# CODEX SUPRASLIENSIS: FULL TEXT ELECTRONIC CORPUS

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The
Codex Suprasliensis (called also Retkov Sbornik) is a Cyrillic manuscript
copied in the late 10th century. As it survives today, the Codex comprises 37
quires, 285 folia, 1î. The size of the sheets is 31 X 23 cm, and the text box
23 X 15 cm (one column). The manuscript is written in straight uncial located
above the line   a model of early Cyrillic handwriting. Obviously the work of a
meticulous copyist, the codex was written on parchment in Cyrillic in Bulgaria
(probably Preslav, the capital of the First Bulgarian kingdom). The animal skin
is well-processed and in places so thin that the letters on the opposite side
of the parchment show through. The costly, well-processed parchment indicates
that the manuscript was written in times of plenty, with the generous support
of church and state authorities.

The decoration of the Codex Suprasliensis is purely
graphical and monochrome. It was executed with a brush and with the same ink as
the main text, and was probably made by the copyist Retko.  It consists of 13 headpieces, of some
text-dividers and of decorated initials that are 3 to 6 lines in height. The
style of the Codex Suprasliensis decoration resembles that in the early Greek
minuscule codices and stays within the tradition of the simply designed Greek
manuscripts of the 9th &ndash; 10th centuries, which was
also kept later on in the Byzantine provinces. Parallels to some of the
ornaments in Codex Suprasliensis could be also found in mosaics from the Near
East. The Codex&rsquo;s decoration proves that Retko was both a skilled calligrapher
and a gifted producer of books with a rich imagination, who managed to create
numerous variants out of a basic design.

The Codex Suprasliensis was copied by three scribes. The main part of
the manuscript was made by Retko. There is a colophon with his name on folio
104r. The second copyist wrote f.129.30 and f.139.9&ndash;20 (Severjanov). It is supposed
that the text on f.218.8&ndash;16 was copied by a third scribe and was afterwards
corrected by Retko (Zaimov).

The manuscript reflects a developed Cyrillic script system that is
characterized by The manuscript features four letters for nasals   k, m, g and Y.. A specific characteristic of the codes is
the use of
a special additional letter for little jus Y, which the main scribe uses after a consonant. There are two jers ú and ü, special
letters for the jotated vowels e, W, þ,, and for the palatal sonorants ë„ and í„. The most
significant orthographic features are: the regular etymological use of the
letters for the front and back nasals, an inconsistent norm for the jer vowels
with instances of loss of the weak jers, the use of å instead of a front jer (in both roots and suffixes)
and of î instead
of a back jer in suffixes only. The morphology of the Codex Suprasliensis is
characterized by a high frequency of forms that are typical of the later stage
of the Old Bulgarian literary language and reflect peculiarities of the Eastern
Bulgarian dialects.

Retko&rsquo;s manuscript was named Codex Suprasliensis after the Supra[l Monastery.
It was discovered in 1823 by the Russian slavist and orientalist MichaB Bobrowski
(1784&ndash;1848) who was a professor at the University of Vilnius. There are several
hypotheses on how the manuscript had found its way to the Supra[l Monastery:

a) the codex came to Supra[l thanks to the close relations of the
monastery with the Kiev Caves Lavra and Kiev (A. Rogov);

b) the manuscript was evacuated, like many other books, to the
north of the Danube and thus came to the Supra[l Monastery, or was brought
there by Athonite monks (K. Kuev);

c) the codex was granted to the monastery&rsquo;s founder Aleksander Chodkiewicz
by one of the Patriarchs of Constantinople   either Joachim I (1505) or
Jeremias II during his visit to the monastery in 1588&ndash;1590   or was brought to
the monastery by a Balkan pilgrim monk (M. Hajduk);

d) the manuscript had been in the monastery since its foundation in
1498 (L. &Scaron; avinskaja);

e) in the 13th century the manuscript was already in use in the
East Slavonic lands (S. Tem in).

