

ON THE TEXTS AND CHANGING CONTEXTS
OF THE *SLOVO O POLKU IGOREVE* AND THE *ZADONŠČINA*

By Harvey Goldblatt
(Yale University)

I.

Textual Witnesses of the *Zadonščina*

1. [**K-B**] *Kirillo-Belozerskij Monastery Collection*, No. 9/1086, in a miscellany compiled by the scribe Efrosin, fols. 123^r-129^v. Now found in the RNB (St. Petersburg), 1470s. Entitled: “Писание Софонии старца рязанца, бл(а)г(о)-с(ло)ви от(че): Задонщина великог(о) кн(я)зя г(о)с(поди)на Дмитрия Иванович(а) и брата его кн(я)зя Володимера Ондрѣвич(а).” First published in Archimandrite Varlaam [1859]. Edition: Lixačev and Dmitriev [1966: 548-50].
2. [**H₂**] *Historical Museum Collection*, No. 3045, *fragmentary*, fols. 70^r-73^v. Now found in the GIM (Moscow), late fifteenth-early sixteenth century. Title lacking. First published in both Adrianova-Peretc [1947] and Ržiga [1947]. Edition: Lixačev and Dmitriev [1966: 546-47].
3. [**H₁**] *Historical Museum Collection*, No. 2060, fols. 213^r-224^v. Now found in the GIM (Moscow), late sixteenth-early seventeenth century. Entitled: “В лет(о) 6887 похвала великому кн(я)зю Дмитрию Ивановичю и брату ег(о) кн(я)зю Владимиру Ондрѣвичю, внегда победиш(а) пособьем Б(ож)иим поганог(о) Мамаа съ всѣми его силами.” First published in both Adrianova-Peretc [1947] and Ržiga [1947]. Edition: Lixačev and Dmitriev [1966: 541-46].
4. [**U**] *Undol'skij Collection*, No. 632, fols. 169^v-193^v. Now found in RGB (Moscow), mid-seventeenth century. Entitled: “Слово о великом кн(я)зе, Дмитрее Ивановиче и о брате его кн(я)зе Владимире Андрѣвиче, яко побѣдили супостата своего царя Мамаа.” First published in Beljaev [1852]. Edition: Lixačev and Dmitriev [1966: 535-40].
5. ([**S**]) *Synodal Library Collection*, No. 790., fols. 36^v-46^v. Now found in GIM (Moscow), Belorussian, seventeenth century. Entitled: “Сказание Сафона Резанца, исписана руским князем похвала, великому кн(я)зю Дмитрию Ивановичю и брату его Владимиру Ондреевичю.” First published in Smirnov [1890]. Edition: Lixačev and Dmitriev [1966: 550-56].
6. [**Ž**] *Ždanov Collection*, No. 1.4.1, fols. 30^v-31^r. Now found in the Library of the RAN, approx. 1650-1680. Entitled: Сказание о Донскомъ бою. First published in Sreznevskij [1903]. Edition: Lixačev and Dmitriev [1966: 547-48].


Excerpts from Goldblatt & Picchio [2008]


II.

Test Case #1: A Comparison of the *Slovo* and the *Zadonščina*

A. SECTION A. OF THE “PROLOGUE” OF THE *SLOVO* .¹

[I] *He lъno li ны бяшетъ, братіе, начати—старыми словесы трудныхъ повѣстій о пълку Игоревѣ, Игоря Святъславичя—начати же сію повѣсть по былинамъ сего времени а не по замышленію Бояню?*

[II] *Боянь бо вѣщій, аще кому хотяше пѣснь творити, то растѣкашется мыслию по древу: сѣрымъ вълкомъ по земли, шизымъ орломъ подъ облакы. Помняшетъ бо, реч(е), първыхъ временъ усобицѣ.*

[III] *Тогда пушашеть десять соколовъ на стадо лебедѣй; который дотечаше, та преди пѣснь пояше: старому Ярославу, храброму Мстиславу, иже зарѣза Редедю предъ пълкы Касожьскими, красному Романови Святъславичю.*

[IV] *Боянь же, братіе, не десять соколовъ на стадо лебедѣй пушаше, нь своя вѣща прѣсты на живия струны въсладаше, они же сами княземъ славу рокотаху.*

COMMENTARY ON SECTION A. OF THE “PROLOGUE” OF THE *SLOVO*.

(i) There is no question that at the heart of Section A. is the attempt to define the *Slovo* based on the distinction between writing a “tale” (*повѣсть*) according to the “actual events of this very time”—as well as words from the “arduous tales” on Igor’s raid—and using the “inventive style” of the “vatic Boyan” to produce a “song” (*пѣснь*). The critical opposition between “truthful tales” and “fanciful songs” dominates sequence I.² By contrast, sequences II-IV focus on Boyan’s actual

¹ Words indicated in italics refer to textual material that has been identified by scholars as common to the *I.T.* and the *Zad* [Zaloznjak 2007: 395-409; Zimin 2006: 490-97].

² In our proposed edition of the *I.T.* the work is segmented into eighteen sections. Each section is presented in the form of “sequences” that are distinguished by their particular isocolic distribution, that is, by the particular grouping of logical and syntactic units in series of rhythmically marked *cola* with an equal number of stresses. The present study refers to these modes of segmentation even if the isocolic structures of the work have not been indicated [see Goldblatt & Picchio 1995: 37-54].

poetic activity, which is connected with his adroit ability to transform memory and myth into poetic figures.

