

# *Rotulus Beratinus,* A Greek Liturgy Roll

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THREE PIECES of a parchment roll containing the text of the liturgy of the Greek Orthodox Church known as the Liturgy of St Basil the Great have recently been brought to my attention. They are at the time of this writing the property of Mrs Theodore Kuchova of Atlantic City, New Jersey, and were brought with her about fifty years ago at the time of her immigration from her original home at Berat in southern Albania, about forty-five kilometers northeast of Valona. No further information as to their more precise provenience is available, but one piece (2<sup>v</sup>, see PLATE 6) bears in its margin a clearly modern note in purplish ink and in the modern Albanian orthography which was codified in 1908. The meaning of the note appears to be that the manuscript of the liturgy is one that was used by a priest named Vangjeli.<sup>1</sup>

Berat, once the capital of a Turkish *sanjak* and the see of an Orthodox metropolitan, is not unknown for its manuscripts. It has given its name to one of the few New Testament mss written in letters of silver on purple parchment, the *Codex Beratinus*, von Soden's ε17, and was, at least at one time, the home of another ms of the Gospels which has been called the *Codex Aureus Anthimi*, written in letters of gold on purple parchment. It would appear that these treasures were taken, around 1900, to the skete of St Andrew on Mount Athos, too late to be recorded in Lambros' catalogue of the Athonite mss.<sup>2</sup>

In 1885 Pierre Battifol visited Berat with the specific objective of studying the *Codex Beratinus*. He reported that many of the mss in the archbishop's palace were in a wretched state of neglect and disrepair.

<sup>1</sup> For the reading, interpretation and information about this note I am deeply indebted to Professor Kostas Kazazis of the University of Chicago, who was kind enough to offer his help on the basis of a transcription from the original.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. L. Petit, *EchO* 4 (1900/01) 64 and, for further bibliography on the mss of Berat, M. Richard, *Répertoire des bibliothèques et des catalogues des manuscrits grecs* (Paris 1958) 51–52.

Among other items he describes a roll containing the liturgy of St John Chrysostom in letters of silver on purple parchment, which he judged one might date as early as the twelfth century.<sup>3</sup> Although the dimensions of this roll are apparently about the same as those of the pieces here to be described, and although Battifol mentions that the piece he describes was mutilated at the bottom, there is no question of the identity of the two, since their content as well as their style is different. There is also no reason to suppose that our pieces were part of the much-neglected archiepiscopal collection. There were several other churches in the city, in which any surviving MSS may be supposed to have been equally neglected.

Rolls of this kind are not uncommon. In fact the collections of the great libraries of Europe contain numerous manuscript examples which preserve one or another of the forms of the Greek Orthodox liturgy in copies dating from as early as the XI to as late as the XIX century.<sup>4</sup>

The format of these parchment rolls (*εὐλητάρια*) is unique. The skins are cut to maximum length, glued together to form a strip, sometimes as long as twelve meters (*Paris.suppl.gr.* 578),<sup>5</sup> and attached at one end to a knobbed spindle (*Vat.gr.* 2281<sup>6</sup> and *B.M.Add.* 27563). The lines of writing are at a right angle to the long axis of the strip, continuous from the top to the bottom end of the strip, at which point the parchment is reversed and the lines of writing continued from bottom to top of the *verso*. Just as with the codex, one set of ruling serves for both sides, but, since the letters are, as usual in Greek MSS, pendent from the ruling, the lines of writing on the *verso* fall in the spaces between the lines on the *recto*, with the result that the eye-confusing show-through of ink, which is an inevitable result of the codex form, is minimized. I do not, of course, suggest that this techni-

<sup>3</sup> P. Battifol, "Les manuscrits grecs de Berat d'Albanie," *ArchMiss*, 3<sup>e</sup> sér. 13 (1887) 437–66. For the description of the liturgy roll see p.444.

<sup>4</sup> E.g. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale; London, British Museum; the Vatican Library, and, of course, the libraries of the monasteries of Mt Athos and the National Library and the Byzantine Museum in Athens. Examples in codex form are much more numerous.

<sup>5</sup> This exceeds somewhat the maximum length of known Greek literary rolls. Cf. F. W. Hall, *Companion to Classical Texts* (Oxford 1913) 7, who mentions the British Museum roll containing the text of Hyperides, which is about 28 feet in length.

