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Б. Д. ГРЕКОВ

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ЛИТЕРАТУРЫ НА ИНОСТРАННЫХ ЯЗЫКАХ
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THE CULTURE OF KIEV RŪS

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FOREWORD

IF YOU are about to inspect the Sophia Cathedral[1] in Kiev and are inclined to be condescending as regards the ability of our distant ancestors to express their understanding of the great and the beautiful, then you will be greatly astonished. You no sooner step across the threshold of the St. Sophia Cathedral of Kiev than you immediately come under the spell of its immensity and magnificence. The imposing dimensions of its interior, its strict proportions, the ornamental luxuriant mosaics and frescoes captivate you by their perfection even before you have had an opportunity to look at and ponder all the details and to comprehend what it is the creators of this outstanding work of architecture and painting had in mind.

The Russian metropolitan, Hilarion, spoke without exaggeration when he said: "This is a beautiful church, celebrated in all neighbouring countries, and the like of which it is impossible to find anywhere else on earth, from east to west."

Even when reconstructed in the 17th century after having suffered considerable damage, this temple evoked the astonishment of foreigners.

"The whole mystery,"—writes Paul of Khaleb (he visited Kiev in 1653)—"is: where do they (the Russians—*Author*) procure the marble that went into the tremendous columns outside the church, for there is nothing anywhere in this whole country that suggests the quarrying of marble.

"As a matter of fact they brought it across the Black Sea from Marmora,[2] which is in the vicinity of Constantinople, and then up the big river Niepros (the Dnieper) which empties into this sea. It was unloaded in the city of Kiev."

Your astonishment will be even greater when you learn that the St. Sophia is not the only and, perhaps, not even the finest memorial of its kind. Right next to the Sophia was another edifice which was destroyed by Batu during the siege of the city—the so-called Desyatinny Sobor,[3] also known as the Sophia.

It occupied a large area—1,542.5 sq. metres (the Sophia of Yaroslav was 1,326, not counting the galleries) and judging from the bits of building material and ornamentation that remained, its decorations were even richer than those of the Yaroslav Sophia. The numerous marble fragments (the annals go so far as to call this cathedral a "marble" one), the small bits of marble bases and capitals, the chips of jasper which was evidently imported from the Crimea, the pieces of floor of varicoloured marble, the glass, and large slabs of slate, most likely brought from the Carpathians, the bits of wall mosaic and fragments of Greek inscriptions—all of these taken together leave no doubt as to the character of the building.

The ruins of another large building, not a church, which probably fell to pieces during the same period, are indicative of equal splendour of the princely abode. This structure, conventionally called the palace of Princess Olga, was a two-storey brick building, and among its ornamentation, found in a pile of rubbish at the site of a fire, were fine brick slabs of a light brown hue, marble, red slate, mosaics, frescoes, glass, etc. The "palace" was built before the Desyatinny Sobor, some time about the middle of the 10th century.

Vladimir Svyatoslavich, who was interested in building Christian temples in his land, had an excellent appreciation of ancient art. He could not refrain from carrying off from Korsun,[4] which

he had captured, some antique statues, two sacrificial altars, and a quadriga, which even now stand behind the Desyatinny Sobor and which the uninformed believe to be made of marble. Vladimir had them erected in the most prominent place, and there they stood, adorning the capital, Kiev, until it was taken by Batu.

In just the same way Charlemagne adorned his capital, Aix-la-Chapelle, with a statue of Theodoric he had stolen in Ravenna, and a quadriga carried off from Constantinople to this day adorns the façade of the St. Mark's Cathedral in Venice.

An impression as profound as that left by Kiev is produced by Great Novgorod, which has succeeded in preserving to our days its own Sophia, erected in 1045-52 to take the place of a wooden church with thirteen cupolas that was destroyed by fire. The city of Chernigov prided itself on its Spas Cathedral,[5] built by Yaroslav's fortunate rival, his brother Mstislav. The capital of the latter, Tmutarakan,[6] unfortunately has not preserved any ancient cultural treasures. Polotsk considerably rebuilt its Sophia Cathedral, but from the traces that have come down to us we can still get an idea of the architectural conception of its creator. There is no need to list all the treasures of Kiev, Novgorod, Chernigov, Polotsk, Galich and other ancient cities of Rūs. Even without such a recital one is struck not only by the high level of Russian culture of the 10th-11th centuries, but also by its wide diffusion over the tremendous expanses of Eastern Europe.

Whence this sweep and fine taste in our ancient art? Very often Greek engineers and masters are advanced to the fore as the explanation. That however is only half the answer. Huge structures demand not only experienced engineers; they also require qualified workers, and these were not imported from Greece. At that time Rūs had no small number of its own artists and craftsmen. As far back as the beginning of the 9th century their fame had travelled far and wide over the earth. In a well-known treatise by Theophile (end of the 9th century) on the technique of various art crafts,

Rūs is placed second only to Byzantium in a list giving the foremost countries of Europe and the East, and comes before Arabia, Italy, France and Germany. As to later times, there is no need even to speak of them.

A legend about Boris and Gleb (12th century) mentioned the skill of the Russian artist who, it says, "so beautifully adorned (the shrine of Boris and Gleb—*Author*) that I cannot describe this art in a manner worthy of it, and many who come from the Greeks and from other lands say: 'There has never been anything of similar beauty anywhere.'"

A Byzantine poet of the 12th century glorified Russian ivory carving and compared the Russian masters with the legendary Daedalus. The Italian, Johannes de Plano Carpini, who had seen quite a few exquisite things in his own land, could not refrain from commenting on the only thing that struck his eye at the palace of Kuyuk-Khan, namely, the khan's throne, made by the Russian master, Kosma: "The throne was of ivory and there was also gold, and precious stones, and pearls, if our memory does not fail us."*

The engineer merely fulfills an order, and the client in the given instance was the Kiev state, which wanted Kiev to be not inferior to Constantinople, to have its own Sophias in the largest cities of Rūs, and above all, in its, Rūs's capital, wanted the magnificence and splendour of the capital's buildings to evoke in the Russians a realization of the greatness of their people and their state.

