

## OLD RUSSIAN APOSTOLUS FROM THE XIV<sup>th</sup> CENTURY: THE MANUSCRIPT HISTORY AND DIALECTAL FEATURES

*Aliona A. Bakshaeva*

*Kazan Federal University  
aabakshaeva42@gmail.com*

*Oleg F. Zholobov*

*Kazan Federal University*

*Mariia O. Novak*

*Kazan Federal University*

*Mikhail B. Popov*

*St. Petersburg State University*

**Abstract.** The article presents the research of an Old Russian copy of Apostolos (Tolstovskii Apostolos, National Library of Russia, Q.p.I.5) yet recently dated by the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> – the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The codex stands out among other Old Russian written sources having a unique structure. It represents a full-text version (the continuous text type) of the Preslav recension. An online edition of the manuscript was accomplished at Kazan Federal University. This machine-readable publication is accompanied by various search modules and indexes and located on the “Kazan digital collection” page of the “Manuscript” portal. Recently, a hypothesis of the same provenance of this Apostolos and the Onega Psalter (precisely dated by 1395) has emerged. Besides, it is assumed that both manuscripts were produced at a Moscow scriptorium. The article critically examines these hypotheses describing the manuscripts’ history and comparing their handwritings, orthographic systems, and decoration. The study presents an analysis of regional characteristics of Tolstovskii Apostolos, which confirm its north-western origin and root relations with the book culture of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The analysis of the linguistic parameters of both codices was undertaken for the first time.

**Key words:** Old Russian, book culture, continuous Apostolos, manuscript history, dialectal features.

**1.Introduction.** Recently, the “Kazan collection of digital editions of Slavic-Russian written sources from the 12th-14th centuries” on the “Manuscript” portal was supplemented with a new publication. Presently, it has nine voluminous codices [1]. A parchment Apostolos from F.A. Tolstoi’s collection (from now on – AT) being stored in the Russian National Library (Q.p.I.5) was included in the database, published by using a photocopy [2]. Slavonic Apostolos research takes a significant place in the Slavic studies both in Russia and other countries [3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11]. This article considers the history of AT, certain peculiarities of its structure, design, and linguistic features that could shed light on the source’s origin.

### 2.METHODS

The electronic edition of AT presents a machine-readable version. Therefore the manuscript can be studied through modern digital technologies using various search modules, direct, converted, and quantitative indexes [12, 13, 14]. We used comparative and diachronic methods in describing and comparing various manuscript sources. The comparative analysis of AT and OP codices was of primary importance. Also, the Khitrovo Gospel and the Kiev Psalter were involved in the comparative study in a certain number of parameters. Sometimes, we used the quantitative method, since a significant quantitative predominance of certain spelling allows to clarify dating of manuscripts.

### 3.Results And Discussion:

**3.1.General Characteristics of the Manuscript.** AT was written in two columns with a small-size beautiful uncial on parchment in quarto (22,2 x 16,3 cm). The cover is old but younger than the manuscript. The AT composition is unusual: first, follow Paul’s Epistles, secondly, Catholic Epistles and the book of Acts finishes the codex. Besides, AT contains some additional texts.

**3.2.The Manuscript’s Design.** The manuscript opens with a skillfully designed frontispiece (f. 1v.), which is unique and essential for specifying the manuscript origin. It depicts a temple with five domes (cf. the color photocopy XLI [15]). A single line outlines the silhouette of the temple. The inner surface of the drawing is painted blue and covered with a woven ornament, cords and zoomorphic images. The basic AT text has no ornaments.

**3.3.The Question of the Manuscript Date and Origin.** In “Svodnyi Katalog”-1984 the manuscript has an early and wide dating – the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> – the first half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century [16, p. 342]. In “Svodnyi Katalog”-2002, A.A. Turilov placed the manuscript at the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, referring to A.L. Lifshits’s opinion [17, p. 587]. According to the latter, AT, perhaps, is a pair codex of the Onega Psalter from 1395 (from now on – OP). The basis for this assumption was “extremely similar, although not identical,” scribes’ handwritings, and the similarity of frontispieces [18, p. 82]. Like OP, AT was designed mainly for home (not liturgical) reading. Moreover, it is not a praxapostolos, and other ancient Russian manuscripts do not repeat its structure [19, p.511]. For OP both G.I. Vzdornov [20, p. 226] and A.A. Turilov [21, p. 542] assume some Moscow origin. Thus, it would be logical to assume a Moscow origin for AT. At the same time, Lifshits does not see any significant reasons for bounding both manuscripts to a particular territory and, in our opinion reasonably, doubts their Moscow origin: “Khudozhestvennoe

ubranstvo rukopisi nikak ne vpišyvaetsia v moskovskii kontekst” [The codex’s design never accords to the Moscow context] [18, p. 79].

His thesis that AT and OP form a paired set of manuscripts is also highly questionable. There is quite a significant difference between both their handwriting and spelling systems.