The current research work on the history of the manuscript bears
testimony that initially it was in Kiiv Caves Lavra.

Nowaday the manuscript is kept in three libraries.
Canon MichaB Bobrowski sent the Codex to the Slovenian scholar Bartholomaeus
(Jernej) Kopitar for study. After Kopitar&rsquo;s death the first 118 folia were
preserved in the University Library in Ljubljana, where they are still kept. The
following 16 sheets were purchased by A. F. By kov in 1856 and are now located
in the Russian National Library in St. Petersburg. The remaining 151 sheets
found themselves in the collection of the Counts Zamoyski; this so-called
Warsaw part disappeared during World War II and was long considered lost until
it reemerged in the USA and was returned to Poland in 1968. It is now located
in the National Library in Warsaw.

Codex Suprasliensis was examined by scholars of 19 countries. The
contributions of foreign scholars are mainly in studying the language of the
Codex Suprasliensis. Its palaeographic and orthographic features were
investigated by Russian, German, Czech, and Polish researchers. Among them were
A. Vostokov, F. Miklosich, I. Sreznevskij, P. Lavrovskij, A. Leskien, P. Diels,
F. Pastrnek, J. PapBoDski, S. SBoDski, etc. According to them the manuscript is
an example of early Cyrillic script. The bibliography on the Codex numbers more
than 200 titles (not counting more general scholarship about the Old Church Slavonic
language or on the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition), which demonstrates the breadth
of interest in Europe and elsewhere. It was published by F. Miklosic (Vienna,
1851), S. Sever&rsquo;janov (Saint Petersburg, 1904), and  by Jordan Zaimov and Mario Capaldo (Sofia,
1982&ndash;83). The Greek sources of the Codex Suprasliensis and its texts have also
been thoroughly investigated. The main Greek sources were traced and published
(R. Trautmann, R. Klostermann, R. Aitzetmüller, M. Capaldo), an index of
sources was compiled (R. Abicht), the translated vitae were interpreted from a
historical and cultural point of view (S. Ivanov, W. Lüdtke), and a comparative
study of the Biblical references was proposed (L. MoszyDski).

The Codex Suprasliensis includes 24 vitae of Christian saints for the
month of March and 23 homilies for triodion cycle of the church year. In
content it is a lectionary menaeum (or panegyric), combined with homilies from
the movable Easter cycle, most of which were written by or are attributed to John
Chrysostom.

Most of the hagiographic works are vitae of martyrs from the 3rd
&ndash; 4th centuries, like SS Paul and Juliana, St Basiliscus, the Forty
Martyrs of Sebaste, St Pionius, presbyter of Smyrna, and some others. Several

vitae tell the lives of saints who lived in the 1st &ndash; 2nd
centuries, such as St Conon of Isauria, in the 6th &ndash; 7th centuries,
such as St Gregory the Great, Pope of Rome, or in the 9th century,
like the Forty-two Martyrs of Amorium. Geographically, the stories took place
in various regions- the Roman Empire, Asia Minor, Palestine, Egypt, the present-day
Tunisia.

It is the earliest witness of a relatively complete stage in the
development of voluminous collections of readings in the Slavonic milieu. In
this regard, it could be concluded that by the end of the 10th century
this type of composition was already established in Bulgaria. Similar
collections for other months have been preserved in later Russian manuscripts
descended from Old Bulgarian protographs, like the so-called Uspenskij sbornik
from the 12th &ndash; 13th century (State Historical Museum, Moscow,
Uspenskij 4), which contains readings for May, as well as the Miscellany with
readings for February (¹ 92.1. from the Moscow Ecclesiastical Academy
Russian State Library, Moscow).