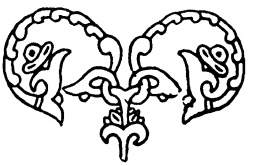
These indications—preserved accidentally—of the beauty and splendour of the civilization of the Kiev state, give us the right to judge of other aspects of the life of society, which are, of necessity, interconnected to a certain extent. And everything at our disposal, whether a household article or an ornament for a dress,

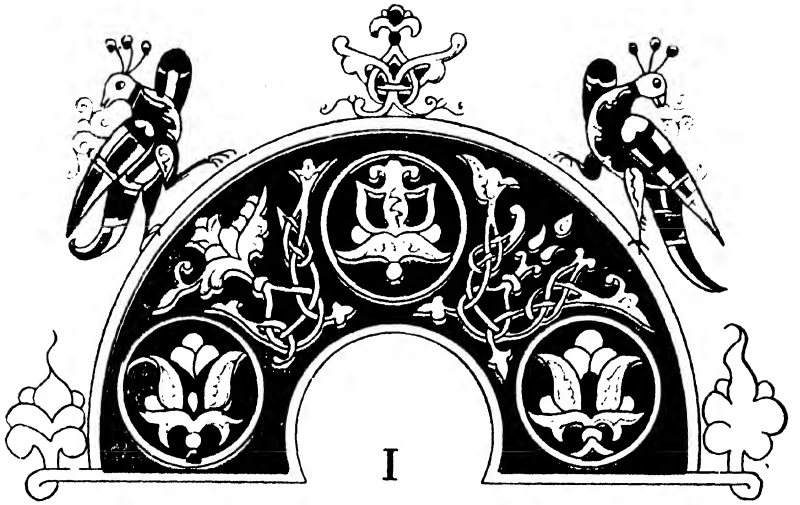
* B. A. Rybakov: Handicraft in Ancient Rūs.

a weapon or a poem, a sermon or a work of literature—all of these testify with equal eloquence to the fact that not by accident did imposing structures, their gifted builders and outstanding artists appear in the capital of Rūs and in other Russian cities in the 10th-11th centuries, but were the consequence of logical development.

These achievements could not, of course, have been won suddenly. They came as a result of the long life of a people that knew how to work, a people possessing great initiative and talents, and capable of creating the conditions necessary for its further progress.

We will trace the main stages in the development of this civilization, which gave such concrete indications of its maturity as far back as the 10th-11th centuries.





SOURCES OF RUSSIAN CIVILIZATION

WHEN the civilization of one or another nation is under discussion, one should consider not only the direct achievements of the given nation, but also the heritage which it received from its ethnic forerunners. We cannot state exactly just how and when the Slavs appeared on the historical scene, but we can assert with absolute conviction that their origin—root and branch—dates back to pre-Scythian and Scythian times, when various Scythian tribes and peoples, through long-continued and varied intercourse, gave rise to new ethnic groups, one of which was the Slavonic.

Have we the right, in our study of the civilization of the Slavs, to ignore that period in their history when, before they were as yet Slavonic, they were already acquainted with agricul-

tural implements, knew many varieties of grain crops, employed domesticated animals to work for them, had learned the secret of mining and treating metals and had developed certain conceptions of this world and the world beyond, as a result of which certain religious rites which were strictly observed, came into being?

Of course there were many changes in the life of the masses, consequent upon the changes in the circumstances conditioning the ethnic processes which culminated in the forming of the Slavonic people. But this new ethnic unit could not have forgotten all cultural achievements that preceded it, and we would be committing a grave error if we refused to examine this old heritage, for without looking into it we cannot understand the history of Slavonic culture. Incidentally, this refers to all nations the world over. There is no people without ancestors. Nor can a nation's history be examined without one's taking into consideration and studying the cultural values created by that nation's forerunners.

It is only by following this path that we can avoid such gross errors as fill historiography on the subject under discussion. For instance, one of the greatest historians of the 18th and early 19th centuries, von Schlözer (1735-1809), a man of world fame, pictured the East-European plains up to the 9th century as "terribly savage and bare."

"Of course there were people there," he says, "God knows since when . . . but people who had in no way distinguished themselves, who had no contact whatever with the southern peoples, which is why they could not be noticed and described by a single enlightened Southern European."

The celebrated Schlözer should have known, of course, that these people, whom he considered savages, had at various times been associated with the most cultured people of the world—the Hellenes, Romans, Arabs, Greeks and others—and that the latter

Inner view of the St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev, 11th century

peoples had taken excellent "notice" of them and, when necessary, had "described" their northern neighbours; that, finally, these more cultured peoples had found it necessary not only to notice but also, for their own good, to make an earnest study of the Northerners, who by no means had impressed them as resembling the birds and beasts of the forests. It is true that other German savants, Schlözer's contemporaries, did not believe him, and Heinrich von Storch (1766-1835), for example, could not refrain from reminding him that the Eastern Slavonic peoples had traded considerably with the East and the West back in the 8th century. However, this did not in the least embarrass Schlözer. By calling Storch's reasoning illiterate and monstrous he felt he had decided the controversy in his own favour.

In his stubborn defence of his conception of ancient Rūs Schlözer himself encountered arguments that seemed to shatter his views. Why was Byzantium able to conclude agreements with Rūs, why had Rūs received a considerable portion of her navigation terminology from Byzantium and not from the Normans from whom, according to Schlözer's theory, she should have received it; why had the Normans become Slavonicized so quickly?

Sometimes Schlözer handles these facts in a rather arbitrary manner. He declares the Oleg Agreement[7] a forgery, calls the presence of Byzantine navigation terminology in Rūs an accident, and simply refuses to explain why the Normans became Slavonicized ("a phenomenon which even today is quite beyond explanation," he writes).

The controversy continued for a long time and was sharp and persistent, lasting for over a hundred years. Today we can safely say that it was settled finally and irrevocably, and not in Schlözer's favour. The careful and systematic procuring, collecting and interpreting of archeological material, its comparison with the written documents of foreign and Russian origin, have made it possible

for historians to draw quite definite and adequately convincing conclusions.