<sup>6</sup> For an illustration cf. Franchi de' Cavallieri and Lietzmann, *Specimina codicum graecorum Vaticanorum* (Berlin 1929) pl.35, and for a full description A. Turyn, *Codices graeci Vaticani saeculis XIII–XIV scripti* (Vatican City 1964) 23–25.

cal feature has anything to do with the choice of this format for liturgy rolls.<sup>7</sup>

What originally dictated the use of this format is not, so far as I am aware, a matter of record. There are few examples earlier than the XII century. No doubt the wear to which a liturgical work would be subject can account for the disappearance of earlier copies. Still we have no assurance that the format has a history more ancient than the preserved specimens. There is a natural inclination to suppose that this use of the roll form would be a survival from the ancient papyrus book-roll, and religious conservatism might be invoked to explain the survival. But the papyrus book-roll was a very different thing, its lines of writing parallel to the long axis of the roll, in columns at a right angle to the long axis, and the *verso* left blank. Thus, while it is chronologically antecedent to the liturgy roll, its characteristic format will hardly serve to explain that of its later congener.<sup>8</sup>

There is, indeed, a parallel to this format in the Latin Exultet Rolls of south Italy, which have their text disposed in the same manner as the Greek liturgy rolls but contain illustrations alternating with sections of text, oriented in the opposite direction to the text, so as to be visible to the congregation as the roll was slowly unwound by the officiating priest and allowed to drop over the edge of a lectern.<sup>9</sup> The examples of these rolls at Bari and Pisa, *e.g.*, are no older than the XI century and can hardly be regarded as antecedents of the Greek rolls. The most that can be said would seem to be that they are similar. There is, of course, the possibility, since the Exultet Rolls are of south Italian origin, that they have been influenced by Byzantine liturgy rolls. If the use of this particular format goes back, on either side, to much earlier Christian usage, the probability that it is of eastern origin increases.

If again this roll form should prove to be of early Christian origin one might look to Hebrew practice for its inspiration. The Torah does, of course, persist in roll form, but it follows the Graeco-Roman prac-

<sup>7</sup> For a description of the roll form and a brief listing of examples *cf.* V. Gardthausen, *Griechische Palaeographie*<sup>2</sup> I (Leipzig 1913) 152–54.

<sup>8</sup> *Cf.* E. M. Thompson, *Introduction to Greek and Latin Palaeography* (Oxford 1912) 50–51, who speaks of the survival of the roll form, but with a changed direction of writing, in the Middle Ages. It may be questioned whether this is properly a *survival* or a different form with or without ancient models.

<sup>9</sup> For the format of these rolls and scenes showing their use *cf.* Myrtila Avery, *The Exultet Rolls of South Italy* (Princeton 1936).

tice, with its lines of writing parallel to the long axis. This is also the case with the Dead Sea Scrolls.

One other parallel occurs to me, and that is the so-called Ravenna Roll. This parchment piece is represented by a remnant 19 cm. wide and 3.60 m long. It is now in the Archivio del Principe Pio at Lugano. It was written originally on only one side and contains a series of Latin prayers associated with the Advent, or perhaps more probably with Christmas, disposed as in the Greek liturgy rolls. It has been associated with Ravenna because of the content of the letters which have been copied on its *verso* in a hand later than the original of the *recto*. The large, bold Latin uncials of the *recto* have been dated by E. A. Lowe to the early VIII century.<sup>10</sup> Although it was originally written on only one side, it is in its format the closest parallel to the Greek rolls. If Lowe's dating can be pressed for that high a degree of accuracy the roll would have been written under the Exarchate, and similarity to Greek rolls would not be surprising.<sup>11</sup> In this context, however, it would be most probable that the Latin roll was made in imitation of Greek rolls. If this be the case we have testimony to the existence of the roll format for the Greek liturgy as early as the VII century.

Thus I can only raise the question of the origin of this format without being able to provide any answer. As more attention is paid to the evolution of book forms and as new material and evidence becomes available an answer may be forthcoming.

My purpose here is to describe the roll fragments mentioned at the outset (see PLATES 5 and 6). The maximum original width of the pieces is 25 cm. The roll was at some time cut into pieces. Piece 1a is 70.5 cm. long, piece 1b is 75 cm., and piece 2 is 33 cm. Pieces 1a and 1b were originally continuous. Something is lost between 1b and 2, and 2 was not the last piece in the strip. The right-hand side of piece 1a has been badly eroded, perhaps by mice, and thus the text is mutilated down to its 29th line on the *recto* and to a corresponding point on the *verso*. The overlap for gluing pieces together is 1 cm. wide.

