

THE HISTORY OF RUSSIAN EDUCATION. THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

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*Byzantium and Christianity – Grand Duke Vladimir and his son, Jaroslav
– The cultural awakening – The monastic order. Patriotism. Turning
away from the west – Religious and secular literature – Books and
libraries – The cultural system. The end of the age.*

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Byzantium and Christianity

According to chroniclers of the Middle Ages, the ancestors of the Russian's, the "Ants", lived in the territory between the *Dnieper and Dnyester* Rivers from about the 4th to the 7th century. Historically their first known moral and cultural claims were rooted in a pagan cult connected to farming and agricultural production . The "Ants" personified and worshipped the natural world, the sun, the fire, rivers, springs, trees, stones and the spirits of their dead ancestors and erected idols to their gods in their holy places (Dazsbog, Stribog, Volos, Hors, Mokosh, etc.). The god of thunder and lightning, Perun, was the head of their pantheon. They accepted the religions, customs and languages of other peoples.

This nature worship and religious belief, however, was no longer appropriate within the incrementally more rigid order of the loosely-tied eastern Slavic tribes in the transitional age of the 9th and 10th centuries, when certain trade settlements began to evolve into commercial centers and cities. It is approximately the period when the inhabitants of the area were first called "Rus", "Russians".

Their traditions rapidly gave way to two historical constituents: the Eastern Roman Empire and Christianity. Despite raids of plunder and military campaigns against Greek settlements to the south and the empire's capital, Constantinople (Byzantium), in the 9th and 10th centuries, the Russians had always maintained good cultural and commercial relations with the Greeks. At that time, the 500 year old civilization of the Eastern Roman Empire was already an object of interest and appeal to the less advanced Russian people.

The Russians were aware of Christianity earlier. (The Apostle *Andrew*, who according to tradition reached the Volga River as a missionary among the Scythians, today is recognized as a patron saint in Russia. The cross of the Russian Orthodox Church bears a second, crooked arm, which represents "Andrew's cross" and his crucifixion. *Timkó 279.*) Greek monks had probably escaped from Greek settlements to the northern coast of the Black Sea and to the Crimean Peninsula at the time of the 8th and 9th centuries iconoclast into Russian territory and began spreading the new faith as missionaries. Russian

ties with Constantinople were strengthened at this time and in the 9th century Russian commercial centers sprang up in Novgorod on the Baltic Sea and Kiev on the Dnieper River. It was in these places that Russians came in contact with many western and northern Christians. Thus, small Christian communities might have originated here and there. According to the Arab writer Ibn-Hordadbeh, whose work dates back to the 840s, Russian merchants in Baghdad called themselves Christians.

The baptisms of many Russians in the 860s were recorded, including entire "druzinias" (entourages of armed royal soldiers).

At the end of the 9th century, at the time of the forging of the Kievian state when Oleg, Prince of Novgorod, made Kiev the centre of his empire (882) and took the title of Grand Duke after conquering the neighboring states, Byzantium took a special interest in the conversion of Russians to Christianity. The Eastern Roman Empire hoping to lessen the danger of attack from Russian marauders, not only forged pacts with Russian principalities, but focused more energy on missionary conversions.

The competition between Rome and Byzantium for the conversion of the Slav people thus intensified. The differences between eastern and western people, their differing customs and cultures, politics and spirituality, had resulted for centuries greater separation and independence. Eastern Christians clung to their inherited religious traditions and liturgies. The organization and discipline of the Eastern Church also diverged from western ecclesiastical structures. Their differing way of life and mentality made it more and more difficult to keep unity. An intense rivalry between the Eastern and Western Churches followed the crowning of Frank King Charles the Great as Emperor of the Western Empire (800). Byzantium contested the indisputable legal authority of the pope and rejected Rome's absolute authority in the Latin liturgy (*Szántó* I. 288, 294). Simultaneously, the cult of dogma, growing since the iconoclast, intensified, along with disputes of faith, despotic uses of authority, insistence on loyalty to the old faith (orthodoxy) and attacking, accusatory language. The classic literary heritage, claimed by the east, kept alive its feeling of superiority over the west.

As a representative of this spirit, *Phótiosz* (820-891) took the patriarchal throne in 858 and the impending break with Rome became the daily order of business. Constantinople, racing the Empire of the West and the papacy, moved as quickly as possible to bring the Bulgarians and Russians under its patriarchal church authority. Rome was also uneasy about Byzantium's support of Moravia's aspirations to create a national language liturgy.

Amidst these circumstances, the translation of the liturgy into Slavic by the Moravian missionaries, Cyrill and his brother Methodius, the "Apostles of the Slavs", was received by both sides as an event of great significance.

Cyrill's, originally called Constantine (826-869) and Methodius' father was a military officer at Salonika. Constantine became patriarchal librarian in Byzantium and later taught philosophy. He conducted fruitful theological debates with the aniconics and with the Muslims in Syria. He was sent among the Kazár people on a diplomatic mission. The emperor sent him and his brother to do missionary work in Moravia. They also travelled among the Slavs of Pannonia and were persecuted for their spreading of the Slavic-language liturgy. They were monks until the end of their lives and Constantine's brotherhood name was Cyrill.

It is probable that *Phótiosz* tried to introduce his nation's religion and the Slavic liturgical translation to Kiev. What the chronicles prove is that in 866 a pact of "alliance and friendship" was established between Byzantium and Kiev, which outlined the structure of the Russian bishopric and sent the Greek patriarchal bishop to Kiev.

The Church of the West paid close attention to these events. Rome wanted to establish ties with the Bulgarian Czar and appease the Moravians and Pannonian Slavs. Pope Hadrian II, therefore, decided to accept Cyrill's formerly banned Slavic translation alongside the official Latin and Greek religious texts in 868. The question of who would exercise authority over the Russian church was also a major reason why the pope recognized the Slavic liturgy and allowed masses in the Slavic language. (*Dvornik* 201-202. Later, the pope again banned the Slav language and liturgy in Church functions.) The situation, however, was not remedied with this truly great concession. The eastern empire achieved its goal. The Bulgarian church joined the Patriarch of Constantinople in 870 and henceforth employed the Slavic liturgy, while Christianity spread faster, especially in the 10th century, when Russian contact with the Bulgarians increased. The Russians were practically introduced to the rituals of the Church, which were now in their own language, under the guidance of the Patriarch of Constantinople.