Before we can solve the special task that faces us, we must state certain initial theses which have been accepted by our scientists:

1. Although we do not precisely know the origin of the Slavonic peoples, just as the origin of other peoples is not known, in any case we do know that the Slavs, like other peoples, came into being historically through the intermingling of various tribes.

2. Genetically the Slavs are related to those tribes whom the Greeks called Scythians, and first of all, with the Scythian ploughmen.

The recognition of these theses gives us a basis when determining the genesis of Slavonic civilization, for not ignoring the ancient East European cultures, and for attempting to solve the problem of the mutual influence of these cultures and their further evolution.

Archeological studies reveal an unbroken process of development of the society in the region around the Dnieper, to the east and west of it, from the Carpathians to the Don—an unbroken process from the Scythians to the Kiev state inclusive.

Although the Scythian period is not directly connected with the history of the Eastern Slavs, nevertheless it communicated to them a number of features which took firm root in the life of the Eastern Slavs: their funeral rites, the Scythian-Sarmatian ritual designs which later found their way into Russian folk embroidery, zoomorphic and anthropomorphic fibula (clasps).

Objects which have been discovered on the territory under discussion bear the traces of Roman influence since about the 2nd century of our era.

It was during the 6th-7th centuries that an independent unique East-Slavonic, otherwise known as Ante or Rūs, civilization assumed form. It was this very area, the Dnieper region, the black earth country, where forests give way to steppes, that provided the

conditions for the more rapid development of civilized life as compared with the northern forest belt.

It is no accident that right here, on both banks of the Dnieper, we find the burial mounds of the Scythian ploughmen, one of the most civilized groups of the Scythian tribes. Later on, in this same place we come across the Slavonic tribes of Polyane, Ulichi (until their migration to the southwest) and Severyane.

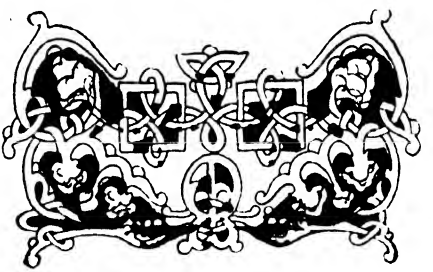
The Scythian barrows are more than a thousand years removed from the Slavonic, yet the type of tomb in the Kiev and Poltava regions is essentially Scythian. The old roots of Dnieper civilization proved very tenacious and viable.

When, with the growth of the Roman empire, the map of the world changed and the chain of Roman towns, fortresses and garrisons stretched from what is present-day Hungary to the Azov seacoast, it was the country around the Dnieper which proved to be best prepared to absorb elements of Roman civilization. It is here that the largest number of Roman coins of the 2nd and the beginning of the 3rd centuries were found. Evidently this area, from days of old engaged mainly in agriculture, came to establish active trade relations with the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire. This fact, by the way, affected the Russian dry measure system: a Russian *chetverik* is not merely a translation of the Roman *quadrantalis*, but equals it exactly in volume. Each of these measures contains 26.26 litres, just as the *medimnos*= the *polosmina* which is equal to 52.52 litres. The Russian *polosmina* contains two *chetveriks*. This exact coincidence both philological and quantitative cannot be explained as mere accident.

The fall of the Western Roman Empire, the mass migration of Slavs across the Danube into the Eastern Roman Empire and, in this connection, a certain resultant shifting of Slavonic tribes; the incursion of the Avars, against whom the Slavonic tribes formed a great league under the leadership of the Duleby—all of these important events of world magnitude left their impress on the fate

of the Slavs as a whole and, in particular, on their East-European branch. A new epoch began in the history of the Eastern Slavs, who, from this time on, figure in source material as the Antes. This period leads us directly to an explanation of the brilliant civilization of Kiev Rūs.

The period of the 6th-8th centuries is one that is characterized by the strengthening of the ties between the Dnieper region and the East, and the development of local industry. The latter reached a high level and continued into Kiev days.



II

CIVILIZATION OF THE DNIEPER REGION IN THE 6TH-8TH CENTURIES

THE SEAT of the Ante civilization was the region around the Dnieper from where its influence radiated over a considerable area. The splendour of its achievements paled somewhat in direct proportion to their distance from the centre, but their basic principle remained the same: the ornamental design of their ceramics was fundamentally the same over a very large territory from the Dnieper to the Oka and the Don rivers.

The works left behind by the Dnieper artisans of the 6th-7th centuries are numerous and interesting. The materials used were mainly bronze and silver. Gilt was sometimes employed; it was obtained by dissolving gold in mercury, a process borrowed by Rūs from Rome.

From the point of view of art their cast metal work with images of men is especially striking. The heads of the men reveal able

craftsmanship. One's attention is particularly attracted to the clothing these figures wear: the blouses have long sleeves, the trousers reach down to the ankles, the fronts of the blouses have embroidered insets that reach to the waist. There is embroidery on the sleeves also. Such apparel has been characteristic of the entire population of the Dnieper area for many centuries, and is to be found even today in the Ukraine and Byelorussia. The heads of the men are unmistakably Russian, with peasant faces and with the hair cut round. They are the work of Polyan-Ante-Russian masters.

To attain such a degree of craftsmanship the artists of necessity had to have established traditions, experience, knowledge and talent. A point meriting special comment is that these people were not only able craftsmen but produced articles in large quantities, their fame stretching far and wide. Judging from archeological excavations, they found a market not only in the region between the Dnieper and the Don, but in the Crimea and the Oka basin as well.

During this period the Antes established close cultural ties with Byzantium and the East. Articles of Byzantine and eastern craftsmen (chiefly Iranian) appeared among the Antes in the 7th-8th centuries. They were primarily items of luxury, made of bronze, silver and gold (buckles, ornaments for horse harness, women's ornaments, belt clasps, weapons, axes, coats of mail and helmets). Ante craftsmen soon began to fashion similar things in their own land.