(ii) Ever since the *Slovo* first appeared in print in 1800, succeeding generations of specialists [e.g., Jakobson 1966a: 133; Dmitriev 1960: 357; Dmitriev & Lixačev 1967: 43] have tended to segment sequence I into two sentences: (1) an opening sentence that contains a rhetorical question; and (2) a second sentence that offers a response to this rhetorical question. As regards the second sentence, its initial part has been interpreted as a hortatory imperative in which the impersonal form of the reflexive verb *начати* takes the noun phrase *тѣмъ нѣсни* in the *dativus commodi*. According to the reading we have proposed in our commentary “towards a “new critical edition” [Goldblatt & Picchio 1995: 39-40], sequence I consists, instead, of a single interrogative sentence. In the new reading we have submitted, the question mark posited by previous scholars after what was considered the first sentence has been replaced by a comma, while a new question mark has been placed at the very end of the sequence (i.e., at the end of the second sentence). Both the first occurrence of *начати* and its rhetorical repetition take the same direct object, which—according to our conjectural reading—is *сію повѣсть**.³ It is important to note that the reading *повѣсть** is supported by considerations of not only a paleographic but also a contextual nature. As mentioned above, sequence I is a single interrogative sentence subdivided into two clauses. The first clause, *Не льно ли ны бѣшетъ, братіе, начяти старыми словѣсы трудныхъ повѣстий о пълку Игоревеѣ, Игоря Святъславича*, proposes that something not immediately specified should be presented “with the ancient words of the arduous tales.” In the second clause, *начати же сію повѣсть по былинамъ сего времени, а не по замышленію Бояню?*, the verb *начати* is repeated, but this time it is followed by a direct object that provides the information missing from the initial clause. The direct object aims to define a manner of exposition characterized by the “ancient words of the arduous tales” and “in accordance with the actual events of this very time.” The phrase “of this very time” (*сего времени*) refers to the precise period when the raid of Igor Svyatoslavič took place and was first celebrated, thereby emphasizing the historical mode of the exposition. At the same time, this manner of representation is opposed to the “invention of Boyan” (*а не по замышленію Бояню*). If we were to identify the direct object of the verb form *начати* as a *нѣснь*, we would contradict the entire logical development of the programmatic statement which opens the *I.T.*. Indeed, it is precisely the “invention of Boyan” that is identified as a *нѣснь* in sequence II. The reading *повѣсть*, instead, perfectly fits the logical scheme of the sentence that comprises sequence I. The message conveyed in sequence I can thus be summarized as follows: It is convenient to tell the story of the raid of Igor Svyatoslavič on the basis of actual historical events, and in the style of the arduous “tales” (*повѣсти*) that refer to Prince Igor’s time, rather than in the fantastic manner characteristic of Boyan’s “songs” (*нѣсни*). In other words, it is fitting to compose a *tale* rather than a *song*.⁴

³ On this crucial conjectural reading, see Goldblatt & Picchio 1995: 40-42.

⁴ This interpretation is in fact very close to and therefore supported by the scheme found in the translation of the *I.T.* done for Empress Catherine the Great: “*Коль прилично намъ, братцы, представить древнимъ слономъ жалостную повѣсть о сраженіи Игоря Святославича? Мы составимъ оную [повѣсть] изъ самыхъ дѣяній тогдашняго времени, не употребляя вымысловъ Бояновыхъ*” [cited after Dmitriev 1960: 318]. Finally, in this regard, the crucial programmatic statement conveyed in sequence I is reinforced in sequence V, where the actual exposition of the *I.T.* would appear to commence with the following words: “*Почнемъ же, братіе, ПОВѣСТЬ сію.*”

(iii) In the remainder of Section A. of the “Prologue” (i.e., sequences II-IV), the narrator focuses on the “fantastic” manner of Boyan, who is associated with a remote past that is presented in contradistinction to the historical nature of the “events of this very time” [Goldblatt & Picchio 1995: 43-46]. In sequence II, Boyan’s poetic activity and varied transformations harken back to a bygone age, wherein the process of “remembering” the “feuds of the first times” is presented in a mythical context. The first enigmatic image of sequence III—namely, the setting loose of ten falcons upon a flock of swans—is followed by an explanation in sequence IV, that is, the laying “vatic fingers” upon the living strings. In other words, the “ten falcons” indicate the “ten fingers” of a poet-player, whereas the “flock of swans” refers to the “living strings.” The opposition between falcons-fingers and swans-strings is reinforced by the contrast in gender between the *соколы-пръсты* (masculine) and the *лебеди-струны* (feminine). Behind this metaphorical presentation, however, there is a deeper meaning, which is not immediately disclosed in the text of the *Slovo* but which is essential for an understanding of the work. Only later will this “higher” meaning become clear to the reader through the use of the symbols *соколы* and *лебеди* with very precise connotations. In other words, the falcons symbolize the princes of Rus, while the swans refer to the Polovcians. In the days of old, the falcons had easily subdued the swans and made them sing the praises of the princes of Rus. However, the harmony of Boyan’s living strings had given way to discord, disunity, and feudal strife. The motif of harmony destroyed by internal feuding occupies a prominent place in the *Slovo*.

(iv) A fundamental element of Boyan’s “fantastic” style is the transformative image of “rushing forth with his mind” which is used to convey the notion of the unbounded spreading of the mind, that is, the poet’s self-abandonment to the natural impulse of inspiration. Hence, Boyan’s “invention” conveys the idea of a product of mental activity seemingly not constrained by real historical events. It would appear, therefore, that Boyan does not tell the truth but rather deviates from accurate accounts of what actually took place. Indeed, the purpose of his words is not to convey historical truth but rather to play on facts and images.

(v) The considerations presented above are of particular importance when attempting to define the nature and function of the *Slovo* within the context of Old Rus literature. As can be clearly observed in Section A. of the “Prologue,” the particular mode of narration the storyteller selects for himself—as highlighted through the marked use of certain key terms—plays a seminal role in elucidating an essential aspect of the semantic code for the *Slovo*. More specifically, there is no doubt—as suggested above—that the opposition between the terms “song” (*пѣснь*) and “tale” (*повѣсть*) is of crucial importance for the programmatic statement that opens the *Slovo* and is developed in subsequent parts of the work. According to the narrator, it is proper to compose not a “song,” which conforms to the “invention of Boyan” (*замышленіе Бояню*), but rather a “tale” (*повѣсть*), which is the conceptual and rhetorical equivalent for an “actual event” (*былина*). Two points are of particular relevance here. On the one hand, the aim of the narrator is to compile not a “song” but a “tale” that relies on “truthful accounts” that are contemporary to the raid of Igor Svyatoslavič. The narrator is obliged to reject the “poetic imagination” employed by Boyan, for—as suggested above—the “vatic Boyan” offers a “fanciful” approach to historical events and is therefore not a reliable source of information for reporting what took place and explaining the true significance of Igor’s raid. On the other hand, it is important to emphasize that Boyan’s “invention” is not really rejected in the *Slovo* but, instead, forms part of rhetorical “game” that is played with the narrator’s “own” style. Rather than simply being dismissed for his “fanciful” approach, Boyan is assigned a precise role throughout the work. As a symbol of the fantastic mode of speech, he becomes a counter-voice to the truthful exposition of the narrator. The reader should not be surprised, therefore, to find Boyan’s voice reappearing intermittently later in the *Slovo*, notwithstanding the fact that he has been summarily “dismissed” in the opening sequences of the work.

