



DOI: 10.22363/2618-8163-2025-23-3-448-460

EDN: XQEGBQ

Research article

## The Bible and the spiritual space of the Russian word

Valentina A. Maslova Vitebsk State University named after P.M. Masherov, *Vitebsk, Republic of Belarus* [mvavit@tut.by](mailto:mvavit@tut.by)

**Abstract.** Since the end of the twentieth century, linguistics has been laying the foundations for studying another language hypostasis, the spiritual one. However, the categories of spirituality and spirit have not been investigated in Russian language studies yet. This substantiates the relevance of studying the Bible heritage and spiritual space of the Russian word. The aim of the study is to show that the Russian language is the basis for the spirituality of the Russian people, which is formed and preserved in words, set expressions, proverbs with deep sacred meanings. These units fix the system of Bible values and guide the behavior of the people. The material of the study were words, set expressions, proverbs from dictionaries derived from the Bible or having sacred meanings, and some parts of the Bible. The author used descriptive, discursive, and linguistic-cultural analysis and system-semasiological interpretation of the language material. The study showed that the Russian language is the main and necessary source of spirituality for Russian people; it expresses and keeps key ideas about the God, religion, and church, which define intellectual and moral traits of Russian-speaking personality. The study reveals an important aspect of the communicative function of the Russian language, which is realized in prayers, requests to God, and in the sacred meanings of the Russian word as part of its linguistic semantics. The study proves that the Russian linguistic consciousness contains the basic religious and spiritual values and the behavior norms. The Russian language is permeated with biblical meanings so the theological-anthropocentric paradigm of scientific knowledge is prospective for Russian language studies.

**Keywords:** Russian language, Russian culture, Bible, a language unit with biblical meaning, God, Orthodoxy, spirituality, theolinguistics

**Conflict of interests.** The author declares that they have no conflict of interests.

**Article history:** received 22.01.2025; accepted 06.03.2025.

**For citation:** Maslova, V.A. (2025). The Bible and the spiritual space of the Russian word. *Russian Language Studies*, 23(3), 448–460. <http://doi.org/10.22363/2618-8163-2025-23-3-448-460>

---

© Maslova V.A., 2025



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/legalcode>

## Introduction

The interaction between language and religion, scientific and religious worldview, artistic literature and spirituality has always attracted scientific interest, but the attitude to it has changed over the centuries. Scientific worldview has been forming in parallel with the religious one, but they have been opposed to each other since late XVIII century. Consequently, the XIX – early XX centuries saw a separation of philosophy and literature from religion and spirituality. It is clearly seen in “Religion of Humanity” philosophical concept of A. Comte, F. Nietzsche’s ideal of Overman, and artistic works of writers which D. Andreev characterized as having “high artistry and low spirituality”<sup>1</sup>.

Now science and religion are coming closer to each other. In the early XXI century, S.S. Averintsev, Yu.S. Stepanov, and V.I. Postovalova state the need to unite several humanitarian sciences, including linguistics and theology, with the religious worldview. For example, Yu.S. Stepanov says that new breakthrough results in studying the language need the synthesis of linguistics, culture, philosophy, religion, and mythology, which will open the new opportunities for studying scientific issues in the borders of “imagined Philology” (Stepanov, 2010). V.M. Shaklein (Shaklein, 2012) also contributed to humanitarian sciences integration, and “the concept of church-religious functional style is established in Russian language studies” (Izotov, 2017: 100). Vladimirova (Vladimirova, 2022) also states the necessity of synthesis of linguistic and religious knowledge for solving scientific issues (also see: Vladimirova, Sinyachkin, Khatiashvili, 2022).

Thus, an increasing number of linguists consider that it is necessary to analyze linguistic and cultural heritage of the Bible. The significance of this object forms a separate direction at the junction of linguistics and cultural linguistics (Ivanov, Maslova, Mokienco, 2022).

Russian language and culture occupy a special place among other languages because God and Christian values form the basis of Russian literature. Thus, Daniil Andreev wrote about G.V. Derzhavin: “It is not by chance that the great Russian literature began with the ode ‘God’. It is not by chance that its very first pages are flaming with the stunning stanzas of Pushkin’s “Prophet”<sup>2</sup>. Almost every Russian word not only educates, but also enlightens, spiritualizes, and guides. Every “language, whether it is a single word or a coherent speech, is an act of the spirit, its truly creative action...” (Humboldt, 1984: 197). But Russian language stands out among other Slavic languages. The cultural and political connections between Slavic, and especially Eastern Slavic, countries are based primarily on Russian language and culture representing Orthodox spiritual values.