The Kama Bulgars and Khazar Khanate [8] were the chief intermediaries in establishing the relations between the Rūs Antes and the nations of the East. Very noteworthy in this connection is the penetration of tremendous numbers of eastern dirhems in the 8th and even in the 7th century into Eastern Europe, especially after the Byzantine Empire had grown weaker in the 8th century. Writers of the East manifested a lively interest in Eastern

Fresco of the stairway in the St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev, 11th-12th centuries

Europe, seeking to know more about the land from where their merchants imported valuable furs, flax—called Russian silk, wax and other articles which were partly or completely lacking in the East. On the other hand, tales of the riches of the distant East spread throughout the territory of Rūs and intrigued her more enterprising inhabitants. The centre of this eastward movement was Kiev.

The Normans, who appeared within the boundaries of Rūs rather late (not until the 9th century), were drawn to her not only by the wealth to be found there, but also by the possibilities of establishing relations—through her—with Byzantium, Iran and the Arabian lands.

The riddle of the origin of Russian cities has not been solved even today. The existence of a large number of cities in our country—whence it was called the land of cities (Gardarik) even back in the 9th century—has always been a puzzle to explorers.

The achievements of Soviet archeologists now make it possible to state that the solution of this riddle is close at hand. Nor need one be a prophet to forecast, even now, archeology's basic conclusion.

As a concrete example let us take one of the recently excavated ancient cities, the so-called Sarskoye Gorodishche, the predecessor of the present town of Rostov (in Yaroslav region). It occupies an area of about 10,000 sq. m. The city was fortified—its ramparts still stand. Near the town there is an ancient cemetery dating back to the 7th-8th centuries. Excavation of the tombs has shown that many craftsmen were buried there. Among the things found in the tombs are parts of spinning wheels, planes, axes, pestles for braying paint, crucibles, moulds, silver and bronze ingots, copper and iron slag, blooms, smith's tongs, and potter's implements. Thus, even in the 7th-8th centuries there were spinners, carpenters, tanners, founders, jewelers, smiths and potters.

There cannot be the slightest doubt that Sarskoye Gorodishche was a centre of handicraft industry and that, of course, buyers

were to be found not only in the city itself but also in the area around it. The ramparts bespeak the fact that it was simultaneously a fortress which could serve as a *refugium* or refuge for the population of the surrounding country.

Other places similar to this are the Gnyezdovskoye Gorodishche, old Smolensk and old Ladoga.

Needless to say, this is not the only type of ancient Russian city. One must take for granted the existence of *refugium*-cities similar to those which Heinrich of Latvia so picturesquely describes in his chronicles.

The settling of numerous craftsmen and tradesmen in many of these *refugium*-cities should be considered a perfectly normal and common occurrence.

The organization of city-fortresses for military needs is also mentioned in annals under a very early date. An item on the expulsion of the Variags from that political association of Baltic peoples which Arab writers call Slavia,[9] taken undoubtedly from the early Novgorod annals, says:

"The Slavs and the Krivichi and the Mery and Chudes rose up against the Variags, and drove them beyond the sea and began to rule by themselves and to found cities."* How this was done can be seen from a later entry in the *Chronicle of Ancient Years*.[10] The entry, under the year 988, states that Vladimir Svyatoslavich was faced by the problem of defending Kiev.

"And Vladimir said: It is not a good thing that there are few cities near Kiev. And he began to build cities on the Desna and on the Vostra, on the Trubezh and on the Sula and on the Stugna, and he began to assemble the finest men among the Slavs, the

* *Chronicle of Ancient Years* mentions the building of cities in pre-Rurik days several times. For instance, "Slavs ... built the city of Novgorod"; "Kiy, Shchek and Khoriv founded a city"; "Oleg began to build cities," while Kiev, which had already been in existence a long time before, was made the state capital by Oleg.

Krivichi, the Chudes, and the Vyatichi and settled them in the cities, because war was being waged against the Pechenegs. He fought against them and conquered them."

It is important to emphasize here that in the 7th-8th centuries, in various parts of Rūs, especially in the Dnieper region and to the south-west of it, there already existed centres of craftsmanship and trade and at the same time military outposts, which are indicative of the state of civilization in Rūs in pre-Rurik times.

There are many facts which confirm this, and their number is being constantly increased by new archeological findings. The picture revealed by these facts becomes ever clearer and there can be no doubt as to their meaning as a whole.

Men spent many centuries in far from fruitless endeavour to improve their living conditions, and their achievements merit earnest attention if we wish to understand the high level of cultural development attained in the centuries that followed, and particularly the civilization of Kiev Rūs.

This interesting process is not reflected in Russian literature as Rūs had no written language of its own in those days. And more cultured peoples, those that were close to Rūs territorially but sometimes very far removed as regards relations with Eastern Europe, had no incentive to make a profound study of the life of Rūs. They were quite content with a knowledge of those aspects of the life of the East European tribes and peoples, which interested them directly. The Hellenes were well informed about Scythian wheat, which fed them. The Arabs were attracted by the magnificent furs of the European North, and they made a careful study of the roads leading to the land rich in furs. The Byzantines were interested not only in maintaining trade connections with the Slavs, but also in obtaining their help as allies against the numerous enemies that threatened their weakening state.

The Arabs noted only certain facts in the life of the contemporary Slavs, those that were outstanding. Byzantine historians and

statesmen recorded merely what they required to know for purposes of their own defence, in but rare instances stepping beyond these limits.

Herodotus, for instance, who visited the Hellenic colony on the Southern Bug River, was interested in the life and, to a certain extent, in the history of the peoples around Olvia.[11] But as he was ignorant of their languages, he could learn relatively little through the medium of interpreters.

However, even if we take into consideration everything that has been written about the forerunners of the Slavs, about the Slavs themselves, and particularly about the Eastern Slavs, this information will still be insufficient to enable one to form an idea of the development of their civilization and the consecutiveness of the development of the cultures of various peoples associated with Russian culture. On the other hand archeological material is incomparably richer and more consecutive. All that is necessary is to make it speak in a language we can understand and to express our demands clearly. This is something we have attempted to do in the pages that follow.