The luxurious design of OP distinctively presents a combination of different styles including the New Byzantine one. The external resemblance of the frontispieces is undoubted, but the details of the composition and the filling of their ornaments are nevertheless noticeably different. Since OP design is a compilation of styles, it is natural to see borrowed images in its architectural frontispiece. OP “vydeliaetsia sredi rukopisei XIV veka neobyknovennym raznoobraziem dekorativnykh elementov” [stands out among the 14<sup>th</sup>-century manuscripts with its extraordinary variety of decorative elements] [22, p. 85]. Architectural frontispieces with teratological and woven ornamentation are a characteristic feature of the Novgorod manuscripts in the 14<sup>th</sup> century [22, p. 77]. The difference between the AT and OP frontispieces consists in one innovation. It is the distinct silhouette of a temple, in which the ornament is hidden, while usually, the ornamental space itself had a shape of a temple.

**3.4. The Manuscripts History.** The history of two manuscripts does not support the hypothesis that they form a pair set. The Onega Psalter received its name after its location in Krestnyi (Cross) Monastery (Onega county, Arkhangelsk province) whence it was transported to the State Historical Museum (where is kept under the library code Mus. 4040). To Krestnyi Monastery it came from another Arkhangelsk monastery – Siiski, to which, in particular, was then affixed Krivetsky pogost (a small locality or churchyard), where, as believes A.L. Lifshits, could be kept both “pair” manuscripts [19, p. 512].

The documented history of AT is also related to Arkhangelsk province, but it is quite different and has been put out of the boundaries of the monastery life. On the bottom cover of AT there is an inscription made in 17<sup>th</sup>-century cursive. It says that AT was sold by the widowed priest Matvei Osipov to the merchant Nikita Grigorievich Stroganov [23, p. 211–212].

Below the inscription, in the center of the page, are the signs S and Д, enclosed in a circle. There are two cross-shaped flourishes within the circle. This record made it possible to decipher the purchase price – six dengas [16, p. 343]. According to N.A. Mudrova, it was six altyns and four dengas (Old Russian monetary units) [24, p. 287]. The first sum seems too small to buy a book. Although at that time printed books were more expensive than handwritten books [24, p. 115], one could see that the cost of a handwritten Apostolos would be about 7-14 altyns.

Referring to A.A. Vvedenski, N.A. Mudrova talks about the sale of N.G. Stroganov’s property after his death in 1616. Probably, his property was transferred from Solvychevodsk to Moscow in the spring of 1617. In the register book from 1620 there is the following entry: “Kniga Deianie apostol’skoe i Apostol pis’mennaia, tsena 2 grivny, prodan protopopu rozhdstvenskomu Ivanu, vziato s pribyl’iu pol poltiny” [The book of Acts of apostles written, the price is two grivnas, sold to the archpriest Ivan from Nativity Church, a half-poltina was taken with the profit] [25, p. 58]. Considering the accuracy of that register book records, we assume that this was said about AT. This supposition is based on the following facts: the name of the manuscript, reflecting its contents, and the note “written”. Among 22 Apostolos copies listed in the register book 18 are printed, for one there is no indication, among three written one is written “v osminku” (in 8<sup>o</sup>), one is “aprakos” (a praxapostolos), the third is the required one, i.e. AT. Moreover, the sums spent for the manuscript purchase match: six altyns and four dengas are precisely two grivnas noted by the author of register book from 1620.

Thus, after AT had arrived from Solvychevodsk – the ancient territory of the Novgorod Republic, it was bought between 1616 and 1620 together with several other codexes by Ivan Lukoshka, the archpriest from the Nativity Cathedral “u gosudar’a na sen’ach” [on tsar’s porch] (Moscow Kremlin) (see about him in [25, p. 67]). In 1830 the manuscript entered the Imperial Public Library as a part of F.A. Tolstoi’s collection, under no. 5 [16, p. 343].

**3.5. Novgorod Dialectal Features.** There are reasons to associate the AT design with 14<sup>th</sup>-century Novgorod [26, p. 45]. The further history of the manuscript agrees with this. The discussion about the codex origin was not supported so far by any linguistic analysis. AT language, in general, has a bookish supradialectal character. Nevertheless, we managed to find in the manuscript a certain number of Novgorod dialecticisms (about Novgorod dialecticisms, see, in particular, [27, 28]). The Novgorod feature is the development of *ě* instead of the original *ь*, including the \**ь*rt-groups [28, p. 67]: *věsb věrujai* 72c; *O fikově izvērženii* 62b, and other. There are examples that reflect the Novgorod transition *ě* in *i*: *nadъ vsimъ domotъ* 66d (instead of *vsěmъ*); *neviděnija* 53d (instead of *nevěděnija*); *opriskočnii* 71a (cf. *oprěsněčēni* [29: II, p. 553]), and others. The verb forms *věděti* and *viděti* are mixed: *Vidě č(e)l(o)v(ě)ka ... i vidě takovago č(e)l(o)v(ě)ka* 23d (cf. *věmъ ... vědě...* in other copies of Apostolos). A striking Novgorod feature is the use of prefix *pri-* instead of *prě-/pre-*: *priobrazuite s’a ponovleniēm uma vašego* 8d (cf.: *prěobrazuite* R 12,2 Ochr Slepč [29: III, p. 468]); *prispěvanija* 31c, and other. The mutual modulation of inflections *-i* and *-ě* may have both a morphological and a phonetic explanation: *sъ n(e)b(e)si ... sъ n(e)b(e)sě* 70c, and other. The mixing of hissing and hushing sibilants as a Pskov-Novgorod peculiarity is observed in following contexts: *razmysl’ajuščemu* 9c vs. *razmysl’ajušču* 69d; *žičuščei* 54a. A Pskov feature, also noted in Novgorod birch bark letters from the middle of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, is a post-tonic *yakanie* (an [’a] pronunciation) [28, p. 76]: *vs’a čtet’a bratъstva vъzl’ubite. b(og)a boites’a c(ьsa)r’a čtete* 54b. Apparently, two (or even three) Novgorod dialecticisms present in the form *o(t) mertьciny* 79d (cf. *o(t) mertvečiny* 74a, 78d). Here reflected the [ts]–[ch] merger, the Novgorod reflex \**ь*rt >