<sup>1</sup> Andreev, D. L. (2014). *The Rose of the World*. Moscow: Eksmo publ.

<sup>2</sup> Andreev, D. (2014). *Rosa Mira*. Moscow: Eksmo publ.

Such a look at language as a spiritual action helps to understand religious-spiritual content of the Russian language. This is an actual issue for modern Russian language studies.

**The aim of the study** is to establish that the Russian language forms the spirituality of the Russian person stored in language units, words, phraseological units, proverbs with deep sacral semantics, which fix the system of biblical values; these values determine the behaviour of the linguistic personality.

### Methods and materials

The author uses the descriptive method, the methods of discourse and linguistic-cultural analysis, and system-semasiological and theolinguistic interpretation of factual material. The linguistic units under consideration are extracted by the method of continuous sampling from the Bible, and dictionaries “Lepta of Biblical Wisdom” by E.E. Ivanov and al.<sup>3</sup>; “Explanatory Dictionary of Biblical Expressions and Words” by G.A. Lilich, V.M. Mokienko, O.I. Trofimkina<sup>4</sup>. About 200 units were analysed. About 100 units of the modern Russian language with spiritual meaning were also used for analysis.

### Results

The study of the role of language in forming human spiritual world has shown that Russian language is the main and irreplaceable source of spirituality of the Russian people because it expresses and fixes ideas about God and religion. Language contains and keeps sacral meanings and innermost knowledge, which determine the intellectual and moral-ethical qualities of Russian native speakers.

The article reveals that the most effective in conveying divine meanings are the biblical units as a linguistic heritage of the Bible, words of prayer, and spiritual and ecclesiastical vocabulary.

The author proves that one of the most important aspects of communicative function is the function of God-communication. It is realized in prayers, requests to God, and in the deep sacral meanings as parts of the linguistic semantics forming religious-spiritual content of the Russian word.

Religious-spiritual space of Russian linguistic semantics and its use in God-communication is part of the matrix of a special behaviour based on biblical values. The Russian language reflects and keeps Orthodox norms and values, which are represented in the lexical semantics of many lexical,

---

<sup>3</sup> Ivanov, E. E. et al. (2014). *Lepta of Biblical Wisdom: biblical winged expressions and aphorisms*. Mogilev: A. Kuleshov MSU; Ivanov, E. E., & Mokienko, V. M. (Eds.) (2019). *Lepta of Biblical Wisdom: Russian-Slavonic dictionary of biblical expressions and aphorisms with their correspondences in Germanic, Romance, Armenian, and Georgian languages : in 2 vol*. Mogilev: A. Kuleshov MSU.

<sup>4</sup> Lilich, G. A., Mokienko, V. M., & Trofimkina, O. I. (2010). *Explanatory dictionary of biblical expressions and words : about 2000 units*. Moscow: AST ; Astrel publ.

phraseological, and paremiological units. Religious-spiritual semantics of the Russian language forms the Russian personality who lives by the rules of the Orthodox behaviour.

## Discussion

At the beginning of the 21st century, linguists are convinced that national spirit directly depends on national religion; religion is its main moral wealth; creative forces and aesthetic ideals are useless without it. M. Heidegger described the negative impact of technology on culture and language. Then it did not seem to be true, but now we understand the threat of artificial intelligence. The new values being now imposed on the national spirit and culture are even more destructive; economic profit, personal success, and endless pleasure are presented as the main human values. These destructive values can be opposed to religious-spiritual values, which are reflected and preserved in Russian language consciousness.

Now anthropocentrism is the main direction in the world humanitarian science; it puts the human being at the centre of the world and language. Concepts of linguistic and speech personality, linguistic-cultural types, linguistic directions oriented on a person, including communicative linguistics, have appeared.

However, it is in Russian linguistics that *the theanthropocosmic paradigm* is being formed as a paradigm of the future (Postovalova, 2011a, 2011b, 2022), where man does not see his place in the centre of the world but understands that he is influenced by different circumstances, including those acting and explained in the religious worldview. They are reflected in the Russian language as well. E.M. Vereshchagin writes that “the Russian language is so imbued with Orthodox reminiscences that if we can, with certain limitations, speak of Russia as an Orthodox country, then the Russian language is, with the same limitations, an Orthodox language” (Vereshchagin, 2014: 2).

