Context-Based Meaningful Variation of Lexeme
PRAVDA in Oldest Russian Code

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Abstract—The title of the well-known old Russian code Russkaya Pravda is analysed and some factors that determine its understanding in Russian culture are discussed. The authors describe the etymology, meaning and derivational relations of the lexeme pravda and demonstrate that it syncretically denoted quality (justice, truth, innocence), action that is aimed at investigation of truth that is conducted in accordance with the truth of God and law that regulates the action. The place of Russkaya Pravda in the composition of Merilo Pravednoye (14th century) and the Novgorod First Chronicle of Younger Recension is defined by means of semantic analysis of the titles of the texts under consideration and the titles of legal texts that they comprise, semantic analysis of the alternative titles of Russkaya Pravda (ustav, zakon) and comparative analysis of the meanings of the lexemes under study. As a result, semantic components of the lexemes ustav, zakon, sud, pravda that generate connotations, associations are defined and patterns of meaning in the title Russkayay Pravda are established.

Keywords—Russkaya Pravda; chronicle; Merilo Pravednoye; Old Russian text; semantic syncretism; lexical meaning.

I. INTRODUCTION

“Преже всякия праўды достоинъ естъ о боžii правдě глиня ѣ ты” [Before every truth, God’s truth is to be pronounced]” is a quotation from the Old Slavic Code Zakon sudnyy lyudem, which is included into the 14th century Old Russian manuscript Merilo pravdenevo [22, fol. 125 v.]. The quotation and the title of the manuscripts mentioned above comprise words that are semantically related to the title of the well-known Old Russian code Russkaya pravda and are considered vital for interpretation of the lexemes pravda, božiya pravda, zakon, sudnyi, merilo, pravednoye.

As a unique source of data on the history of Russian law, social and economic relations, Russkaya pravda has always attracted attention of many scholars who studied it from historical, legal and linguistic perspectives. The notion of pravda denotes one of the main concepts of Russian mentality that has not been fully researched in historical linguistics and this gap needs to be addressed. As Pravda Russkaya is part of numerous compilations of texts that vary in contents and size representing a great number of copies (over one hundred) of undefined date and origin, the purpose of the present study is to analyse the meaning of the lexeme pravda within the language system and in broad context of other texts. The study aims to establish patterns of meaning the lexeme pravda acquires in the context of the two Old Russian manuscripts Merilo pravednoye and Novgorod First Chronicle of Younger Recension. To achieve the purpose, methods of contextual and semantic analysis are employed and the etymology of the lexeme pravda is analysed.

II. ORIGIN OF THE WORD PRAVDA AND ITS MEANINGS IN THE OLD RUSSIAN LANGUAGE

Due to its long history in the Russian language, the word pravda is deeply rooted in the mind of Russian language speakers.

According to etymological studies, the lexeme pravda and its cognates (pravýj – ‘right’, pravit’ – ‘to rule’, pravilo – ‘rule’, pryamoj – ‘straight’) derive from PIE *pr-(interchange *-pr-, *-pr-, *-prē-) [1], meaning an action that is directed ahead through space, cf. Old Russian prav’ through, for’, pra- ‘pro-, cross-, trans-’, Lithuanian pr-pro- ‘pro-, cross-, trans-’, Old Indian pra-in front of, over’, Avestan and Old Persian fra-, Greek ἕν ‘in front of’, etc. [1].

The adjective *prē-v-os > *prav-v-na that is formed with the *-v/-vo- suffix attached to the root *prē- [2] was likely to mean some quality – ‘directed ahead, straight’. The adjective is viewed as a base for the verb *praviti – ‘to point ahead, to straighten’ and, as many scholars believe, the noun pravda (*prav-ud-a) [2, 3, 4].