The establishment of the Russian Church was hailed as a great achievement in Greek politics. It is palpable in the tone of Patriarch *Phótiosz's* pastoral letter in 867 that the birth of the Russian bishopric was a relief to Byzantium and a success for *Phótiosz* himself. First the Bulgarians, he writes, and now the Russians "have forsaken their pagan and Godless beliefs for the purity of Christian teaching and now count among our respected and respectful friends, whereas not long ago they were pillaging our country and treating us with unbridled brutality. The religious thirst and fervour has so gripped them that they have accepted their shepherds and the Christian rites zealously" (quoted from the original Greek. *Levchenko* 77.; *Phótiosz* refers here to the siege of Constantinople in 860.)

Russian Christianity was already accepted as an established fact in the Greek capital. However, in 911 and again in 944, the arriving Kievian ambassadors swore to their pagan gods when pledging renewed vows of peace.

The position of the Russian Christian Church was not yet solid enough. Regardless of political relations with Byzantium, Christianity easily fell out of favor in the court of the Grand Duke of Kiev. Olga, the Duchess of Kiev had been baptised in Byzantium, but her son Svjatoslav's principality remained pagan. Friendly relations were also frequently strained by the fierce independence of Russian Church political leaders. Constantinople was not willing to consider the Russian Church as more than a patriarchal bishopric. The principalities of Kiev, on the other hand, wanted to establish an independent church organization, as the Bulgarians had done. It is probable, that the strong-willed and persistent Olga, the one who had set about christianizing the state "from above", attempted, first in 955 and again in 957, to raise Kiev to an archbishopric. However, *Constantine VII* attached such political demands to the establishment of a Russian archbishopric hierarchy, that it obviously made any such agreement impossible.

Even in the absence of further evidence, it is likely that the Russians, more than once, turned to the Church of their brothers, the Bulgarians, for support.

The Bulgarian Empire waged a life and death struggle with Byzantium with the intention of bringing the Russians under their own influence and away from that of the Greek alliance. In any case, it is a fact that primarily the Bulgarians, enclosed as they were within the territory of the Byzantine Empire, lent a great hand to the spread and strengthening of Russian Christianity.

Christianity was introduced in Bulgaria at the end of the 8th century and achieved significant success thanks to Cyril's new translation and by 865 was the state religion. It was not only the rites of the Church and other religious texts, however, that the Bulgarian translators, priests and friars translated to their own language, but also earlier scholarly works, such as theological texts, books on canonical law, ancient Christian works and texts on other basic, educational subjects like history, geography and natural history. They betrayed a great susceptibility towards questions of the general human condition in the works they selected for translation. Lihacsev called this (Razvitije 39) "general europeaness" (obsejvropijskoszty), "general humanity" (obsecselovesznoszty). They travelled widely, making pilgrimages to *Mt. Áthosz*, Jerusalem, the Sinai Peninsula and Byzantine monasteries and took the Slavic writings among the communities of Christian Slav peoples, especially the Russians, where there was the greatest need for books in the Slavic language.

The court of the Bulgarian Czar, Simeon the "book-lover" (885-927), in Preslav, became a significant literary center and greatly influenced the early developments of Russian literature. The established Slavic literary language and language patterns fed the burgeoning Russian culture.

Great numbers of missionaries were working in the large Kingdom of Kiev by the 10th century. They came not only from Bulgaria, but also from the western-Slav Moravian church, where missionaries were persecuted for their part in the spread of the Slavic liturgy. They also came from other countries representing the great rivals, the Byzantine and Latin Churches. Olga, for example, turned to Germany as well as Constantinople, but, obviously, a growing number of missionaries were native-born priests and, especially, monks.

Grand Duke Vladimir and his son, Jaroslav

The foundations of the Medieval feudal state were laid during the development of the early Russian civilization. The final step toward the formation of the new state meant merely waiting for the right political moment to openly declare and celebrate the national conversion to Christianity. External circumstances also provided the impetus. The Russian state of tribal alliances was no longer interested in adventure and plundering, but in steady agricultural production and was forced to protect itself from attack by destructive nomadic people from the east.

Byzantium's power grew quickly at the end of the 10th century, sustaining its rivalry with the west and advancing its influence in the east. It was internal strife, however, which more than once threatened the empire's position. Urgent military aid was necessary in 987 to defend the capital and the throne itself from Bulgarian and Greek revolts. In this desperate position Emperor Vasilios (Basil) II was ready to do almost anything, send an archbishop or even establish family ties, to convince Russia to officially declare itself Christian. Olga's grandson,

Vladimir, Grand Duke of Kiev (980-1015), who not long before had, for political reasons, wanted his people to worship their tribal gods in a collected pantheon, came to the aid of Byzantium. He was christened and declared his people Christian in 988.

On his orders, idols were destroyed, the statue of Perun, the main god of the pantheon, was thrown into the Dnieper and in its place on a hill was built a church to the patronage of St Vazul (Basil).

Naturally, the example of Bulgaria's more than 100 years as a Christian state played a part in Vladimir's decision. With its civilization, Christianity, missionaries and literature, Bulgaria prepared the ground well in Russia.

Conversions were done en masse and by force. Spiritually, the whole of the people were far from convinced. Vladimir's work marks an enormous turning point in Russian history, since with it began an age of state-building that tied Russia to European civilization. Vladimir had probably already travelled to the west as Prince of Novgorod (Heller 26). The Russian Church observes Olga and Vladimir as holy saints and apostles of Christian missionary.

Regarding religious matters, Byzantium viewed Russia as a vassal within its empire, exactly as it had done earlier with Bulgaria. Russian leadership, however, did not agree with such claims. Kiev accepted the Greek archbishop, but between 988 and 1000 there were three papal ambassadorial visits to Russia's capital and, likewise, two Russian visits to Rome. Obviously, questions of church organization were timely. For a while, anyway, Vladimir was able to keep a political balance between the rival churches, proving himself loyal to Rome and keeping the door open to Byzantium's influence. (Cf. *Winter* 23-27., *Vodoff* 81-87.) All the while, though, he clung to the dream of an independent Russian Church like Czar Simeon's, under neither empire's control.