Consequently, Russian language studies in modern historical conditions solves actual issues of investigating Bible heritage in the Russian language and describing religious-spiritual meaning of the Russian words, phraseological and paremiological units as a source of spiritual culture of Russian nation. The issues are characterized in four important aspects: 1) the Russian language as a source of national spirituality; 2) the Russian word as the material and instrument of religious thinking; 3) the function of God-communication as one of the important functions of the Russian language; 4) religious-spiritual content of the Russian language as the matrix of a special behaviour based on biblical values.

### Russian language as a source of national spirituality

Many linguists see the interrelation of linguistics, cultural studies, religion studies, and theology (Yu.S. Stepanov, T.E. Vladimirova, A. Gadomsky, E.E. Ivanov, K. Koncharevich, V.V. Kolesov, V.I. Postovalova, V.M. Mokienko, etc.).

For example, N.D. Arutyunova calls the language “a system of symbols which reflect the spiritual life of people” (Arutyunova, 1999: 657–658).

As the above-mentioned studies show, the most important category for the Russian person is spirit and spirituality. W. Humboldt wrote: “The concept of spirit is elusive and difficult to analyse. The paradox lies in the fact that, on the one hand, all speakers intuitively feel the presence of this spirit, and on the other hand, it is difficult to define because it is not easy to relate the very concept of spirit with the material means of its expression” (Humboldt, 1985: 380).

One of the founders of philosophical anthropology M. Scheler argued that “*spirit* is the most important man-forming principle” because “man is a spiritual being” (Scheler, 1994: 153). The Holy Spirit is known to be the essence of God, and one of his hypostases also lives in man.

In the Russian language, *дух* ‘spirit’ and *душа* ‘soul’ are polysemous words as evidenced in explanatory dictionaries of the Russian language. In Old Russian, the word *духъ* ‘soul, reason, wind’ appeared in the XI century, and Christianity gave it several meanings: *reason, moral side of man, true sense, “air”, “soul”, “supernatural incorporeal being”*<sup>5</sup>. Soviet dictionaries connect these lexemes with human consciousness without the meaning “religiosity”. The interpretations of words *духовный* ‘spiritual’ and *духовность* ‘spirituality’ link the essence of the named concepts with the intellectual and moral-ethical essence of man: “Spiritual, intellectual nature, inner, moral essence of man opposed to his physical, bodily essence”<sup>6</sup>. The religious component returned in the beginning of the XXI century in the dictionary edited by G.N. Sklyarevskaya: “Spiritual. 1. Religious. Relating to spirit, connected with religious life of a man; relating to God, faith, church. Spiritual rank”<sup>7</sup>.

Without considering the sacral meaning of these words, we cannot understand neither the mystery of Russian soul and “Holy Russia”, nor the spiritualization of Russian culture. That is why the Russian language should be considered not as a simple system of signs or an instrument of thinking, but as a spiritual essence, as part of spiritual world of the Russian man which mostly forms this world.

E.M. Vereshchagin writes: “Spirituality is a state of personality, which is expressed in the harmony of man and the cosmos and gives a sense of unity with the surrounding world, nature, and people. Spirituality gives meaning to our life” (Vereshchagin, 2014: 107). Consequently, spirituality brings a person into the sphere of the Higher Mind, God, who is in the soul of each Christian and gives immortality. A spiritual *person in the aspect of communication Rhetorics*

<sup>5</sup> Semenov, A. V. (2003). *Etymological dictionary of the Russian language*. Moscow: Yunves.

<sup>6</sup> Kuznetsov, S. A. (Ed.) (2008). *Big explanatory dictionary of the Russian language* (p. 289). Saint Petersburg: Norint ; Moscow: Ripol Classic.

<sup>7</sup> Sklyarevskaya, G. N. (Ed.) (2001). *Explanatory dictionary of the modern Russian language: Linguistic changes of the end of XX century* (p. 239). Moscow: Astrel; AST publ.

should have such **qualities** as “*humility, meekness, modesty, patience, diligence, charity, obedience, attention to the troubles and experiences of others, the ability to accept another person as himself*, and so every person was called *neighbour*” (Annushkin, 2022). These qualities make a Russian man a linguistic personality capable of effective communication and understanding Christian (Orthodox) values and norms of life expressed in the Russian language and preserved in background meaning of linguistic units (words, phraseological units, and proverbs).