However, an alternative hypothesis, according to which the noun *pravda derives from the verb *praviti, seems to be plausible. Speaking about deverbal nature of the noun*n*pravda, the authors of the Etymology Dictionary of Slavic languages point out that in some historical dictionaries definitions of pravda do not have the primary semantics of process, e.g. pravda želēzō – ‘trial, investigation of the truth by red-hot iron ordeal’, and the lexeme is placed in the category of justice [5]. The noun *pravi-dl-o > *pravi-i-o derives from the verb *praviti and is formed with the suffix that denotes ‘instrument’ [3, 4], i.e. ‘a tool for straightening, pointing straight and ahead’. The adjective *prē-m-na is an *-m- suffixed form of the root *prē-, cf. Old Church Slavonic prēmo – ‘straight, opposite’, Old Russian pryamo – ‘straight’, pryami – ‘straight’ [6, 7].

As follows from the above, the root with interchanging vowels *-prē- / *-prē- that possessed the semantic component
of space was used to generate semantically related lexemes. Those, despite having different paths in the Russian language evolution, held conceptual unity long enough.

It seems possible that in ancient times the root under investigation represented the concept of something straight, directed ahead through space that in the mind of ancient people was probably associated with images of a road or a path. R. M. Tseytlin writes that the concept of a path as a paved, straight (shortest) road can be traced back to ancient times, which is displayed in the etymology of lexical subsets that denote ‘way, road, path, passage’ in a number of Indo-European languages that among others include Slavic ones [4]. It is indicative that the words with the root -pravy- are used in combinations with the word poto in old Slavic texts [4]. These specific representations conveyed the idea of movement in the right direction along a straight (shortest) path that was perceived as an optimal and, consequently, an ideal (and the only one). Deviating from a path was perceived as breach.

The idea of a specific straight path and related concepts (the notion of ‘straight’, ‘straightness’) was subject to figurative reconceptualization. R. M. Tseytlin presented a detailed analysis of the lexical sets with the root -prav- in Slavic languages [4], and reported that in old written texts these words were used in predominantly metaphorical contexts [4] and, consequently, they easily developed transferred meanings. For instance, the adjective [4] and, consequently, they easily developed transferred meanings. The verb praviti [7], the derivate of pravyi, also expressed the idea of achieving an ideal, e.g. ‘to direct’, i.e. to show the right way; ‘to counsel’, i.e. to ensure proper conduct, to teach life skills; ‘to rule’, i.e. to organize an activity in the optimal way; ‘to correct’, i.e. to bring in line with a norm or a model; ‘to judge, try a case; to execute a judgment’, i.e. to bring an unsettled situation back to conformity with legal norms.

The idea of a specific straight path and related concepts (the notion of ‘straight’, ‘straightness’) was subject to figurative reconceptualization. R. M. Tseytlin presented a detailed analysis of the lexical sets with the root -prav- in Slavic languages [4], and reported that in old written texts these words were used in predominantly metaphorical contexts [4] and, consequently, they easily developed transferred meanings. For instance, the adjective pravyi had the following meanings: ‘open-minded, sincere, free from deception’; ‘right’, ‘fair’; ‘true’ among others. Later, the word pravyi lost the original meaning of ‘straight’.

The authors believe that both the literal and transferred meanings of the lexeme pravyi share the semantic component ‘conforming to a certain ideal’, i.e. following a direction chosen, a course of events, a tradition, or a norm in all of its aspects. The verb pravit [7], the derivate of pravyi, also expressed the idea of achieving an ideal, e.g. ‘to direct’, i.e. to show the right way; ‘to counsel’, i.e. to ensure proper conduct, to teach life skills; ‘to rule’, i.e. to organize an activity in the optimal way; ‘to correct’, i.e. to bring in line with a norm or a model; ‘to judge, try a case; to execute a judgment’, i.e. to bring an unsettled situation back to conformity with legal norms.

The rule, indeed, was perceived as an instrument to achieve correction, counseling, conformity with the norms. Dictionaries of Old Russian Language enumerate the following meanings of the noun pravilo (rule): ‘steering-wheel, rudder; tiller’, ‘gear for handling the sails, brace’, ‘construction instrument for vertical stonework and making right angle turns’ among others; ‘portable rudder; governance, power, supremacy’ [8], ‘established rule, canon’ [7] among others.