Vladimir's son, Jaroslav the Wise, was compelled to reinforce ties with Constantinople because of renewed attacks by the Petcheneg tribes. The archbishopric of Kiev was formed under his rule and from then on the Patriarch of Constantinople sent archbishops to Kiev, exactly as had been done in the subdued Bulgaria. As well as the highest church authority, the archbishop represented the Byzantine Emperor's power over his vassal state and all court requests were in the hands of the archbishop. It was the responsibility of the archbishop to instill the "barbarian" people with the sense of law and order and culture of the Roman Empire of the East. Byzantium wished to count Kiev among the ranks of its vassal-states and viewed the country as a province that was "romanizing".

This was something that Russians, independent-minded and conscious of their tribal identity, were never able to accept. Their entire history and way of behavior differed from the Byzantines. The Russians were alien to the material and spiritual demands, indeed luxury, of Byzantium, the representative of ancient Greek culture welded to the Christian faith. To Byzantium, the Russians were a people of undetermined identity, worthy of mild scorn, mock jealousy and often revulsion. The Russians were sharply divorced from the characteristics of the Byzantine world and as ignorant of calculation, cunning and ulterior motives as they were of spiritual enlightenment or the labyrinths of business and economics. The ambition and vanity of citizens of the empire was far beyond that of the Russian people, who were neither sceptical nor rational thinkers, but receptive, patient and ready to learn. They did not take kindly, however, to any tampering with their characteristic customs and national culture; they could not

think within a Byzantine conceptual framework and stood in direct opposition to the emperor's ambitions of hegemony.

Thus, in the 11th century the more enlightened strata of Russian society appeared ready to confront Greek imperialism and defend its ancient customs and morality against the new faith. The common religion was not enough to bridge the wide natural and spiritual divergences between the two peoples. In its ambitions of unity, the Church of Byzantium attempted to restore Greek language to religious rites. For the most part, this failed in the face of Russian resistance, except under the rule of the half-Greek, Vladimir Monomah (1113-1125), when religious worship was conducted in Greek for a short period.

There were occasions in the 11th and 12th centuries when the princes of Kiev, for their part, attempted to establish Russian religious independence. For example, by replacing the Greek archbishop with a Russian. However, these efforts met with little success, since by the beginning of Mongol rule (1237) only 2 of the 23 archbishops were Russians. (To the archbishops *see* Vodoff 109-115.) Kiev was reduced to maintaining good relations with Constantinople and, in the end, all religious questions were answered according to the Patriarch's will.

The cultural awakening

Kievan Russia (Kijevskaja Rus) quickly rose among the most powerful countries of the Middle Ages. Kiev boasted 50-70 thousand inhabitants by the end of the 11th century and its leaders wished to make the city similar to Constantinople. It was a rich city, full of markets and a lively economic center of serious international trade. Vladimir, like his father Svjatoslav and son Jaroslav, was active in European and Byzantine affairs. Other nations were forced to reckon with Kiev, which had established political, commercial or royal-family connections with many European countries as well as with Byzantium. (Of the 65 marriages arranged between the Kiev court and other kingdoms in the east and west, here are the numbers with the major countries: Poland 16, Germany 10, Byzantium and Hungary 7, respectively. *The History of the Soviet Union I*. 43.)

Novgorod, with 10-15 thousand inhabitants, was the territory's second major commercial and spiritual center. It had existed since before the 9th century, when the Scandinavian-Norman ("varég") Rurik and his brothers took it in 862 and began the long dynasty of the "Rurikovich" Czars. They further developed the old Russian tribal centers: Belgorad, Chernyigov, Perejaslavl, Smolensk, Halich, Rostov-Suzdal, Polotsk, Rjazany and Vladimir.

Later, Russian religious institutions were established. In Vladimir's time the archbishoprics of Kiev, Novgorod, Chernyigov, Rostov and Vladimir-Volinski were formed. Kiev leadership ordered that one-tenth of national income was required to maintain the Church. This course of action was probably an imitation of western examples, because the Church of Byzantium did not allocate funds in this way (Ammann 18.). The Russian Church entered the burgeoning feudal society in the second half of the 11th century when bishoprics and monasteries were awarded land. The state grew stronger under its own authority, its power was confirmed and religion was found to be a wonderful tool in the justification of the societal order. The Church became the

real, unifying strength and protector of the sentiments which to a great degree helped solidify the Russian state.

The system of law was organized. A Bulgarian translation from the late 8th century ("Kormchaja knyiga", The Governing Book) of the collected Byzantium legal code ("Nomokanon") was employed broadly in all facets of Russian life. Though certain strict measures (death penalty, mutilation, etc.) were eased to money fines and corporal punishment, the new legal system was, at first, quite far from the original Russian concept of law and a great deal of time passed before it was imbued with any real necessity. It is beyond doubt, however, that over many centuries the new law code exerted an immeasurable disciplinary effect in all areas of public and private life (Ikonnikov 305-313.). During the reign of Jaroslav the Wise, began the task of developing a distinctly Russian code of law (Ruskaja Pravda).

The earlier pagan culture, folklore, tales of warriors and heroes ("bilina") told in historical song cycles, continued to flourish after the establishment of the Christian state, just as did customs of wizardry, shamanism, nature worship, etc. The remnants of the pagan cults and traditions held on stubbornly for a long time and, over the centuries, many habits, superstitions and folkloristic elements melted into Russian Christianity. This mixture of the new concepts with the old beliefs formed a duality ("dvojeverije") in the people's consciousness. The Church took steps against paganism and the dual belief on numerous occasions.

Spiritual life was given completely new foundations with the spread of Christianity. Russian Christians were touched by the holy books and theological knowledge and their spiritual lives became more and more defined by the words of the Book of Psalms. The "new people", as believers called themselves, also believed that a Russian version of the flowering Byzantine civilization was coming to power. Constantinople's wealth and brilliance was always attractive to Kiev, but the advances adopted from the Greeks only served as examples. The real fervour was directed toward establishing their own independent culture.

Russian life began to transform inside and out. Not only their spirits were tamed, but industry and art developed to new heights. Byzantine architects, artists, master craftsmen, musicians, singers and merchants appeared in the country. A main city gate was built in Kiev identical to the Golden Gate in Constantinople and monumental church constructions were commenced. Russia's great cities, Kiev (1037), Novgorod (1052) and Polotsk (1066), were given their own "Sophia's", stone replicas of the Hagia Sophia, where only wooden versions had been before. With the cathedrals, the Russian Church wished to emphasize its equality under the law with Byzantium and simultaneously its independence from the empire. The churches also adopted the style of decorative mosaics and iconography.