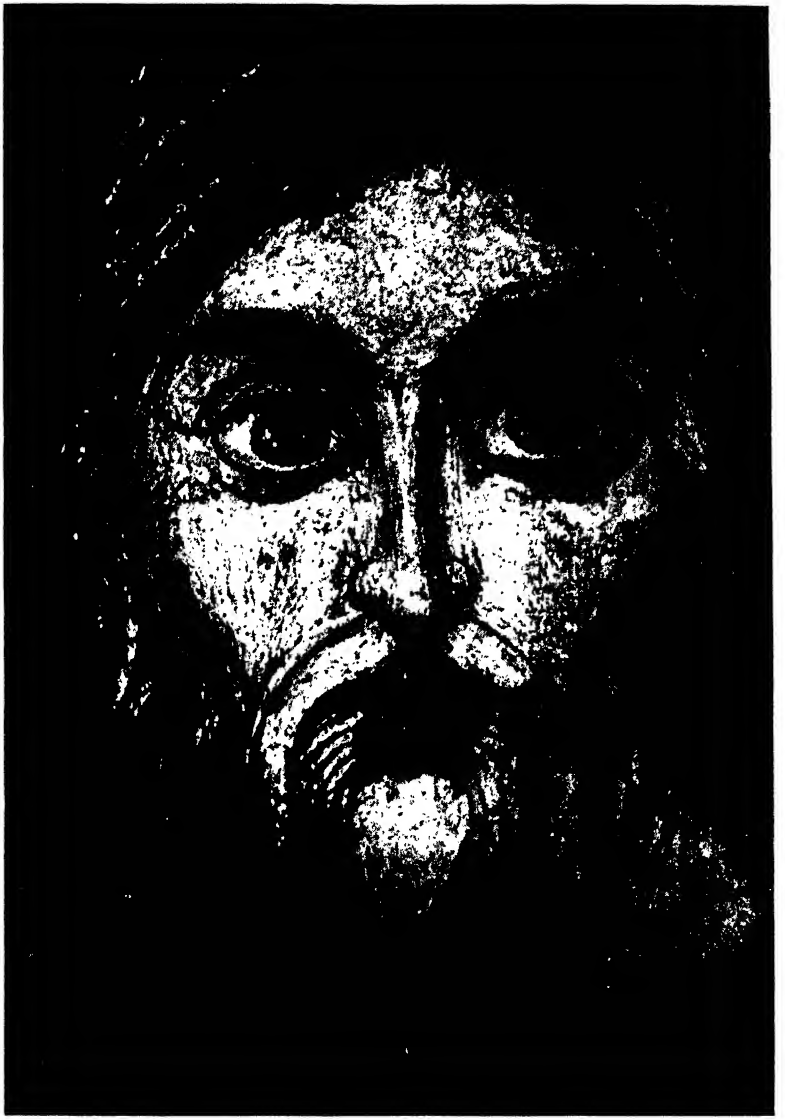
On the basis of archeological data we can draw the following conclusions:

1. Although the connection between the civilization of the Scythians and that of the Eastern Slavs cannot be considered a direct one, nevertheless we have no ground whatever for ignoring it.

2. The influence of Rome upon the civilization of the Eastern Slavs can be seen from the very first centuries of our era.

3. Beginning with the 6th century the finds enable us to speak more concretely about the character of the civilization of the Eastern Slavs, who had become known as the Rūs Antes and whose civilization had assumed sufficiently definite form.

4. During the same period the Rūs Antes entered into direct contact with Byzantium and the peoples of the East and established long-enduring relations with them.



Head of a Saint

Fresco of the St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev, 11th century

5. In the course of the 7th-8th centuries cities appeared among the Eastern Slavs which were more than mere forts.

Thus, before the formation of the Kiev State, that is, before the second half of the 9th century, the Eastern Slavs, Rūs-Antes, had already acquired a considerable history of their own and had succeeded in making very notable achievements, in the development of their material culture.

It is a well-known fact that material culture is the foundation of social life. Therefore, if we bear in mind certain well-known facts taken from the field of industry, we may find it easier to interpret and understand the fragmentary and sometimes even contradictory testimony of foreigners which comes to us from the distant past, concerning the social system and civilization of the Eastern Slavs.

For instance, that great Byzantine historian of the 6th century, Procopius of Caesarea, said that the Antes and Slavs were not ruled by one man, but that they lived in a democracy and decided their affairs at popular assemblies, that "all the ways of life and laws of both these tribes are identical." In this connection he quotes certain of these laws, for instance, that those who returned to their native land from captivity whither they had been sold into slavery, "according to the law" became free, that the Antes concluded "agreements" with their neighbours and observed them rigidly. Thus, calling to our aid the facts procured by archeologists, we are compelled to admit that the society of the Antes was far from being a primitive society, and that if it constituted a "military democracy" it was not in its initial, but in its final stage. Its relatively well developed crafts, the considerably wide market for the produce of these crafts, the concentration of craftsmen in definite points—these manifest features of cities-in-the-making, which cities indeed appeared not long after—speak of conditions which justified the rise of great political associations and the appearance of outstanding leaders capable of guiding large masses of people organized in a

military way and of directing important military and political undertakings.

