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TWO HAGIOGRAPHIC NOTES
ST. SIMON – APOSTLE OF CIMMERIAN BOSPORUS

BASIC RESEARCH PROGRAM
WORKING PAPERS

SERIES: HUMANITIES
WP BRP 127/HUM/2016

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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 Cimmerian Bosporus 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, Bosporos, Caucasus, Crimea, manuscripts, critical edition

JEL Classification: Z.

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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 saints, describes in his ‘Life of Apostle Andrew’, somewhat unexpectedly, two tombs of apostle Simon found by him: “The Bosporans... showed us... a shrine with the inscription of ‘Simon the Apostle’, immersed 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”. 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 Euxinos. 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 Britain, or else he was the second bishop of Jerusalem and died there or in Egyptian Ostrakene. To Jerusalem bind Simon also his apocryphal acts (CANT 282–283), with the exception of Latin ‘Acts of Simon and Jude’ (CANT 284), which tell about his preaching in Persia and his death in Suanir, identified by some scholars with Suania-Svaneti (in modern Georgia). However, the text, which in its present form is not older than second half of 6th s., was

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3 “Βοσπορικοὶ... ἔδειξαν... λαμπρὰ ἐπιγραφὴν ἑγὼν Σίμωνος ἀποστόλου, εἰς θεμέλια κεραμεῖνην ναοῦ τῶν ἐγκαταλελυγμένων ἀποστόλων πάνω μεγάλων, ἐγὼν λείψανα, καὶ ἔδωκαν ἑμῖν τὸν ἑαυτὸν. ἐστὶ δὲ καὶ ὑπὸ τοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ τοῦ ἑαυτοῦ τάφου. Νίκοψι, ἐπιγραφὴν ἑγὼν Σίμωνος Κανανίτου καὶ σύντος ἑγὼν λείψανα” (Greek Church Tradition of Simeon of Kanaania, Bisho of Nikopsi, ed. A.YU. BIKHJNVRADOV (= Biblioteka «Христианско Востока», 3), Saint-Petersburg, 2005, p. 145–146, 179).

4 A strange neighborhood of Mauritania and Britain could be explained by confusion of similar minuscule forms of Munipatvia and Britannia.

5 Prophetarum vitae fabulace, indices apostolorum discipolorumque Domini Dorotheo, Epiphanio, Hippolyto alisque vindicatae, ed. TH. SCHERMANN, Lipsiae, 1907, p. 112–113.


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 Sun\(^8\) – 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 Bosporus (Bosphorus, 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 Bosporus 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 type\(^10\) about the death of Apostle Andrew in Byzantium-Constantinople goes back to the burial of his body in Constantinopolitan church of SS. Apostles. 5-6\(^\text{th}\) centuries as the date of Latin list ‘De ortu et obitu prophetarum’ shows that the tradition of second Syrian type of the ‘Lists

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\(^8\) 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 ‘Breviaria apostolorum’ (B. DE GAIFFIER, Le Breviair Apostolorum (BHL 652), in AnBoll, 81 (1963), p. 89–116) and Georgian list from cod. Ivr. georg. 42 (M. VAN ESBOECK, Une liste des apôtres dans le codex géorgien 42 d’Iviron, in AnBoll, 86 (1968), p. 139–150), but this connection is not direct.

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 Goth-Tetraxitai15) an Episcopal see for Zikhs in Nikopsis was founded16. The appearance of Simon’s relics in

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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 (в Древности Керчи, 3), Kerch, 1999, p. 46. To this early basilica can belong an invocative inscription on marble cornice found under Predtechensky square in Kerch (see В.В. Шкорпил, Боспорские надписи, найденные в 1911 г., in Известия императорской археологической комиссии, 45 (1912), p. 21, № 11).
15 Procopius, De bell., 8, 4, 12.
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 metropolis 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 Notitiae episcopatum I17.

Epiphanios 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 Abkhasia, 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 Catholicoate, so that exactly these two Apostles were portrayed in the 16th century over the tomb of the Catholico Eudemon Chkhetidze in the cathedral of Pitsunda, evidently as the founders of Abkhasian Church (Fig. 1).

18 Гре́ческие предания cit., p. 117, 161.
19 See L. KIROUSHKOVA, Les monuments chrétiens de la côte orientale de la Mer Noire. Abkhazie. IVe — XIVe 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 Usener\textsuperscript{20}. 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\textsuperscript{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 gréque, Paris) and digital copies available online or courtesy of the libraries. 16 manuscripts were used as follow:

Athos Vatopedi 84 (79), late 9\textsuperscript{th} – early 10\textsuperscript{th} c., ff. 213-222
Jerusalem Patr. 6, 9\textsuperscript{th} – 10\textsuperscript{th} cc., ff. 223-230
Lesbos Agiou Ioannou 57, 13\textsuperscript{th} c., ff. 145v-160
London British Museum Add. 25881, 16\textsuperscript{th} c., 243-254v
Messina S. Salvatore gr. 77, 12\textsuperscript{th} c., ff. 56v-70
Milan Biblioteca Ambrosiana F 99 sup., 11\textsuperscript{th} c., ff. 118-124
Oxford Bodleian Library Barocc. 148, 15\textsuperscript{th} c., ff. 262-267v
Paris BNF gr. 1021, 16\textsuperscript{th} c., ff. 38-51
Paris BNF gr. 1468, 11\textsuperscript{th} c., ff. 211v-224
Paris BNF gr. 1470, AD 890, ff. 132-141
Turin Biblioteca Nazionale gr. 80, 10\textsuperscript{th} c., f. 118
Vatican BAV gr. 866, 12\textsuperscript{th} c., ff. 216-219v
Vatican BAV gr. 1538, late 15\textsuperscript{th} c., ff. 248v-281
Vatican BAV Ottobon. gr. 12, 12\textsuperscript{th} c., ff. 152v-162

\textsuperscript{21} Bibliotheca hagiographica graeca, Brussels, 1957, p. 84–86.
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. MΓ66, 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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