Resistance to the widening social order and centralized spreading of the faith began to make only sporadic appearances from time to time and place to place. Peasant uprisings and anti-Christian revolts lead by wizards (volhv) gave the kingdom cause for concern – the northeast territories were the last to be christianized – but these were crushed and ended by the 12th century.

According to the contemporary German chronicler Thietmar, in 1018 there were more than 400 churches in Kiev. It seems the entire 10 percent of national income granted to the Russian Christian Church went directly to this prescribed construction. The magnificently decorated, first stone church in Kiev was built during Vladimir's reign and took its name from this 10 percent allocation of

funds (Gyesjatyinnaja cerkov). It seemed that an optimistic impulse and great desire was fueling the rapid rise to the level of Byzantium. People were receptive to the beauty of religious ceremony and the aesthetic effect of religious songs. The structure of religious services in Russia was patterned after the Byzantine Church ceremonies held in the Hagia Sophia under the regulations of the "Great Church Tipikon" (Smolitsch: Das altruss Mönchtum, 23. "Tipikon": the order of worship according to *the reforms of Studioni St. Theodore*).

Churches and religious worship were of great importance to the country from the perspective of cultural development. In medieval Russia, it was the churches, not schools by today's definition, that were the actual centers of culture and, thereby, education. It was in church that congregations of believers took into their souls those concepts and practical principles which were very appropriate towards shaping the life of the individual and the community spirit, as well as satisfying the intellect. The church as the center of art and religious enlightenment, the sermon and the participation of the masses in liturgical singing united the congregation under one educational power. It disciplined, educated and nurtured all at once. The bigger stone churches served as safe havens for libraries, certificates and official documents. In close conjunction with the churches were established facilities for the sick and the poor, accommodations for foreigners, pilgrims and other guests, as well as schools to instruct children. This entire structure was overseen by a body of citizens from the Church and the congregation under the priest's leadership.

The monastery of the order of Saint Vazul (Basil, died 379) the Great was another foundry of culture. Along with merchants, friars were the greatest travellers of the age. They lived in monasteries in Constantinople and at the top of *Mt. Athos* and made pilgrimages to the Hagia Sophia and Jerusalem. Monasteries, which first appeared mainly in cities in the 11th century, became cultural centers from which the new spirit and way of life disseminated. The monks translated, copied, decorated and bound books, founded libraries, wrote biographies, painted icons and edited the chronicles. These intellectual pursuits were taken up after the appropriate schooling, which was likewise initiated within the walls of the larger monasteries, where clerks, miniaturists and painters were trained and priests were prepared. Convents also existed by the 11th century and were mainly populated by women of the aristocracy, who were sometimes educated.

The third cultural spring was the royal court, where the country's administration was taking its first steps toward an education in world affairs. There is not much data concerning the intellectual life of the court, only from the characteristic epithets of some persons in the chronicles can we draw certain conclusions about their erudition. The royal family used its linguistic ability in commercial and diplomatic relations and many court figures and members of the aristocracy could certainly speak Greek. There were those who had outstanding educations, such as the two Russian and two Greek archbishops, as well as the six Russian rulers, up to the 13th century, who were expressly known as "Bookish" or "Lover of Books" in their epithets. Jaroslav the Wise was especially enthusiastic about the spread of "education through books. A great book lover, he read "night and day" and not only had Greek manuscripts translated and copied, but actually joined in the work himself. These books were placed in the Church of Holy Wisdom (Szofja). One of Jaroslav's sons was

known for understanding many foreign tongues and his grandson, Vladimir Monomah, among the most erudite of Russian rulers, was a contemplative man of letters. Also outstanding was Konstantin Vsevolodovich, ruler of Rostov, whose love of education is shown by his book collection which contained over 1000 volumes in Greek alone. Roman, ruler of Smolensk, also collected and translated Greek books. He employed Greek teachers and opened schools where Latin was also taught. The people of Smolensk paid for his funeral from their own pockets, because when he died it appeared that Roman had spent his entire fortune on the pursuit of education.

The monastic order. Patriotism. Turning away from the west

The monastic order, known in the west as "bazilita", determined the religious sentiment of the Church of the East and greatly influenced the mentality of Russian society. The model and center of monastic life was the Studioni-Monastery in Constantinople, reformed by Studioni St. Theodore (Theodoros Studités, died 826). At that time, the capital city itself was known as the "monastic empire" because of the proliferation of monasteries (Smolitsch: das altruss Mönchtum 14). In the 10th century, friars of differing nationalities settled on the Halkidiki peninsula, at the top of *Mt. Athos*. In this independent, separately formed "state of brothers" they nurtured their own national, monastic concept and by degrees became the main representatives of not just the orthodoxy (old faith), but of a conscious patriotism.

The Russian monastery on Mt. Athos (Xilurgu) has been known to exist since 1016 when its monastic ideals began radiating all across Russian life. Later, the Panteleimon monastery took over this role. Many monks, returning home from Mt. Athos, assumed higher positions within the Church and established many new monasteries. The first such information is from the time of Jaroslav the Wise who "liked the priests and especially the friars very much". He founded the first monastery (ktitor) in his own Christian name (Georgij) and the first convent in his wife's name (Irina), after the Byzantine model. This was the primary model until the middle of the 13th century when the Mongol and Tatar hordes destroyed the kingdom of Kiev. The founders, the rulers, the bishops, the wealthy nobility all had a say in the internal affairs of the monastery, such as in the selection of the abbot. The other type of monastery, the "lavra", was much rarer. It was usually a group of hermits drawn together into a common life of prayer, fasting, poverty and chastity, living in a forest or cave. At the beginning of the Mongol age there were approximately two or three hundred Russian monasteries, with an average of between 30 and 50 brothers in each. (Sanukov: Book 136. The so-called "lavra" – ancient Greek, "laura", "narrow street", "path" – was and first found in the Church vocabulary in about the 3rd century and probably used in its Arnobius meaning – latin: settlement, farm. In the 4th century it referred to the fenced land and buildings occupied by Palestinian hermits and later generally came to mean monastery. Finally, in the Middle Ages in Russia it referred to certain large monasteries comprised of many buildings or sometimes an entire village.)