Taking into consideration the deverbative origin of pravda (*pravda or *praviti) expressed in the Eymology Dictionary of Slavic languages, it is necessary to point out that the lexeme retains its primary semantic component of ‘process’: bringing something in conformity with the benchmark, norm, or example. By the time this word first appeared in written texts this semantic component had become rather vague in its most meanings, with the primary component now being ‘conforming to an ideal’, for instance when it means ‘truth’, i.e. the real state of affairs; ‘justice’, i.e. unprejudiced adherence to the truth; ‘goodness’, i.e. following the Christian commandments; ‘innocence’, i.e. conformity with the law, determined during court trial.

Nevertheless, the semantic component of process remains in the meaning of pravda as ‘court trial’: … a na pravdu ęzyyty ak oboi [9]. As a result of metonymic transfer, this meaning generated another meaning – ‘rules of court’ or ‘law’ (‘justice is administered in accordance to the law’). It is obvious that this meaning is used in the title of the old Russian law manuscipt – Russkaya Pravda – which represents the legal practice of East Slavs; scientists call this artifact a collection of criminal and criminal procedure law [10], code of justice (sudebnik), [11]; Sudebnik is also the title of the two 15th century copies of Russkaay Pravda [12].

The meaning of ‘conforming to an ideal’, regarded as a positive quality, contributed to the formation of axiological value of ‘truth’, as one of the first and foremost concepts of Old Russian mindset. This concept was thoroughly researched by V.V. Kolesov [13] in various perspectives. The scientist reviews the interrelation between the notions of truth (pravda and istina) both in Old Russian and in modern Russian language consciousness, meanwhile highlighting the syncretic semantics of the Old Russian word pravda, in which the notions of ‘truth’ and ‘justice’ were not opposed but interwoven. V.V. Kolesov reports that the split of the Truth into truth and justice occurred as a result of historic development and orientation towards the new culture. The syncretic ambiguity of the Slavic root -prav- gradually differentiated as suffix-built words developed – one by one – different co-meanings of this root [13]; the Slavic mindset the juxtaposition of Slavic and Christian views on ‘truth’ (pravda and istina, respectively) took a long time to adapt to the Slavic mindset and never reached completeness when it came to the interpretation of these dialectically developed relations. This process of ethic attraction and semantic repulsion is still ongoing [13].

Semantic syncretism, which is defined as semantic indivisibility of a lexical unit – a word (a word group), uneliminated, and sometimes ineliminable, indiscrination in word semantics, and diffusivity, indiscerion of lexical or categorical semantics [14], is associated with semantics of nouns that express either positive or negative evaluation [15]. Specialists note that this syncretism manifests itself in texts produced as in the speakers’ mind these lexemes are associated with un categorised representation of reality conceptualised by an extremely broad concept [14]; the specifics of ancient people’s worldview, i.e. integrity and figurativeness, are reported in: [16, 17].

Although lexicographers present the semantic structure of the lexeme pravda as a hierarchical set of meanings it is still characterised by semantic syncretism, as these meanings are diffusive and they do not always realise on a syntagmatic level, which is observed not only in Old Russian contexts, in which the lexeme pravda is used, but also in scientific commentaries on semantic interelation (that is occasionally semantic opposition) between the concepts of pravda – istina.
that meaningful variations of the lexeme \textit{pravda} that is used in the title of the reviewed manuscript is worth being examined.

This article presents analysis of the two texts of \textit{Russkaya Pravda} from manuscripts that include various contents and genres – the 14\textsuperscript{th} century \textit{Merilo Pravdnoye} and the 15\textsuperscript{th} century Novgorod First Chronicle of Younger Recension according to the Commission List.

\section*{IV. VARIATION IN THE MEANING OF THE TITLE \textit{RUSSKAYA PRAVDA} FROM \textit{MERILIO PRAVDENOYE}}

