

ON AN UNKNOWN 14TH CENTURY COPY OF A SERMON ATTRIBUTED TO
ST. KLIMENT AND ON SOME PROBLEMS OF THE STUDY OF THE OLD
BULGARIAN EXHORTATIVE SERMONS FROM THE 9TH–10TH CENTURIES

(Summary)

The article is dedicated to an unknown copy of the 5th sermon for the Sundays of Great Lent and is based on a manuscript fragment of 8 folios written on parchment in Medieval Russia in the 14th century. This ms. is kept in the State Historical Museum in Moscow under the call number Chlud. 9d. The article presents the content of the fragment, which is quite unique as far as its composition is concerned. It contains 4 sermons variously attributed to Kliment of Ohrid: the Exhortation for the 4th Sunday of Great Lent, the Exhortation for the 5th Sunday of Great Lent, the Eulogy on the Resurrection of Lazarus and the Eulogy on Palm Sunday. None of the Slavic MSS known so far and dated before the end of the 15th century contains these 4 sermons in this sequence. The article gives an outline of the results from the studies of the cycle of 6 sermons to be read on the Sundays of Great Lent which are presumed to be the work of Kliment of Ohrid. These sermons were widely known in Russia during the Middle Ages. On the basis of a study of the respective Russian and South-Slavonic manuscript tradition and the links of the latter with the manuscript tradition of the two eulogies included in the fragment before the beginning of the 16th century the article reaches the conclusion that the content of Chlud. 9d is somehow linked to the Bulgarian manuscript tradition. The author advances the view that the sermon for the 5th Sunday of Great Lent is an inseparable part of the cycle of sermons for Great Lent that already emerged in Bulgarian literature in the earliest stage of its development, viz. in the 9th–10th century. This cycle probably consisted of 11 sermons – 9 for the Sundays of Great Lent and 2 eulogies (for the Saturday of Lazarus and for Palm Sunday) and the composition in its final form was probably linked to the compilation of the liturgical books. This cycle reached Russia at a very early date, probably not later than the 12th century. It is possible that it was transmitted in a somewhat damaged state and along different routes (this becomes clear, e.g., from the beginning of the text of the 5th sermon for Great Lent, unique among the beginnings of the nearly 60 copies known so far) and that the process of the disintegration of the cycle continued at least until the end of the 15th century. The Chlud. 9d fragment is the only witness of the presumed composition of the original cycle known so far and because of this one may assume that this is the oldest Russian evidence that indeed the 9 sermons for Great Lent and the 2 eulogies for the Saturday of Lazarus and for Palm Sunday constituted a whole. As an appendix the article publishes the text of the sermon for the 5th Sunday of Great Lent according to the copy in Chlud. 9d with variants from two other early copies dated to the end of the 14th and the early 15th century that are now kept in the Russian State Library in Moscow in the collection of the Trinity-St. Sergius Laura under the call numbers Tr. 11 and Tr. 9.

Svetlina Nikolova
Cyrrillo-Methodian Research Centre – BAS