

THE NEW RILA SERVICE ON THE TRANSLATION OF THE RELICS OF ST. JOHN OF RILA WITH A COMPILED CANON IN SOUTH SLAVONIC COPIES FROM THE 15TH–16TH C.

(Summary)

The article presents two unknown South Slavonic copies of the service of St. John of Rila with a compiled canon. The canon is a combination of Skylitzes' canons – at the beginning of every ode there are troparia from the canon in mode two and then troparia from canons in modes one, three and four are added to them.

As a result of the most recent studies of professor Ivan Dobrev the oktoechos cycle of canons written by Skylitzes in honour of the hermit of Rila became known in scholarly circles. From the whole cycle only the canons in modes one, two and six can definitely be attributed to Skylitzes. The eight canons of the cycle are preserved in a late 15th c. manuscript from the Rila Monastery.

The copies presented in the article are located in the National Library in Sofia: a Serbian festal menaion written at the end of the 15th c. or the beginning of the 16th c. (№ 140) and a Bulgarian menaion for the months from September to November (№ 116). They present the new Rila redaction of the service of the Dormition of St. John of Rila (19 October) with the canon in mode two. In order to reconstruct the history of the service, published texts from the Skopije Menaion of 1451, a Rila manuscript from the 15th c. (1/26), including the canon in mode one, and a Serbian copy from the 16th c., a manuscript kept in the Museum of the Serbian Orthodox Church (№ 32), both containing the canon in mode two, are used for comparison in the Appendix.

This comparison leads to the conclusion that the initial compiled variant of the Rila service was probably composed using hymnographic components added to those already existing in the previous redactions and that the canon was composed combining odes from two canons (keeping the theotokia). At a later stage the reduction of the number of the troparia in each ode of the canon may be observed in the Serbian copy.

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