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THEORETICAL BASICS OF STUDYING THE OLD RUSSIAN MESSAGE

Abstract: This article is dedicated to the history of the teaching of the genre of the message. Based on the research of many scientists, it was shown that the ancient epistolary rules of Old Russian bookishness were borrowed from Byzantine practice, which in turn was based on the traditions of ancient and Middle Eastern writing. Similarly, in ancient Russian letters, a number of epistolary formulas and topos are found, correlated with the ancient and Byzantine ones. Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that the Old Russian message has a number of significant features that have not yet been fully comprehended.

Key words: epistolary tradition, a message, literary etiquette, an epistolary formula, a style of a message.

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Introduction.

The genre of the epistle of Old Russian bookishness is received in a sufficiently designed and developed form at the time of its inception during the transplantation of medieval Christian literature to Russian soil.

Codification of the epistles and its systematization occurred in the ancient rhetoric. The letter should begin with the name of the author and the greeting "Rejoice!". The narrative part contained an exposition of the main subject of speech. The letter ended with the wishes of health, happiness, and regards. Thus, in compositional terms, the epistle was to be three-part and consist of a prescript, semanthema and clause. In the initial part of the letter, the order of mentioning the name of the author (addresser) and the addressee could be different, which depended on the hierarchical relationships of the real participants in the correspondence. In general, the author should demonstrate respect for the correspondent and put his name after the name of the addressee. However, in messages to high-ranking officials, this order was changing. In addition, the epistles were recommended to decorate with various rhetorical figures of speech [8, p. 8-9].

Materials and Methods.

The epistolary theory of antiquity, set forth in the treatise of the pseudo-Demetrius of Faler "On the Syllable", in which the quotation of the unknown

author of Artemon is cited, demands from the writing person simplicity, conciseness, proportionality of volume and theme, free syntax. It is especially important that the letter relates to a dialogue, a conversation, and is contrasted with a scientific treatise or a judicial speech: "Unless in conversation with a friend would someone put it like Aristotle turns to Antipater when he writes about some aged exile. After all, such a conversation is more like a proof than a conversation. And the syntax should be more free. After all, it's ridiculous to use periods, as if writing is not a letter, but judicial speech" [8, p. 7]. "Frequent references to Aristotle's letters allow us to think that the main source of it was the teaching of the Peripatetics, to whom the main merit in the development of the epistolary theory belongs" [5, p. 176].

In the treatise pseudo-Demetrius of Faler from the composer of the message, it is necessary to be logical in describing the essence of the matter. The main content of the epistles is "the expression of friendship", "the expression of the moral image of a person", the creation of a portrait of his soul. "To tell the truth, the author notes, "and in every composition of verbal art one can discern the character of the writer, but most of all in a letter" [8, p. 7].

Already in antiquity, there were special rhetorical aids for writing letters. One of the most ancient letter-writers is entitled "Types of letters", it is composed in the form of a message addressed to



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an unknown Heraclitus. It complements the recommendations of the pseudo-Demetrius of Faler. Here, 21 meaningful versions of the epistles are singled out and their samples are given, which can become a model for the compilation of corresponding texts by clerical scribes to order [5, p. 176]. The second of the ancient surviving treatises "About the Style of Letters" was compiled by a Christian author and "takes literary etiquette into account", [5, p. 176] the letter-writer "Types of letters" is attributed to Proclus, the second "About the Style of letters" is attributed Libanus (between the 4th and 6th centuries A.D.).

Summarizing the information known from the monuments of antiquity V.A. Smetanin listed the main requirements for writing of this era:

1. The letter demonstrates the moral qualities, personal character and the mood of the author of the letter.

2. The letter should be proportionate to the topic and be distinguished by the conciseness of the syllable. When composing a letter, it is necessary to take into account the identity of the addresser – his rank, educational qualification, age, sex, etc.

3. The presentation of the topic should be public and convincing.

4. The style of writing should be close to speaking, and the tone should be emotional. However, one should beware of vulgarity.

5. The style of writing should be carefully polished. Elegance and grace does not tolerate excessive use of rhetorical means [11, p. 64-65.].

