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THE NUMBERING OF THE JOHANNINE SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS IN EARLY GREEK AND SLAVONIC GOSPEL LECTIONARIES

Introduction

It has been noted by scholars working on the lectionary text¹ that there appears to have been two systems of numbering the Sundays between Pascha and Pentecost in the Greek gospel lectionaries, but the causes of this phenomenon have not so far been investigated. Differences between MSS can often prove helpful in grouping related codices together and it is therefore important to understand as fully as possible the factors which could have caused any differences which we may have observed, so that we do not count as significant some community in error that is in fact due to mistakes made quite independently.

It is the purpose of this paper to review the evidence from the various types of Greek lectionaries and to show how the two systems came about, after which the situation in Slavonic lectionaries will be discussed. Before this can be satisfactorily carried out, however, it is necessary to outline the earlier history of the festivals we now call Sunday, Easter and Whitsun, together with the related festival of Mid-Pentecost, because even though the Greek lectionary MSS containing the Byzantine lection system probably developed from very simple archetypes no earlier than the VI century, probably during the reign of Justinian,² the origin of the system of numbering the days and the weeks can be traced back to the Jewish customs.

THE FESTIVALS OF THE EARLY CHURCH

The New Testament itself shows that the first Christians worshipped in the synagogue (being, indeed, in the time of Paul considered a Jewish sect,³ and must therefore have celebrated the Jewish festivals. This means they attended the synagogue on the Sabbath and celebrated the Passover and the Pentecost (that

¹ H. M. Buck, Jr. *The Johannine Lessons in the Greek Gospel Lectionary*, Studies in the Lectionary Text of the Greek New Testament, Volume II, No. 4, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois, 1958, pp. 5–6. Owing to the fact that an original Greek Ν (-50) came to be written Η, which looked like the original Greek Η (-8), Dr Buck thought the lectionaries said Saturday the eighth and Sunday the eighth, when they were actually intending to say Saturday of Pentecost and Sunday of Pentecost, respectively. A very few early lectionaries do actually intend to say Sunday the eighth (usually as well as Pentecost).

² Y. Burns. *The significance of the Jassy Greek Gospel Lectionary and other / sel MSS in the development of the Byzantine lectionaries*, *Revue des études sud-est-européennes*, Bucharest, 1976.

³ Acts XXIV, 5, 11–12, 17–18.

is to say, fifty days) of harvest which commenced on the following first day of the week, as well as the Feast of Unleavened Bread⁴ that preceded Passover. These festivals were centred upon the Spring equinox, but the Autumn equinox also had its own festival, the Feast of Tabernacles.⁵ Since this was a dedication festival, it must have fallen into desuetude for Jews and Christians alike after the destruction of the Temple in 70 A. D., but it was revived by the Emperor Constantine in the IV century on the occasion of the dedication of the Holy Sepulchre Church which he had had built in Jerusalem. The actual dedication ceremony was described by Eusebius⁶ and Sozomeno⁷, while Egeria formerly called Sylvia and then Aetheria⁸, making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 385 A. D., described an eight-day festival commemorating it. This festival has become combined with that of the Elevation of the Cross, which commemorates the finding of the Holy Cross by the Empress Helena (mother of Constantine) and the showing of it to the assembly at the original dedication ceremony. The Jewish feast had been held at the full moon of the Autumn equinox, and it was approximately at the same time that the Christian feast was held in Palestine, 23th September, when the Armenian lectionary was written.⁹

The other Jewish festivals, however, continued to be celebrated without any break.

1. 1 The Lord's day

Returning now to apostolic times, it is known that the first Christians met together on the first day of the week for instruction and worship¹⁰ and the breaking of bread.¹¹ The Lord's Day, as it came to be called (and is called in the lectionaries), was thus added to the keeping of the Sabbath. The first recorded use of the term "Lord's Day" is to be found in the book of the Revelation of John, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. . ."¹² Although in this context it is considered probable that it refers to the annual Lord's Day (Easter, the day of Resurrection)¹³, nevertheless, in the Apocryphal Acts of John¹⁴ (written not later than about 150 A. D.) we read of a sermon preached by John on the Lord's Day and followed by the Eucharist.¹⁵ The Apocryphal Acts of Peter¹⁶ also mentions the Lord's Day as the time when Peter had to minister to the widows with his own hands. In fact, by the third century, Origen, a native of Alexandria living in Caesarea in Palestine, says, "The Resurrection of the Lord is not celebrated merely once for all in the year, but also always every eighth day."¹⁷ This idea is most certainly expressed in the Greek lectionaries by the

⁴ Acts XX, 6, 16.

⁵ Jesus' participation in this feast is described in John VII, 2—53.

⁶ Eusebius. Life of Constantine IV, 43—47.

⁷ Sozomeno. Ecclesiastical History II, 25.

⁸ Peregrinatio Aetheriae XLVIII, SC XXI, 265; J. Wilkinson, Egeria's Travels London, 1971.