<sup>10</sup> Originally published by A. Ceriani and G. Porro, *Il rotolo opistografo del Principe Antonio Pio di Savoia* (Milan 1883) with facsimiles. It is discussed with bibliography by H. Leclercq, s.v. ROULEAU DE RAVENNE in *DACL*. Lowe's description is in *Codices Latini Antiquiores* III, no.371. See also K. Gamber, *Codices Liturgici Latini Antiquiores* (Freiburg 1963) no.270, with additional bibliography.

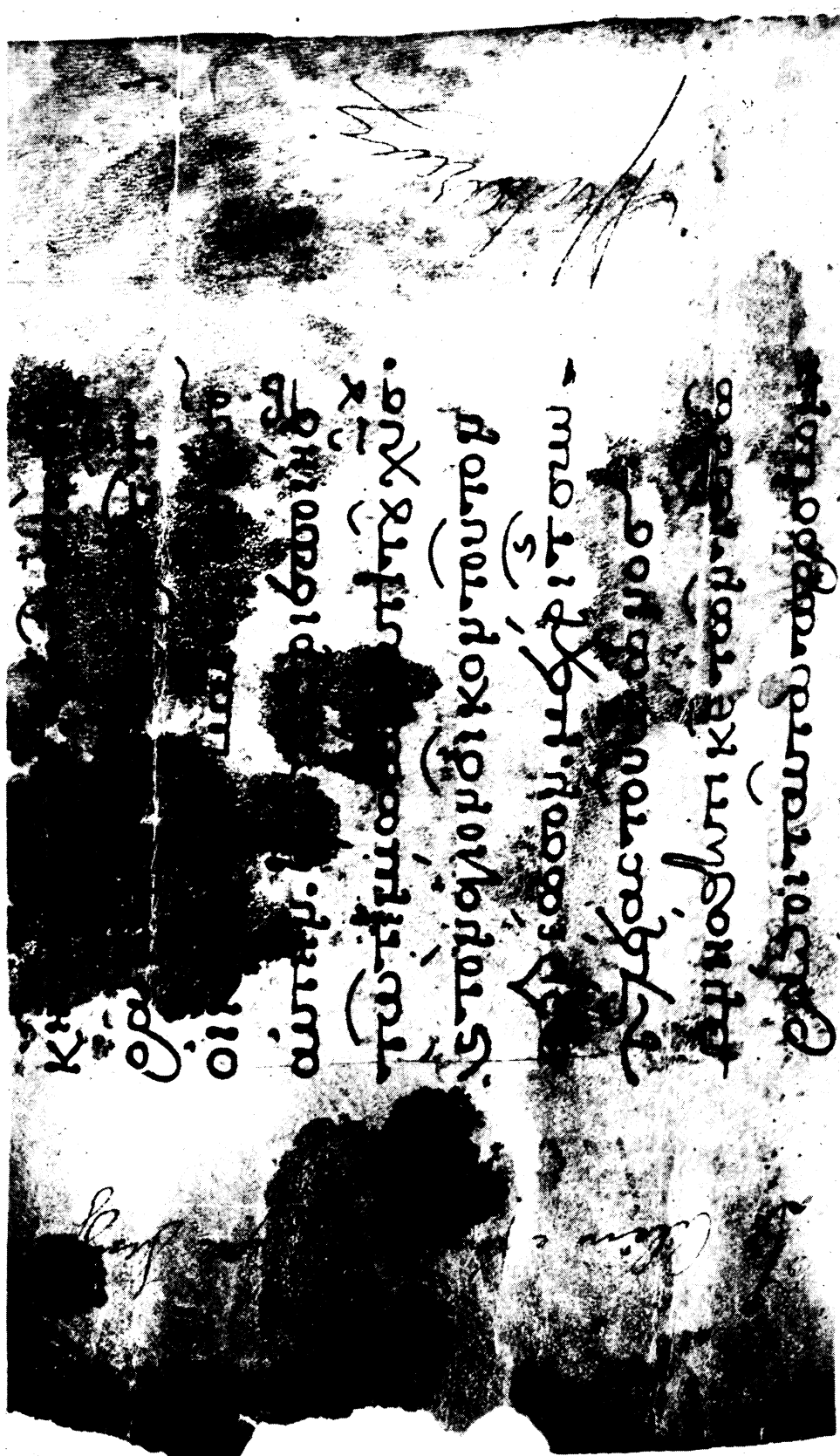
<sup>11</sup> Even though, as Gamber observes, the Roman rite had been introduced at Ravenna at least a hundred years before the time of the roll.