### The Russian word as the material and instrument

The spiritual aspect of the word can be studied in detail on the material of biblical discourse, first, the Bible heritage. The most prospective in the aspect are such sections of the Bible as the Pentateuch of Moses, the Books of the Prophets, and the Books of Kings, the Holy Gospel, the Collected Epistles of the Apostles, the Revelation of John the Theologian. The Bible heritage in the Russian language can be studied in different aspects (Maksimowicz, 2021). For example, historians of language are interested how much and in what aspects the language of Holy Scripture has influenced the Russian language (Grigor’ev, 2011; Mokienko, 2024). Words and expressions borrowed from the Bible which entered modern spoken and written language are studied: *соль земли* ‘*salt of the earth*’; *Фома неверующий* ‘*Thomas the unbeliever*’; *хлеб насущный* ‘*daily bread*’ (Mokienko, 2018; Baláková, Kováčová, Mokienko, 2020). Biblical winged expressions are the foundations of religious discourse and religious-literary understanding of Russian aphorisms (Ivanov, 2019: 387).

As modern dictionaries show<sup>8</sup>, there are more than two hundred set expressions associated with the text of the Bible in the Russian language: *петь Лазаря* ‘*singing Lazarus*’, *идти на Голгофу* ‘*going to Golgotha*’, *без зазрения совести* ‘*without a twinge of conscience*’; *блудный сын* ‘*prodigal son*’; *камень преткновения* ‘*stumbling block*’; *не ведают, что творят* ‘*do not realize what they are doing*’, etc.

We should pay special attention to biblical words in the Russian language (Mokienko, 2023). They make us think about ontological problems of existence; as a rule, they are connected to spiritual perfection and wisdom: “A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver” (Book of Proverbs of Solomon 26, 11). The metaphors of golden apples and silver vessels show the highest material values that characterize word as the ideal essence.

Spiritual vocabulary in the Russian language, God-centred in its basis, at the same time preserves anthropocentric beginnings. Such lexemes are акеза

<sup>8</sup> Ivanov, E. E. et al. (2014). *Lepta of biblical wisdom: biblical winged expressions and aphorisms*. Mogilev: A. Kuleshov MSU; Lilich, G. A., Mokienko, V. M., & Trofimkina, O. I. (2010). *Explanatory dictionary of biblical expressions and words*. Moscow: AST ; Astrel publ.

‘*ascesis*’, *бессмертие* ‘immortality’, *благочестие* ‘piety’, *добродетель* ‘virtue’, *воскресение* ‘resurrection’, etc. The most important mental essences form the basis of the Russian Orthodox world picture: *Владыка* ‘the Lord’, *Человеколюбец* ‘the Merciful One’, *Иисус Христос* ‘Jesus Christ’, *Утешитель* ‘the Comforter’, *вера* ‘faith’, *спасение* ‘salvation’, *душа и дух* ‘soul and spirit’, *крест* ‘the cross’, *икона* ‘the icon’, etc. Being universal for different confessions, they have specific features for each nation. For example, Russian Christians perceive *salvation* is a complex entity consisting of spiritual salvation, physical health and physical life salvation in different situations (in fire, etc.).

There are words and expressions with religious-spiritual meaning which are not actual for Russian language speakers as shown in their meanings in modern dictionaries. Nevertheless, they are still connected to Orthodox worldview, contain hidden religious meanings and play an important role in preserving and reflecting spiritual potential of the Russian language. For example, such words as *убогий* ‘wretched’ (it used to mean ‘be near God’ and now means ‘defective’), *прелесть* (as *пре-лесть*, i.e. ‘flattery at the highest level’; it used to mean ‘demonic charms’ and now it is the highest level of beauty), *свидетель* ‘witness’ (it used to be *сведетель* from *ведать* ‘to know’ and now it is traced from *видеть* ‘to perceive with eyes’), *ревность* ‘jealousy’ (it used to mean only ‘jealousy to God’ and now has a wider meaning) (Maslova, Sknarev, 2023).

In theological linguistics (theolinguistics), the word is “not just a human product, but a creative co-action of God and man”<sup>9</sup>. There are quite a lot of Russian words with the meaning of the *light of God* and its energy: *sparkle*, *luminosity*, *warm words*, *the word radiates light*, *word burns with life*, *the word is lightning*, etc. Such word is sacred in its depths. N.S. Trubetskoy concludes that “words of Church Slavonic origin in the Russian literary language make up almost half of the words”, which puts our language “really apart among the literary languages of the globe”<sup>10</sup>. That is why the Russian language has more Orthodox meanings than other languages. The Russian language under the influence of Old Bulgarian (Church Slavonic) adorns and ennobles Greek words with the first part *благо-* and *добро-*: *благодать* ‘goodness’, *благополучие* ‘welfare’, *благоговение* ‘worship’, *добросовестность* ‘fairness’, *добродушие* ‘kindness’, etc., which is the beginning of all things. Church Slavonic and Greek expressions in the Russian language make it more flexible and enriches it with important and positive concepts. Many of these words were reinterpreted, and their meanings can change into opposite. Let us look, for example, at the complex opposition *good and evil*, where *good* is the highest value and the basis of divine morality (God helps the good *to do good*), and *evil* is a negative force in the