⁹ F. C. Conybeare. Rituale Armenorum. Oxford, 1905, p. 507.

¹⁰ C. W. Dugmore. The Influence of the Synagogue upon the Divine Office. Alcuin Club Collections. No. XLV, London, 1964, p. 26.

¹¹ Acts XX, 7; I Cor. XVI, 2.

¹² Rev. I, 10.

¹³ J. van Goudoever. Biblical Calendars. Leiden, 1959, p. 167.

¹⁴ M. R. James. The Apocryphal New Testament. Oxford, 1924, p. 266.

¹⁵ C. W. Dugmore. Op. cit., p. 26.

¹⁶ M. R. James. Op. cit., p. 329.

¹⁷ Origen. Homily on Isaiah. V. 2.

use of the Resurrection lections, eleven of them, at consecutive Sunday morning services.

It had been the symbolism of seven representing completeness that gave rise to the Jewish custom of counting the days in sevens which we have inherited, and this, in turn, developed into the concept that it was even more complete to add the eighth day, which was at the same time the last day of one week and the first day of the next.

Origen's words show quite clearly, already in the third century, not only the importance of the Lord's Day as a weekly commemoration of the Resurrection, but also the concept of it being both the eighth and the first day. We shall meet this again in § 2 when we look at the rubrics of one of the earliest complete lectionaries (*f* 563 of the VIII century),¹⁸ where we shall find the causes of the two systems of numeration of the Johannine Sundays.

1. 2 Passover and Pascha

The Jewish Passover was celebrated at the time of the full moon of the Spring equinox,¹⁹ and commemorated the angel's passing over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt, when first born of each Egyptian family was slain.²⁰ The Jewish rite consisted of each family killing a firstling lamb and touching the lintel and doorposts of the house with a bunch of hyssop dipped in the blood that had drained from the lamb.²¹ In essence it represents a sacrifice of the lamb so that the children shall be preserved, the same concept being expressed in the story of Abraham and Isaac.²² It can be seen that to Paul Jesus represented the firstling lamb, slaughtered so that the rest of mankind should be redeemed,²³ and this aspect was brought out in John's gospel, the crucifixion taking place after mid-day on 14 Nisan, the day before Passover.²⁴ This was the time the Jews killed the Passover lamb. There is also a parallel in the departure from the custom of breaking the bones of the crucified, since the Passover lamb had to have no bones broken.²⁵

To the writers of the synoptic gospels, however, Jesus ate the Passover meal with his disciples, spent the night watching and praying on the Mount of Olives (Luke) or Gethsemane (Mark and Matthew), and was crucified on 15 Nisan.²⁶

It is perhaps possible that the varying accounts given in the four gospels not only on this point, but also concerning the chronology of the Ascension, are the reflection of a development of specifically Christian festivals during the first century itself. In any case, they certainly resulted in different customs being followed in different parts of the world. Eusebius²⁷ states that in the second century the churches in Asia were celebrating the Passover at the same time as the Jews on 14 Nisan, on whichever day of the week it fell, while in the West the Church celebrated the Sunday of Easter.

¹⁸ Y. B u r n s. Chapter Numbers in Greek and Slavonic Gospel Codices. New Testament Studies. Cambridge, (in the press). An asterisk is used after the Gregory-Aland number when referring to lectionaries containing chapter numbers.

¹⁹ E x o d u s XII, 2—6.

²⁰ E x o d u s XII, 26—27.

²¹ E x o d u s XII, 22.

²² G e n e s i s XXII, 1—14.

²³ I C o r. V, 7—8.

²⁴ J o h n XIX, 14.

²⁵ E x o d u s XII, 46; J o h n XIX, 36.

²⁶ M a t. XXVI, 18, 30; M k. XIV, 12, 16, 17, 26; L u k e XXII, 7, 8, 13, 14, 39.

²⁷ E u s e b i u s. Ecclesiastical History. V, XXIV.

Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, who was said to have heard John himself speak,²⁸ went to Rome to discuss the matter with Anicetus, bishop of Rome. Polycarp rested upon the authority of John, while Anicetus quoted his predecessors, who seem to have instituted this festival during the first half of the second century. These bishops agreed to differ on this matter, but such was not the case when differences arose later between the bishops in Asia and Victor, bishop of Rome.²⁹ Ireaneus, bishop of Lyons, urged conciliation, but from that time onwards efforts were made to persuade the quartodecimans to conform. This was not completely successful until the Council of Nicaea in 325 A. D. Certainly the universality in the Greek-speaking Church of the lection system of the synaxarion (which depends entirely upon the central point of Easter Sunday in the ecclesiastical year) could not have come about until this question had been solved.