The brothers living in prayer were not out to change the world. Their only goal was to save their own and their brothers' souls through their God-fearing and devout (blagochestyije) way of life. The world-view of eastern monks was

focused only on the afterlife and other questions of eschatology. They did not take part in the affairs of the world as did western monks, but practically never left the confines of the monastery in their pursuit of holy perfection (Smolitsch *quoted work* 22-24). The monastic order's spirit still inspires and imbues the Church of the East today through its ascetic holy aspirations and its worshipful, glorifying liturgy. The monks, in their solitude, emanated the ideals of the age and St. Vazul the Great, turning away from the world and looking only inward. The goals and tasks of the outside world had no meaning in the monks' lives. The words of the father of the Russian monastic spirit, St. Feodosij (Theodosios, died 1074), "In manibus opus, in ore psalmus" ("Work in our hands, the psalms in our mouths"), visibly agree with the western Benedictine, "Ora et labora" ("Pray and work"). The "opus" and the "labor", however, do not mean the same. It is understandable that the organized and independent monastic congregations of the west, which included work done outside the monastery in their world-outlook, were foreign to Russian and Byzantine monastic orders (It is very possible that only monasteries with this outlook existed in the west). "The holy places" and the "houses of angels" as the monasteries were called and the saintly friars were greatly respected in Kievian Russia. Mainly, they heard confessions and the nation's rulers, priests and believers chose pastors from among their ranks. The bishops of Byzantium and Russia, who took vows of celibacy, were also selected from the among the brothers. The monasteries proved highly influential in the decision making of the age whether concerning cultural questions or other issues. The monastic order and the Russian Church in general were the uncompromising upholders and nourishing well-springs of national sentiment among the people.

The Archbishop and the Greek authorities were opposed to Kiev's Cave Monastery (Pecherskaja lavra, 1051), an advocate of Russian nationalism, since its founding. However, the royal court of Kiev kept constant contact with the order of the Cave Monastery and it became a center of religious and political life. It was founded by Antonij Pecherskij (died 1073) and among its priests between 1062-1074 was St. Feodosij. Many pontiffs and church superiors came from the Cave Monastery and its contribution to the nation's cultural and educational history was enormous. There was a small Hungarian monastic colony in Kiev. From the Cave Monastery is known *Magyar Mózes* (died 1043), a renowned book copier, who is practically revered as a saint in the Russian Church along with his brother Efrém (died 1053). (*Mészáros* Education in the Middle Ages 35, Berki 116. Legend published *Iglói* 136-143. See also *Timkó* 396, *Puskely*: Christian I. 537.) Here was chronicled the legend of the two innocent Russian princes, Boris and Gleb, Vladimir's youngest sons, murdered by their older brothers. In daring opposition to the Greek Church and the Archbishop of Kiev, they were canonized as Russian saints by the court of Kiev in 1072. (The Church opposed the canonizations on the grounds that only those who died for their faith could become saints). The cult of Boris and Gleb spread and took a distinct national character. There were six dates on the Church calendar named in their honor and a church dedicated to them was known by their names among the people rather than the Hagia Sophia.

The Russian Church gratefully memorialized Vladimir. In the presence of the royal family, he was eulogized by Ilarion as the ambassador of the new age of the merciful covenant in Russia and a ruler worthy of sainthood. The heir to the throne, Ilarion, said in his famous church sermon, "Vladimir's speech was

law and mercy" (approximately, 1049). Ilarian became the first Russian Archbishop of Kiev, serving for a short time from 1051. Vladimir was made a saint much later in the face of sustained opposition by the Church of Byzantium.

Russian independence also formed in opposition to the west. The relationship with Rome was determined by Russia's debts to the Greek church. By this time, the differences between Rome and Byzantium were substantial from a cultural perspective. In Byzantium, the ascetic and holy existence remained the central point of life and the Church rigidly clung to the teachings of the great, eastern Church fathers and the first seven synods and separated themselves from worldly knowledge and the speculative and exploratory nature of western theology (Cf. Mulert 56). The Greek Christians were not only convinced that their culture was superior to the west, but also that they alone faithfully and purely kept the religious traditions. They scorned the Western Christians on the one hand as uncultured and on the other hand persecuted them and their reforms (*Same place* 15-16). Besides the keeping to the purity of the words of the holy canon until the fall of the empire (1453) the Byzantium also insisted on the use of the ancient language of the Greek Church fathers from the 4th and 5th centuries (Guillon 330-331). Bitter disagreements had for some time often lead to breaks between the Eastern and Western Churches. The Archbishop of Constantinople and the monastic order were unconditionally opposed to negotiations with the west (*Same place* 178-179). Later, the western popes continuously-and usually without success-urged compromise, reconciliation and even reunification. Neither did overtures to Rome serve the interests of the increasingly independent Russian state. Any archbishop who was perhaps inclined to open negotiations was open to attack from the Church and the state and faced stiff resistance from the congregations and monastic orders and even a possible internal split within the Russian Church.

From the beginning the Russians were instinctively guarded against influence from the west. Even the first Latin missionaries met with difficulties in Russia, whereas the Greeks had more success because of the language similarities. The rhythm of Latin was strange to the people living within the orbit of the Slavic liturgy, as was the Latin alphabet. This is why the first western missionaries were unsuccessful. It also did not help the appeal of the western religion that the neighboring Polish, Roman Catholic since 965, had constantly been in conflict or at war with Russia since 981.

The previously mentioned "Kormchaja knyiga" (Governing Book) of the 8th century contains the first sharp criticism against the Latin Church-taken from Greek sources (Zuzek 86-88). In the 10th and 11th centuries many tracts against the Latins appeared continuously in Kiev. Among the archbishops, Leon (died 1004), Georgij (died 1079) and Ioann II (died 1089) voiced their disapproval. Archbishop Nyikifor (died 1121) wrote many anti-Latin letters, calling Rome schismatic, the Latins pagan and forbidding contact with them altogether after a lengthy elaboration of their transgressions (Ammann 34-35). Russian monks said the same. Feodosij, the abbot of the Cave Monastery, in 1069 warned Prince Izjaslav-who had married the sister of the Catholic king of Poland-against any and all unions with Latins while giving a list of their "heresies" (Ocherki History of USSR I. 219). The chronicler Nestor accused the Catholic Church of "destroying the faith" and called their priests morally reprehensible (Tyihomirov: *Drevnyaja Rus* 272).