<sup>9</sup> *Modern philosophical dictionary* (p. 230). Moscow: Akademicheskiiy Project, 2015.

<sup>10</sup> Trubetskoy, N. S. (1995). *History. Language. Culture* (p. 198). Moscow: Progress Publ.

world and man (*Evil Natalia think all people scoundrels* (V. Dahl). However, each epoch can bring its own meanings to this opposition. For example, the expression *Добро должно быть с кулаками* ‘lit. Good should be with fists’, which was widespread in Soviet times, lacks the most important moral concept of Orthodoxy — *non-resistance to evil by violence*. Orthodox Christianity states that good triumphs over evil with the help of kindness, not violence. When words are deprived of divine meanings the concepts expressed by these words disappear. This impoverishes not only our language, but also our life, culture, and morality. For example, A.S. Pushkin in “The Captain’s Daughter” calls the priest’s wife *a cohabitant* outlining her mission to be the companion in the life. In modern society, the bonds of marriage have weakened, and the word has acquired negative meanings.

According to Yu.S. Stepanov, “the actions associated with the word in the Russian language are represented by a three-phase model: ‘to glorify – to hear – to be known’” (Stepanov, 2004: 383). As we see, the academician puts “to glorify” in the first place, and this verb shows the main function of the word, to glorify God. Most of Russian Orthodox prayers are not petitionary, but glorifying God, the Mother of God, the saints, etc. All these prayers are clear, musical, emotional, and written in beautiful Russian language. For example, the prayer to St. Polycarp of Bryansk says: “*Oh God-pleaser, deliver the cities and towns of our land from all enemy attacks, and do not leave us weak, burdened with sins and sorrows, without your intercession*”<sup>11</sup>. Here the request is not only saturated with numerous additional meanings, but it is also rhythmic and euphonious.

The Russian word is both the instrument and the material of God the Creator. The sacred word carries the world of the spirit of an entire nation inside. Religious philosophy asserts that the word is not just a mirror reflecting the real world, but the creator of the world. It created the universe, heaven and earth for the Word is God. Religious leaders believe that the energy of the word has power over the world. According to V.I. Postovalova, it is the “work” of “the hidden moments of linguistic experience, belonging to the sphere of mystical pragmatics” (Postovalova, 2011b: 7).

Words naming mental states are connected with God at the level of their deep meanings: *pity, mercy, charity, suffering, compassion, empathy, sympathy*, etc. The most important of them is *suffering*, whose meanings have changed throughout history (Maslova, 2011). Aristotle considered it evil; according to the Western European tradition, a person deserves suffering, so he should not be sympathized with. In the Bible, *suffering* cleanses man’s soul and body of sins to make him righteous (Hebrews 12:4–13). Suffering gives *holiness which* is considered the highest virtue; it is a moral goal for a Christian though only a few

<sup>11</sup> *Life of the soul. Orthodox calendar* (p. 59). Moscow: Syntagma, 2023.



achieve it. The ideal of suffering is *Jesus*, who suffered for all people. The word *suffering* preserves the sacred meaning of the sufferings of Christ. Every Christian feels *pity, mercy, charity, suffering, compassion, empathy, sympathy* to Jesus.

Modern religious worldview gives the word power to rule the reality. This is important for studying sacred meanings as part of linguistic meaning. According to V.I. Postovalova, they are the place for “inmost moments of linguistic experience in the sphere of mystic pragmatics” (Postovalova, 2011b: 7). The meaning of sacred lexis is the important and necessary part of Russian spiritual world, which has been understudied. The most relevant issues of Russian language studies are the spiritual component in the meaning of the Russian word and religious-spiritual component of the Russian language. They can be understood and described with the combined knowledge in the sphere of semantics and theology. We can find this combination in the work of T.E. Vladimirova (Vladimirova, 2022).