The original Jewish idea of Passover, which was translated Pascha in Greek, referring to the sacrifice on 14 Nisan, gradually gave way to the use of the word Pascha for the Sunday of Resurrection.³⁰ In the Armenian lectionary Maundy Thursday is called "Old Zatik." (i.e. "Old Pascha")³¹, but Pascha is used for Easter Sunday in the Georgian lectionary³² and in the Greek lectionaries.

1. 3 Pentecost

The Jewish Feast of Weeks³³ was at the end of seven weeks commencing from the day the sickle was first put to the corn. There were varying customs amongst the Jews and the Samaritans as to the day on which this was to be carried out.³⁴ Some groups interpreted the scriptures as meaning the first day of the week, so that seven full weeks were included, the final day thus being the first day of the week also.³⁵ On the first and the last day of the seven weeks there was a ceremonial waving, the first being the first sheaf and the last being two loaves. The total number of days being fifty, the festival came to be called Pentecost.

The seven weeks of Pentecost correspond to the seven days of the week, while the fiftieth day corresponds to the completion of the week by including in it the eighth day. Thus a Pentecost of fifty days comprises eight Sundays. We shall see in §2 that *l* 563³⁶, and most of the lectionaries between the VIII and the X centuries, adhere to this system of numbering the Sundays between Easter and Whitsun from one to eight, even though the numbers are not usually written down for the first and the last, nor even for the second, as a general rule.

The earliest specific reference³⁷ to the Christian celebration of the period of the fifty days of Pentecost as a joyful season (because of the Resurrection) as opposed to the Jewish observance of this period as a time of restriction³⁸ oc-

²⁸ Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History., V, XX.

²⁹ Ibid., Ecclesiastical History. V, XXIII—XXV.

³⁰ J. W. Tyrer. Historical Survey of Holy Week. — Alcuin Club Collections, No. XXIX, Oxford University Press, 1932, p. 14—30.

³¹ F. C. Conybeare. Op. cit.

³² M. Tarchnischvili. Le Grand Lectionnaire de l'Eglise de Jérusalem I.—Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, vol. 189, Scriptorum Iberici, tomus 10, Louvain, 1959.

³³ Deuteronomy. XVI, 9.

³⁴ J. van Goudoever. Op. cit., p. 3, 15—29.

³⁵ Leviticus XXIII, 15—16.

³⁶ Kurt Aland, Kurzgefasste Liste der Griechischen Handschriften des Neuen Testaments, Berlin, 1963. This List reprints and continues the system of numbering used by C. R. Gregory for Greek New Testament MSS. The numbers given to lectionaries are prefixed by *l*.

³⁷ J. van Goudoever. Op. cit., p. 182.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 183.

curs in the Apocryphal Acts of Paul,³⁹ written about 180 A. D. This says, "While Paul was in prison, the brethren, since it was Pentecost, wept not neither did they bow the knee, but stood and prayed, rejoicing." In addition, a portion preserved from an otherwise lost book by Irenaeus refers to "the Pentecost in which we do not bend our knees, because it has the same value as the Lord's Day. The custom started in apostolic times."⁴⁰

Tertullian also confirmed that it was considered just as unlawful to fast or kneel in worship from Easter to Pentecost as it was on the Lord's Day.⁴¹ At another time he stated that "the period between Easter and Pentecost Day is one long festal day, fifty days of pure exultation"⁴².

This period is also referred to as a joyful one⁴³ by Origen⁴⁴, Epiphanius⁴⁵, Basil the Great⁴⁶, the Coptic lectionary⁴⁷, the Gregorian kanonarion⁴⁸, the Apostolic Constitution⁴⁹ and the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus.⁵⁰

Dr van Goudoever⁵¹ has pointed out that this tradition of fifty days of joy seems to have been replaced by emphasis on the fiftieth in a similar way to the tradition that grew up in the Jewish liturgical year during the second or third century A. D. of celebrating the giving of the Law to Moses on the fiftieth day. The first reference to it is in Origen, but this day gained in importance from his time onwards.

The choice of lections for this period in the Byzantine gospel lectionaries is consistent with a new system replacing or superimposed upon an earlier tradition,⁵² but the system of numbering the pericopae for the fifty days from one to fifty (which the present writer has discovered in four MSS) may be an echo of the earlier concept.

1. 4 Mid-Pentecost

The custom of attending the synagogue in the middle of a feast in time of Jesus is attested in John vii: 14, and J. van Goudoever⁵³ has shown that the festival Mid-Pentecost, which lasted from the fourth to the fifth Wednesday, inclusive, of the Pentecostal period, had the character of the giving of spiritual food, and, indeed, the falling of the manna was commemorated by the Samaritans at that period also. The same idea is to be found in many lectionaries, both in the East and in the West, but in addition a similar idea is to be found in the Syriac lectionary, the Jacobite, the Nestorian and the Roman liturgy at the time of Mid-Fast. Nevertheless, it is considered that the older of the two festivals is Mid-Pentecost, which Peter Chrysologus called a divine festival from the tra-

³⁹ M. R. James. Op. cit. p. 572.