Already in the first treatises and letters, the main quality of the literary letter as a genre was determined - this is the theme of friendship, the obligatory presence of so-called philophonic motives. "A friendly letter in antiquity, as D.M. Bulanin, – was at the top of the hierarchy of texts, clothed in an epistolary form" [5, p. 177].

According to Aristotle, the condition for the birth and continuation of friendship is a joint life, separation carries a danger, since direct communication becomes impossible. In this case, the best replacement for personal communication is a letter [5, p. 177].

Of course, not one literary rule is immutable. The rules of rhetoric concerning the compilation of the epistol were also amended. Latin literature not only absorbed the Greek rhetoric techniques, but also took a step forward. As indicated V.A. Smetanin, Cicero gave the finished stylistic decoration to the Latin epistle. He also proposed a "three-fold classification of letters: according to their tone – to intimate and intended for public reading; attitude of the author to the letter to the addressee – on the official (*publicae*) and personal (*privatae*); in content – on simple notices, on friendly, joking, and on strict, serious and sad" [11, p. 15-16].

Already in Greek and Latin literature the letter becomes not only a genre of business or personal communication, but also acquires a literary character. Epistle begins to live an independent life, regardless of the reason for writing it. "The main thing is the message itself, and the author and the addressee are de-individualized" [2, p. 8]. As an example, you can refer to the works of Seneca, where the main philosophical content, as well as Pliny's letters, which were addressed to a wide range of readers.

In the II – V centuries A.D. researchers discover not only genuine correspondence, but also fictitious letters in which the form of the message becomes an artistic device. The form of the message is adapted to represent the character, transfer the mood of a particular person and a particular situation. V.A. Smetanin believes that with the help of reciprocal correspondence between several persons, the rudiments of the novel arise in late antique literature. A similar picture is found in the so-called pseudo-historical letters, which it was customary to compose in rhetorical schools on behalf of the heroes of antiquity. This leads to the emergence of epistolary biographical stories. "Understanding of the techniques is already given in the literature of the III century A.D., and epistolary "etopeya" – rhetorical reproduction of character is achieved by these techniques. The letter is perceived as a certain system of means of expression, conditioned by the character of the person on whose behalf it is written" [11, p. 18].

According to the researchers, the flourishing of genre of the friendly message falls on the IV – V centuries. However, at this time, not only secular authors of late antiquity but also Christian writers-classics create their compositions. Epistolary friendship is reborn, it is replaced by the concept of Christian love for one's close person, which leads to the loss of the actual philophronetic motives. A friendly letter, turns "then into a soul-saving instruction or into controversial invective, then into a lengthy theological treatise. In fact, we should talk about new literary forms, only genetically related to the classical patterns of friendly writing. The new modifications are not characterized either by the emphasis on personal relations between correspondents, neither brevity, nor transparency of thoughts, nor simplicity of the syllable" [5, p. 178-179].

Even the pseudo-Demetrius of Falerski pointed to the existence of "false" letters, in fact treatises that were clothed in the form of messages. Close to them are New Testament apostolic messages. One of the first researchers of evangelical epistolography. S.A. Zhebelev noted: "The Apostle Paul wrote neither "epistles", nor real "letters". Paul's letters differ from the epistles in that they have a pronounced individual character, but draw closer to them by their content, with the exception of a letter to Philemon, that go

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beyond what we call a letter in the literal sense of the word" [6, p. 128]. Bulgarian researcher L.N. Moncheva believes that in the epistles of the Apostle Paul the capacity of the ancient form of epistolary is expanded by introducing specific didacticism, exegeses, theological discussion, philosophical generalization. Thus, a complex artistic form with genre syncretism is created. Accordingly, the image of the author of the apostolic epistle is also syncretic. It combines a preacher, an apologist, a polemicist, a theologian, an exegete, a biographer, an epistolographer [9, p. 190]. The apostolic message, as M.V. Antonova, proves is characterized by the de-individualization of the image of the addressee and the deconcentration of the depicted, which is a consequence of the desire to send its "message" to the widest circle of readers and to confine it to typical life situations, to universalize content [2, p. 33].