(vi) It is important to emphasize not only that the semantic system of the *Slovo* is grounded precisely in the opposition of truth and fancy but also that reliable accounts and trustworthy representations appear to be given preference by the narrator on the basis of both the literary conventions of *Slavic orthodoxa* and the “intelligence of the divine Scriptures” [Goldblatt 1997: 98-99] It is of note, in this regard, that the stylistic interplay presented in the “Prologue” and elsewhere in the *Slovo* between two sophisticated ways of writing that both involve the use of allegorical speech—that is, between a “poetics of the truthful” (*повѣсть-былины*) and a “poetics of the fantastic” (*пѣснь-замышленіе Бояню*)—would appear to be linked to the pronounced contrast in Orthodox Slavic “literary doctrine” between “true” verbal signs and “fabricated” signifying functions. Only the latter could reveal an absolute truth revealed by the Word of God, whereas the former could be veracious only if it adapted itself to the semantic domain of absolute truth. However, in accordance with the Orthodox Slavic “rules of the game,” any veridical historical narration, based as it was on the relative truth of human experience, was acceptable, provided that it relied on the absolute truth of divine revelation. As noted above, moreover, dependence of the relative truth offered by an “actual event” on the absolute truth of Christian doctrine required a distinction between different levels of meaning: “Historical (i.e., transitory) reality could become entirely intelligible only in light of the spiritual reality revealed by the Bible and other sacred writings. From this it followed that any human writing, placed as it was on the *historical level* of meaning, could aim at the truth only if its signifying system relied on semantic referents located on the spiritual level [Picchio 1977a & 1983].



B. ZADONŠČINA.

[Undol'sky MS.]

[fols. 171^v-172^r] И рцем таково слово: Лудчи бо нам, брате, начати повѣдати иными словесы от похвальных сихъ и о нынешных повѣстех похвалу великого кн(я)зя Дмитрея Ивановича и брата его кн(я)зя Владимира Андрѣевича, а внуки с(вя)таго великаго кнн(я)зя Владимира Киевскаго. Начаша ти повѣдати по дѣлом и по былинам. Не проразимся мыслию но землями, помянем первых лѣт времена, похвалим вещаннаго боярина разна гудца в Киеве. Тот боярин воскладоша оразная своя персты на живыя струны, пояша руским кн(я)зем славу.

[Historical-1 MS]

[fol. 215^v] Рци того, лутче бо ес(ть), брате, нача повѣдати инѣми словесы о похвал(ь)ных о нынешних повестех от полку кн(я)зя Дмитрея Ивановича и брата его кн(я)зя Владимира Киевскаго. Начаша повѣдати по дѣлом по гибел(ь)ю, но потрезвимъс(я) мысльми и землями, и помянем первых лѣт времена, и похвалим вѣща боинаго рогаздаго гудца в Киевѣ. Тот боюн воскладше гораздныя своя персты на яивыя струны и пояше кн(я)земъ рускимъ сл(а)вы.

[Synodal MS]

[fol. 37^r] Скажи ми, брате, коли имы словесы о похал(ь)ных сихъ о нынешних повестех а полку великого князя Дмитрия Ивановича и брата его князя Володимера Анъдреевича и правнуковы Володимера Киевского. Нача повѣдати о делом былым. Не поразился мысленными землями, помянем первых лет времена, похвал вещаго горазда гудца. Тотъ бо деи похвалы, вещи буиныи накладаетъ свои белыя руцы но злотыи струны, пояше руским князем похвалу.

[Kirillo-Belozersky MS]

[fol. 122^v] Первѣе всѣхъ вшедъ восхвалимъ вѣщаго го Бояна в городѣ в Киевѣ, гораздо гудца. Тои бо вѣщии Боянъ воскладая свои златыя персты на живыя струны, пояше славу руссыимъ кн(я)земъ.

COMMENTARY ON THE ZADONŠČINA IN COMPARISON WITH THE IGOR TALE.

(i) It is of note that in the introductory textual units prior to this passage from the *Zad*, one learns in *U*, *S*, *Ž*, and *H*₂ that the purpose of the narrative is to give praise to *both* Grand Prince Dmitrij Ivanovič *and* his “brother” Prince Volodimer Andreevič. By contrast—and despite the important role played by Vsevolod Svjatoslavič in the *Slovo* in the “Prologue” to the latter work the narrator makes it evident that there is *one* main protagonist of the tale, namely, Prince Igor Svjatoslavič. In other words, unlike the *Zad*, the *Slovo* is a work that focuses on the inner drama of *one* hero, whose “sin of pride,” defeat at the hands of the Polovcians, and imprisonment—and later repentance, freedom from captivity, and liberation from spiritual bondage—are at the heart of the work.

(ii) The *Slovo* opens with a discussion between the narrator and his audience (*братіе*), wherein it is suggested that it might befit *us* to begin the tale of Igor's raid “in accordance with the actual events of this very time.” In the *Zad*, however, whereas *U* begins with a *first-person plural* verb form (рцем)—cf. the initial words of the *Slovo* and the use of the *first-person pronoun* (*Нелъно ли ны бяшетъ*)—both *H*₁ and *S* present a *second-person singular* verb form (*рци, скажи*). Indeed, in *S* our textual unit for “test case #1” is attributed not to the narrator but to Grand Prince Dmitrij Ivanovič, who addresses his brother Volodimer Andreevič (*Говорит княз(ь) великии Дмитреи Иванович брату своему кн(я)зю*). The latter reference to the two “brothers” repeats what one finds at the very beginning of *S*. Unlike *S*, *U* and *I* do not contain this phrase, which in *S* appears to refer to Dmitrij Ivanovič as the source of the following address [Adrianova-Peretc 1962: 135-36]. The transitions between singular and plural would appear to apply not only to the narrator but also the “audience.” It is of note, in this regard, that *U*, *H*₁ and *S* make reference to a singular addressee (*брате*), while the *Slovo* refers to a collective set of listeners or readers (*братіе*).