⁴⁰ Fragment VII, Irenaei, ed. A. Stieren; Pseudo-Justin Martyr, *Questiones et Responsa ad Orthodoxos*, 115.

⁴¹ Tertullian, de Corona, III.

⁴² Tertullian, de Leuiuo, XIV; de Baptismo, XIX.

⁴³ J. van Goudoever. Op. cit., p. 184—185.

⁴⁴ Origen, Against Celsius, VIII, 22.

⁴⁵ Epiphanius, Expos. of Faith, XXII. *Patrologia Graeca* (Migne) XLII, 828A.

⁴⁶ Basil. On the Holy Spirit, XXVII, 66.

⁴⁷ Dictionary of Christian Antiquities. London, 1880, p. 960.

⁴⁸ Kluge-Baumstark. *Oriens Christianus* NS. VI, 224.

⁴⁹ Apostolic Constitutions V, XX.

⁵⁰ Hippolytus, *The Apostolic Tradition*, XXIX, 3. (Edition of G. Dix, 1937, p. 56).

⁵¹ J. van Goudoever. Op. cit., pp. 184—185.

⁵² Y. Burns. Op. cit. (Jassy).

⁵³ / 563*, / 514*, / 519 and continuous text codex 461 (835 AD) in rubrics.

⁵⁴ Op. cit., p. 130—138.

dition of the Apostolic Fathers.⁵⁴ The use of the pericopae John vii: 14—30 and John vi: 5—14 in the Byzantine lectionaries for the fourth and fifth Wednesdays, respectively, seem, therefore, to have been the result of ancient custom. Indeed, the latter pericope breaks the *Bahnlesung*⁵⁵ of Johannine weekdays, showing prior choice. The fact that the lection for Mid-Pentecost itself does not break the *Bahnlesung*, although we know it to have been of ancient origin shows that the *Bahnlesung* was arranged to suit it. Although the Johannine *Bahnlesung* was not written down in the earliest Byzantine lectionary MSS,⁵⁶ it may well have continued, in general, an earlier tradition in which the *lectio continuo* was arranged to reach John vii: 14 at Mid-Pentecost. Certainly the present order of lections could not have arisen by chance.

1. 5 *The Festivals of the church at the time of origen*

This, then, completes the review of the way in which the early Christians adapted the Jewish festivals, maintaining the ancient custom of completing the week of seven days by the addition of the eighth and the group of seven weeks by the fiftieth day. This resulted in the celebration of an important Christian festival lasting for eight days and culminating in greater festivities on the eighth than on the intermediate six days, while the festal period of Pentecost was counted as eight Sundays, beginning with the Resurrection, the Lord's Day par excellence, and concluded by the eighth Sunday, which increasingly took on the nature of a festival in its own right. If it was the end of the fifty days of joy it was also the beginning of a new period of the year.

It is important to notice that Origen⁵⁷ specifically mentioned that the festivities celebrated in his times were the Day of the Lord, the Sabbath, the Passover and the Pentecost.

2. METHODS OF NUMBERING AND DESCRIBING THE SUNDAYS FROM EASTER TO PENTECOST

One system of numbering the Sundays from Easter to Pentecost is based on the ancient concept of eight Sundays, but a second system is also found in which the Sunday after Easter is considered to be the first and the Sunday before Pentecost is considered to be the sixth. These two systems are exemplified in the weekday lectionaries which the present writer has distinguished⁵⁸ and called the S type and the \varkappa type, respectively. The S type, the earlier of the two types, usually preserves the original numbering system, but the second system a characteristic of the \varkappa type that was probably devised in the X—XI centuries and was reproduced in considerable numbers from the XI century onwards. This characteristic is one of the ways in which the deviser of the \varkappa system rationalised the

⁵⁴ *Patrologia Latina* (Migne), LII, 440—441.

⁵⁵ Lections in *Bahnlesung* consist of pericopae read in the order in which they are found in a continuous text codex.

⁵⁶ Y. B u r n s. *Op. cit.* (Jassy).

⁵⁷ O r i g e n. *Against Celsius*. VIII, 22.

⁵⁸ Y. B u r n s. *The weekday lection system of Miroslav's Gospel*, *Zbornik Narodnog muzeja u Beogradu*, VI, Belgrade, 1970.

Y. B u r n s. *A comparative study of the weekday lection systems found in some Greek and early Slavonic weekday gospel lectionaries*, Doctoral thesis, University of London; *The Byzantine Weekday Lectionaries*. Accepted for publication, *New Testament Tools and Studies* (editor Bruce M. Metzger) E. T. Brill and Co., Leiden.

lectionary, since it brought the numbering of the Sundays of the Pentecostal period into line with the numbering of the Sundays of the rest of the year.

