

THE GLAGOLITIC MSS IN THE BODLEY LIBRARY

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The purchase of the Canonici MSS by the Bodley Library in 1817 was one of the largest single purchases ever made by that library. The collection consists of 3,550 MSS and costing in all just over £ 6,000 — a little less than £ 2. per MS. This seems ludicrous today but at the time there was no great demand and Canonici's executors had had difficulty in finding a buyer.

We probably owe the existence of the collection in the first place to the successive suppression and persecution of the Order of Jesuits (to which Canonici belonged) that eventually forced Canonici to retire to his native Venice from more opulent Parma and to study history which required MSS. Left to his own taste he might well have pursued paintings instead. It is known that Canonici travelled every year in pursuit of books and MSS in Italy. His methods of acquiring them, often »borrowing« them, are well known. The bulk of the MSS are Greek, Latin and Italian, there are a few Hebrew, Turkisch, Arabic and Tamil. The Slavonic MSS are eight, five Glagolitic and three Cyrillic.

The existence of these MSS has been generally known to Slavonic scholars since Uspenski noted them in an article in 1878 in the *Ž. M. N. P.* Morfill, Jagić, Vajs and Syrku had all either actually worked on them or at least referred to them before 1915.¹ Between the wars nobody seems to have studied them; interest was not renewed until 1952 when Štefanić noted them *en passant* in a review published in *Slovo* of Vajs-work on the oldest Glagolitic missal. The

¹ Morfill's letter to V. Jagić published in *Hrvatska glagoljska bibliografija*, *Starine* 33, Zagreb 1911, p. XIII.

Also, J. Vajs, *Hlaholské kodeksy v Bodlejaně v Oksfordě*. Čas. kat. duch. Prague 1915; П. А. Сырку, *Заметки о славянских и русских рукописях в Bodleian Library в Оксфорде, С-Петербур* 1907.

following years Marin Tadin gave a fairly full description and dating in two articles in Nos. 4 & 5 of the Oxford Slavonic papers.² Despite their shortcomings, these articles are the fullest description so far of the MSS. But as Professor Hamm indicated in his review of Tadin's article in No. 3 of *Slovo* (1953) there are still points to be decided and details to be filled in. In particular he noted the date at the end of MS 172, namely 1310, which Tadin takes as genuine, but which Vajs had long since dismissed as a late edition. Plate 1 reproduces this disputed date. Both the colour of the ink and the hand — uneven and elongated — is not of a piece with the rest because the MS is beautifully neat and keeping within the lines. Also whereas the red ochre in the rest of the MS is clearly red and really applied to the initials, this is a dull red as if a cheap later imitation which has been smudged into the bargain. Another characteristic of this MS passed over by Tadin and fairly usual for Glagolitic MSS in the use of non Glagolitic initials where they are decorated. This is the case of the 'A' of Anselam on Folio 276r where obviously the 'A' could be either Latin or Cyrillic, but there is the odd Cyrillic as well. The insertion of *умислиш* on Folio 244r clearly has a Cyrillic 'y'. The problem remains what is the date of this Breviary, the 14th Century to judge by the parchment and alignment of the script but probably, as Vajs says, the end of the 14th Century.

The microfilm of this MS and the two other liturgical MSS 349 and 373 are in the National and University Library in Zagreb.

MS 349 is a missal. The first folio recto has the proper for St. Florian which is added in a different, untidy and probably later hand because the rest is much more even.

MS 373 is also a missal. It is the largest and most beautiful of the five MSS, both missals have been dated the 15th Century and according to the slight comparison I was able to make with the texts of the exhibition in the Academy of Zagreb on the occasion of the Glagolitic Symposium, this seems likely on palaeographical grounds. Again on Folio 84r we see an initial which only vaguely recalls the Glagolitic 'O' and is nearer the Cyrillic.

The remaining two MSS, those that 'probably' belonged to Canonici, are non liturgical and again have been dated the 15th Century. The beginning of MS 414 is well known to Yugoslav scholars from

² M. Tadin, *Glagolitic Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, Oxford Slavonic Papers, vol. IV (1953) p. 151—158; vol. V (1954), p. 134—144.*

the transcription published in *Radovi* in 1967 by Hercigonja.³ This covers the first four folia only. The rest are sermons and edifying stories. There is a sure date, 1480, given in the text and Tadin says he can decipher 1448 on the first page; I must confess I looked very hard and could not see any further than the sign for 1,000. Is it the middle or the end of the 15th Century that we should take as the date?

Finally MS 412 which is the confessional of St. Anthony. There are at least three scribes unless Michal changed his style very often. Since this is obviously a popular text (there were three MSS of this title in the Zagreb exhibition alone) and obviously a text much used by the clergy, it is possible that we should take the date 1486 which occurs in the colophon in the middle of folio 158 to be the starting point, for a number of hands.