Of course, Kiev had just as little to gain from Constantinople's bellicose

orthodoxy and accusations which lead to the permanent schism during the rule of Archbishop Kerullarios in 1054. There were people from the west who settled in Russia, practiced the Latin belief and were Roman citizens. They had churches in Kiev, Smolensk, Polotsk, Pskov, Novgorod and Ladoga. Kiev maintained active political ties and other connections to western Catholic countries, especially Poland and Hungary, however, the Russian people were not happy to have Catholics in their midst. Obviously, the exchanges of accusations between the rival Churches played a major part in the situation. At the beginning of the 12th century, a Catholic friar named Antonyj Rimljanyin established a monastery in Novgorod, the old center of western influence in Russia. During the course of the century, the population of Catholics grew in Kiev as well, where the Dominicans were prominent. They were exiled in 1233 and, due to the discord, Pope Gregory IX declared in distinctly written messages that he was forced to take the "Latins" of Kiev and their families under his protection in 1234 (Sapunov /quoted work/ 174-175).

The Russian Church was restricted to Byzantine religious rituals and the fact is that Kiev had no chance of becoming independent from Greek religious influence, since the archbishops and, at first, the bishops, too, who were either all Greek, or in any case, educated in the Byzantine spirit, decided all religious and any other general matters regarding the relationship with the west. Kiev only filled its role within the structure of the Greek Church. However, the unity of the people, the tribe and the nation, arising over the centuries from brotherhood and faith to the "Russian homeland", became an eternal source of strength in the national consciousness. The unconditional devotion to national and religious tradition springing from common roots, togetherness, the power of what is "ours"(szvoj), insured an unquestioned spiritual belief and a spiritual inheritance untouched by the "contagion" of doubt. At the same time, there awakened an instinctual rejection of what was "foreign to us", including the Greek as well as the Roman.

It is sure that the loyal patriotism and unbending orthodoxy of the Russian monastic order had an extraordinarily strong educational affect on the developing society. On the other hand, it deprived the culture of the kind of inquisitiveness, open-mindedness and flexibility necessary for intellectual progress. Monks fearfully guarded against everything that was not orthodox, while believers lacked the awakening western sense of worldly fulfillment through work. Instead of conceptual analysis and theoretical cogitation, the Russian interest rather insisted on the untouched purity, the perceptible wholeness, effectiveness and aesthetics of the power and life of things.

The religious and patriotic behaviour of the Russian people was directed by the monastic order and to a great degree, therefore, went hand in hand with the evolution of a frequently isolated atmosphere, distrustful and suspicious of the west. The cyrillic literature and culture was the starting point of the separation from the rapidly developing Latin Christian world. Later it continued to fuel an ever growing alienation from the western spirit. The crusading armies of 1204 - out of misguided political motives - occupied Byzantium, pillaged and desecrated its holy places, later propped up the 60 year "Latin Empire" and even installed a Latin Patriarch for a short time. Thereafter, the Greeks had only hatred for the Latins and forever turned their backs on the Church of the West.

The Russians, looking on at this violent attempt at unification, took it as a lesson.

Religious and secular literature

Despite the difficulties during the age of Kiev, great numbers of mainly translated and also original literary works survived, not only within a kind of mother-tongue cult, but also under the conscious literary and cultured atmosphere that reigned in Vladimir and Jaroslav's empire. From the beginning, the literary language here was Slavic, not the Byzantine Greek, or the Latin of the west. The Russians never looked down on their own native language or considered it barbaric. There certainly was a stratification in Russian culture, but it was never as sharply defined as in the Latin west, because the more sophisticated levels of the nation were intrinsically bound not only to religious traditions, but also to the Russian language and spiritual culture. The adoption of Christianity did not automatically mean the simultaneous adoption of Greek classicism, which could have aided the evolution of an elite intellectual class. Across the centuries, the content and form of the culture became both intrinsic and national Russian phenomena.

The Russian Church was essential to the national literature. The monastic order was the origin for a large proportion of the surviving literary works. A much smaller number of works, however, represented secular literature and mirrored the unified spirit rooted in the world view of the monastic order.

The largest parts of the specifically religious literature were highlighted by the necessary words of religious ceremony and the laws of the Church. These were mainly Slavic writings arriving from Bulgaria. Selections from the Gospels of the Old and New Testaments were used in religious and other ceremonies and were collected together in separate books (Paremejnyk, Jevangelije-aprakosz). The larger books, such as those on conducting the worship service (Sluzsbnjik) and various other ceremonies, belonged to the church. The priest, meanwhile, kept in his possession the smaller books (Trebnyik, Potrebnjik) containing prayers and blessings for use on certain occasions – christening, burial, seed sowing, harvest, blessing a home, etc. (Sapunov 69.) Mainly, the Book of Psalms (Psaltir) was used from the Old Testament, while the Gospels and letters of the Apostles, especially The Acts of the Apostles (Apostol), were taken from the New Testament. The four books of the Gospels, however, were not completely translated into Slavic until the 12th century. ("Chetverojevangelija", 1144.; Döpmann 24-25.) Certain other theological dissertations were also copied and mass produced.

The characteristic religious and secular literature began to appear: Apocrypha, legends, biographies of the saints, followed by the Russian saints, collected biographies of the Patriarchs (Patyeriki), followed by the Russian Patriarchs, collected sermons, road maps to the holy lands, the history of Alexander the Great, "Barlám and Josef", adapted from the original Syrian, "Akir Premudrij", the Trojan War most likely translated from Latin, etc. Many were based on original Greek works, but most were taken straight from the Bulgarian translations. Texts on secular knowledge such as literature, geography and natural history were translated from Byzantine works (i.e. "Fiziolog"). Bearing mention was the "Kozmographia" of Kozma Ingyikopolov. Numerous Russian works on world history appeared using material from Byzantine chroniclers (G. Hamartolos, J. Malalas, K. Manasses, J. Zonaras). A fine

translation, or rather adaptation, of Josephus Flavius's work, "The Jewish War" was also available.