It is possible, therefore, that some Saturday-Sunday lectionaries of the XI century onwards may have been written in the same scriptoria as the *z* week-day lectionaries with the result that the same system of numbering may have been adopted for them also. This, however, is a field in which more research is needed, the Saturday-Sunday lectionaries having been investigated systematically only up to and including the X century (although some have been studied from later centuries).

The study of all the Byzantine lectionaries that has been carried out up to and including⁵⁹ the X century shows quite unmistakably, on the other hand, that the original method in the Byzantine system was to number the Sundays of Pentecost from one to eight, although not actually mentioning the number for Easter Sunday and often not mentioning it for the following Sunday either. The eighth Sunday is more often called Pentecost.

There is also a third method of distinguishing the Sundays of the Pentecostal period, that is to say, by the name of the pericope that is read on the Sunday in question, or in some cases the dedication for that day. There is evidence that this method was also of long standing, as can be seen below in 3.

The matter is straightforward enough when only one of these three systems is used in a given MS, but we may well ask ourselves how it came about that scribes were often inconsistent in their use of the systems. There are two answers to this problem. One is to be found in the development of the lectionaries from the primitive single-cycle MSS⁶⁰ containing only a few lections in the Pentecostal period to the lectionaries containing lections for little more than Sundays only, and on further to the Saturday-Sunday lectionaries. The other answer is to be found in the rubrics of the earliest Byzantine lectionaries extant, and especially in those of the VIII century *l* 563*. We will study the situation in the extant descendants of the most primitive Byzantine lectionaries first of all.

. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE JOHANNINE LECTIONS IN THE BYZANTINE LECTIONARIES

As a result of the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, changes came about in the ecclesiastical year of Byzantium and all the evidence points to the VI century and the reign of Justinian as the time when the first very simple lectionaries were written there containing the simplest form of the Byzantine lectionary.⁶¹ These were, unlike the later Byzantine lectionaries, written in a single cycle commencing with Easter Sunday and concluded by the recently introduced festival of the Annunciation. The festivals were named and no dates were

⁵⁹ With very few exceptions, thanks to the magnificent collection of Greek New Testament MSS on microfilm in the Institut für Neutestamentliche Textforschung, Wilhelms-Universität, Münster, Westphalia, to whose Director, Professor Kurt Aland, the writer is a greatly indebted.

⁶⁰ Y. Burns. The significance of the Jassy Greek Gospel Lectionary and other *l* sel MSS in the development of the Byzantine lectionaries, *Revue des études sud-est européennes*, Bucharest, 1976 (in the press).

⁶¹ *Ibid.* It must be born in mind that we are considering here the development of the Byzantine lectionary as a written document. It is not synonymous with the development of the Byzantine lection system as read in church or monastery, which must have read lections on days not mentioned in the simplest lectionaries, presumably using continuous text codices.

given. It seems to have been the custom to provide an index and to number the pericopae.

As only the chief festivals of the year were mentioned, the Pentecostal cycle was very simple, consisting at first of Easter Sunday, Ascension Day and Pentecost itself (as in *l* 35). Since the octave of a festival had from time immemorial been important, the Sunday after Easter was added (as in *l* 46*), then Mid-Pentecost (as in *l* 1044) and one or other day from the first week (as in *l* 46* and *l* 1044).

Eventually lectionaries were written with lections for each day of the octave of Easter Sunday, for each Sunday of the fifty days and also for Mid-Pentecost and Ascension Day. Two descendants of such lectionaries are *l* 1101 and *l* 123*, and both number the Sundays in the ancient manner. The former gives each Sunday except the first and last (which are only named) both a number and a name, but the latter gives the first two Sundays names only, the last two Sundays both numbers and names and the intermediate Sundays the less usual description of Sunday of the third week, Sunday of the fourth week, etc.

The most developed Pentecostal period in the single-cycle *l* sel MSS has the addition of a lection for Monday of the second week, and this is to be found in two MSS, *l* 142 and *l* 675. Both these MSS name the days, but do not number them. Since the Morrow of Antipascha has a lection which breaks the Johannine Bahnlesung it can be deduced that this lection was chosen before the remaining Johannine lections, which provides confirmation of the theory that these lectionaries are descendants of primitive forms. The custom of naming the Sundays therefore seems to have been of long standing.

There came a time when the festivals celebrated according to the solar calendar were rearranged into a separate cycle commencing with the Beginning of the Indication on 1st September. This was the beginning of the development of the Byzantine lectionaries as we know them. The new arrangement permitted the lectionary to extend beyond Pentecost and to conclude the first cycle by the pre-Eyaster lections. The period from Easter to Pentecost shows the same general development, however, as that described for the single-cycle MSS, except that one of them, *l* 1*, has gone further by adding lections for all the Saturdays.

Now when we study the Johannine Bahnlesung we find that it is consistent with most of the Saturdays being added at the same time as the weekdays. This is confirmed by the description "Saturday of the third week" (rather than "the third Saturday") in the early lectionaries. In the period after Pentecost, on the other hand, Saturdays were added to Sundays without weekdays and the word "week" was not introduced into the rubric.