тъгѣ > tret, and the simplification of the consonant group. Also, cf. *naric'a* 38a, 68a vs. *nariča* 37b (twice); *naricaemyja* 66c vs. *naričaemyi* 69d, and other.

Additionally, “material berestianykh gramot ukazyvaet na to, chto perekhod *ky, gy, hy* v *ki, gi, hi* nachinaetsia v dr.-novg. dialekte prakticheski lish' s XIV v.” [the material of birch bark letters indicates that the transition of *ky, gy, hy* to *ki, gi, hi* began in ancient Novgorod dialect, practically, only in the 14<sup>th</sup> century”] [28, p. 91], although ancient combinations occurred in birch bark letters up to the 15<sup>th</sup> century. In AT, the combinations *ky, gy, xy* were consecutively preserved and entered even borrowings: *damaskyneskъ* 23d. New combinations of *ki, gi, xi* in non-loan words are represented only by single examples.

In the following erroneous writings, one can presume that the neutralization of *u* and *v* is due to the prolonged preservation of the bilabial consonant (cf. in Novgorod birch bark letters [28, pp. 82, 91]). Cf.: *uvъzdigъšu* 29c instead of *vъzdvigъšu*; *vъzy* 77d instead of *uzy* in other copies [29: I, p. 617].

Perhaps, a dialectal character could have, according to [28, p. 53–54], forms with *ju-* at the place of the initial *u-* from \**q-*: *jutrobu* 58c; *južičьstvo* 66d. The South Slavic initial *ju-* in the manuscript is consistently replaced by *u-*.

A Novgorod innovation is noted in the genitive form of the \**a*-declination: *o(t) věř* 50d. The form of 1Pl. *esme* also presents a Novgorod dialecticism [28, p. 139], although the supradialectal Old Russian *esmy* prevails. Cf.: *My že dolъžni esme xvaliti b(og)a vsegdа o vasъ bratija* 36c, and other. 3Sg. and 3Pl. forms without the inflective *-tъ* characterized primarily western Old Russian dialects, both in the south and in the north. However, 3Pl. forms spread to a greater extent in the north-west. Cf.: *jako sъbude li mi s'a o nemъže s'a mol'u* 38c; *jazyka niktože ne može o(t) č(e)l(o)v(ě)kъ utomiti* 52b (cf. James 3,8: *a jazyk nikto iz l'udej ukrotit' ne možet*); *da egože radi oklevetaju* vy 54d (cf. 1 Peter 3,16: *za čto zloslov'at vas*), and other forms.

**4.Summary.** The AT online edition makes possible to use computer technologies in the study of the Slavonic Apostolos, as well as to accomplish a thorough linguistic analysis of the manuscript. Thanks to using a specialized font, the online edition quite accurately reproduces the manuscript orthography, including the use of grapheme-homophones and superscripts.

There are no compelling reasons to consider AT and OP as manuscripts associated with one scriptorium and forming one home-reading set. Their handwriting and spelling characteristics vary considerably. The similarity on the initial frontispieces' design could be explained by the existence of some mediating source. In general, the OP design presents an entirely different stylistic tradition, based on a compilation, and a higher artistic level. The Moscow origin of OP is questionable due to the considerable artistic, graphical, and spelling differences with such Moscow manuscripts as the Khitrovo Gospel (1393) and the Kiev Psalter (1397). AT's design continues the 14<sup>th</sup>-century Novgorod tradition of drawing architectural frontispieces. The presence of Novgorod dialecticisms in the manuscript confirms a relation with Novgorod territory.

**5.Conclusion.** The study approved the unique character of AT. Its publication helps to make a more detailed description of the Old Russian language and the book tradition in their evolution. Analysis of AT design, its linguistic peculiarities, as well as extralinguistic factors, show the high probability of the north-western, Novgorod origin of the manuscript. Likely, this codex did not form a reading set together with the OP manuscript and emerged earlier.

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