(iii) If one accepts the conjectural reading in A.A. Zimin's reconstruction of the “extensive version” of the *Zad*—namely, «Лудчи бо нам есть братіе, **начати**, поведати иными словесты о похвальных сих о нынешних повесех о полку великого князя Дмирея Ивановича и брата его князя Владимире Одреевича, правнука святого великого князя Владимире Киевскаго—**начати** поведати по делом по былым» [Zimin 2006: 444]—one is obliged to conclude, in contradistinction to the interpretations offered by Jakobson, Lixačev, and other scholars, that this passage is composed of a single sentence, subdivided into two clauses. Thus,

from the syntactic and rhetorical viewpoints, one “branch” of the *Zad* would appear to parallel what we have detected in the opening sequence of the *Slovo*

(iv) Nonetheless, a careful comparison of the two textual units in question reveals significant differences between the *Slovo* and the textual documentation of the *Zad*. In the opening words of the *I.T.*'s “Prologue” the narrator suggests that it is better to begin “this tale” (a) by relying on the “arduous tales” about the raid of Prince Igor Svjatoslavič and (b) “in accordance with the actual events of this very time” (i.e., the time of Igor Svjatoslavič) but (c) “not according to the invention of Boyan.” In other words, the narrator’s intent is to write a “truthful tale” instead of a “fanciful song” in the style of “vatic Boyan.” Nonetheless, even though a symbol of the “fantastic” mode of speech in the *Slovo*, Boyan becomes a “counter-voice” with a precise rhetorical function even after he has been summarily discarded in the opening lines of the “Prologue” for not being the voice of the “true faith.” He will reappear intermittently later in the *I.T.*, reminding the reader of that “other style” which reveals embellished expressions of poetic falsehood. In the complex phrasing of the *Zad* (i.e., as attested in *U*, *H₁* and *S*), instead, it would appear that—according to the narrator—the work should *not* be modeled on the “current praiseful stories” seemingly even written *by* Dmitrij Ivanovič (i.e., not necessarily *about* Dmitrij Ivanovič); the “new” work on campaign of the *two* “brothers” should rather be “retold in different words” and should “begin according to actual deeds and events.” This message is in sharp contrast to what we read in the “Prologue” of the *I.T.*, where we are told by the narrator that the “new” tale is about the raid of only *one* brother (i.e., Igor Svjatoslavič) and should begin *both* “with ancient words from the arduous tales” and “in accordance with the actual events of this very time.”

(v) The most important contrast between the *Slovo* and the *Zad* is to be found in the role assigned to “vatic Boyan” [Adrianova-Peretc 1962: 136-37].⁵ As noted above, in the *Slovo* the narrator establishes an opposition of the style of “truthful representation” to the “fanciful manner” of Boyan. In other words, it is possible to conclude that *повѣсть* (“tale”) is presented by the narrator in the “Prologue” as the conceptual and rhetorical equivalent of *былина* (“actual event”), whereas *пѣснь* (“song”), the formal alternative to *повѣсть*, is identified with the *замышленіе Бояню* (“invention of Boyan”). Moreover, as Roman Jakobson [1966b: 404-05] noted, the contrast between the “trustworthy” style of the narrator and the “fanciful” approach employed by Boyan betrays a striking parallelism with what is found in the preamble to the *Chronicle* of Constantine Manasses in general—and its introduction to the story of the Trojan War in particular—regarding the type of exposition to be used in presenting a “tale” in a truthful manner [cf. Picchio 1985]. Thus, the *Chronicle* informs the reader of the decision not to tell the history of Troy in the manner of Homer, inasmuch as Homer, having yielded to poetic imagination, diverges from historical reality. Likewise, according to what we find in the “Prologue” to the *IT*, the narrator informs us that he will not accept Boyan’s “inventive” style because it deviates from the facts. In other words, like the Homer of the *Manasses Chronicle*, Boyan “adorns his words with various ornaments of wisdom and alters and transposes many things.” In the *Zad*, instead, one is confronted with an entirely different contextual backdrop. In this work, we are asked to recall the “era of the first times” and—it would seem—to offer a composition in the style of “vatic Boyan”; indeed, rather than suggesting that we reject Boyan, the narrator of the *Zad* encourages us to praise the “skilled *singer* in the town of Kyiv.” Finally,

⁵ Cf. the position advanced by Roman Jakobson [1966: 405], who writes, as follows: “In particular the rôle of Boyan in the [*I.T.*] is definitely organic. ... The prophetic sayings of the wizard Boyan play a considerable rôle in the course of the entire [*I.T.*], whereas the evocation of Boyan and his epithet in the [*Zad*] are motivated uniquely by the emphasized intention of the author to imitate the [*I.T.*].”

when Sofonija subsequently is recalled in *U* (*Аз же помяну резанца Софония*), as well as in *H₁* and *S*, the narrator not only accepts but *extols*, “in the words of Boyan's psaltery *songs*, this Grand Prince Dmitrii Ivanovič and his brother, Prince Volodimer Andreevič ... because from the fight on the Kalka until the battle with Mamaj, for some 160 years the [Rus] princes' manliness and striving for the [land of Rus] and the Christian faith had nearly crumbled.” It is of note— notwithstanding the views advanced by Jakobson, Lixačev and many other scholars—that the contextual frame for the *Zad* begins here and elsewhere, in the textual documentation of the work, *not* with the battle on the river Kajala (i.e., Igor's raid of 1185) but rather with the fight on the river Kalka (i.e., the battle between Russians and the Tatars in 1223-1224) [Fennell 1968].



III.

Test Case #2: A Comparison of the *Slovo* and the *Zadonščina*

Section B. of the “Prologue” of the *Igor Tale*.