It follows, then, that the Saturday lections in *l* 1* are not likely to have been added as a normal stage in the development of the lectionary MSS, but to have been interpolated during copying. It is not therefore surprising to find that the Saturdays are numbered in consistently, the second Saturday being called correctly "Saturday of the second week", but the third Saturday being called incorrectly "Saturday of the fourth week", by analogy with the following day, which is called "Sunday of the fourth week". It is also interesting to notice that this MS was written by the same hand, or at least in the same scriptorium as *l* 123*⁶², and they both contain the same unusual combination of rubrics for the Johannine Sundays.

⁶² Bibliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae, Codices Vaticani Graeci, Codices 1485—1683, Vatican, 1950, p. 67—70.

Y. BURNS. Op. cit. (Jassy).

The normal stage after the double-cycle *l sel* MSS containing lections for each day of the octave of Easter, for each Sunday of the fifty days, as well as Mid-Pentecost and Ascension Day, is to add the eve of Pentecost and then the remaining Sundays throughout the year, thus producing the “*l k*” lectionary. The extant codices of this type either count the Sundays from one to eight (as usual without giving the first and the last) or use the names only, without numbers.

This investigation of the early stages of the Byzantine lectionary, as found in later copies, shows that the ancient custom of counting the days and the Sundays from one to eight was preserved, unless the other Sundays were given special names by analogy with Easter, Antipascha and Pentecost.

4. THE EARLIEST EXTANT RUBRICS FOR JOHANNINE PERIOD

The earliest extant evidence for the Byzantine lection system⁶³ is a single leaf of the VII century from the Lucan period, so the earliest evidence of the Johannine period is found in the VIII century MSS. There are two continuous text codices, E (07) and ψ (044), containing lection rubrics, while the Saturday-Sunday lectionary *l 563** is, perhaps the most helpful document of all for the solution of the problem in hand.⁶⁴

In *l 563** we find, for example, that the Sunday that was called the sixth in S type weekday lectionaries, namely the thirty-sixth day of the fifty days from Easter Sunday to Pentecost, inclusive, bears the rubric:

$$\chi \quad \bar{\lambda} \sigma \quad \eta \mu \epsilon \rho \alpha \quad \cdot \quad \bar{\alpha} \quad \cdot \quad \bar{\nu} \quad \bar{\eta} \quad \bar{\nu} \quad \bar{\varsigma} \quad \bar{\epsilon} \quad \bar{\delta} \\ \alpha \rho \quad \cdot \quad \bar{\lambda} \sigma \quad \cdot \quad \eta \mu \epsilon \rho \alpha \quad \cdot \quad \bar{\alpha} \quad \cdot \quad \bar{\kappa} / \bar{\varsigma} \quad \cdot \quad \bar{\tau} \quad \bar{\kappa} / \bar{\tau} \quad \bar{\epsilon} \quad \epsilon \beta \delta \omicron \mu \alpha .$$

i.e., “Lection 36: 1st day (of the week): Sunday the 6th: On Sunday of 5th week”.

This rubric and the other rubrics of *l 563** give us the following information:

1. The lection for each day of the fifty days of Pentecost from Tuesday of the second week onwards is numbered. Since the numbering is not continued after Pentecost, it is more likely to have arisen from an ancient custom of numbering the days rather than the pericopae. Such numbers are found beside a few lections in the λ lectionary *l 514** (IX) and α lectionary *l 519* (XII),⁶⁵ while the continuous text codex 461 (835 AD) contains similar rubrics beside the text. One of these in 461 is:

$$\epsilon \quad \bar{\eta} \quad \bar{\varsigma} \quad \bar{\delta} \quad \bar{\omicron} \\ \eta \mu \quad \bar{\iota} \beta \quad \bar{\tau} \quad \bar{\epsilon} \quad \bar{\tau} \quad \bar{\beta} \quad \epsilon \beta \delta ,$$

which says “day 12, Thursday of the 2nd week”, although another is

$$\epsilon \quad \bar{\kappa} \quad \bar{\delta} \\ \eta \mu \quad \bar{\gamma} \quad \bar{\alpha} \rho \quad \bar{\kappa} \delta ,$$

meaning “3rd day (of the week), lection 24”, as in *l 563**.

This seems to be a relic of an old way of numbering the days of Pentecost, so old that its meaning is not remembered clearly.

⁶³ Y. B u r n s. Op. cit. (Jassy), 6.

⁶⁴ The rubrics of *l 627* have in many cases been shorn off by the binders, and it has not been possible to see *l 689*. The rubrics of 047 were difficult to read on the microfilm. These MSS complete the number of gospel MSS ascribed to VIII century.

⁶⁵ The λ type weekday lection system is the most primitive and contains weekday lections from Matthew and Luke only. Lections from Mark were added by means of a supplementary codex. An α lectionary incorporates the Marcan lections after the Matthean. See Y. B u r n s, Op. cit. (Thesis).