#### The function of God-communication as an important function of the Russian language

Communicative function of the language, which must be understood broader than in traditional linguistics where language is understood as a means of human communication. But language is also a means of human communication with God. However, we cannot understand God with our mind, we can communicate with him only in prayers where not words themselves are important, but their meanings and feelings, which cannot be directly expressed. Prayer is the dialogue with *God*. P. Riker (Riker, 2008) writes that dialogue reflects not only what is directly expressed, but the endless unexpressed. Archpriest K. Kopeikin says that language in communication with God performs “the function of touching the mystery, the original depths of being, revealing to man both the extraordinary height of the high world and the exceptional depth of the inner space of the human soul” (Kopeikin, 2006: 14).

Indeed, we communicate with God in our prayers, requests with the help of words. But people communicate with each other using the same words. As we see, it is impossible to create a complete scientific picture of language without taking God into account its sacred meanings (Stepanov, 2010: 67).

#### Matrix of a special behavior based on biblical values

The synthesis of language, theology, and psychology shows spiritual aspirations, which are translated into a special type of behaviour. Man lives in a linguistic-cultural environment which preserves the guidelines and norms of behaviour for the society. Behavior is largely based on ancient knowledge, archetypes. Archetype, according to C.G. Jung, is a typical model of human experience or behaviour, manifested in a fundamental theme, which is realized

in its own way in different cultures and religions. There are archetypes common to all mankind. They are as diverse as the human experience itself. Moreover, most archetypes are sacred, which increases their emotional energy. C.G. Jung wrote that archetypes are clots of powerful psychic energy; they guide human behaviour (Jung, 1988).

Sacred meanings of words are the most ancient archetypes and the deep behavioural matrices which guide our behaviour. The Bible repeatedly points out the great power of the word. “The stroke of the whip maketh marks in the flesh: but the stroke of the tongue breaketh the bones. Many have fallen by the edge of the sword: but not so many as have fallen by the tongue”. (Sirach 28:20–21). In the religious worldview, words create actions, which form human behaviour, and reveal their spiritual essence. Thus, the Book of Proverbs of Solomon says: “*He who digs a pit will fall into it, and he who rolls a stone will have it roll back on him*” (26:27). “*Let another praise you, and not your own mouth — a stranger, and not your own lips*” (27:2). These statements teach us that you will be rewarded from people and from God for your deeds; you should behave modestly, not boast; let others praise you. These are important spiritual and moral principles underlying human behaviour.

Russian language preserves norms of Orthodox behaviour in the semantics of set multiword expressions (Bredis, Ivanov, 2022: 16–18). The lexeme *God* is one of the most frequent in Russian phraseological units and proverbs (Mokienko, Nikitina, 2024). The proverbs with the component *God* fix the correct behavior in Russian linguistic culture: *Бойся Вышнего — не говори лишнего* ‘*Fear God, and do not speak in vain*’; *Не бойся никого, кроме Бога одного* ‘*Do not fear anyone but God alone*’ and many others. In our life we can count on God’s help: “*Without Me you can do nothing*” (John 15, 5), — said the Lord. Many rules of behaviour are prescribed in the Bible: *Give, and it will be given to you; what measure you take, the same measure will be given to you*, etc., i.e. help others, share what you have. These words teach us to love God, the world, and man himself.

Thus, religious-spiritual ideas about what the man should be which are fixed in the Bible and reflected in the semantics of language units form the matrix of spiritual behaviour of the Russian man.

## Conclusion

Since the end of the twentieth century, linguistics has been laying the foundations for studying another hypostasis of language, religious-spiritual one. The hypostasis investigates language units and functions which influence national culture in the aspect of reflecting and preserving religious-spiritual essences, values, and norms.

The Russian language preserves the basic values and norms of religious worldview, human behaviour of Orthodox man which form Russian culture. Russian word is spiritual reality, so its full and multi-faceted studies should

combine language theory, anthropology, cultural studies, and theology. It forms the theoanthropocentric paradigm, the system of new knowledge based on the synthesis of linguistics, theological linguistics, and cultural linguistics. The direction can be called theological cultural linguistics: it should be aimed at studying deep sacred meanings in linguistic and background semantics of language units.