L.N. Moncheva in his study applies only to the Pauline letter, but the above observation concerns apostolic messages in general, since genre syncretism is characteristic of the whole body of these works intended to serve the missionaries. The Apostolic letters became a means of open struggle against paganism, and therefore naturally included in their content controversy, didactics, and theology, which undoubtedly reflected on the form of the work.

The form of the Byzantine epistle was studied in detail by foreign and Russian Byzantologists. In particular, V.A. Smetanin, relying on the work of foreign researchers F. Ziemann, H. Hunger, G. Karlsson, I. Sikutrisa et al, describes in detail the form of Byzantine writing. In addition to the three parts already mentioned, the epistle must have an inscript, that is, an external address. Accordingly, the letter should include four obligatory parts: 1) an inscript, 2) a prescript, 3) a semantheme, 4) a clause.

The prescriptus is usually a combination of two formulas: 1) an indication of the names of correspondents, 2) a greeting.

Semanthema in turn is divided into parts. The initial part of the semantheme consists of traditional formulas. The central part is the actual message. The final part of the semantheme also contains template expressions and keywords. V.A. Smetanin indicates fourteen stable mandatory epistolary formulas, which are found in the late Byzantine epistle:

- 1) the formula for ascertaining the receipt of a letter,
- 2) the formula of admiration for the addressee and his praise,
- 3) determining the stimulus for writing a letter,
- 4) a formula indicating a friendly communication or conversation,
- 5) the formula for expressing the relation to the content of the letter (praise or criticism),

6) the formula of "parousia" (the illusion of the presence of a correspondent as a result of receiving a letter),

7) philophrontic formula, that is, the expression of friendly feelings.

8) the formula concerning the receipt of the letter,

9) the formula for expressing the need for written communication,

10) the formula of assurance in mutual memory,

11) the greeting formula,

12) the formula of health wishes,

13) the formula for requesting a letter,

14) the formula for the motivation of one's own letter [11, p. 68-70].

All the above formulas were used in the prescript, the clause, in the introductory and final parts of the semantheme. If prescript formulas and clauses were sufficiently stable and compulsory, then the semantheme was not strictly regulated. The author had the right to select the expressions he needed. Actually, the content part of the letter had a completely free structure, it "did not have any pivotal words and was conformal to the semantic meaning" [11, p. 72].

As D.M. Bulanin, notes "the epistolary scheme served not only for practical purposes in Ancient Rus, from ancient times it was used in literary works". Many writers of the Kiev period addressed to it: Feodosiy Pechersky, Kirill Turovsky, Clement Smolyatich, the creators of the Kiev-Pechersk Patericon Simon and Polycarp, Metropolitans John and Nicephorus. Researcher defines Genre attribution of their writings in the form of messages as follows: "Slavic replica of the apostolic message, only genetically related to the Byzantine friendly letter". From his point of view, "the brevity and simplicity of style is not characteristic of Old Russian pastoral messages. The philophrontic topic is muffled and dissolves in moralizing". Furthermore, D.M. Bulanin believes that the Old Russian authors, included in the literary unity of Slavia Orthodoxa, "neglected the epistolary canons", which entailed "the genre amorphousness of the text" and allowed later editors "without a twinge of conscience to change their genre-nomination, calling them "words" and "legends" " [5, p. 183-84]. The researcher fairly concludes that in the literature of Ancient Rus there was no "literary letter in its pure form" [5, p. 184], but repeatedly states the existence of a tradition of Slavic-Russian teaching messages, but does not address the analysis of the latter, since this is not within the scope of his scientific tasks [5, p. 186, 195, 199]. D.M. Bulanin finds the first experience of literary writing in the XV century – this is the message of Vasily Dmitrievich Yermolin to Yakov, the secretary of Kazimier IV, the King of Poland and the Grand Duke of Lithuania [5, p. 189-192].