[V] *Почнемъ же, братіе, повѣсть сію отъ стараго Владимира до нынѣшняго Игоря, иже истягну умъ крѣпостію своею и поостри сердца своего: мужествомъ⁶ наплънився ратного духа наведе своя храбрія плъкы на землю половѣцкую, за землю Руськую.*

[VI] *Тогда Игорь възрѣ на свѣтлое солнце и видѣ отъ него тъмою вся своя воя прикрыты, и рече Игорь къ дружинѣ своей: «братіе и дружино! Луцежъ бы потяту быти, неже полонену быти».*

[VII] *«А всядемъ, братіе, а свои брѣзья комони, да позримъ синего Дону». Спала князю умъ похот(ь) искусити Дону великаго, и жалость ему знаменіе заступи.⁷*

COMMENTARY ON SECTION B. OF THE “PROLOGUE” OF THE *IGOR TALE*.

(i) In sequence V of Section B., as in sequence I of Section A., there is an invitation to begin telling a “story” (i.e., *Почнемъ же ... повѣсть сію*). The rhetorical link with the earlier occurrence of the term *повѣсть** in sequence I (i.e., *начати же сію повѣсть*) would appear to be evident and confirms the conjectural reading—namely, *повѣсть** in the place of *нѣснь*—submitted therein. Moreover, whereas Section A. of the “Prologue” provides a true introduction to the *I.T.*, Section B. would seem to transfer the reader to the actual “tale” of Igor Svjatoslavič

⁶ Sequence V consists of two parts. Whereas the first part contains the spiritual definition of the work's subject matter, the second part (beginning with the word *мужествомъ*) provides the historical description and elucidation. It is of note that—in contradistinction to the view held by most scholars—thematic and prosodic analyses confirm that the main break in sequence V occurs after *своего*: [Picchio 1978: 399-404; Goldblatt & Picchio 1995: 47-48].

⁷ It is of note that we have inverted the last two syntactic segments. In the same way that “desire” inflames Igor's mind, so his “passion” creates a spritual barrier between him and the “sign” (i.e., the eclipse) shown to him by God [Goldblatt & Picchio 1995: 49-50].

and its levels of meaning. In other words, sequence V would appear to represent the *pivotal* portion of the “Prologue” that marks the transition from seemingly programmatic remarks on style to what would appear to be the narrative of the *Slovo*. Finally, if the *novbctь* motif had been confined to only a minor portion of Section A.—and Boyan had been the true focus of the narrator’s attention—the “raid” of Prince Igor and its significance predominate in Section B.

(ii) It would appear, therefore, that it is only in Section B. that the actual *narratio-expositio* of the work begins. The narrator then proceeds to provide additional details about Prince Igor, making it evident that he is the *main* protagonist of the *Slovo*. In sequence V, however, the hero of the story, Igor Svyatoslavič, is characterized not only historically but also allegorically. The historical events in which he is the *principal* character are alluded to in the words, [*Игорь*] *наведе своя храбрья плъкы на землю половѣцкую* (“[Igor] led his brave hosts into the Polovcian land, beyond the land of Rus”), whereas the spiritual meaning of the story is disclosed in the words, [*Игорь*], *иже истягну умъ крѣпостію своею и поостри сердца своего*: (“[Igor], who expanded his mind through his own hardness”). In other words, here, too—as in many other Old Rus literary works—one can detect a “thematic clue” placed in a structurally-marked position that appears to be used in order to bridge the semantic gap between the historical and spiritual “senses” or “meanings” [Picchio 1977a; Picchio & Goldblatt 2009*].

(iii) Thus, what appears to have escaped the attention of previous scholarship is that the phrasing in sequence V seem to contain a *biblical* “thematic clue,” namely, a citation from Deuteronomy 2.30—“And King Sihon of Heshbon was not willing to let us pass by him, *because the Lord our God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate*, that he might be delivered into your hands, as on this day”—which if read within its biblical context, elucidates the higher meaning of the *Slovo* as it has come down to us [Goldblatt & Picchio 2009*]. It is evident in sequence V that the “author” of the *Slovo* desires to attribute to Igor Svyatoslavič a state of mind and “harshness of manner” similar to traits exhibited by King Sihon of Heshbon, whose spirit and heart were “hardened” and “made obstinate” by God. There is a difference, however, between King Sihon and Prince Igor. Whereas the God of Israel spiritually blinded the former, the latter hardens his *own* spirit and “exasperates” his *own* heart. It is true that, from a Christian standpoint, at issue here is the Prince Igor’s resistance to God, not whether it is the former or the latter who hardened the heart. Nonetheless, the phrasing in the *Slovo* can be viewed as an emphasis placed on the motif of Prince Igor’s “*sin* of pride.” In other words, Igor’s spiritual blindness—that is, his refusal to “observe” the sign, in the form of an eclipse, and give heed to God—is presented at the very *beginning* of the “tale” as the result of *his own* sinful behavior.

(iv) The spiritually-marked works based on Deuteronomy 2.30 define Igor Svyatoslavič as a protagonist who “expanded his mind through his own hardness and made his heart harsher.” We are confronted here with an allusion to a general state of mind whose historical expression is described by the words that immediately follow in sequence V: *мужествомъ наплънився ратного духа, наведе своя храбрья плъкы на землю половѣцкую, за землю руськую* (“Filled with boldness of a warlike spirit, [Igor] led his brave hosts into the Polovcian land, beyond the land of Rus”). There is a relationship of cause and effect between the action described in this sentence and the preceding “thematic clue.” This linkage is suggested by the emphasis laid on the “boldness of a warlike spirit,” which can be regarded as a mode of insisting on the motif of spiritual “hardness” and intensity of feeling. In other words, Prince Igor “expanded his mind through his own hardness and made his heart obstinate” *in order that* he might engage in a military enterprise while being seized by a “warlike spirit.” The parallel implied by the reference to Deuteronomy 2.30 becomes more evident if we transfer our attention to a “higher” level of meaning. Indeed, the above-cited scriptural verse states that Lord God “hardened [Sihon’s] spirit and made his heart

obstinate *in order that* he might be delivered into [his enemies'] hands." By grasping the "higher" significance of these two stories, any reader of the *Slovo* would realize immediately that the raid of Igor Svyatoslavič was doomed from the outset.