## References

- Annushkin, V. I. (2022). *Russian literature. History and modernity*. Moscow: Flinta Publ. (In Russ.). EDN: DVABXH
- Arutyunova, N. D. (1999). *Language and the human world*. Moscow: Languages of Slavic Cultures Publ. (In Russ.). EDN: YLAWAR
- Baláková, D., Kováčová, V., & Mokienko, V. M. (2020). Biblijska frazeologija z vidika jezikovnih uporabnikov ruščine (iz izsledkov sociolingvistične raziskave). *Slavistična revija*, 68(2), pp. 299–310. EDN: VJPUBR
- Bredis, M. A., & Ivanov, E. E. (2022). Linguoculturological commentary in polylingual dictionaries of proverbs. *Russian Journal of Lexicography*, 26, 5–29. (In Russ.). <http://doi.org/10.17223/22274200/26/1> EDN: OMKJCF
- Grigor'ev, A. V. (2011). The Byzantine tradition and semantics of Russian biblical expressions. Linguo-cultural competence and phraseological motivation. In A. Pamies & D. Dobrovolskij (Eds.). *Phraseologie und Parömiologie*. Band 27 (pp. 111–115). Baltmannsweiler: Schneider Verlag Hohengehren GmbH.
- Jung, C. G. (1988). *Man and his Symbols*. New York: Anchor Press, Doubleday.
- Ivanov, E. E. (2019). Aspects of empirical understanding of aphorism. *RUDN Journal of Language Studies, Semiotics and Semantics*, 10(2), 381–401. (In Russ.). <http://doi.org/10.22363/2313-2299-2019-10-2-381-401> EDN: ZEELHM
- Ivanov, E. E., Maslova, V. A., & Mokienko, V. M. (2022). *The heritage of the Bible in the language and culture of Russia and Belarus*. Moscow: RUDN University. (In Russ.).
- Izotov, A. I. (2017). On the reasonableness of singling out the church-religious functional style in the Russian studies and the religious-functional style in Bohemistics. *Philology. Theory & practice*, (2-1), 100–103. (In Russ.).
- Kopeikin, K. (2005). What language does God speak to us? In *Conversations of lovers of the Russian word: Orthodox clergy about the language* (pp. 11–24). Saint Petersburg: St. Petersburg State University Publ. (In Russ.).
- Maksimowicz, E. (2021). Studying Biblical idioms in the Russian language — an overview of the most important research approaches. *Studia wschodniosłowiańskie*, 21, 169–181. (In Russ.). <http://doi.org/10.15290/sw.2021.21.11> EDN: YGZOFB
- Maslova, V. A. (2011). Suffering and compassion (based on the material of Russian and Belarusian linguistic cultures). In *The Slavic conceptual sphere in comparative lighting. The lexicon* (pp. 382–396). Samara: Universitetskoe Publ. (In Russ.).
- Maslova, V. A., & Sknarev, D. S. (2023). An advertising image in religious Internet communication. *Bulletin of the Tajik University*, (3), 11–26. (In Russ.).
- Mokienko, V. (2018). Russian biblical terms in the European context. *Językoznawstwo*, (1), 33–45. (In Russ.). [https://doi.org/10.25312/2391-5137.12/2018\\_33-45](https://doi.org/10.25312/2391-5137.12/2018_33-45) EDN: ALDQCT

- Mokienko, V. M. (2023). The Biblical Heritage in the “Explanatory dictionary of the Russian language” edited by D. N. Ushakov. *Philological Class*, 28(4), 103–116. (In Russ.). <https://doi.org/10.26170/2071-2405-2023-28-4-103-116> EDN: YAVBXX
- Mokienko, V. M. (2024). From the history of Slavic phraseological biblical expressions. *Slavistika*, 28(1), 41–55. (In Russ.). <https://doi.org/10.18485/slavistika.2024.28.1.3> EDN: VTPWLF
- Mokienko, V. M., & Nikitina, T. G. (2024). Man and God: Forms of interaction in the images of phraseological units. *Studia Slavica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, 67(1-2), 101–113. (In Russ.). <https://doi.org/10.1556/060.2023.00098> EDN: XTHDQZ
- Postovalova, V. I. (2022). *Theolinguistics. The origins. Grounds. Concepts*. Moscow: Publishing House of the Brotherhood of St. Alexy. (In Russ.). EDN: KVJYMP
- Postovalova, V. I. (2011a). Time and eternity in the Orthodox worldview. In *Logical analysis of language: Linguofuturism: Language’s Perspective on the Future* (pp. 94–109). Moscow: Indrik Publ. (In Russ.). EDN: SCEGKT
- Postovalova, V. I. (2011b). Religious concepts in the theolinguistic view. In *Readers of theolinguistics* (pp. 6–12). Belgrade: University of Belgrade. (In Russ.).
- Riker P. (2008). *Conflict of interpretation. Essays on hermeneutics*. Moscow: Academic Project Publ. (In Russ.).
- Scheler, M. (1994). *Selected works*. Moscow: Gnosis Publ. (In Russ.).
- Shaklein, V. M. (2012). *Historical linguoculturology of the text*. Moscow: RUDN University. (In Russ.). EDN: TNGSET
- Stepanov, Yu. S. (2004). *Constants. Dictionary of Russian Culture*. Moscow: Academic Project. (In Russ.).
- Stepanov, Yu. S. (2010). *The thinking reed. A book about “Imaginary literature”*. Kaluga: Eidos Publ. (In Russ.).
- Vereshchagin, E. M. (2014). *Church Slavonic literature in Russia: Linguotextological research*. Moscow; Berlin: Direct-Media Publ. (In Russ.). <https://doi.org/10.23681/252563> EDN: FTWQKC
- Vladimirova, T. E. (2022). Semantic potential of the word: based on the material of the mythologeme of the sacred marriage of Heaven and Earth. *RUDN Journal of Language Studies, Semiotics and Semantics*, 13(2), 294–306. (In Russ.). <https://doi.org/10.22363/2313-2299-2022-13-2-294-306> EDN: LNUFXW
- Vladimirova, T. E., Sinyachkin, V. P., & Khatiashvili, H. A. (2022). At the crossroads of Georgian and Russian cultures. *Philological sciences. Scientific reports of the Higher School*, (S6), 42–49. (In Russ.). <https://doi.org/10.20339/PhS.6s-22.042> EDN: URTPEC

