The Latin versions of the Psalter as a reference point for the Church Slavonic textual tradition

The Latin versions of the psalms are relevant to the Church Slavonic Psalter tradition in two ways: they supply the probable source of some distinctive readings which can be referred back to the earliest translation, and they offer illuminating parallels to the history of the text in Church Slavonic. This paper will review briefly the problems of identifying Latin influence in the early Church Slavonic Psalter.

It will suggest criteria for evaluating possible instances of such influence while making due allowance for the textual peculiarities of the psalms, for the complexities which result from a relatively uncontrolled tradition and from recurrent checking against Greek, and for issues of translation technique.

It will trace the continuous attestation of readings derived from Latin through the Church Slavonic revisions of the 10th century up to the introduction of new revised versions in the early 14th century.

On the basis of comparison between the translations of the nominalized Greek infinitive in Latin and Church Slavonic, it will argue that the early Church Slavonic versions, even when they did not directly imitate Latin, faced similar translational problems and resorted to similar solutions, which may well have been inspired by Latin models. Later, by contrast, the literalistic morphosyntactic treatment of this construction which developed in 14th-century revisions became so well established that it was treated as a norm by Maxim Grek's assistants, effectually obscuring the use of Latin as a mediating language in his revisions.