14\textsuperscript{th} century \textit{Merilo Pravdnoye} is a compilation of texts that are related to church law and legal issues. The contents of the collection are expressed in its title, which is written under the headpiece with cinnabar ink following the established book-writing tradition: «\textit{Siya knigi merilo pravdnoye. izvěsť istinnyi. světě uth. oko slov. zercalo svěsti. tmě světilo. sľěpotě voź. priputěn uth. skrověn razam. príkrutė pomyslě. pastyrę stadu. korabłęy kormionkë. volkom lovesc. tatem reźb. voronap sobol. netorytę s<X>hinc. oku kvæč. čeremę sobo.} [22, fol. 2]. The phrase \textit{merilo pravdnoye} – ‘right, correct scales’, which metaphorically means ‘benchmark; something that allows one to make a judgment about something by weighting, measuring; to estimate’ [7, 8], remains the conventional title of the compilation. It is accompanied by the synonymous phrase \textit{izvěsť istinnyi} – ‘a true weight measure; the measurement of things, benchmark’ [7, 8], expressing the same meaning, and by a series of figurative epithets to describe the moral and spiritual mission of the book, which is to instantiate the idea of fair justice and a fair judge and as M.V. Karagodina points out to demonstrate that all rightious judges have in common are wisdom and wish to live under the law of the Lord [11]. This idea threads throughout the book, ensuring its thematic unity as a text, and is clearly expressed in the foreword to the collection.

The construe of \textit{Merilo} text is actualized in its formal structure that is formed by conceptual blocks. The collection consists of two parts: the first one includes homilies about unrighteous and rightous judges; the second one is divided into 30 chapters of legal works (\textit{Zakon sudnyj lyudem. Zakon gradskij, and Russkaya Pravda} among others). The chapters in both parts have titles (the headlines are written with cinnabar ink and emphasized with special graphic symbols) and sometimes contain articles with headlines; the second part is preceded with the table of contents with numbered sections.

14\textsuperscript{th} century \textit{Merilo Pravdnoye} comprises the Extensive edition of \textit{Russkaya Pravda}, which is a copy of the so-called \textit{Sindonalo-Troitkskaya} group (the authors follow the classification of the copies of \textit{Pravda} and the numbering of its articles according to [12]). Its components, namely \textit{the Yaroslav Vladimirovich’s Justice} and \textit{the Law of Vladimir Voevodovich}, are included as two separate chapters, which is evident from the table of contents of the second part.

The word \textit{pravda}, placed in a strong position of the text, i.e. in the title, reflects the contents of the text (chapter) and forms meaningful relations with the words in the title and the
text in other chapters as well as the title of the whole collection of texts on a conceptual level (see Table 1).

Russkaya Pravda in this copy, as well as in the majority of other copies, has an extended title, which is Sud(d) yaroslavskih volo(dim)ernikh [22, fol. 332]; the first part of it being written in capitals with cinnabar ink, Pravda russkayai being written in usual ink only with the initial P written in cinnabar. That is, it is designed to look like the beginning of an article and can be perceived as a subtitle (the second part’s table of contents lists only sud yaroslavskih).

The word pravda is interrelated with the word sudh, complementing, specifying or, most likely, repeating its meaning (the adjective russkaya is used for specification, the meaning of which should be examined separately). This micro text has only one occurrence of pravda – in article 21: iskavše li posluja ne nalažeža, a istoča načetna golovu klepati, to ti innd pravdu željə [22, fol. 333 v.]. This noun means ‘trial ordeal’, implying the usage of red-hot iron to find out the truth during the trial [12]. This work occurs twice in articles 56 and 85 from the Law of Prince Vladimir: Aže zakup běžit o( ) gospody. to obelih ideti li iskat kum, a yavelno hodito, ili ko knyazya ili ko sudyamym, běžit obidy dela yego svoyego gos.>spodma. to pro to ne robyat yego. no dati yemu pravdu [22, fol. 383 v.]; Ty tvaži vše sudjaułu posluhi svobodnymi, budetu li posluži holopn, to holopu na pravdu ne vylazit [22, fol. 340]. In both contexts pravda means ‘judgment, trial’. As can be seen from the above, in all the mentioned articles this noun bears the meaning of process, which reflects its deverbal origin.