The work of writing chronicles in a simplified form was underway, not only within the Russian monasteries and kingdoms, but in certain cities and among circles of priests around the world. The literature of the chronicles played a very important part in the continued survival of the national identity. The first Russian chronicle was probably written between 1037 and 1039 at the urging of the archbishop. Nestor (1056-1114), a monk of the Cave Monastery, finished his work known as "Chronicles of Old Times" ("Povesty vremennih let") in 1113. His work, which was soon slightly altered, partly in the interest of the royal court, gathered its material not only from older texts, Greek chronicles and Russian libraries, but also from folk tales, historical song cycles and oral tradition. Nestor's chronicle was the most important text to Russian culture and education in the Middle Ages. The credibility of the data and the solid narrative construction of the work made it a fountainhead of Russian religious and national identity for centuries.

Reading also became more prevalent in secular society and the role of secular writers increased in importance. "*Igor Song*" (Slovo o polku Igoreve, from 1187 or 1188) was the first work of completely independent secular Russian literature and appeared at the end of the 12th century. The developing language, however, presented obstacles to the growth of literary life. The literature of Russia, searching for a place and identity, was not able to break away from the enormous effect of the rigid modes of style and expression adopted over the centuries. Writers characterized people inside and out with a certain stylized uniformity. Realism only began to emerge in a few narrative, biographical and apocryphal works. (Gudzij: History 22, 39, 44, 166.)

The strength of the spoken language became more steadily apparent and the writing began to mirror the character of the living Russian word. By the 11th century, there was no place for religious vocabulary and locution within the secular literature. The literature which came later did, for a long time, bear features of Slavic religious writing - until the reforms of Peter the Great in the 18th century - but after the 11th century, the spoken word was free of language characterized by the Church (Obnorskij 3-8). Vladimir Monomah's "Admonition" (1117) is written in a fundamentally Russian language, especially in the autobiographical part, in which the religious Slavic is less apparent than other parts of the work (Gudzij /quoted work/ 95).

At the same time, the Slavic language of the Church (cerkovno-slavanskij jazik) also grew more independent and was only preserved in the ceremonial books and religious literature. The effect of the Bulgarian language proved strong. In some works originating in the 11th century, it is not clear whether the writer is Bulgarian and unfamiliar with the characteristics of the Russian language, or Russian and unable to work free of certain Bulgarianisms. The Russians always inserted elements of their own language into the texts whenever copying Bulgarian written works. Those translating from the Greek, as educated persons, could not resist employing changes to the original and, for the sake of Russian readers, altering or rewriting the texts.

Books and libraries

The Russians held erudition in very high esteem and the manuscripts were the central objects of respect. Numerous instructions expressly call attention to the value of books and reading. "To diligently search for wisdom in books is to do a great service to the soul. Those who often read books are conversing with God and the saints." If a book contained the word of God, then reading was food for the soul and the root of good deeds. That is why reading hurriedly was not permitted. "Read every chapter two or three times before proceeding to the next to enhance the value." Books "are the nourishing rivers of everything, the well-springs of wisdom, their depth is unfathomable, we gain solace from them, they are the bridle of self-restraint." There was no acceptable excuse not to read; neither the demands of a wife and children, being inundated with work and responsibilities, nor the pursuit of a profession. There could be no protests of, "it is not our task - let the friars read." Everyone had to read books to dispel grief and find sanctuary (A. C. Arhangelskij: *Tvorenija otcov cerkvi i drevnerusskoj pismennosti*. Kazany, 1890. 54-55. quoted Tihomirov: *Russian culture* 160).

Writing and especially the reproduction of books was regarded as an eminent science. Besides the monks, who usually worked either on their own monastery's books or those of their fellow monasteries, priests and deacons also labored in the copying of books. It was an art passed down through family generations, preparing texts for their own churches or perhaps copying books to fill orders. Since the first centuries of Russian Christianity, great numbers of holy texts were translated into Slavic, especially the texts used for ceremonies (dawn prayer, mass, vespers, etc.) and the longer or shorter parts of religious texts spoken on market days and Christian celebrations. The number of translations increased over time.

Writing was held as an activity that pleased God. It was decorative and celebratory and done out of piety, confession and repentance. The calligraphic, artistic, decorative style of book reproduction, record keeping and document writing demanded great discipline and skilled hands.

The work of one written reproduction was very time-consuming and often required many people and an entire workshop. It is conjectured that at least 20 Russian and Greek translators and writers worked in the court of Jaroslav the Wise. The works are usually supplied with various names and information. From the age of Kiev, between 1047 and 1230, the names of 39 copyists are known and among these are 15 Church officials (priests, deacons, assistants); the friars usually worked anonomously. Book reproduction became an independent industry during the industrial developments of the 12th century and secular copyists referred to themselves as "master craftsmen" from the end of the 13th century (Sapunov: *Istoki* 118, *Book*113, 116, 118).

Written work was of material as well as spiritual value. Great care went into the proportional positioning of the letters and lines, the beauty of the miniaturizations and the decorativeness of the binding. The Byzantine style was a guideline in such areas. The epitome of the art, beautifully written and rich in miniatures, is the oldest surviving Russian book, the "*Ostromir Gospel*" (1056-57), made for Ostromir, the regent of Novgorod. Other than the monasteries, only the ruling class, the nobility and the wealthier merchants could buy books or have copies made. Their libraries contained most of the works of secular

literature. At the request of royalty and nobility, magnificent, gilded kodexes, decorated with silver, precious stones and pearls were made, usually of the Gospels and the letters of the Apostles. Poorer customers and monasteries were satisfied with texts written on the bark of birch trees (Sapunov: Book 84-109). Upon their deaths, secular people often bequeathed their libraries to the monasteries.

The largest collections were in the hands of the monasteries. The Studioni reforms stipulated that a monastery had to have a library; friars had to know how to read and could keep books in their cells. Church libraries, especially those of the bishop's cathedrals, needed books expressly written for holy worship services. The monasteries and churches built during the age of Kiev (rectories, monastery churches, cathedrals, personal chapels for royalty and nobility) were, until 1240, equipped with an initial, optimal number of books, estimated to be between 130-140 thousand, of which only 390 remain (1965 data) (Sapunov: Book 64, 82, 114, 136-138, 207).

