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## "A Beautiful, Tremendous Russian Book, and Other Things Too"

An Overview of Rare Russian Books from the Diaghilev-Lifar Collection in the British Library



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The British Library holds one of 65 existing copies of the first dated book printed in Muscovy by Ivan Fedorov and (Acts and Epistles) (1564) and one of two known copies of Ivan Fedorov's Primer (L'viv, 1574), which is considered book printed in Ukraine. The recent history of these books is linked to the name of the legendary Russian art critic

(1872–1929). Both titles belonged to his private book collection. A story of Diaghilev's collection became part of the in 1975 it acquired, among other books and manuscripts, his copy of the famous 1564 *Apostol*. Diaghilev's copy of t Harvard University Library, but its detailed descriptions and facsimile editions helped the British Library curator Cl the Russian collections, to identify a second copy, which is now held at the British Library. This article tells the sto Diaghilev's collection of rare Russian books and manuscripts were acquired by the British Library, examines possibl for books, and highlights other themes relevant for the history of private and public book collecting.

**Affiliations:** 1: Lead East European Curator at the British Library Katya.Rogatchevskaia@bl.uk

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