The words sudh and ustavn within the frames of Russkaya Pravda itself (in the Laws of both Yaroslav and Vladimir) are used with performative verbs suditi and ustaviti, thus retaining their meaning of action or process: sud(d) yaroslavskih ... a ino vse yako že yaroslavšt suditi, takо že i s<xy> svedom yego ustaviša [22, fol. 332]; ustavv vo(lo)<o>dim(r) vsevol(l)<o>diča. Volodiměr vsevolodič, po s<xy>topolč, sozva družinu svoyu ... i ustavili do trezysago rěža [22, fol. 338]; Aže kto ubijet ženu. to těm že sudoma suditi, yako že i muža [22, fol. 340 v.].

| TABLE I THE WORD PRAVDA IN MERILO PRAVĐENOYE |
|------------------|------------------|
|                  | I                | II               |
| SKAZANJE, SLOVO, SUD口语, NAKAZANJE, ZAKON口语 | ZAKON口语 | SUD口语rules of court, law |
| SUD口语 | USTAV口语‘law’ |
| nepravdu ‘untruth, nepravdnih, untruthful, dishonest’, pravito ‘rule’, ispravljene ‘correction’, pravovernosti ‘orthodox, true believer’, pravodati ‘acquit’ |
| Pravda russkaya ‘rules of court, law’ | suditi ustaviti suditi ustaviti pravda ‘trial ordeal’ |
| sudh, sudh božji, suditi, zakonih, pravda ‘truth, justice’, pravodavci ‘just’ |

* Tables I-III contain headings of the texts under scrutiny in capital letters, boldface is used for headings and subheadings of Russkaya Pravda, the lexemes under study are written in italics, definitions of meaning are given in quotes.

Placed in the title (or the subtitle), the word pravda interrelates with the titles of other micro texts in the second part of Meriło Prawdnoye: sud(d) yaroslavskih volodiměrnih [22, fol. 332], ustavv vo(lo)dim(r) vsevol(o)diča [22, fol. 337], o vlasněm ... pravilo [fol. 344], zakonih dorobskah [22, fol. 231], novaya zapovědi ... [22, fol. 198], zakonih sudnich lyudem [22, fol. 125 v.] among others. Positioned in the same line with ustavs as ‘charter, laws, a collection of laws or rules,’ zakom as ‘law, judgment of the supreme authority’, zapovědi as ‘order, law, rule’, and pravilo as ‘a set rule, canon’ or ‘charter, code of conduct’ [7], [8], [23] and as a result of metonymic transfer the words sudh and pravda are interpreted as nominations of courts acts and rules of trial procedure. The semantics of process in the title substantiates is blurred while the semantic feature of objectness is brought into the forefront. Thus, the line of nouns is made up of appositional titles of functionally similar legislative acts, which ensures the unity of these documents as constituents of the second part of the collection.

The word pravda and other derivatives with the root prav- (nepravd, pravodni, nepravdno, opravditi, pravilo, ispravlênie, pravovernosti among others) can be found in non-title positions in other chapters of the second part of Meriło Prawdnoye. They often occur in similar contexts with the derivatives formed from the roots -sud- and -zakon-, thus conceptualizing common semantic field, i.e. conducting a fair or an unfair trial, either according to the law or in breach of it. For instance: zle mya osudila, i ne po pravdu izvεrenь byl[42, fol. 85]; ne svadeš s nepravdnim, byti nepravdnoj nhv židě budeš ... i ubijem pomolužil ne, na sud date suditi uumu o(t) vosyago glagol a ot)stupiši nepravdnina, nepovinnogo i pravnego ne ubijesh, i ne opravditi neč( )otvago i mozd ne vzněžil. Il mozd obislyeyvet oči vidiaščih i pogublyayvet glagol y pravdno, ne stvorish nepravdy v sud ... pravdovu suditi [22, fol. 118–118 v.]. In this fragment, the noun (ne)pravdeno means ‘(in)justice’, the adjective pravodni means ‘honest, truthful (witness, speech)’, ‘not guilty’, the verb opravditi – ‘to declare not guilty’, sometimes these meanings are impossible to divide, e.g. c nepravdnojmi can be understood as ‘with the dishonest’, ‘with the unjust’, or, in brief – ‘with the unrighteous’ in every sense and manifestation of unrighteousness. Such contextual variations of the word pravda form conceptual background that facilitates its understanding and interpretations in the title pravda russkaya. This is accompanied with variations in ethical and legal valuation of sud and pravda even when they are used as synonyms: sud can be both fair and unfair, while pravda is always a fair trial.

