

The Graeco-Slavic Contacts in Psaltic Art: The case of Metropolitan Serafim of Bosnia

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Abstract. The Metropolitan Serafim of Bosnia became known according to the so-called Yale fragment, discovered by Prof. Miloš Velimirović at the library of Yale University in 1964. The main part of the fragment contains thirteen chants in mode 1 for Saturday Vespers of the Oktoechos' repertory. The text is written in Slavic with Greek letters. The importance of this discovery threw a new light on the Graeco-Slavic contacts in the development of psaltic art in Balkan Orthodox countries and revealed new paths of investigation of both music and musicians. Serafim of Bosnia is very little known in Orthodox music. The focus of the paper is a musical manuscript from the library of Rila monastery (6/59), which contains two inscriptions with his name. The manuscript originates from the 18th century. It is of the Akolouthiai-Anthology type. The two inscriptions in which the name of Serafim is read are in Slavic and seemingly written by him. The question of who was Serafim is raised. The psaltic art from the 18th and the very beginning of the 19th century is discussed. Several layers of repertory are revealed: a traditional one with anonymous chants; an old composed layer with pieces from the 14th- and 15th-century composers; a newly composed first layer with pieces from the 17th- and 18th-century composers up to 1770; and a newly composed second layer with composers after 1770. The musical Anthology of the Metropolitan Serafim is one more proof about the great role that he played in the process of adopting the new Church Slavonic language to the psaltic art of the second half of the 18th century. As a result of Serafim's appeal to Peter Lampadarios for creating a repertory in Slavic, pieces for Vespers, the Orthros, and the three liturgies appeared. These pieces were used by the Slavs in their Worship.

Περίληψη. Ο Μητροπολίτης Σεραφεΐμ της Βοσνίας έγινε γνωστός από το λεγόμενο «απόσπασμα του Yale», που βρέθηκε στη βιβλιοθήκη του πανεπιστημίου του Yale από τον καθηγητή Miloš Velimirović το 1964. Το κύριο μέρος του αποσπάσματος περιλαμβάνει 13 ψαλμούς σε πρώτο Ήχο για τους εσπερινούς του Σαββάτου, από το ρεπερτόριο της Οκτώηχου. Το κείμενο είναι γραμμένο στα σλαβικά με ελληνικούς χαρακτήρες. Η σπουδαιότητα αυτής της ανακάλυψης έριξε ένα νέο φως στις Ελληνο-Σλαβικές σχέσεις στην ανάπτυξη της Ψαλτικής Τέχνης στις Βαλκανικές Ορθόδοξες χώρες και αποκάλυψε νέα μονοπάτια στην εξέταση της μουσικής και των μουσικών. Ο Σεραφεΐμ της Βοσνίας είναι ελάχιστα γνωστός στην Ορθόδοξη μουσική. Το επίκεντρο της εισήγησης είναι ένα μουσικό χειρόγραφο από τη βιβλιοθήκη της Μονής της Ρίλα (6/59), το οποίο περιλαμβάνει δύο σημειώσεις με το όνομά του. Το χειρόγραφο χρονολογείται από τον 18ο αιώνα και είναι του τύπου του Ανθολογίου Ακολουθιών. Οι δύο σημειώσεις στις οποίες διαβάστηκε το όνομα του Σεραφεΐμ είναι στα Σλαβικά και φαίνεται πως είναι γραμμένες από τον ίδιο. Τίθεται το ερώτημα, ποιος είναι ο Σεραφεΐμ και συζητείται η ψαλτική τέχνη από τον 18ο αιώνα και τις αρχές του 19ου. Αποκαλύπτονται διάφορα στρώματα του ρεπερτορίου: ένα παραδοσιακό με ανώνυμες ψαλμωδίες, ένα παλαιό στρώμα με συνθέσεις του 14ου και 15ου αιώνα, ένα πρώτο νέο στρώμα με κομμάτια συνθετών του 17ου και 18ου αιώνα μέχρι το 1770 και ένα δεύτερο νέο στρώμα με συνθέτες μετά το 1770. Η μουσική ανθολογία του Μητροπολίτη Σεραφεΐμ είναι μια ακόμη απόδειξη σχετικά με το σημαντικό ρόλο που εκείνος έπαιξε στη διαδικασία υιοθεσίας της νέας Εκκλησιαστικής Σλαβονικής γλώσσας στην ψαλτική τέχνη του δεύτερου μισού του 18ου αιώνα. Μετά την έκκληση του Σεραφεΐμ στο Πέτρο Λαμπαδάριο να δημιουργηθεί ένα ρεπερτόριο στα Σλαβικά, προέκυψαν κομμάτια για τους Εσπερινούς, τους Όρθρους και τρεις Λειτουργίες, τα οποία και χρησιμοποιήθηκαν από τους Σλάβους στη λατρεία τους.