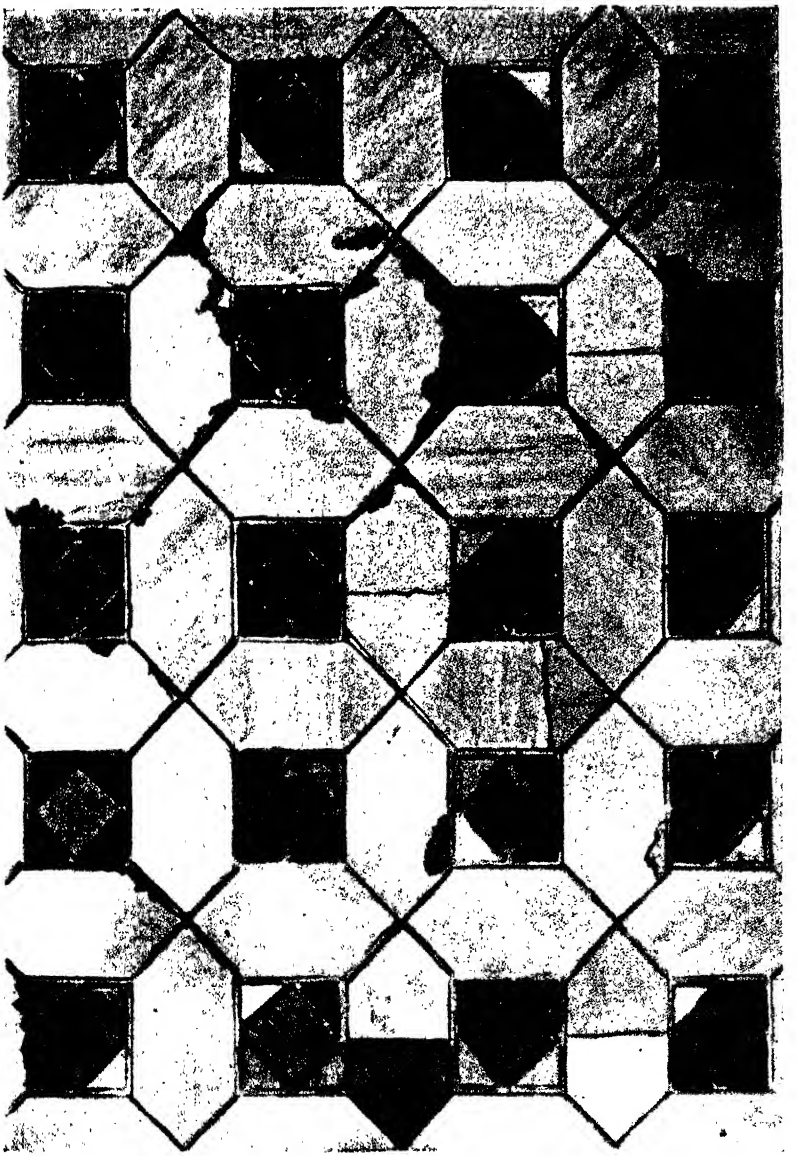
It becomes clear why the Ante armed people were able to rearm themselves so quickly according to the Byzantine model, after the Antes came into conflict with the Byzantine troops on the field of battle. The success of the Antes in this conflict was founded on the quantity of metal mined, on the skill of their craftsmen, and, of course, on the ability of the Antes to master technical innovations rapidly, an ability which astonished foreign observers even at a much later date.

No longer do we wonder at the fact noted by Constantine Porphyrogenitus in the 10th century that the significant Russian term "law" was incorporated into the Pecheneg language ("when the Pechenegs give the Tsar's official oaths according to their laws"— (κατὰ τὰ ζάκανα τῶν αὐτῶν). It was from Rūs that the Pechenegs obtained this word, which was lacking in their own language, just as the term *voivode* and all terms relating to agriculture were adopted by the Hungarians (they had their own terms referring to cattle-raising).

This is clearly indicative of the relatively highly developed social relations of Rūs even before the 10th century, as of an agricultural people that spread its farming culture among its neighbours, both nomadic and semi-nomadic peoples.

Under these conditions the formation of the first political associations known to us becomes logically inevitable—the alliance of the Duleby in the Carpathians (the end of the 6th century), Slavia,[9] Kuyavia[12] and Artania,[13] political organizations that came into existence before the Rurik state, and which are mentioned by Arab writers. All of this taken together explains the riddle of the high degree of civilization in Kiev Rūs.

Not only did Schlözer in the 18th century stop in bewilderment before the mystery of the civilization of ancient Rūs, but even much earlier observers of the life of the Slavs were similarly



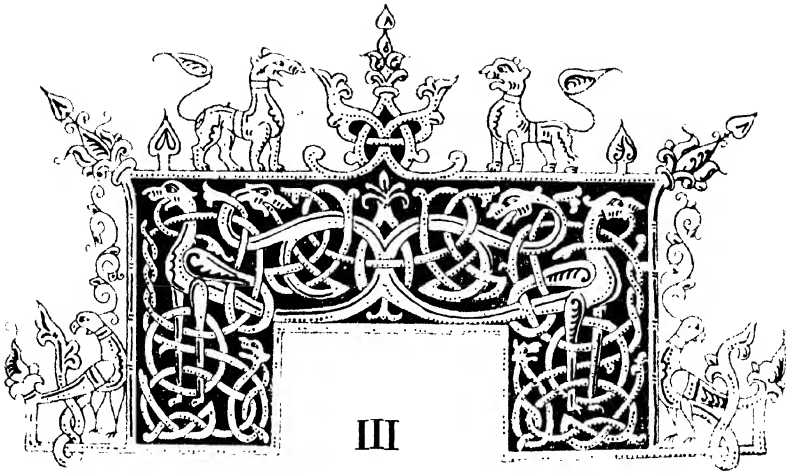
Mosaic floor in the Desyatinny Church in Kiev, 10th century

puzzled. No less famous a person than Tacitus, an authority on the history of Rome and of the peoples who came in contact with it in one way or another, was at first inclined to hesitate as to where to place the Slavs (Venedy or Wends)—whether with the more backward Sarmatians or with those peoples who had already attained a certain level of civilization. But after Tacitus had studied the Slavs (Venedy) more closely, he ceased hesitating and placed them with the non-nomadic peoples of Europe.

"They build houses," Tacitus says, "and are armed with shields, and like to move about on foot ("*. . . et domos fingunt et scuta gestant et pedum usu ac pernicitate gaudent*").

"This is quite different from the Sarmatians, who live in tents and on horseback." *

* Tacitus, *Germania*, (Chapt. XLVI).



III

EVOLUTION OF SLAVONIC-RUSSIAN PAGANISM

IT IS much more difficult to penetrate the hearts and brains of our ancestors of a period so distant from us. The material at our disposal in this field is not so abundant or convincing. True, the funeral rites as revealed by archeological excavations are very enlightening, besides which there are notes of Byzantines. Furthermore, some survivals have penetrated Russian literature of a later period while others continue to live on in tales, songs, byliny (metrical tales of old times) and customs.