If it is true that four of our Glagolitic MSS out of the five are 15th Century MSS they illustrate the enormous variety of palaeographical styles. In particular Eckhardt's palaeographical analysis⁴ applies interestingly. We are concerned at this period only with four and five lined types — according to this the MSS 373 and 414 are five lined as is also the 14th Century MS 172, while 349 and 412 are of the four lined type. Neither dating nor provenance can be established surely on palaeographical grounds alone. But probably each one represents a geographically distinct tradition which coincides with the general picture of the Glagolitic tradition, a tradition carried on in Centres, not very far apart always but often separated by terrain or political frontiers.

³ E. Hercigonja, Glagoljska verzija pune redakcije Pavlove apokalipse iz Oksfordskog kodeksa Ms Can. lit. 414, *Radovi Staroslavenskog instituta*, knj. 6, Zagreb 1967.

⁴ T. Eckhardt, *Napomene o grafičkoj strukturi glagoljice*, *Radovi Staroslavenskog instituta*, knj. 2, Zagreb 1955.

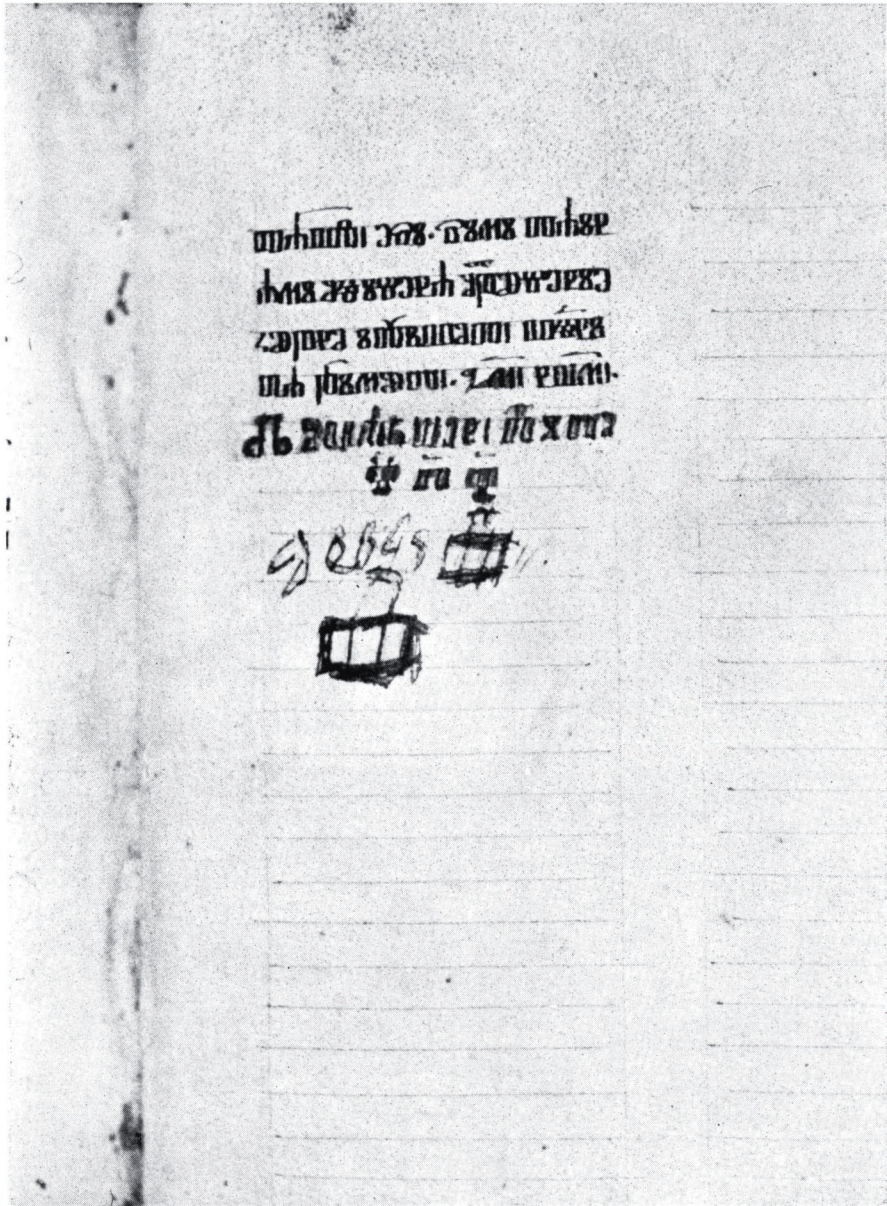


Plate 1
Ms. Canon. lit. 172, f. 409r