(Ill. 1) The Metropolitan Serafim of Bosnia became known in the field of Orthodox music history according to the so-called Yale fragment, discovered by Prof. Miloš Velimirović at the library of Yale University in 1964 [1] (precisely 50 years ago). The importance of this discovery threw a new light on

the Graeco-Slavic contacts in the development of Balkan Orthodox music and revealed new paths of their investigation in terms of both music and musicians or people involved in music.

The main part of the fragment (eleven sheets of paper) contains thirteen chants in mode 1 for Saturday Vespers [2]. The text is written in Slavic with Greek letters, that is, a kind of Greek phonetic transliteration. The notation is late-Byzantine of the second half of the 18th century. There is a rubric in Greek at the beginning (f. 1r) revealing the contents that reads (ill. 2): "With Holy God – Anastasimatarion, which was set to music in the Slavic dialect by the most learned musician, kyr Petros Lambadarios of Peloponnese, according to the order of the old Anastasimatarion, at the request of the Very Reverend and Holy Metropolitan of Bosnia, kyr Serafim, for the use of the Slavs and for the memory of his soul" [3].

In the present contribution I shall present unknown or not sufficiently known materials related to Serafim of Bosnia. As Miloš Velimirović pointed out, very little is known about this interesting and distinguished person. The focus of my study is a musical manuscript from the library of Rila monastery under the signature 6/59, which contains two inscriptions with the name of the Metropolitan Serafim (ill. 3). Rila monastery is located in the southwestern part of Bulgaria. It is the biggest monastery in Bulgaria and one of the biggest monasteries on the Balkans. It has very rich library. The musical manuscripts preserved in it from the 18th and 19th centuries only are more than 100.

The manuscript 6/59 originates from the 18th century. It is of the Akolouthiai-Anthology type. This type, as is already well known, was compiled at the end of the 13th and the very beginning of the 14th century according to the revised "mixed" Jerusalem Typikon. For the first time chants for Vespers, the Orthros, and the three liturgies were included in it. The manuscript 6/59 is written in Greek in late-Byzantine notation. The two inscriptions in which the name of Serafim of Bosnia is read are in Slavic and seemingly written by him. They are dated. The inscription with the earlier year is written on the second to last folio. It reads: "1779 March 30. I, the sinful metropolitan Serafim of Bosnia bought the whole chant book" [4]. The other inscription is on the inside of the front cover. We read: "This chant book belongs to the metropolitan Serafim of Bosnia who is now in Rila monastery: 1781" [5] (ill. 4).

Who was Serafim and what do we know about him? Miloš Velimirović stressed that his personality is "a mystery as to whether he was a Greek, a Serb, or a Bulgarian" [6]. According to some Serbian sources, the name of Serafim referred to as Metropolitan of Bosnia is attested for the first time in 1766, the year when the Patriarchate of Serbia was abolished and the Serbian church became a domain of the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate. Serafim's name appears in a petition according to which the Serbian bishops "requested" the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate to annex the domain of the Serbian (Pech) Patriarchate. The appearance of Serafim's name in such a document gave reasons to Serbian historians to conclude that Serafim was not a Serb [7]. Velimirović argued that Serafim was not a Greek: if he had been a Greek, according to him, he would have favored the use of the Greek language. Serafim's request for creating chants in Slavic does not support his Greek origin.

According to some Bulgarian sources, Serafim was Bulgarian, born in the town of Razlog or Bansko in southwestern Bulgaria [8]. Hieromonk Hierotej of Rila, Serafim's contemporary, gave evidence about him in an inscription found written in the margin of the pages of an Oktoechos printed in 1715 in Moscow [9]. The evidence goes back to the year 1753 when the monk Serapion was elected abbot of Rila monastery. Serapion served four years as abbot. In 1757 Pech's Patriarch Cyril visited Rila monastery. He proclaimed Serapion a prelate. Serapion was sent to the Stip eparchy, which had a temporary seat of the metropolitan in the town of Kujstendil. After that Serapion was appointed metropolitan of the Dabrobosnia eparchy, which had its seat in the town of Bosnia. He was renamed Serafim. According to some documents, Serapion-Serafim remained in this appointment 6 years – from 1766 until 1772 [10]. After that he went to Rila monastery spending the rest of his life devoted to literary work. It is not known when exactly Serafim settled at the monastery. An inscription left by him on f. 16v in the MS *Paraklis of St. John of Rila* shows that in 1770 Serafim was at the monastery. We read (ill. 5): "...I, the humble Metropolitan Serafim of Dabrobosnia copied this book from the old ones in 1770, September 7" [11]. It is assumed that Serafim died at Rila monastery about 1800. Hence, he must have been born at latest about 1720. As it can be seen by the inscriptions, Serafim has always signed himself as a Metropolitan of Bosnia, even in later ones when he was already in Rila monastery.

