporos-Kerch. Firstly, in favor of this interpretation speaks the expression 'in Bosporos', which cannot be applied to Thracian Bosphorus strait. Secondly, an Armenian list refers to 'upper Bosporus', which indicates also Cimmerian and not Thracian Bosporus. Finally, a link to the Eastern Black Sea is build also in Greek lists by the mention of 'Iberian Bosporos'.

But how ancient is this tradition? Information about the apostolic preaching on the territory of Byzantine Empire, contained in the Eastern tradition of the 'Lists of the Apostles', is generally based on their cult in mentioned locations. For example, an erroneous indication of the lists of so-called first Syriac type¹⁰ about the death of Apostle Andrew in Byzantium-Constantinople goes back to the burial of his body in Constantinopolitan church of SS. Apostles. 5-6th centuries as the date of Latin list 'De ortu et obitu prophetarum' shows that the tradition of second Syrian type of the 'Lists

⁸ This account has evidently influenced the appearance of a Temple of the Sun as the place of martyrdom of Apostle Matthew in manuscripts **Bb** of Pseudo-Epiphanius.

⁹ А.Ю. ВИНОГРАДОВ, *Апостольские списки – «забытая» страница христианской литературы*, in *Богословские труды*, 40 (2005), p. 134, 145. In Syriac sources this type is not testified, but from its content is clear, that its primary source was of Syriac origin. Second Syriac type was known not only in the East (second Armenian list; *Écrits apocryphes sur les Apôtres*, trad. par L. LELOIR (= CCSA, 4), Turnhout, 1992, p. 745–755), but also among the Greeks (so-called Greco-Syrian anonymous and the list in 'Chronicon' of Pseudo-Symeon (BHG 154b)) and Latins ('De ortu et obitu prophetarum et apostolorum'; F. DOLBEAU, *Nouvelles recherches sur le «De ortu et obitu prophetarum et apostolorum»*, in *Augustinianum*, 34 (1994), p. 91–101). In a certain connection to this type stays also Latin 'Breviarium apostolorum' (B. DE GAFFIER, *Le Breviarium Apostolorum* (BHL 652), in *AnBoll*, 81 (1963), p. 89–116) and Georgian list from cod. Ivir. georg. 42 (M. VAN ESBROECK, *Une liste des apôtres dans le codex géorgien 42 d'Iviron*, in *AnBoll*, 86 (1968), p. 139–150), but this connection is not direct.

¹⁰ А.Ю. ВИНОГРАДОВ, *Апостольские списки* cit., p. 139. To this type belongs the most part of Syriac lists : of Michael the Syrian (J.-B. ШАВОТ, *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, 1/2, Paris, 1901, p. 146–147), of Solomon of Basra (*The Book of Bee*, ed. by E.A.W. BUDGE, Oxford, 1886, p. 103–106), of Bar-Ebroyo (GREGORII BARHEBRAEI. *Chronicon ecclesiasticum*, I, ed. J.B. ABELOOS et TH.J. LAMY, Louvain, 1872, p. 32f.). lists **Lp**, **Le** (M. VAN ESBROECK, *Neuf listes d'apôtres orientales*, in *Augustinianum*, 34 (1994), p. 135–137, 141–147, 153–158). In a more distant connection to it stay evidently also Syriac list **L** and Armenian list from cod. Matenadaran 2678 (*Ibid.*, p. 116–118, 137–139).

of the Apostles' is very old – hence, the tomb of Simon in Bosporos was still existing already at this time. Indeed, the bishopric of Bosporos existed at least since the beginning of the 4th century, when bishop Kadmos (or Domnos) has participated in the I Ecumenical Council in 325¹¹.

However, on the contrary, did not penetrated the information from the 'Lists of the Apostles' to Bosporos in a later time? It seems that a negative answer to this question is given by Epiphanius the Monk himself : according to him, the shrine of Simon was “immured in the basement of a very large church of Holy Apostles”, i. e. it was there from the time of church's construction. Indeed, the great basilica near the present small late-Byzantine church of St. John the Baptist in Kerch dates back to the later 5th – early 6 century¹². One can even suggest, that a model for the Bosporan church with its apostolic shrine was the famous Constantinopolitan Apostoleion, where the relics of Apostles Andrew, Luke and Timothy were transferred in 356-357.