The word pravda is also related to the text titles from the first part of Meriło Prawdnoye. These titles are names of the genres they represent (skazaniye, slovo, sudh, nakazaniye) or indirect descriptive nominations that provide insight into the contents of the text via the keywords suditi, sudh, pravodni, božji sud (o ispravlêni sud, o vlonem i o straelu den ne obidιte ţim, etc.), titles of paradigmatic texts: the Bible, patristic literature, and other spiritual books (ot vtorago zakon, o pčelh among others), and authors of these texts, e.g. prophets, theologians (davida csaruy, ioana zlotousta, etc.).
Some of these titles form meaningful relations with the contents of the whole collection (sudb, pravda, zakom), while others unfold the cultural importance and value of those terms: fair trial is included into the system of Christian values through references to the Bible and patristic literature.

The lexemes měřilo, pravdědnost, suditi, ustav, sudb, pravda and other semantically related words with sets of literal and transferred meanings form a single conceptual environment. The fragments in the book also rely on macro texts from the Bible and other spiritual and culturally important texts which together compose a megatext (the term by N. S. Kovalev [24]) of orthodox culture in ancient Rus’, while the keywords they contain constitute the conceptual sphere of the Old Russian language.

The word pravda that is used in the title of the legal artifact Pravda russskaya, bearing the particular meaning ‘law of court and trial’, is semantically related to the titles of other chapters and the book Merilo pravednnoye itself, thus, becoming semantically ‘charged’ by the contents of the whole collection. The semantics of the lexeme becomes broader than its separate meaning; it acquires the status of a concept and can be addressed from the perspective of Christian culture.

V. VARIATION IN THE MEANING OF THE TITLE RUSSKAYA PRAVDA IN THE NOVGOROD FIRST CHRONICLE OF YOUNGER RECENSION

In contrast to the earlier compilation, the Novgorod First Chronicle of Younger Recension, according to the Commission List, is a secular manuscript. Complex in composition, the text bears the essential features of a hybrid text type. It includes Russkaya Pravda as annual entry of the year 6524 (1016) and as part of other legal texts that follow the chronicle.

The annual entry quotes Russkaya Pravda in The Short Edition after the lines «а Ярославъ иде въ Киевъ ... и або винъ въ селѣ ... а новгородцы по 10 гривенъ въ селѣ ... и отпусти въ домъ, и да въ имя pravdu, и уставъ списавъ, тако реклъ имъ: «по се грамотѣ медитъ, якоже списа въ вмѣ, такоже дерците». А се естъ pravda русская. » [25, fol. 79 v.–80]. The title Pravda russskaya (letters written with spacing in this chronicle) is written in cinnabar ink, followed by the text with no article division, although the introduction of the second part Pravda ustavlena Russkoj zemli [25, fol. 81] is emphasized with capital P in cinnabar in the beginning of the line and can be perceived as a subtitle, closely related to the general title. According to G. M. Barats, it is only a variant of Russkaya Pravda title; N. A. Maksimeyko believed it to be an opposition between Kievskaia (of Yaroslavichi) and Novgorodskaya (of Yaroslav) Pravda [12]. It is critical to mention, that though both titles contain the word pravda, these are the only occurrences of this word in the whole text of the Short Pravda. Here it means ‘law, judicial regulation’, i.e. it serves as the title of a regulatory act; this meaning is supported with the verb forms ustavlena, ustavil (изъясняя) of istaviti – ‘to formalize, to resolve’ [23]: pravda stands for law principles and rules of procedure, set by princely power. According to M. B. Sverdlov, this edition of Russkaya Pravda had the heading Sud Yaroslavib Velodimerib [26], which was omitted by the chronicler; if that is so, then pravda expresses the same meaning as that in the title of the Extensive edition from Merilo Pravednoye as the authors have mentioned before.

Besides, the word pravda in the title of the text in the annual entry has meaningful relations with the words in the preceding context of the chronicle: pravda, ustav, gramota (see Table 2).