Serafim sent his request for Slavic chants to Petros Lambadarios of Peloponnese (d. 1777 or 1778), as the Yale fragment evidences. It is not by chance. Petros was his famous contemporary, one of the most distinguished musicians during the second half of the 18th century. He was a composer, theorist, singer at the Great Church in Constantinople, and teacher in the second music school, which was founded by the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate in 1776 [12]. His activity outlines a new era in the development of Balkan Orthodox music. The manuscripts from his time compared to those from prior to 1770 display differences in codicological, palaeographical, and musical aspects. I take as a provisional dividing year 1770 because at that time the activity of Petros Lambadarios and of the other musicians of his circle had already been widespread. I shall point out quite briefly some changes in the musical repertory, which are related to the aim of this study.

The investigation of musical manuscripts up to 1770 reveals several layers of repertory [13]: *firstly*, a traditional one [14], which contains anonymous chants with designations showing different musical traditions: "old" and "new", "urban" and "monastic", "soloistic" and "choral", etc.; *secondly*, an old-composed layer with pieces from the 14th- and 15th-century composers such as John Koukouzelis, John Glykis, Ksenos Koronis, John Lampadarios Kladas, Manuel Hrysaphis, etc.; and *thirdly*, a newly-composed first layer with pieces from the 17th- and 18th-century composers (up to 1770) such as Hrysaphis the New, Balasios Hiereos, Petros Bereketos, German of New Patras, Kosma the Macedonian, etc. Since 1770 one more (fourth), a newly composed second layer appeared. It contains first of all works by Petros Lambadarios, Petros Byzantios, Jakovos Protopsaltis and many others from the generation of the last quarter of the 18th and the very beginning of the 19th century. These composers developed further the trends of Balkan Orthodox music laid out by the former generation of composers from the second half of the 17th century up to 1770. They established as a basic compositional procedure the "exegesis", that is, the interpretation of the chants by means of using a more analytical notation when writing them in manuscripts [15]. Unlike the former generation of composers who applied this procedure only to some chants like trisagion nekrosimon, Petros Lambadarios and his contemporaries applied it to the whole chant repertory.

The musical anthology with the cited inscriptions of Serafim represents an exquisitely written manuscript in a small pocket size. According to its palaeographical characteristics, the manuscript must have been written before 1770. It contains 288 folios of a repertory in Greek of the abovementioned layers up to 1770. It starts with the Preliminary psalm 103 *Ανοιξαντος* in mode pl. 4 for the Great Vespers. There is a rubric, which says that it was composed "by different writers, old and new" but there are neither names, nor any other designations. Maybe the composers of these chants became so popular that there was no need for their names to be written down. My investigation of the chants revealed that they are works of the composers from the 14th and 15th centuries: John Koukouzelis, John Lampadarios Kladas, Ksenos Koronis, Manuel Hrysaphis, and so on. After the Preliminary Psalm follows the evening psalm 140:1,2 *Kúrie ékékraca* designated as "megálon kekragáron" performed on Saturday Vespers as well (12r); it is given in eight modes; then follow theotokia dogmatika for the same service and pasapnoaria (ps. 150:6,1) also in eight modes for Sunday Orthros (21r). After them are written chants of the Akathistos service for the Holy Theotokos performed on Saturday Orthros during the fifth week of Lent in mode pl. 4 (41r): the resurrection morning troparion *Qeòj Kúrioj*, the troparion *Tò prostaxqèn mustikój* and the prooemium of the kontakion *Th uẏpermaxw strathgw̃*. The latter is designated as "Poïma árxaïon yálleth dé dúxoron" ("work old, sung by the two choirs"). Then follow chants for the Orthros of the Holy Week in mode pl. 4: *Allhloúia – Idoù oẏ numfioj – ÝOte oiẏ èndocoi* (44r). They are succeeded by the following chants: the melismatic versions of pasapnoaria by different composers in different modes performed at the Orthros before the Gospel (46v), the eleven morning Gospel stichera with the traditional rubric that ascribes them to the Emperor Leo VI the Wise, "melisténta" by John Glykis Protopsaltis (59r), a doxology by different authors (77r), trisagion for the Holy Cross by Manuel Hrysaphis in mode 4 (98v) and trisagion nekrosimon designated as "èchghton" in the same mode 4 (99v). The author or the interpreter of this trisagion is not given. My investigation identified it with the work of Balasios Hiereos from the second half of the 17th century. In some manuscripts (for instance, Rila 6/19 from 1731, f. 248v) is said that Balasios has interpreted his trisagion according to this one sung in Athens and known under the designation "Aqhnaion". The Trisagion is followed by two chants of the special