It remains to solve one, but a very important problem : how the tomb of Apostle Simon in Nikopsis was created? The answer to this question lies in the political history of the Black Sea of 6th century. In 497–523 ceases to exist ancient Bosporan kingdom, whose territory gets under authority of the Empire; in 527 in Bosporos appears a Byzantine garrison¹³. On the other hand, in 536 the hierarch of Bosporos has suddenly raised his status to a metropolitan, and in 519 a bishop in neighboring Phanagoria is mentioned¹⁴, obviously obey to the Bosporan metropolitan as a suffragan. Finally, in the second third of 6th century in the frame of Justinian's policy of christianization of the Eastern Black Sea region (institution of bishops for Abasgoi and Goths-Tetraxitai¹⁵) an Episcopal see for Zikhs in Nikopsis was founded¹⁶. The appearance of Simon's relics in

¹¹ See *Patrum nicaenorum nomina Latine, Graece, Coptice, Syriace, Arabice, Armeniace*, ed. H. GELZER, H. HILGENFELD, O. CUNTZ. Lipsiae, 1898, p. 219.

¹² See Т.И. МАКАРОВА, *Археологические данные для датировки церкви Иоанна Предтечи в Керчи*, in *Советская археология*, 4 (1982), p. 91–106; Л.Ю. ПОНОМАРЕВ, *Средневековая Керчь (= Древности Керчи, 3)*, Kertch, 1999, p. 46. To this early basilica can belong an invocative inscription on marble cornice found under Predtechenskya square in Kerch (see B.B. ШКОРПИЛ, *Боспорские надписи, найденные в 1911 г.*, in *Известия императорской археологической комиссии*, 45 (1912), p. 21, № 11).

¹³ See А.Ю. ВИНОГРАДОВ, *Херсонес-Херсон: две истории одного города. Имена, места и даты в исторической памяти полиса*, in *Вестник древней истории*, 1 (2013), p. 40–58; А. VINOGRADOV, *Geschichte einer Stadt zweimal neu geschrieben : diokletianische und konstantinische »Altertümer« aus Chersones*, in *PONTES 7*, Freiburg in Br., 2015 (in print).

¹⁴ See *Hierarchia ecclesiae orientalis*, 1, a cura di G. FEDALTO, Padova, 1996, p. 391–392.

¹⁵ ПРОКОПИУС. *De bell.*, 8, 4, 12.

¹⁶ А.Ю. ВИНОГРАДОВ, *Зихия*, in *Православная энциклопедия*, 20, Moscou, 2009, p. 186–192.

Nikopsis' church points out, that its consecration, made by means of the relics, was carried out with the help of Bosporan metropolitan, who obviously also had a control over of Nikopsian bishopric, and who gave the relics of the Apostle for the consecration of its new cathedral. In all likelihood, the remainder of this large Bosporan metropoly is a very special ecclesiastical eparchy of Zikhia, consisting of three archbishoprics, of Bosporos, Cherson and Nikopsis, and mentioned for the first time in 660s, in the *Notitia episcopatum I*¹⁷.

Epiphanius the Monk tells us, that a main guideline in his travels was for him the above-mentioned 'List of the Apostles' by Pseudo-Epiphanius¹⁸. It is likely, that the Byzantine hagiographer just did not want to harmonize conflicting traditions regarding the place of death and burial of Simon in Pseudo-Epiphanius (Jerusalem, Ostrakene in Egipt, Britain) with the no less contradictory realities viewed by himself (tombs in Bosporos and Nikopsis). So he chose to withdraw Apostle Simon from the action of the 'Life of Andrew', leaving him in Abasgia. However, precisely because of this hagiographic trick in the future a local tradition was born, not only of the preaching, but also of Simon's death and burial in Abkhazia, in the city of Anakopia, which was identified with Nikopsis, yet abandoned for a long time at this moment¹⁹. Moreover, Apostle Simon, along with Apostle Andrew, became a symbol of the identity for Abkhazian Catholicosate, so that exactly these two Apostles were portrayed in the 16th century over the tomb of the Catholicos Eudemon Chkhetidze in the cathedral of Pitsunda, evidently as the founders of Abkhasian Church (Fig. 1).

¹⁷ *Notitiae episcopatum Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae*, texte critique, introduction et notes par J. DARROUZÈS, Paris, 1981, p. 206. About the date of composition see M. JANKOWIAK, *Byzance sur la mer Noire sous Constant II: la date de la première notice du patriarcat de Constantinople*, in *Proceedings of the 22nd International congress of Byzantine studies. Sofia, 22–27 august 2011*, III, Sofia, 2011, p. 56–57.

¹⁸ *Греческие предания* cit., p. 117, 161.

¹⁹ See L. KHROUSHKOVA, *Les monuments chrétiens de la côte orientale de la Mer Noire. Abkhazie. IV^e – XIV^e siècles* (= *Bibliothèque de l'antiquité tardive*, 9), Turnhout, 2006, p. 103. It is very significant, that in a modern fundamental research of Christian monuments in Abkhazia we find absolutely fantastic information about Apostle Simon, not corresponding to any reality : "Les *Acta Andreae* parlent aussi du martyre et de l'enterrement de l'apôtre Simon en 55 à Nikopsis près d'Apsaros, dans les pays des Ziques. Epiphanius le Moine évoque une inscription qui en témoigne, mais il m'a pas vu lui-même sa tombe" (*Ibid.*, p. 21).