The cultural system. The end of the age

By the 12th century, the international waterway running north to south through Kiev, "from the Normans to the Greeks" had lost its importance due to the rise of Venice and the Mediterranean area. Kiev's role decreased both within the country and abroad. Centralized power became unstable as the kingdoms fractured. The state was divided up between Vladimir and Jaroslav's sons and the oldest took the throne of Kiev.

The Russian cities in the countryside flourished thanks to their efforts to imitate the capital. Kiev could not compete with the strengthening economic and political power of Novgorod, Pskov, Smolensk, Polotsk and Chernyigov and in the north-east, Suzdal, Vladimir, Rostov and Rjazany. Brothers waged war on brothers. In the 170 years after the mid-11th century, 293 rulers in 64 principalities went to war against each other. Kiev, the "mother of Russia's cities", became easy prey and was twice sacked and pillaged (1169, 1203). In the latter half of the 12th century numerous feudal oligarchies of various strength and character formed out of the ruins of the old Russian state. Novgorod had been an independent republic as early as 1136 and by the end of the century the duke of Vladimir-Suzdal was using the title of "Rus Grand Duke".

With the splintering of the country and newly independent urban centers came a widening of trade and markets, more industry and architectural development. Churches and monasteries multiplied, culture spread, but all at a slower pace. The cities were smaller, the churches no longer of gigantic Greek proportions, simpler wall paintings (frescoes) replaced mosaics and silver was often used instead of gold for decorations. The urban Christianity also infiltrated the new cultural centers where it could better saturate the population with its national elements. This cultural exchange was discernible in architectural examples just as it was in the decoration of books. The effect of literature translated from the original Bulgarian and Greek spread and was adapted to the demands of the increasingly versatile nation. Writers boldly adopted the Byzantine genres and styles and produced outstanding original work. Independent Russian schools of architecture and painting appeared as

well as the names of Russian architects, artists and painters in the 12th century. The real beginnings of a native culture were cropping up everywhere.

The role of Byzantium in the Russian world changed in the latter half of the 11th century. Most notably, the economic ties weakened. Each independent principality in Russia conducted its own foreign policy and the empire was forced to deal with each differently. Instruction and education in the Greek style came to an end with the widening independence of Russian culture and newer education methods took the stage.

The established old Slavic literature of Bulgaria was an historic gift to Kiev which helped to shore up the Russian cultural ranks with remarkable speed. The Greeks, however, were in no way accepted as masters to be emulated. Byzantium only held a spiritual allure until and as long as the spread of concepts satisfactorily served the general demands and common spiritual necessities of the people. This was the case in the 9th and 10th centuries, when Christian teaching answered general, all-encompassing, basic human questions through morality-building literature. The situation was reversed in the 11th and 12th centuries when secular knowledge and learning, reborn in the newly discovered classic works, flourished in Byzantium and there was an attempt, through ancient Greek philosophers, dramatic writers and historians, to recapture a localized, rational and often ironic, Greek national spirit. This was all foreign to Kiev. Opinion here was formed by the monastic spirit, which may have been open to the moral and educational use of many secular works, but was clearly closed to Byzantine fiction, for example. The people of Byzantium, within the atmosphere of their morally relaxed society, easily accepted the pagan lineage of classic literature, whereas the morality of the Russian reading public was never able to come to terms with it (Cf. Lihacsev: *Razvityije* 39). Of those Russians learned in Greek culture, very few would refer to ancient pagan writers in the 12th century and those that did could expect open criticism (Ammann 44, Gudzij /quoted work/ 69).

People felt that Kiev no longer offered security, protection and leadership in Russian society. When the country broke into independent feudal kingdoms it caused a great weakness in centralized power and the task of defending themselves against attack, whether it be from internal or external enemies, was left to the citizens' sense of community and cohesiveness. The roots of community feeling were deeper than the external factors that created the confused situation and people became more conscious of these feelings during the internecine wars. The Russian sense of unity was also preserved during the country's dismemberment. People longed for the return of the great nation and the return of the warriors and heroic leaders (*bogatírs*). The sense of cohesiveness, the unifying spirit and organization of the Church and finally, the proud, national memory of the glorious empires of Vladimir and Jaroslav were factors that kept alive the hope for peace and the possibility of reunification during the internecine wars. The chronicles increased their warning calls for unity in the Russian land. The "Igor-Song" raised its voice to warn the dukes of threatening external dangers. The two leading ideas of the age, Christian thought and Russian unity, became the main forces toward a strong educational system in Russia during the Middle Ages.

As the renewed fighting tortured the simple people in both the city and the country, their worldly needs began to be reflected consciously in their world of ideas. The intimate religious spirit was strengthened. Russian pilgrims so

flooded Jerusalem, Mt. Áthos and Constantinople in the 12th century that in the following century pilgrimages had to be forbidden. Russian pilgrims everywhere prayed for their homeland and their rulers (Stupperich 340). The validity of monastic thought reached an emphatic level. Human life was full of Satan's temptations and could only be successfully defeated within the walls of the monastery. The salvation of the soul stood at the center of the age's religious thought. In the 12th century, it was truly fashionable to become a monk. Near the ends of their lives, many dukes, feudal lords and widows-imitating the Byzantine example-donned the monastic robe to escape the corrupt world, cleanse themselves of sin and ensure eternal grace for themselves by taking a monk's monastic oath(shima). Those who founded a monastery were laid to rest within its walls.

According to the otherwise life-loving and optimistic Bishop *Kirill Turovskij* (died approx. 1190)-whose prayers are spoken by believers to this day-man is a miserable sinner, who can only be saved from his evil weakness and fall from grace through the mercy of God, unless the fallen is completely unworthy. The devil lurks within us. "The enemy of my soul lives within my heart and is only waiting for the right moment to steal the last remnant of my belief from me" (quoted Tschizewskij 60). Avraam Smolenskij speaks of the salvation of believers and the impending end of the world in his work entitled, "The Heavenly Powers". The perception of the secular world as a negative place became stronger. The dreadful pessimism and angry God promising to punish sinners sharply contrasted the opening of the 13th century with the cheerful enlightenment of the 9th and 10th centuries.

The premonitions of the age did not lie. The breakthrough of the Mongol hordes brought an end to the glorious age of Kiev and, for a lengthy period, stopped the continuation of what had held so much promise.

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