prelate service in mode baris/plagios 3d: *Tòn despóthn* designated "árxañon" and *ʿAnwqen* by John Koukouzelis designated "éntexnón" (102r-v). After them are included polychronia or wishes for a long life (105r) followed by chants for the three liturgies: of St. John Chrysostom with cherouvika and koininika by different composers, of St. Basil the Great and of the Presanctified Gifts (110r-214v). After them is written down the sticheron *Anastásewj h̄méra* in mode 1 (214v). Again, the composer is not given. I identified it with Manuel Hrysaphis of the 15th century. After this chant are included kalophonikoi hirmoi by "kùr Pétrou Glukú Melòdi", that is, Petros Bereketos of the second half of the 17th century designated "panugurikoi" (231v). The manuscript ends with some chants that are written by another hand: the resurrection troparia, called "evlogitaria" in mode plagios 1, performed on Sunday Orthros (279v) and two cherouvika songs. The first one is in mode 1 by Petros Byzantios (284r) and the second one is in mode plagios 1. It is in Slavic. There is a rubric in the beginning written in Greek. It reads (286r): "poïma kùr dionusiou ieromonáxou toũ èk belestínou" ("a work by kyr hieromonk Dionisij of Veles").

Petros Byzantios, to whom the first cherouvikon is ascribed, is a composer from the generation of Petros Lambadarios, that is, he belongs to a generation later than the one whose works are included in the main part of the Anthology presented. Thus, the "other hand", which has written the last three pieces, is later than the one in which the main text is written. The last three pieces are written as an addition. They are written in the same exquisite manner as the basic part of the manuscript. The two cherouvika songs – by Petros Byzantios and Dionisij of Veles – are written outside of the main cherouvikon repertory included in the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom. The cherouvika in the Liturgy are by authors from the second half of the 17th and 18th centuries up to 1770: German of New Patras, Balasios Hiereos, Hrysaphis the New, and others. The question is raised: where were the two cherouvika songs at the end of the manuscript written down – in Rila monastery when the manuscript had already been purchased by the Metropolitan Serafim, that is, after 1779, or before that time?

Observing once again the authors of the two cherouvika songs, I would say this. Petros Byzantios is one of the most famous musicians of the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century. His popularity is comparable to that of Petros Lambadarios. About Dionisij, however, we know nothing: up to now his name has not been encountered in any other musical manuscript. The rubric cited above refers to him as a hieromonk. That shows that he held a high rank. Judging by the cherouvikon, he must have been a contemporary of Serafim. It is possible that they knew each other. They worked in neighboring places: the towns of Stip and Veles. Only one Dionisij with a high rank from the second half of the 18th century is revealed [16]. He was a bishop and prepared a Graeco-Slavic Dictionary in town of Veles [17]. The Dictionary has the following title: "This Dictionary was written by my hand, a humble prelate and the former metropolitan of the town of Stip, Dionisij of Byzantium. Greek and Slavic, 1803" [18]. Dionisij was the metropolitan in the town of Stip until 1788 [19]. The nickname "Byzantium" here might be synonym of "Orthodox", that is, in the service of the Orthodox Church. It is a question for now of whether Dionisij of Veles and Dionisij of Byzantium is one and the same person [20].