The Greek Martyrium of St. Marina: toward a critical edition

The Greek Passion of Saint Marina was published only once — in 1886 by the famous Hermann Usener²⁰. The edition is based on two manuscripts : Par. gr. 1468 and 1470, with partial use of Latin translation and Cod. Vat. Pal. gr. 4 which presents according to him a different recension of the Passion. All the later researchers used only this publication. Later P. F. Halkin has identified several revisions of the Passion in his edition of the *Bibliotheca hagiographica graeca*²¹ (BHG 1167c, 1167x, 1168, 1168b, 1168c, 1168e). In addition, in the hand-written catalogue of hagiographic manuscripts in the Society of Bollandists, Brussels he listed 40 manuscripts of the Passion (I thank the Society and personally X. Lequeux for kindly providing this material). In sense of a further critical edition of the Passion of Saint Marina, I have studied its text in some Greek manuscripts, mainly in microfilms (from Institut de recherche et d'histoire des textes, section grécque, Paris) and digital copies available online or courtesy of the libraries. 16 manuscripts were used as follow:

Athos Vatopedi 84 (79), late 9th – early 10th c., ff. 213-222

Jerusalem Patr. 6, 9th – 10th cc., ff. 223-230

Lesbos Agiou Ioannou 57, 13th c., ff. 145v-160

London British Museum Add. 25881, 16th c., 243-254v

Messina S. Salvatore gr. 77, 12th c., ff. 56v-70

Milan Biblioteca Ambrosiana F 99 sup., 11th c., ff. 118-124

Oxford Bodleian Library Barocc. 148, 15th c., ff. 262-267v

Paris BNF gr. 1021, 16th c., ff. 38-51

Paris BNF gr. 1468, 11th c., ff. 211v-224

Paris BNF gr. 1470, AD 890, ff. 132-141

Turin Biblioteca Nazionale gr. 80, 10th c., f. 118

Vatican BAV gr. 866, 12th c., ff. 216-219v

Vatican BAV gr. 1538, late 15th c., ff. 248v-281

Vatican BAV Ottobon. gr. 12, 12th c., ff. 152v-162

²⁰ H. USENER, *Acta s. Marinae et Christophori*, in *Festschrift zur fünften Säcularfeier d. Carl-Ruprechts Universität zu Heidelberg*, Bonn, 1886, p. 15–46.

²¹ *Bibliotheca hagiographica graeca*, Brussels, 1957, p. 84–86.

Vatican BAV Ottobon. gr. 290, 16th c., ff. 1-31

Vatican BAV Ottobon. gr. 422, AD 1004, ff. 193-204v

The text of the Passion in the manuscripts was compared at three different points: in the beginning (Usener 15.6–16.21), the middle (Usener 30.26–31) and the end (Usener 46.15–27). Preliminary results of this comparison are as follows.

1. The situation with the recensions of the text looks more complicated than it seemed to Usener and to Halkin. It is possible to speak with care not about two, but three recensions of the text.

2. The recension, presented in two Paris manuscripts and taken by Usener as the basis for the edition, is found in only four other manuscripts: Vatop. 84, Ambr. F 99 sup., Taur. gr. 80, and Vat. gr. 866. Inside this edition one can distinguish three families of manuscripts: the first (= BHG 1165; Par. gr. 1470; Taur. gr. 80); the second (= BHG 1166; Par. gr. 1468; Vatop. 84) and third, not reflected in Usener's edition (Ambr. F 99 sup.; Vat. gr. 866). None of them can surely be estimated as original.

3. The second recension is represented by seven manuscripts, including Pal. gr. 4 partially used by Usener. Within this recension one can distinguish two families: the first (= BHG 1167) consists of Pal. gr. 4, Hier. Patr. 6, and Mess. gr. 77; the second – of Sin. MF 66, Par. gr. 1021, Barocc. gr. 148, and Ott. gr. 290. It is noteworthy that the readings of the earliest extant manuscript of the Martyrdom from Sinai coincide with the readings of post-Byzantine manuscripts. From this recension probably derive all of the above mentioned revisions of the text.

4. The third recension combines the readings of the first and second recensions, but is much closer to the later. One can distinguish two families: Ott. gr. 12 and 422 (South Italian?); Lesb. Ioann. 57, and Lond. add. 25881. The text of the Martyrdom in Ott. gr. 422 and Lond. add. 25881 is hardly rewritten.

5. The date of Sinai manuscript and the protograph of Par. gr. 1470 from the 2nd quarter of the 9th century, show that the first and second recensions of the Passion differed even before the 9th century. Neither one of them can be confidently considered to be original, so that a future edition should take into account both versions, and perhaps even be executed in the form of two separate texts.

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