

CODEX SUPRASLIENSIS: FULL TEXT ELECTRONIC CORPUS

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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, 1i. 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 – 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'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.139.9–20 (Severjanov). It is supposed that the text on f.218.8–16 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 – ŭ and ь, special letters for the jotted vowels e, W, Ѣ, and for the palatal sonorants ѣ, and ѥ. 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 ѡ instead of ѡ for a front jer (in both roots and suffixes) and of ѣ instead of ѣ for 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's manuscript was named Codex Suprasliensis after the Supra[il] Monastery. It was discovered in 1823 by the Russian slavist and orientalist MichaB Bobrowski (1784–1848) who was a professor at the University of Vilnius. There are several hypotheses on how the manuscript had found its way to the Supra[il] Monastery:

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

vitae tell the lives of saints who lived in the 1st – 2nd centuries, such as St Conon of Isauria, in the 6th – 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 prototypes, like the so-called Uspenskij sbornik from the 12th – 13th century (State Historical Museum, Moscow, Uspenskij 4), which contains readings for May, as well as the Miscellany with readings for February (' 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's miscellany, and the second is included in the Great Chet's Minei. St. John Chrysostom'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'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's Miscellany (1358–59). 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's Minei 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'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.