The noun pravda in the annual entry has the meaning ‘order, rule, law’ like ustav [8], while the phrase dati pravdu is synonymous to the verb ustaviti. The quotation stresses the fact of writing the statute and formalizing it in a document charter – which evokes an additional component in the semantics of the word Pravda: law principles (pravda) can exist in oral form while here they are presented as written. The authors are not touching upon the question whether Russkaya Pravda was actually granted by Yaroslav or it was another charter [10], [18], [27], [28], [29]; by describing the semantics of the word Pravda, the authors rely on its actual usage in context in this fragment of the chronicle. However, it should be noted that the compositional principles of Russkaya Pravda differ from most Old Russian statutory and other charters which, as a rule, begin with the phrase «Се абъ (name)» and end with the so-called ‘protective’ lines [30], [31]. Although it is not a traditional charter in its classical form, it is regarded as an official written document.

The text of the chronicle in the manuscript is followed by a series of legal texts [25, fol. 265–305 v.], including Russkaya Pravda. These are Pravilo zakonamо o cerkovnykh lyudě, ..., O měrilěh, Pravilo svatych otce 165 5-go sobora, ..., Rukopisanie svatyatogo knyazya krestivšago Ruskuyu землі, Ustavъ Yaroslavlъ, sudь svatitelkоsъ, O ženitв, Ustavъ velikogo knyazya Vsevoloda o cerkovnyh suděh, i o lyuděh, o o měrilвh torgovyh, Ustav velikogo knyazya Yaroslava, Ustav Volodinmer Vsevolodićya, Ustavъ Yaroslava knyazía o mostěh, Rukopisanie knyazía Vsevoloda. It also features the Extensive edition of Pravda, in which the Statute of Vladimir Vsevolodovich is included as a separate text with its own title.

Let us examine the text of Pravda placed in the ‘supplement’ to the chronicle which represents a collection of laws: it is listed under the title Ustav velikogo knyazya Yaroslava (written in ligatures with cinnabar ink). The text begins with an excerpt from Slovo Vasilija Velikogo o sudьях i klevetab (Word of St. Basil the Great on judges and slander), and then is followed by the text titled Pravda.

TABLE II THE WORD PRAVDA IN NOVGOROD FIRST CHRONICLE (ANNUAL ENTRY)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pravda</th>
<th>ustav (spisav)</th>
<th>gramota</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘rules of court, law’</td>
<td>‘law, legislative document’</td>
<td>‘document charter’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pravda russskaya</th>
<th>Pravda</th>
<th>ustavil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘rules of court, law’</td>
<td>‘law’</td>
<td>‘rules of court, law’</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The word pravda semantically relates to the words that are used in the titles of other legal texts – uestav, pravilo, pravilo zakonu, rukopisanie – ‘command, order, or instruction, confirmed in writing’ [8] and with the word sud in these titles, which determines its understanding as ‘court acts’. Among these terms of key importance the word uestav is defined as ‘name of the document, regulating a specific social subject’; it affects the meaning of the phrase Pravda Russkaya as the name of the document which is essentially uestav (statute). Considering the secular context of the book, the term pravda is generally used in its legal secular aspect.

The word mērilo (gradskoye, torgovoye) is also used in common meaning of ‘scales, an instrument for measuring something’.