### Bio note:

*Valentina A. Maslova*, Doctor of Philology, Professor, Professor of the Department of Preschool and Elementary Education, P.M. Masherov Vitebsk State University, 33 Moskovsky Avenue, Vitebsk, 210038, Republic of Belarus. *Research interests*: theolinguistics, language theory, cultural linguistics, Russian language studies, phraseology, philosophy of language. The author of more than 500 scientific publications. ORCID: 0000-0001-8717-9231. SPIN-code: 2442-4318. Scopus ID: 57222509849. E-mail: mvavit@tut.by

DOI: 10.22363/2618-8163-2025-23-3-448-460

EDN: XQEGBQ

Научная статья

## Библия и духовное пространство русского слова

В.А. Маслова 

Витебский государственный университет имени П.М. Машерова, *Витебск, Республика Беларусь*

✉ mvavit@tut.by

**Аннотация.** С конца XX в. в лингвистике закладываются основы видения еще одной ипостаси языка — религиозно-духовной. Однако категории духовности и духа до недавнего времени в русистике не исследовались, отсюда актуальность проблемы дальнейшего изучения наследия Библии и духовного пространства русского слова. Цель исследования — показать, что русский язык является одной из основ духовности русского народа, которая формируется и сохраняется благодаря лексическим, фразеологическим, паремиологическим единицам с глубинной сакральной семантикой, где зафиксирована и сохраняется система библейских ценностей, определяющих поведение языковой личности. Материалом для исследования послужили слова, устойчивые обороты, пословицы (по данным словарей русского языка), имеющие библейское происхождение и/или религиозно-духовную семантику, а также фрагменты текста Библии. Использовался описательный метод, приемы дискурсивного и лингвокультурного анализа, проводилась системно-семасиологическая и теолингвистическая интерпретация фактологического материала. Установлено, что русский язык является основным и незаменимым источником духовности его носителей. В нем выражены и закреплены ключевые представления о Боге и вере, определяющие интеллектуальные, нравственно-этические качества русскоязычной личности. Выявлена одна из важнейших разновидностей коммуникативной функции русского языка, реализуемая в молитвах и просьбах к Богу, а также в глубинных сакральных смыслах русского слова, являющихся частью языковой семантики. Доказано, что в языковом сознании русских людей аккумулируются представления об основных религиозно-духовных ценностях и нормах поведения. Русский язык пронизан библейскими смыслами, поэтому для современной русистики перспективно развитие теолингвистической парадигмы научного знания.

**Ключевые слова:** русский язык, русская культура, Библия, библеизм, Бог, православие, духовность, теолингвистика

**Конфликт интересов:** автор заявляет об отсутствии конфликта интересов.

**История статьи:** поступила в редакцию 22.01.2025; принята к печати 06.03.2025.

**Для цитирования:** Маслова В.А. Библия и духовное пространство русского слова // Русистика. 2025. Т. 23. № 3. С. 448–460. <http://doi.org/10.22363/2618-8163-2025-23-3-448-460>