Procopius of Caesarea goes into considerable detail about the religious ideas of the Antes.

"They consider," he writes, "that only one god, the creator of lightning, is the lord of everything, and make sacrifices of bulls to him, and perform other sacred rites. They do not believe in fate, and generally do not admit that it has any power over man,

and when they are threatened by death, or fall ill, or are in a dangerous position during war, they promise that if they come out alive they will at once offer their god a sacrifice for their soul, and if they do escape death they make the sacrifice they had promised and think that they purchased their salvation with the price of that sacrifice. They worship the rivers and nymphs and all kinds of other demons, and make sacrifices to them all, and with the help of these sacrifices they divine the future."

It is hard to agree with Procopius when he says he has spoken "sufficiently" of the religion and life of the Antes and Slavs. ("I consider that what has been said about this people is sufficient.") What he has said is not much and, manifestly, not altogether exact. However, it is worth noting that the Christian Procopius, who could not, needless to say, feel sympathetically disposed towards a heathen religion, nevertheless in the given instance did not ridicule or condemn it.

The Antes have one god, who is sovereign over all, and some "demons" whom they also worship. The Christian God, of course, does not resemble the god of thunder, the creator of lightning, undoubtedly Peroun, whom all Slavonic peoples worshipped in pre-Christian days. Nor do their demons in any way resemble the Christian devil. They are not evil spirits but secondary deities whom the Slavs revered and to whom they made sacrifices, trying to tell the future by these sacrifices.

Theirs was already a rather well developed religion. In *Lay About How in the Beginning Peoples Were Heathens and Worshipped Idols*, there is a reference to an earlier stage in the Slavonic religion:

"The Slavs began to make sacrifices to Rod and Rozhanitsy (that is, to their ancestors—*Author*) before they worshipped Peroun, their god, and still earlier they made sacrifices to animals and nymphs."

First there was the worship of animals, then the gods Rod and Rozhanitsy, Peroun appearing at a later date.

We cannot, of course, expect the Byzantine historian to give us a complete picture of the religious conceptions of the Antes. Procopius himself very likely did not know what they all were. He gives us, however, the most essential detail in pointing out that they had one chief god, the lord of everything—Peroun. Here Procopius has hardly made a mistake. He learned this fact from Antes and Slavs themselves, whom he undoubtedly met personally as they even occupied important posts in the imperial service in Constantinople. He also knew that besides this supreme god the Slavs had secondary deities who, we know, were elevated in rank and became the equal of Peroun.

Three centuries later we note considerable changes in the religious conceptions of the Rūs Antes. Russians, in their agreements with Greeks in the beginning of the 10th century, swore in the names of two gods—Peroun and Volos. Oleg and his men "took their oath according to the Russian law: they swore by their arms and by Peroun, their own god, and by Volos, the cattle god." (Agreement dated 907.)

There are two things which should be noted here: Peroun became a personal god for Oleg and for his men who bore arms. He was their chief god. They too, or, perhaps, some of them, also swore by another god whom Procopius did not mention and whom neither Oleg nor his men called their own, but they spoke of him as the cattle god, that is, the god of cattle, who also became the god of money, of wealth, of commerce and of the merchants since the word "cattle" itself had already changed its original meaning. This is also confirmed by references in the *Chronicle of Ancient Years.*

When Vladimir Svyatoslavich sought to employ religion to strengthen the unity of his state, he pondered the matter very carefully and acted on a grand scale; he decided to set up as the "god"

of all the people, his own god, the god of the prince and of his retinue, and brought the god out of the palace.

"And he placed the idols on a hill outside of the prince's palace: the wooden Peroun with a silver head and golden moustache and Khors-Dažbog and Stribog and Simargl and Mokosh."[14]

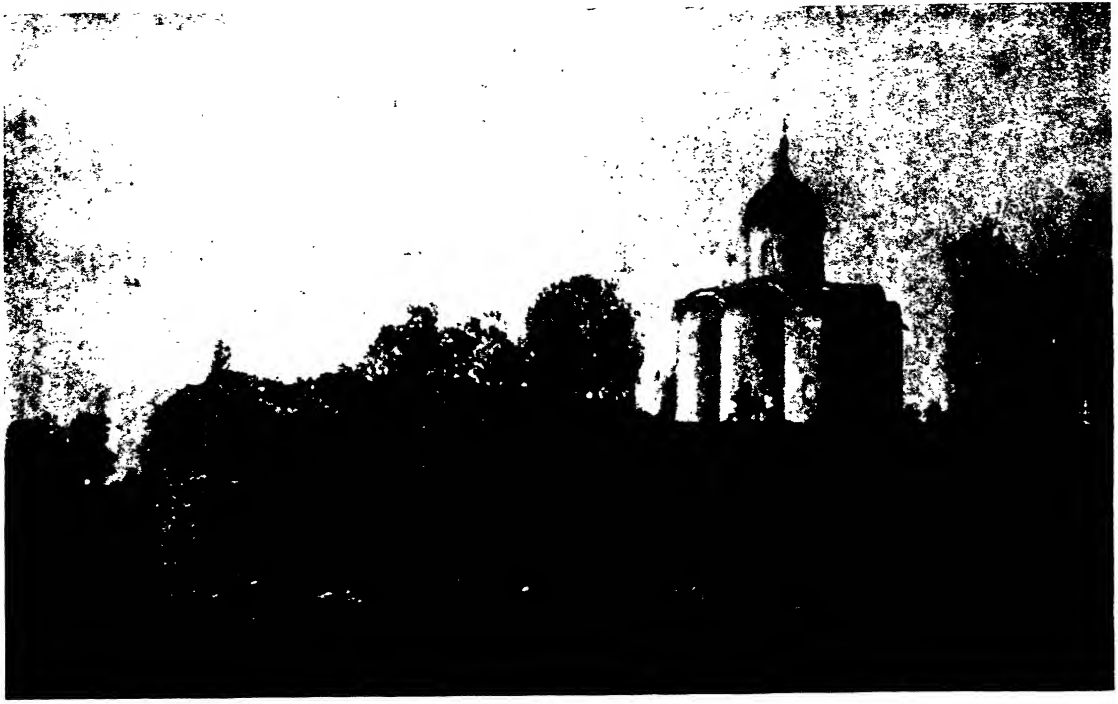
At the same time Vladimir sent Dobrynya to Novgorod on a similar mission.