**TABLE III. THE WORD PRAVDA IN NOVGOROD FIRST CHRONICLE (COLLECTION)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Novgorod First Chronicle of Younger Recension according to the Commission List, 15th cent. (collection)</th>
<th>uestav</th>
<th>uestav</th>
<th>uestav</th>
<th>uestav</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRAVILO ZAKONNO</td>
<td>uestav</td>
<td>uestav</td>
<td>pravila</td>
<td>pravilo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUKOPISANIE</td>
<td>sud</td>
<td>sud</td>
<td>sud</td>
<td>sud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USTAVЪ</td>
<td>zakon</td>
<td>zakon</td>
<td>zakon</td>
<td>zakon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUDY</td>
<td>uzkoniti</td>
<td>uzkoniti</td>
<td>uzkoniti</td>
<td>uzkoniti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USTAVЪ &amp; O</td>
<td>pravdu</td>
<td>pravdu</td>
<td>pravdu</td>
<td>pravdu</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUDĚ́</td>
<td>sudak</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>USTAVЪ</td>
<td>pravda</td>
<td>pravda</td>
<td>pravda</td>
<td>pravda</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘rules of court, law’</td>
<td>‘rules of court, law’</td>
<td>‘rules of court, law’</td>
<td>‘rules of court, law’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, the preamble, i.e. the moral ‘Word of St. Basil the Great on judges and slander’ (which is included in the first part of Merilo Pravednove in Extended version [22, fol. 20 v.–21 v.]) and chapters from Zakon Sudnyi Lyudem expand the semantics of the word pravda. This is supported with frequent occurrences of the words sud, suditi, osuditi, sudiya, zakon, uzkoniti, bezakonnyi, zapovedi in phrases like sud božii [25, fol. 296 v.], božii zakon and zakons lyudskiy [25, fol. 292], božiya zapovëdë pre stuplenie [25, fol. 296]. The perception of court and law is augmented with moral and spiritual component, enriching the notion of pravda in the same manner.

The Word of St. Basil the Great and Zakon Sudnyi Lyudem contain frequent derivatives with the root -prav- as in pravda, pravyi, pravednyi, opravdati, opravdit, ispraviti. They represent abstract concepts of ‘truth, fairness’, ‘innocent’, ‘fair’, ‘righteous’, ‘to determine innocence’ among others, thus forming the semantic subset of ‘court, law and fairness’ composed of the derivatives with the roots sud-, zakon-. In some fragments these lexemes are found in close proximity, sometimes within one sentence, where they semantically interweave, e.g. «gore opravdeysëmu necestivago muzdy radi i ot pravago pravdu otryemlyashçemu. Davyi bo namu bog vlasti istvachët skoro vaša delà i pomysli ispytaet, yakoše bo služitele este carstviya, ti ne sudiste pravo, ni svrhaniste zakona božiya [25, fol. 279]; «Ašče le ne pravo sud, to vseidatku ks velikomu omestnimy, egože postavi vlastu naša pomagati sirotë i vdovice vu pravdu, rekšu bogu i prorokom: sudite sirotë i opravdaiye vdociyu; to da ispravito vëlikii sudiya, i obidyai sirotu da primetë sud protivu dëlomy» [25, fol. 301], etc. Patterns of meaning that are found in these contexts express an appeal to the supreme power and supreme court, claiming that the truth is no longer the princely court, but the justice of God and God’s fairness.

The idea of fairness of court as embodiment of God’s truth that is, as the authors have shown above, represents the axis of Merilo Pravednove and other books of a similar nature. In the annual entry the lexeme pravda is used to report about historical events and the contents of the document are directly related to the events described. However, beyond this narrative, in contextual surrounding of legal texts of Russian and foreign origin that are included in the book for purposes different from the one that is characteristic of the manuscript in question, this lexeme acquires additional meanings. It appears that even in the mind of a 15th century scribe, the writer of the chronicle, the lexeme pravda already had developed regular connotations, and Russkaya Pravda was thought of in relation to other texts (though it was probably not used as practice guideline), which is why it was chosen to introduce a spiritual and moral preamble, taking a fragment from the work of St. Basil the Great.

**VI. CONCLUSION**

To conclude, interpretation of the famous Old Russian manuscript on justice Russkaya Pravda is determined by a series of reasons. Considering semantic syncretism as a peculiar feature of an ancient word, it is necessary to avoid oversimplification when giving meaningful definition to the lexeme pravda, which simultaneously means ‘fairness’,
‘truth’, ‘rightness (innocence)’, and ‘an action directed at establishment of the truth which is implemented in accordance with the truth (God’s truth), and the law governing such actions’. The complexity of the term pravda manifests itself in the titles of the legal manuscripts analyzed. Although it essentially bears a terminological meaning throughout the document, in effect, through numerous associations that are conditioned by lexical and derivational relations with other Russian words and in the context of culturally significant texts this word meaning provides insights not only into historical circumstances of the epoch but also the axiological universe of the Old Russian mentality.

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