2. The use of α in the rubrics of *l* 563* indicates its dependence on a continuous text codex, probably using a list of lections, since α introduces the incipit in a list or in a rubric.

3. The fact that the primary meaning of α as "beginning" has been lost and it has acquired the meaning of "lection" or "pericope" may be compared with the identical, but later, change of meaning of α in the Slavonic MSS, and indicates that lections had been read from continuous text codices for some time before the archetype of the lectionary had been compiled.

4. Sunday was considered the first day of the week. Other rubrics show that Monday was the second, etc., right up to Saturday being the seventh. This is particularly interesting because it is not usual to mention this for Saturday and Sunday, and even Friday is more often called "Preparation Day" than the sixth day, in spite of the fact that the names of Monday to Thursday are "the second day", "the third day", and so on.

5. The next portion of the rubric, which says "Sunday the sixth", shows that the Pentecostal period is thought of as consisting of eight Sundays, the first being Easter and the last both Pentecost and the eighth (as the rubric for that day states in this MS).

6. The last portion of the rubric, however, expresses the concept that Sunday is not merely the first day of a new week, but also the last day of the preceding week. In spite of Sunday being the first day of a new week, the affinity between Saturday and Sunday is so great that Sunday is held back with Saturday in the preceding week.

It is, in fact, this affinity between Saturday and Sunday, which is so clearly seen in this particular MS, that is the cause of the different numbering systems in the Johannine period. This affinity does not only attract Sunday towards Saturday, but sometimes draws Saturday towards Sunday, so that it is the Saturday that is incorrectly rubricated. We have already seen this in *l* 1*, but we also find a similar phenomenon in *l* 563*. The Saturday which should be called, "Saturday the third; Saturday of the third week", we find is actually called in *l* 563*. "Saturday the fourth; Saturday of the third week", by analogy with the following day, which is called "Sunday the fourth; Sunday of the third week". Thus, in the first part of the rubrics quoted here, Saturday is given the number of Sunday, while in the second part, conversely, Sunday is placed in the same week as Saturday.

If it had been the custom in earlier MSS no longer extant to give such long rubrics as those of *l* 563*, it certainly was not continued in the later MSS, because we normally find only one rubric per day containing a number. For example, *l* 514* gives the rubric containing the week in all cases, but *l* 152* (IX) gives the third Sunday as "Sunday the third", although for the following Sundays the week is given, as it is for all Saturdays except Pentecost. It would be easy for such a thing to happen if the copyist was abbreviating the rubrics of a lectionary like *l* 563*.

Another factor that played its part in these changes was the custom of calling the day before Pentecost, "Saturday of Pentecost". This encouraged the use of the term "Monday before Pentecost", etc., instead of "Monday of the seventh week". Some MSS used the term "Sunday before Pentecost" for the preceding Sunday (*l* 570 of the X century, for example). Gradually the week before Pentecost came to be considered the week of Pentecost, and this is how the days are described in the majority of lectionaries. This encouraged the idea that Sunday belonged to the preceding week, and the fact that it started from Pentecost is seen in *l* 181 (X century), where the only Sunday lection to be numbered the

same as the previous day is the one before Pentecost, which is called the sixth (the previous Sunday also, but correctly, being called the sixth).

In later lectionaries the analogy was carried yet another week towards the beginning of the period, so that two Sundays were called the fifth in quite a number of MSS.

Once the \approx type weekday lectionaries were devised with their rationalisation of the numbering throughout the lectionary, lectionaries were written with all the Sundays numbered in the same way as the previous day, but the S type lectionaries containing the original system (without using the word "week") were still copied and it is this system which was printed and is in use in the Greek Orthodox Church to-day. When we find later Saturday-Sunday lectionaries with a mixed system of numbering it seems very likely that it has arisen as the result of copying earlier MSS containing such mistakes, rather than because the systems of the S and the \approx weekday lectionaries were mixed.

5. THE EVIDENCE OF THE SLAVONIC GOSPEL LECTONARIES

The early Slavonic Saturday-Sunday lectionaries follow the early Greek pattern in their rubrics for the Sundays between Easter and Pentecost, in general considering them to be numbered from one to eight, without using the word "week". The Saturdays are considered as belonging to the week that precedes them.

The week after Easter is called "the shining", or "the light" week, whereas the Greek lectionaries call it the week of "Rebirth". The Slavonic name may be connected with the use of the word *λαμπροφωρον*, meaning "light" or "shining", for the Sunday after Easter in *l* 563*, *l* 514*, *l* 845*, *l* 958, *l* 1659 (and in the Constitution of Studion⁶⁶).