Και καταζιωσον ημας δεσ  
 πομετα παρρησια κατα  
 κριτολεπι καλειθαι σε το  
 επονηιον θηπραυλε:  
 Οχ περνημων: οιεε  
 Οπσου εφιν η βασις ηδυ  
 και ηδυ: του πρικτου  
 λου κ του α πης:  
 Ολαος. αμνη: οιερειρ ππ.  
 Οδιακ: τας κεφαλαιου  
 τω κω κλινα.

ΘΕΟΙ ΕΡ

Απο τα κε. οσηρ των  
 οικτημων και θω πασ  
 παραλυνοστος. πδσ  
 απο κειμκοτας σοι τ  
 βαυτων κβφαισ. α  
 λομσορ. αμιασορ. φρου  
 ρησορ. οχυρωσορ. βρδυ  
 ραμωσορ. απο παν τ  
 βργου των ηρου απο φη  
 σορ. παν τιδε βργω  
 αμλωσιν αφορ. και

ROTULUS BERATINUS, PART OF 1b<sup>p</sup>  
 (Photo reduced about one-half)



ROTULUS BERATINUS, PART OF 2<sup>o</sup>

(Photo reduced about one-fourth)

The ruling was done with a dry point pressed so heavily as almost to pierce the parchment in places. The prickings are visible where the margin has not been disturbed. The vertical rulings for the single column of text define a column with lines 12.5 cm. wide. Parallel to these rulings on either side is a second vertical ruling which defines a part of the margin 2.5 cm. wide, within which large initial capitals are written. The lines of writing are thus 12.5 cm. long, and the horizontal rulings for them are at intervals of 1.5 cm. The letters themselves, insofar as they are confined between two lines, are about 0.5 cm. high, while the majuscule headings for individual prayers occupy a full line space 1.5 cm. high.

The writing itself is, as previously mentioned, pendent from the lines. The majuscule headings are written in typical ornamental Byzantine uncials, with frequent abbreviations and monogrammatic combinations involving small medial and superscript letters. These headings, the large initials in the rubrics and the whole of the abbreviated *ἐκφώ* are written in red and washed with gilt.

The script of the text is a striking and harmonious product of a hand that has full command of both uncial and minuscule forms, and combines them in a proportion in which the uncial element is very heavy indeed. In fact every letter of the alphabet appears in both uncial and minuscule forms. This reintroduction of uncial forms in the already firmly established minuscule script is notable in the second half of the X century and becomes most marked in the XI.<sup>12</sup> Our case is an extreme one and seems to me to find close parallels in such dated mss as *Vat.Ottob.gr.* 422 (A.D. 1004), *Vat.gr.* 1675 (A.D. 1018), *Modena Bibl. Estense Ms.gr.* 230 (A.D. 1050), *Vat.Pal.gr.* 259 (A.D. 1054), *B.M. Add.* 19352 (the Theodore Psalter, A.D. 1066), *Meteora Metamorphosis Cod.* 548 (A.D. 1089).<sup>13</sup>

The script of the text is, however, further differentiated. The text of the long prayers, those introduced by a majuscule heading, are written in the mixed script just referred to. That of the ceremonial directions (rubrics) and of the shorter prayers associated with them, on the other hand, is written entirely and exclusively in the type of uncial

<sup>12</sup> Cf. E. Follieri, "La reintroduzione di lettere semionciali nei più antichi manoscritti greci in minuscola," in *Bulletino dell' Archivio Paleografico Italiano* 1 (1962) 15-36.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Franchi de' Cavallieri and Lietzmann, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.6) pls. 18, 20, 23; *Palaeographical Society Facsimiles of Mss. and Inscriptions* I (London 1873-83) pl.53; and *New Palaeographical Society Facsimiles*, 2nd ser. I (London 1913-30) pl.5; Kirsopp and Silva Lake, *Dated Greek Minuscule Manuscripts to the Year 1200 X* (Boston 1939) pl.755.

lettering found in the mixed script, and the individual letters are kept separate from one another, with very few ligatures or connecting strokes.<sup>14</sup>