(III. 6) The cherouvikon in Slavic in the Rila manuscript included is of the ordinary kind of cherouvika songs sung in the liturgy during the Great Entrance when the Holy Gifts entered the altar. Both parts of it are written down: *Иже херувими – Яко да царя* (*That who mystically – That we may raise on high the King of all*). There is an *Alleluia* at the end. There is also a *terirem*, a passage with meaningless syllables sung to cover a certain liturgical time at the beginning of the Great Entrance. It is inserted after the words *Яко да царя* as was the practice of the late-Byzantine time from the 14th and 15th centuries onwards [21]. The melodical phrases are comparatively short and most of them end on *d*, one of the basic tones of mode plagios 1. The melody moves between this tone and *f*, the other basic tone of mode plagios 1 [22]. The phrases are composed of a limited number of formulas intoned in the range of seventh. Only in the *terirem* does their range reach an octave. The melody of the cherouvikon is a simple one. To my knowledge the cherouvikon of Dionisij is the only notated cherouvikon in Slavic among the entire cherouvikon repertory composed during the time of the second half of the 17th and the beginning of the 19th century (up to the establishment of the *New Method* after 1814): all of the cherouvika of that time are written in Greek in the known Slavic and bilingual Graeco-Slavic manuscripts from Rila and Hilandar monasteries [23].

The chants in Slavic appeared systematically notated in musical manuscripts after the Metropolitan Serafim's appeal to Petros Lambadarios. Miloš Velimirović suggested that the Yale fragment was written about 1770 [24]. According to the cited inscription in the manuscript *Paraklis of St John of Rila*, Serafim was at Rila monastery in September of the same year. Did he send his appeal to Petros Lambadarios from there? The handwriting of the last three pieces in manuscript Rila 6/59 resembles very much the one in manuscripts written with certainty in Rila monastery by the end of the 18th and/or the very beginning of the 19th century: the bilingual Graeco-Slavic Anthology Rila 5/78 and the Slavic Hirmologion 1268 of the National library "Sts. Cyril and Methodius" in Sofia (ill. 7). We should keep in mind that there was a close relationship between the town of Veles and Rila monastery: the latter founded a school in Veles [25] (ill. 8).

In conclusion, I would like to stress that the musical Anthology of the Metropolitan Serafim of Bosnia is one more proof about the great role that he played in the process of adopting the new Church Slavonic language for the Balkans to the musical repertory of the second half of the 18th century. It is not by chance that a piece in Slavic was included in his book. Hence, the cherouvikon in Slavic might have been inserted after manuscript 6/59 was purchased by Serafim and recorded in Rila monastery. The question of who wrote it, Serafim himself or another monk of Rila monastery, remains open for now. What is sure is that Serafim's appeal for creating a repertory in Slavic was heard. Pieces in Slavic written in late-Byzantine notation for most of Vespers, the Orthros, and the three liturgies appeared in manuscripts originating from monasteries on Mount Athos like Hilandar, Xenophontos and Dionisiat and the Bulgarian lands [26]. Some of them are linked with the names of Hieromonk Makarij of Hilandar and Hieromonk Joasaph proabbot of Rila. The name of Dionisij of Veles now has to be added to them. No doubt these pieces were performed in the churches, or, applying the words of the Metropolitan Serafim in his message to Petros Lambadarios, they were used by the Slavs in their worship. (Ill. 9) All this outlines one more clue about the close contacts between Slavs and Greeks on the Balkans in psaltic art.

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- [4] "1779=марта м[есе]ца 30. купихъ сию ѱалтикиицу азъ грешный митрополить Босан[с]ки Серафимъ".
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- [17] The Dictionary is preserved now in a manuscript from the National library "Sts. Cyril and Methodius" in Sofia.
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- [22] For the basic tones of the Byzantine music see: C. Floros. *Einführung in die Neumenkunde*. Heinrichshofen, 1980, p. 70.
- [23] It is also true about the cherouvikon repertory of the previous age – from the 14th century onwards. Only a neumated incipit in Slavic of this chant is known according to MS Athens 928, a bilingual Anthology from the end of the 15th century. The Slavic incipit is neumated on f. 93r. It is written on the right margin of the cherouvikon in Greek in mode 2. See: Д. Стефанович. *Стара српска музика*, 2 тома. Београд, 1974, т. 1, с. 67-75; т. 2, с. III.
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- [25] В. Кънчов. "Сегашното и недавното минало на град Велес". – В: *Избрани произведения*, т. II. София, 1970, с. 226.
- [26] Manuscripts in Slavic notated in late Byzantine notation are not known to originate from the Serbian lands of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century except the ones from the Hilandar monastery. See: Д. Петрович. *Осмогласник у музичкој традицији јужних словена*. Београд, 1982.

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