(v) The "hardening of the heart" for sinners, that is, for those who rebel against the "effective achievement" of signs, through the actions of God⁸—or the plea to resist the "hardening of the heart"⁹—is a dominant motif in the divine Scriptures. There is little doubt that the most popular example of such spiritual folly is presented in the story of Pharaoh, whose "hardness" obstructed the wondrous signs from manifesting a knowledge of God's power. Both King Sihon and Pharaoh resisted the march on earth of the bearers of truth—historically identified first with Moses and the Israelites and later with the inspired rulers of the "New Israel" (i.e., Christianity). It is fair to assume that in Old Rus, too, the bookmen who read about the example of King Sihon—who "would not let [them] pass by him because the Lord [their] God hardened his spirit and made his heart obstinate"—had no difficulty in transferring this *metaphor* to the same systems of similes that distinguished the story of Pharaoh in Exodus 1-15.¹⁰

(vi) A distinctive feature in the story of Pharaoh is the frequent relationship between the "hardening" motif and the performance of signs—especially darkness—which have a single purpose: namely, to make apparent the uniqueness and glory of God. It is in the above-mentioned relationship, wherein physical darkness symbolizes the darkness of the spirit, that we can observe the important connection between the story of Pharaoh and the "higher" meaning of Prince Igor's raid. In the *I.T.*, therefore, "hardening of the heart" leads to prolonged disobedience and "obstinacy" against Christian law; and rebellion against a sign from God, in the form of an eclipse, is linked with a "spiritual blindness" that represents bondage to sin. Here, as in the law and later the prophets of the Old Testament, physical conditions—such as "hard hearts" and "dull ears"—are appropriated for moral states. More specifically, in the *Slovo* it is possible to identify Prince Igor's "spiritual blindness" with a "stubborn and rebellious heart" that—because—it does not incline the ear obediently to God's Covenant—is likely to incur divine wrath. Hence, Prince Igor's "obstinate disobedience to Christian law" inevitably leads to the "sin of pride"—that is, to his arrogant belief that he can ignore a divine sign and "break a lance at the border of the Polovcian field"—and is to be understood as the rejection of a sign revealed to warn him about the consequences of not hearkening to God's words and walking only in the imagination of his own heart [see Jer. 13.9-17].

(vii) In sequence VI of the *Slovo* the message conveyed by the "thematic clue" is translated into the language of symbols. Once again, the motif of spiritual blindness is illustrated through a description of behavior, for Prince Igor refuses to understand the "true meaning" of the solar eclipse, which is to be seen as a "sign from God" that, if resisted, can lead to the enslavement that is sin (i.e., a fundamental motif which we can detect in the Laurentian and Hypatian chronicles). As is well known in *Slovo* scholarship, historians have established that this sudden darkness at noon was not mere fiction. There was in fact an eclipse on Wednesday, May 1, 1185.

⁸ See *inter alia* Ex 7.13-14; 7.22; 8.15, 19, 32; 9.7, 12, 34-35; 10.1, 20, 27; 11.10; 14.8; Deut 2.30; 1 Sam 6.6; 2 Chr 36.11-13; Jer 5.23-24, 28-29; Mk 6.52; 8.17; Jn 12.40; Rom 9.18; 1 Esd 1.48. As noted above, there is a striking parallel between God's hardening of Pharaoh and the "deaf ears" of Pharaoh (Ex 7.34; 11.9; 7.13, 22; 8.11, 15; 9.12)" [Boyle 2001: 420].

⁹ See *inter alia* Ps 94 [95].8; Mt 19.8; Mk 3.5; 10.5; 16.14; Heb 3.8, 15; 4.7.

¹⁰ See in particular Ex 10.20-23; 11.10; 14.4; 14.17-21.

Nonetheless, while it is true that the “author” of the *Slovo* had reliable historical information available to him, it is no less true that the historical truth is not to be regarded as a decisive component in the figurative context of the story. In other words, what really counts is the meaning of the eclipse as an omen. Thus, as suggested above, if one follows the exegetical guidelines provided by the *biblical* “thematic clue,” the “darkness” that covered Igor’s host is much more than a physical phenomenon. It is a spiritual barrier that has arisen to separate Igor from God and also a sign of God’s wrath; and to recall the darkness that took hold of Pharaoh’s Egypt, a Christian bookman could have had recourse to not only Exodus but also the Book of Psalms as well as the warnings and complaints in the Book of Job.¹¹

(viii) Igor Svyatoslavič is unable to see or hear God because he is consumed by a warlike fury, which makes him spiritually blind and deaf. If not for his furious passion, he might have understood the divine sign revealed to him in sequence VI, in the form of sudden darkness. This would appear to be the logical conclusion that any Orthodox Slavic reader would have drawn from a correct interpretation of this initial scene. In sequence VII, however, the narrator does not rely totally on the understanding of the reader and, at this point, *explains* directly the hidden meaning of the entire story. Sequence VII is of crucial importance for an understanding of the *I.T.*, inasmuch as it confirms *expressis verbis* the interpretation of the “thematic clue” as an allusion to the protagonist’s “exasperated” state of mind. In other words, it is the “desire” (*noxomь*) “to taste the Great Don” that “consumed” (lit. “burned up”) Prince Igor’s “mind”; and it is his “passion” (*жалость*) that prevented him from seeing the divine “sign” (*знаменіе*) in the clearness of day. The fact that the narrating voice intervenes directly for the purpose of affirming a spiritual assessment of this event casts new light on the entire story. The narrator identifies himself here as the “other voice”—in opposition to the utterances of “vatic Boyan”—and as the voice of true faith. It is fair to say that his is the voice of Christian truth in contradistinction to the embellished expressions of poetic falsehood.

(ix) Subsequent to Section B. of the “Prologue,” in an “evocative panel” that presents Prince Igor setting off into the “open field,” there is a textual portion that also seems to share “common textual material” with testimonies of the *Zad*:

[XIV] *Тогда вѣступи Игорь князь въ златъ стремянь и поѣха по чистому полю. Солнце ему тьмою путь заступаше; ноць стонущи ему грозою птичь убуди; свистъ звѣринъ вѣста блізъ.*

In sequence XIV, the ill-fated raid is symbolized in visual terms: as Igor Svyatoslavič enters into battle, he rides from light into darkness. The “proud” commander is shrouded in darkness, which bars his way; in other words, it is the absence of light which indicates that Prince Igor’s host is advancing from the border-plain into the Polovcian wood. Igor’s “groping at noon-day as in the night” [Job. 5.14] results from his sinful recklessness.