The week before Pentecost is called the seventh in the Slavonic lectionaries, including even the Saturday, the eve of Pentecost. In this they are following the traditions of an earlier period than the extant Greek lectionaries, since even by the VIII century this form seems to have been out-of-date as *l* 563* uses "before Pentecost" and E 07 "on Pentecost". There are however, a few Greek lectionaries that preserve the use of the term the seventh week, so it is not restricted to Slavonic MSS.⁶⁷

It will be noticed that several Greek lectionaries quoted in this paper employ chapter numbers in their rubrics, and the same is true of the earliest Slavonic lectionaries.⁶⁸

It is normal for Slavonic lectionaries to employ the word "gospel" in the sense of lection in the stereotyped phrase stating the source of the pericope that follows. This semantic use of the word belongs to the earliest strata of the lection system, rapidly falling out of use in Greek lectionaries in this stereotyped phrase, but being retained in headings such as the "Gospel of the Passions" and even in simple rubrics such as the "Gospel for Morning Service". It is therefore significant that the only Byzantine lectionaries from VIII to X centuries to use it in the same form as do the Slavonic lectionaries, are all lectionaries containing chapter numbers.⁶⁹

The early Slavonic lectionaries are therefore seen to be connected by their rubrics with a few early Greek Saturday-Sunday lectionaries, but seem to be the descendants of MSS obtained from Greek lectionaries earlier than the extant codices. They therefore confirm that the original method of counting the

⁶⁶ G. H. H. Lampe. *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*. Oxford, 1961.

⁶⁷ See Table 1.

⁶⁸ Y. Burns. *Op. cit.* (Chapter Numbers).

⁶⁹ See Table 2.

Table 1

Greek lectionaries calling the week before Pentecost "the seventh"

l esk	l esk+1 week	l e αβ	l e S	l e z
l 63* (IX)	l 181 (X)	l 344 (XII)	l 1033 (XII)	l 1847 (XI)
l 541 (IX)	l 4 (XI)	l 48* (1055 AD)		l 430 (XII)
l 543 (IX)	l 32 (XI)	l 323 (XIII)		l 811 (XII)
l 806 (IX)	l 1608 (XI)	l 121* (XI)		l 1745 (XII)
l 807 (IX)				
l 847 (IX)				
l 944 (X)				
l 1076* (X)				

Table 2

Greek lectionaries calling lections "Gospels"

Non-byzantine systems		
β ² (VI/VII)	l 249 (IX)	
l 1355 (IX)	l 844 (IX)	
l 1614 (X)	l 846 (VIII?)	
l 1678 (X)		
Byzantine systems		
l sel	l k	l esk
l 123* (X)	l 367* (XI)	l 563* (VIII)
		l 352* (VIII)
		l Plovdiv 99* (XI)
		l 845* (IX)

Sundays was as if Easter were number one and Pentecost number eight, while Saturdays were counted as part of the preceding week.

CONCLUSION

There are three methods of describing the Sunday lections in Greek gospel lectionaries, all of common occurrence, and a fourth method that is found very exceptionally. One of the first three methods is that of naming each Sunday either from liturgical reasons or from the contents of the lection, but the other methods are numerical.

The original method of numbering the Sundays is found in the earliest Greek lectionaries and in the Slavonic lectionaries. It considers the Sundays as starting with Easter Sunday and concluding with Pentecostal Sunday, the numbers running from one to eight, although the first, second and last are normally described Pascha, Antipascha and Pentecost, respectively.

This method continued the Jewish custom of numbering in sevens, adding the first of the next group as the eight both for completeness and for continuity.

The very exceptional method of numbering the Sundays was used together with this method in the earliest Saturday-Sunday lectionary l 563*, but rapidly fell out of use. It consists of calling, for example, the third Sunday also "Sunday of the second week", thus emphasising the dual nature of Sunday as the eighth day of one week and the first day of the next.

The second method of numbering did not come into use until the latest type of weekday lectionary, the *κοινή* lectionary (the *κ* lectionary), was constituted in the X—XI century as a definitive lectionary and multiplied by careful copying. Since each Sunday after Pentecost had the same number as the preceding Saturday, the inaugurators of this lectionary decided it would be more consistent to number the Sundays before Pentecost in the same way. This resulted in the Sunday after Easter being considered as number one and Pentecost as number seven, although, of course, these particular Sundays were normally called by their names, as before.

The very numerous examples of lectionaries mixing the two systems of numbering do not, however, seem to have arisen, in general, from the contamination of the earlier system by the later one, but rather by the natural inclination of scribes to feel that Saturday and Sunday should have the same number. This tendency commenced early with Pentecost, the Saturday being considered the eve of Pentecost. This resulted in Saturday taking the same name as Sunday in this case. This was extended to the previous Sunday, which then took the same number, six, as the day before, Saturday. Subsequent copyists may then have extended this to the previous Sunday, and so on. There are many Saturday-Sunday lectionaries with two Sundays called the fifth, and there are some with two Sundays called the third, the process having been continued further.

In later lectionaries the names of the Sundays between Easter and Pentecost were often added to whatever system of numbering was employed.