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In ancient Russian literature, which undoubtedly took into account the ancient and Byzantine epistolographic experience, for a long time there were no special works that determined the rules for composing the message. A.S. Demin, who studied ancient Russian writers, showed that collections of this type arise late. The first of them dates not earlier than 1478. Nevertheless, the authors of the messages took into account Byzantine epistolary models, samples of apostolic messages. If L.N. Monchev in the above-mentioned work considers the Pauline message mainly as a model of the genre in terms of specific content [9], then J. Birkoff in a number of works on ancient Russian epistolography proved “the existence of a quite definite epistolary consciousness regulating correspondence in Rus as in other nations” [15, p. 57]. Textual analysis allowed the researcher to find elements of epistolary formulas in the epistles of different epochs (the letter of Vladimir Monomakh, Epiphany’s message to Cyril Tversky, the message of Nil Sorsky). D.M. Bulanin, focused in his study on the genre of literary friendly letters, quite sharply characterized the work of J. Birkoff, noting that her thesis about the use of a fully developed epistolary style in the old Russian message remained unproven. Nevertheless, her works revealed “relics of the genre alien to Slavic writing”, which brought to Russia the apostolic message and Byzantine models [5, p. 159]. The last statement of the scientist seems to us to be the most balanced. It generally does not contradict the data of previous studies J. Birkoff and L.N. Monchevoy, and also consistent with the conclusions of M.V. Antonova about the combination of the traditions of the ancient, apostolic and Middle Eastern epistles in the Old Russian epistolography of Kievan Rus [2].

Russian and foreign researchers have convincingly shown that the ancient Russian epistolography can not be perceived unequivocally in the genre aspect: “All, no doubt, the researchers agree on one thing: the epistolary genre has always been a “frontier” genre, was between literature and records management – treated as “elegant” literature, and to business writing” [12, p. 6]. N.V. Ponyrko pointed out that the line between literary and private letters is determined “by the fact of the inclusion of a separate message in the book tradition” [10, p. 3], which is an indicator of the output of a work outside the limits of private correspondence.

To consider the epistles in ancient Russian literature in strict accordance with the ancient

friendly letter, from our point of view, is not lawful. Indeed, in ancient Russia, as shown by D.M. Bulanin, until the end of the XV – beginning of the XVI century epistolary genre has been absent “in a pure form” [5, p. 173-216]. To the same conclusion comes M.V. Antonov concerning the Old Russian message of the Kiev period [3, p. 101]. Of course, between the artistic and business message there are many transitional stages, and the presence of mixed and transitional forms is an essential quality of writing as a genre. Therefore, from our point of view, the position of the team of authors of the study “Auf Gottes Geheiß sollen wir einander Briefe schreiben: Altrussische Epistolographie” is productive, they refused to clarify the problems of the literary character of a text, but focused on studying the topic of the message distinguishing it from pragmatics everyday business writing [13].

Epistolographic rules and epistolary etiquette applied to ancient Russian literature were mainly studied in relation to authors who left a significant number of monuments of this genre. First of all, it concerns Maxim the Greek. In the study, D.M. Bulanin, on the one hand, shows that in the writings of Maxim the Greek a number of etiquette formulas are used, their composition generally corresponds to canonical requirements. However, at the same time these works are at different stages of transition to another genre form, the indicator of which is the loss of certain structural parts of the formulary [4, p. 100, 117 - 123]. To such conclusions comes V.V. Kalugin, studying the correspondence of Ivan the Terrible and Andrew Kurbsky [7]. In the work of M.V. Antonova “Ancient Russian message of the XI – XIII centuries: the poetics of the genre” also shows that the genre form of the ancient Russian message can be recognized as blurred, the reasons for this fuzziness are usually the content aspect, the presence or absence of a certain theme and pathos. Nevertheless, the exact genre qualification of the composition is quite possible on the basis of the presence not only of the signs of the formulary, but also of a certain system of relationships between correspondents [1].

Conclusion.

In general, we agree with the remarks of J. Birkoff, who believes that the epistolographic rules and topic in one form or another can be found in all ancient Russian writings, which are defined as messages [14, 55-77], and this is one of the essential features for genre attribution.

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