(x) Section B. of the “Prologue” thus demonstrates that—like King Sihon and Pharaoh—Prince Igor would appear doomed to spiritual and material defeat because his heart has been “hardened.” This “hardness” does not necessarily come from above; indeed, it may derive, as in the case of Igor Svyatoslavič, from human weakness and *pride*. From a Christian standpoint, however, it would be a mistake to understand the story of Prince Igor solely in terms of

¹¹ See Ps 104 (105). 26-28; Job 5.13-14 & 19.8.

disobedience to God, even if resistance lies at the very heart of human rebellion and *sin*. As the “Epilogue” to the *Slovo* suggests, Christian interpretation of God’s power and the “hardening of Pharaoh’s heart cannot exclude from consideration the sovereign Creator as a *merciful* God who desires the ultimate redemption all humanity, including Prince Igor. Indeed, if one views the hardening of the heart as part of salvation history (i.e., *Heilsgeschichte*), that is, as the story of redeeming acts in history, one can better understand the “Epilogue” to the *Slovo* and Igor’s passage from perdition to the light of salvation [see Rom 9.16-18]. It would appear in the “Epilogue” that God’s wrath will be transmuted into mercy as a result of Igor’s “change of mind” (*μετάνοια*) and acceptance of Christian humility. Once in God’s merciful grace, Igor Svjatoslavič will be liberated from both physical and spiritual bondage and once again be a member of the Christian community of Rus.

(xi) Thus, in the “Epilogue” to the *Slovo* a merciful God suddenly appears to show a repentant Igor Svjatoslavič the way out of the Polovcian land and the “true path” back to Rus (*Игореву князю Богъ путь кажетъ*). He is shown to the good river, which represents the passage from perdition to the light of salvation. Moreover, because having been told that “it is bad for the land of Rus’ to be without Igor,” we are to understand that Igor is now once again member of the Christian community of Rus. Proof of this atmosphere of change in the “Epilogue” is not only Prince Igor’s return to Rus but also the “shining sun,” which has replaced the eclipse that had symbolized God’s warning:

[LXXXVIII] Солнце свѣтитя на небесѣ: Игорь князь въ Руской земли! Дѣвици поють на Дунаи, вьются голоси чрезъ море до Кіева. Игорь ѣдетъ по Боричеву къ святѣй Богородици Пирогошеи.

Thus, discord has disappeared, and Igor’s soul has been cleansed from sin. His arrival at the church of the Blessed Virgin of the Tower is emblematic of both his societal and his religious reconciliation. Igor’s “excommunication” has ended and the land of Rus’ is united. As has been noted elsewhere, “Prince Igor’s ascent of Boričev hill, on which stands the church of the Blessed Virgin of the Tower, symbolically represents his “spiritual rebirth into the enlightenment of Orthodox Christianity” [Spektor 2001: 484]. In other words, it would be a serious mistake to see Prince Igor’s return to Kiev as a “mirror reflection” of his setting out for a campaign or as a “mere conclusion of the natural cycle”; rather one is to view his crossing the river and coming back to Kiev as the direct consequences of a profound “transformation.”



B. ZADONŠČINA.

[Undol’sky MS.]

[fol. 173^r] [i] Се бо кн(я)зь великии Дмитреи Ивановичъ и братъ его княз(ь) Владимиръ Андрѣвичъ помолися Б(о)гу и пречистеи его М(а)т(е)ри, истезавше ум свои крѣпкою крепостью и поостриша с(е)рдца свои мужеством и наполниша ратного духа, оставиша собѣ храбрѣя воеводы в Руской землѣ и помянуша прадѣда своего великого кн(я)зя Владимира Киевскаго.

[fol. 179^v] Тогда кн(я)зь великийи Дмитрии Ивановичъ воступив во златое свое стрѣмя и взем свои мечъ в правую руку и помолися Б(о)гу и преч(и)стои его м(а)т(е)ри. С(о)лнце ему на восток сияет и путь повѣдает, а Борисъ и Глѣбъ м(о)л(и)тву воздают за сродники своя.

[Historical-1 MS]

[fol. 216^r] Сии бо кн(я)зь великийи Дмитрии Ивановичъ и братъ его кн(я)зь Владимир Ондрѣвич помоляс(я) Бо(г)у и пр(е)ч(и)стеи Б(огороди)цы, [iii] Стяжав умъ свои крепостию, и поостриша с(е)рдца своя муж(е)ством, и наполнишас(я) ратного духа, оставиша себе храмныя полъкы в Руськой земли, и помянуша прадѣда своего кн(я)зя Владимира Киевскаго.

[fol. 218^v] Тогда княз(ь) великийи вѣступив во златое стрѣмя, взем свои меч въ правую руку свою, и помоляс(я) Б(о)гу и пр(е)с(вя)тии его Б(огороди)цы. С(о)лнце ему на вѣстоцы сияет, а Борисъ и Глѣбъ м(о)л(и)тву воздают за сродники своя.

[Kirillo-Belozersky MS]

[fol. 123^r] Се азъ кн(я)зь великийи Дмитрии Иванович и братъ его кн(я)зь Володимеръ Ондрѣвич поостриша с(е)рдца свои мужеству, ставше своею крѣпостью, помянувшѣ прадѣда кн(я)зя Володимера Киевскаго, ц(а)ря русскаго.

[fol. 126^v] Тогда же кн(я)зь великийи Дмитрии Иванович ступи во свое злато стремя, и всѣдъ на свои борзыйи конь, примаю копие в правую руку. С(о)лнце ему на вѣстоцѣ семтября 8 в среду на р(о)ж(е)ство пр(е)с(вя)тыя Б(огороди)ца ясно свѣтитъ, путь ему повѣдаеть, Борисъ Глѣбъ м(о)л(и)ту творять за сродники свои.

[Synodal MS]

[fol. 39^r] Тогда княз(ь) великийи Дмитрии заплакал гарко и рече: «Г(о)с(по)ди Б(о)же мои, на тя уповах, да не постыжуся во веки, на да посмеются врази мои». Втер слезы свои и воступает во позлощное свое стремя и взял меч свои во правую руку и помолися Б(о)гу и пречистой его матери. С(о)лнце ему ясная на востак, пут(ь) поведает, с(вя)тыи Борис и (Г)лебъ молитву творит зо сродники своя.