Most of the texts had a complicated history even prior to their
inclusion in the Codex Suprasliensis. For example, the Encomium on the 40
Martyrs of Sebaste is a compilation of two earlier translations made in the 10th
century   the first is preserved in German&rsquo;s miscellany, and the second is
included in the Great Chet&rsquo;i Minei. St. John Chrysostom&rsquo;s Homily for Palm
Sunday also has two Old Bulgarian versions. The earlier is partly preserved in
Glagolita Clozianus and in two Cyrillic copies   in the Bulgarian Grigorovi
Homiliarion from the 13th century (Russian National Library, f. 87, 18.I), and
in a Russian manuscript from the first quarter of the 15th century (The Trinity
St Sergius Lavra, No 9).

The Codex Suprasliensis contains translations of
various origins, and therefore the manuscript&rsquo;s language is rather
heterogeneous. The archaic layer is distinguished by a broader use of the
lexical and syntactical forms typical of the translations of SS Cyril and
Methodius and their disciples (homily of Epiphanius of Cyprus, homilies for the
Annunciation, for Good Friday, for the 40 Martyrs, etc.).

When the Codex Suprasliensis was compiled, all the works included were edited
according to the principles of translation followed by the Preslav literary
school. For instance, it is supposed that the Homily for the Annunciation was
previously translated by St. Clement of Ohrid. The text in Codex Suprasliensis
presents a later version of his translation which displays features typical of
the so-called Preslav redaction. A more archaic version is to be found in
German&rsquo;s Miscellany (1358&ndash;59). The latter became a base for a new (Middle
Bulgarian) version of the Homily, created by the T rnovo men of letters in the
14th century. Later this version was included in the Great Chet&rsquo;i
Menei of Metropolitan Macarius.

Thus the Codex Suprasliensis is a source of primary
importance for the development both of the techniques of translation and of the
norms of the Old Bulgarian language of the late 10th century. The
Codex Supraslianis has been listed in the UNESCO&rsquo;s Memory of the World Register
since 2007. New research work on Codex Suprasliensis began 2011 in the Institute
of Literature BAS in Sofia, in the frames of the project financed by UNESCO and
with collaboration of six countries.

Current project intended to unite digital images of all known parts
of the Codex Suprasliensis, currently located in three different
countries (the National Library in Warsaw, Poland; the National Library of
Russia in St. Petersburg; and the National and University Library in Ljubljana,

Slovenia). The digital images are already available at
http://csup.ilit.bas.bg/galleries. The separate publication of the photographic
facsimile is an interim stage in the project, and the photographs will
eventually be republished together with a transcription that will be fully annotated,
accompanied by commentary and updated bibliography.


The current project aims to develop an electronic version of Codex
Suprasliensis, together with a critical apparatus, a parallel Greek
text, a modern translation, a vocabulary, a grammatical analysis, and
tools for searching. Digital images of every page of the
manuscript will be available simultaneously with
the transcribed text as a unified electronic product. The
electronic version of the Codex Suprasliensis will be freely available under a
Creative Commons BY-NC-SA license.


A pilot model of an electronic edition of a small part of the Codex Suprasliensis
with a search program was developed in 2008 at the University of Pittsburgh
(http://paul.obdurodon.org). This electronic edition of the Life of Paul the
Simple was  based on a corrected version
of the text published by J. Zaimov and M. Capaldo, accompanied by parallel
Greek text, a new English translation, detailed linguistic commentary, and
photographic facsimiles.

The separate module
in electronic edition of Codex Suprasliensis will be added with annotated
glossary created as a result of annotated corpus. It will be annotated
manually, but with the assistance of the morphological guesser already
developed by the project Pragmatic Resources in Old Indo-European Languages
(PROIEL) and trained for Old Church Slavonic morphology on the Codex Marianus.
Thus, the Codex Suprasliensis will be annotated for morphology, syntax, and
other features in the PROIEL annotation interface, and the information will be
exported in XML for incorporation into the projected electronic edition.
PROIEL, which aims at developing morphosyntactic means for the annotation of
and research into the information structure in Ancient and Hellenistic Greek,
Latin, Gothic, Classical Armenian, and Old Church Slavonic, has developed a
statistical morphological guesser and a semi-manual syntactic annotation tool
supported by a set of morphology-based rules.