Perhaps the most notable feature of the prayer script is the line-initial (and occasionally medial) *alpha* with a leftward pointing hook at the bottom, a hook which, from the point of view of letter-formation, may have been originally part of a ligature with a preceding letter, but by the time of this manuscript had become independent and usually line-initial, although it occurs once with a preceding minuscule *gamma* which touches the loop of the *alpha* without making any connection with the hook. Gardthausen noted this letter-form and observed that, while it occurred in X-century examples, it was common in the XI century.<sup>15</sup> Tenth-century examples are, in fact, not uncommon,<sup>16</sup> and its use extends into the XII.

While bearing in mind the *caveat* of E. M. Thompson<sup>17</sup> to the effect that the type of writing used in sacred books is extremely conservative and that it is wise to exercise some hesitation in attempting to fix the exact date of such a manuscript, it seems to me that a date somewhere near the middle or in the latter half of the XI century would not be unreasonable for the script of this roll. The closely similar script of the Theodore Psalter of 1066 is, after all, also that of a sacred book. The wide-sweeping circumflex used may suggest a somewhat later date, and it cannot be denied that archaizing conservatism is a factor to be reckoned with. There is, however, no reliable criterion for assessing this factor, and one is reduced to weighing such subjective considerations as the ease and naturalness with which a scribe appears to use his script. Obviously an accomplished scribe can master any script of which he has adequate examples, and our scribe would appear to be competent enough. What we have, then, is either a later scribe's imitation of an XI-century hand or a piece of XI-century work, and I incline to believe the latter is true. If this date be acceptable, our roll will then be among the earliest of such texts.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Minuscule forms of *zeta*, *nu*, *xi*, *rho* occur once each and the digraph *stigma* appears once in these passages.

<sup>15</sup> Gardthausen, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.7) 218.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. L. Th. Lefort and J. Cochez, *Palaeographisch Album* (Louvain 1932) pls. 18 (913/4), 33 (954), 35 (961), 62 (992), 70 (994).

<sup>17</sup> *op.cit.* (*supra* n.8) 222.

<sup>18</sup> *Vat.Barb.gr.* 336 (formerly III.55, formerly 77) *e.g.*, which is dated to the VIII or IX century, is a codex.



Among other features of this script one may note the occurrence of exaggeratedly tall ligatures, as between *ακ*, *εη*, *ηκ*, *υψ*, etc. and the use of a stroke over vowels at the end of lines to indicate the addition of *nu*. Both these features are to be found also in *Vat.Ottob.gr.* 422, whose similarity to our ms was pointed out above, and which was written on Mt Athos. This is not good enough evidence on which to base any conclusion, but it would not be surprising if our roll were of Athonite origin.

As for the text of the Liturgy of St Basil preserved in the fragments of this roll, it does not vary greatly, so far as the prayers are concerned, from that of Trempelas in his *Τρεῖς Λειτουργίαι*.<sup>19</sup> The portions of the text preserved are the following (**Tr**= Trempelas, with reference to his page and line; **Be**= Beratinus, with reference to pieces):<sup>20</sup>

**Be recto 1a**= **Tr** 167,4 καὶ to 168,7 (see 71,6) *σαρκικαῖς*

**Be recto 1b**= **Tr** 71,6 ἐπιθυμίαις to 76,6 ἀμαρ[τωλοῦ

**Be recto 2**= **Tr** 180,16 τῶν δούλων to 180,28 λαβῶν

**Be verso 2**= **Tr** 185,3 ἰκεταῖαις to 185,14 αὐτὰ

**Be verso 1b**= **Tr** 190,3 ἀπολογία to 190,32 (see 129,19) δόξης

**Be verso 1a**= **Tr** 129,19 τῆς βασιλείας to 129,23 λαῶ and 195,5 εὐ-  
χαριστοῦμεν to 192,13 εἰς περιποίησιν

The variants in the prayers are the following:

**Tr** 68,1–2 καὶ . . . αἰώνων : *om.* **Be**

**Tr** 70,6–7 καὶ . . . αἰώνων : *om.* **Be**

**Tr** 73,1 ἀμέτρητον : ἄμετρον **Be**

**Tr** 73,2 ἀναλλοιώτως : -τος **Be** (with **B**)

**Tr** 73,3 ἐχρημάτισας : -τησας **Be**

**Tr** 75,1 Σεραφεῖμ : σεραφίμ **Be**

**Tr** 180,17 προκαταγγέλλων ἡμῶν : ἡμῶν *om.* **Be** (with **H**)

**Tr** 185,4 προκεκοιμημένων : κεκοιμημένων **Be** (with **I F**)

**Tr** 190,6 ᾶ : ᾶν **Be** (with **B**)

**Tr** 128,2–3 νῦν . . . αἰώνων : *om.* **Be**

**Tr** 190,26–7 ἀκατακρίτως : -τος **Be**

**Tr** 190,27 σου : *om.* **Be** (with **B**)

<sup>19</sup> *Texte und Forschungen zur byzantinisch-neugriechischen Philologie*, Nr.15 (1955) 161–93.

<sup>20</sup> Because of the practice of not repeating the text of identical prayers one must, in using Trempelas' text, refer back to that of the Liturgy of St John Chrysostom for the complete text. The references in parentheses are to page and line in that liturgy.

**Tr** 129,13 καὶ ἀεὶ . . . αἰώνων : *om.* **Be**

**Tr** 129,23 αἵματος : αἵματός σου **Be** (with **A**)

λαῶ : [λα]ῶ σου **Be** (with **B**)

It will be noted that **Be** varies frequently with **B**, the VIII or IX-century codex, and once with **A**, a XII-century roll.

Trempeles observes<sup>21</sup> that “in the rolls and older codices, as well as in most of the later codices derived from them, one will look in vain for extended ceremonial directions such as are found in modern liturgical books. The ceremonial directions contained in the rolls and older codices consist principally of certain headings prefixed to the prayers as well as the constantly repeated and, so to speak, stereotype phrases: ὁ διάκονος; ὁ ἱερεὺς; ἐκφῶ; ἐκφώνως; ὁ ἱερεὺς ἐκφώνει; ὁ ἱερεὺς ἐπεύχεται. But other ceremonial directions contained in any single roll or codex are so brief that, if they were to be set down in sequence, they would hardly fill half a page.”

This brevity is to be observed in our roll. The directions correspond fairly closely to those in Trempeles' text, but in a number of cases the responses assigned to the deacon in his text are missing in ours and have been supplied in abbreviated form by a later hand in the left-hand margin. This is the case at 167,14–15; 167,20–21; 167,32–33 and 190,8–12 (see 126,8–127,16). At the point of the *eucharisteria*, however, there is wide variation amongst texts. I therefore transcribe the complete passage from our roll corresponding to **Tr** 191,1–192,4:

Καὶ τοῦ διακόνου λέγοντος πρ[ο]-  
σχῶμεν ὑψοῖ τὸν ἄρτον ὁ ἱερεὺς  
λέγων: τὰ ἅγια τοῖς ἁγίοις:

Καὶ τοῦ διακόνου λέγοντος: πλήρω  
σον δέσποτα. Λαμβάνει ὁ ἱερεὺς  
ἐκ τοῦ ἁγίου σώματ[ο]-  
μερίδας· καὶ βάλλ[ει εἰς τὰ ἅγια  
ποτήρια· λέγων: πλήρω[μα πνεύματος  
ἁγίου: ὁ διάκονος· ἀμήν:

Ἐἶτα τῆς μεταλήψεως τ[ε]-  
λειωθείσης  
καὶ τῶν ἁγίων καὶ ἀ[χ]-  
ράντων  
λευψάνων ἀπὸ τῆς ἱ[ε]-  
ραῦς  
ἀρθέντων τραπέζης.

<sup>21</sup> *Op.cit.* (*supra* n.19) p.β'. I have translated from his Greek.

As Trempelas demonstrates in the introduction to his edition, there is a tendency for ceremonial directions to become more detailed and extensive as time goes on. The XIV-century revision of the liturgy carried out by the patriarch Philotheos apparently contributed heavily to this development. The terms *liturgy* and *euchologion* tend to become synonymous. It would appear that the *euchologion* was originally simply what the name suggests, a prayer book, containing the text of the traditional prayers as supposedly formulated by St Basil, St John Chrysostom and others, plus minimal (and frequently abbreviated) directions to the officiants. As these directions were made more full and explicit the *euchologia* became *liturgies* in the more currently accepted sense and specified every act and word required of the officiants.

Our roll, then, may clearly be regarded as belonging to the early part of this tradition.

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