[Historical-2 MS]

[fol. 62^{r-v}] Реч(е) кн(я)зь великийи Дмитрѣи Иванович: «Г(оспод)и Б(ож)е мои, на тя уповах, да не постыжус(я) в вѣки, ни да посмеють ми с(я) врази твои мнѣ». И помоляс(я) Б(о)гу и пр(е)ч(и)стѣи его м(а)те(р)и божии и всѣмъ с(вя)т(ы)мъ и прослезя горко и утеръ слезы.

Commentary on the *Zadonščina* in Comparison with the *Igor Tale*.

(i) Previous scholarship often has pointed out that this episode of the *Zad*, “which links it with the *I.T.*, provides a description of princes Dmitrij Ivanovič and Volodimer Andreevič, “almost literally is repeated in the description of the psychological state of Igor Svjatoslavič as he sets off on his raid” [Adrianova-Peretc 1962: 137]. Moreover, as V.P. Adrianova-Peretc [1962: 137-38] has written:

In this episode of [the *Slovo*] we find one of the *hapax legomena* (which is not found in other Old Rus monuments), namely, the verb form *istjagnu* [cf. Lixačev 1950: 380]. Investigators, who compare it to the related verb form *stjatnuti* translate it in accordance with the meaning of this word, that is, [M.R.] *prepojasal*. In the analogous sentence of the [*Zad*] not one of the copies employs the verb form *istjagnuti*, putting in its place the verb that is related in meaning, [that is,] *istezavše* [*U*] ([also] *stjažav* [*H₁*] [and] *stavše* [*K-B*]). However, not one of the meanings of the verb *istjazati*, known in the Old Rus language—[namely, M.R.] *trebovat*’, *vzjat*’, *uznat*’, *issledovat*’, *mučit*’, [and] *istjazat*’—provides a satisfactory translation of the phrase, *istezavše um svoi krepostiju* [*U*]. Only a single explanation remains: having repeated almost literally the distinctive bellicose mood of Prince Igor, having correctly converting the verbs into the plural, Sofonij [i.e., the alleged “author” of the *Zad*] “stumbled” on a word that was obscure for him, [that is,] *istjagnu* and unsuccessfully replaced it with [a verb form] that was similar in sound, [namely,] *istezavše*.

(ii) Our comparison of the two passages from the *Slovo* and the *Zad* reveals “common textual material” which, however, lays bare not only exceedingly different motifs but also quite distinct “psychological states” for the protagonists of the two works. Whereas in the *Slovo* a thematic clue from Scripture is placed in a structurally-marked position in order to reveal to the reader a “higher meaning” that places great emphasis on the “sin of pride” and “spiritual blindness” consuming the soul of *one* protagonists—namely, Igor Svjatoslavič—and separating him from God, in the *Zad* the use of similar “textual material” serves a completely function. More specifically, in the latter work the words that functioned as a thematic clue in the *Slovo* are *not* employed in reference to the sinful behavior of either of the *two* protagonists—namely, Dmitrij Ivanovič and Volodimer Andreevič—and do *not* expose the “expansion through hardness” that is a distinctive feature of the depiction of Igor before riding off into the “open field.” To the contrary, the two “brothers”—rather than having “desire burning the mind” and “passion hiding the sign”—behave in such a way as to *not* create a spiritual barrier between themselves and God. Indeed—as attested by *U*, *H₁*, *K-B*, *S*, and *H₂*—the two princes Dmitrij Ivanovič and Volodimer Andreevič “pray to God and His Immaculate Mother, before they test their minds with firmness and sharpen their hearts.” It would seem that the search for glory (*слава*), as well commonplace attributes of “boldness” (*мужество*) and “hardness” or “firmness” (*крѣпность*)—which were conditioned by the larger context of the *Slovo* in order not only to describe Prince Igor’s behavior but also to reveal a wholesale condemnation of “vainglory” (*слава*) and “discord” (*крамола*)—are used in the *Zad* in a manner similar to they way they would be employed in the so-called “military tales” (*voinskie povesti*), where they help to describe the mental preparation of a courageous prince and strong military leader.

(iii) In the *Slovo* the protagonist rebels against a sign from God (i.e., an eclipse) and consumed by “spiritual blindness” marches into darkness. As noted above [sequence

XIV], the “sun bar[s Prince Igor’s] path with darkness,” that is, consumed by “spiritual blindness,” he marches into the darkness of the Polovcian in violation of the will of God. The sun will only appear, and lead Prince Igor back to the land of Rus, *after* true repentance and redemption, which make possible the protagonist's liberation from both physical captivity and spiritual bondage [sequence LXXXVIII]. In the *Zad*, by contrast, no eclipse takes place and the “sun” never departs from the societal and religious life of the two heroes. That is why—as attested by *U*, *H₁*, and *K-B*— when the grand prince steps into his gold stirrup and takes his sword in his right hand, he again “pray[s] to God and His Immaculate Mother. Hence, *before* the battle with the Tatars, the “sun shines clear for him in the East”; and “Boris and Gleb pray for their kinsmen.” In *S*, and *H₂*, moreover, Dmitrij Ivanovič—already in a state of humility and repentance *before* the military campaign—“weeps bitterly,” affirming that “he has placed his trust in God” so that he not be shamed for eternity.” Thus, the *Slovo* does *not* represent either the exaltation of a valiant warrior or the “dominant motif” of Rus defeat on the Kajala in 1185, but rather constitutes a work which focuses first on the sinful pride and later on the spiritual rebirth of a Rus prince; that is, the work offers a religious *exemplum* that provides an message grounded in Christian teachings. The *Zad*, by contrast, presents as its leitmotif the theme of victory for protagonists who are in a state of Grace *before* and *after* the battle. God had punished Rus for its sin [through the agency of Tsar Batyj]; but now the Lord God, who loves man, pardoned and consoled the [Rus] princes, Grand Prince Dmitrij Ivanovič and his brother Prince Volodimer Andreevič” [Jakobson & Worth 1966: 595]. Thus, both works, the *Slovo* and the *Zad*, offer a Christian message of a merciful God seeking man’s liberation from sin, his redemption, and his salvation.

