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PROBLEMS OF THE TEXTUAL STUDY OF THE BULGARIAN VERSION OF "DE ORTHODOXA FIDE" OF ST. JOHN DAMASCENE MADE BY JOHN THE EXARCH

(Summary)

The lack of a full textual study of the Old Russian copies of the Bulgarian version of "De Orthodoxa Fide" of the St. John Damascene made by John the Exarch (not later than 893) is a handicap for scholars to obtain an adequate idea of the reception of that work in Medieval Russia. The text of "De Orthodoxa Fide" in the Old Russian copies is considered by many scholars to be stable but in reality an analysis of different readings in the copies shows that the opposite is true. The author shows that the preceding scholars have not formulated questions on: 1) the place which the oldest copy dated to the 12th–13th centuries occupies in the "chain" of textual studies; 2) the reasons why later copies are nearer the original than the oldest copy; and on 3) the Russian variants (armful changes in the text) of the translation made in the 9th century. Resting on the peculiarities of the language of one of the groups of copies the author makes a prognosis of the possibility of existence of a Russian variant of the early translation (by John the Exarch) of the text created according the principles of editings and translations accepted at the Athon in the 14th century.