"Upon his arrival in Novgorod Dobrynya placed an idol on the bank of the Volkhov River, and the Novgorod people brought offerings to it."

There is very much in this new sanctuary which merits serious attention.

In the first place, Volos does not figure here for the reason, of course, that he had no place here. He used to stand elsewhere, in the market place in Podol, on the very bank of the Pochaina River. Archimandrite Avraamy of Rostov saw an image of this god in the region of Rostov also. It is evidently Volos, too, that figures in Ibn-Fadhlân's account of Russian merchants who pray to their idol to send them a good merchant with gold and silver money. The Russian delegation to Constantinople swore an oath to two gods: one of them was the god of the prince, of his retinue, of the warriors, and the other the merchants' god; which is fully understandable, inasmuch as the emissaries belonged to these two groups—the prince's warriors and the merchants.

Secondly, Vladimir's gods, who were set up in a prominent place for worship by all the people, included not only Russian gods: between Peroun and Dažbog, the god of the sun, there stood Khors, who was also the sun god of the peoples of Central Asia, whence came the names of Khoresm, Khorasan, and others. Simurg (Simargl)—another deity of Central Asia (Simurg is mentioned in the epos of the peoples of Central Asia)—was also set up there. Mokosh, a goddess of the Finnish tribes (whence comes the name Moksha), likewise was to be found in the same



Church of St. George in Staraya Ladoga, 12th century

place. It is important to note the complete absence of German (Variag) gods.

The head of the Kiev state, which embraced not only the peoples of the East but also those who spoke the Finnish tongue, undoubtedly had taken an important political step.

It was not a measure resulting from profound deliberation, nor the daring act of a bold statesman. The bringing of heterogeneous gods under the roof of a single pantheon had been prepared gradually by the prolonged and close intercourse between the peoples. When Christianity was declared a compulsory state religion, Russians and non-Russians continued for a long time to recognize all those gods whom Vladimir had set up on a hill in Kiev and whom he had established in other parts of his extensive state. The author of the *Lay About How in the Beginning Peoples Were Heathens and Worshipped Idols* as late as in the 11th century found himself compelled to note that "even now in the outskirts, they pray to him, the accursed god Peroun, and to Khors and to Mokosh and to Vil (God of the Sun and of all life on Earth), and they do so in secret."

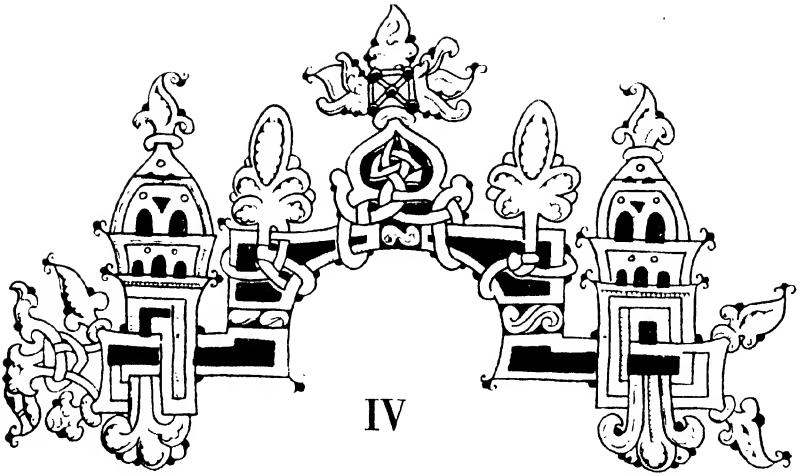
Although our source material is very meagre, we cannot fail to take note of the evolution of the Slavonic-Russian heathen religion.

The first period known to us is the worship of vampires and river gods, then of Rod and Rozhanitsy, that is, the forefathers. This is followed by the spread of the Peroun cult, in which connection it should be mentioned that with the appearance and strengthening of the ruling classes, Peroun was adopted by the feudal-military class and became the god of the prince and his warriors. The god of cattle, Volos, evolved into a god of wealth and trade as cattle turned into a means of exchange, a monetary unit in trade. And finally, when the Kiev state was at its zenith a general pantheon was erected for the entire country as a step towards uniting the country internally, and there the prince's god became the state god,

while the gods of the chief peoples who constituted part of the Kiev state also became full-fledged members of the godly community.

The zeal manifested in wiping out paganism after the adoption of Christianity has deprived us of material necessary for making a more profound study of the heathen beliefs of our ancestors, which are especially interesting in that they were the product of the creativeness of the peoples of the Kiev state and, first and foremost, of the Russian people.

Not only did religious elements of the Iranian and Finnish peoples fuse with those of the Eastern Slavs at a very early date, but also those of more highly developed religions, such as the Jewish, Mohammedan, Roman-Catholic, and Byzantine Greek Orthodox. Rūs was acquainted with all these religions through her established intercourse with the Khazars, the Arabs, the peoples of Central Asia, of Western Europe and Byzantium.



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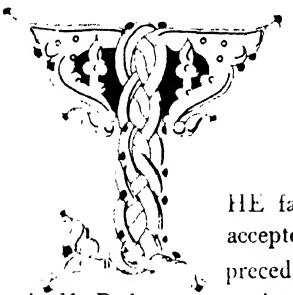


CHRISTIANITY IN RŪS. RŪS'S DEFENCE OF HER NATIONAL CULTURE

THE fact that it was from Byzantium that Rūs accepted Christianity had its basis in the entire preceding history of the Eastern Slavs and of Rūs itself. References to the preaching of Christianity in the Dnieper region date back to the first centuries of our era, and are associated in legend with the name of the Apostle Andrew. This piece of information found its way from some source into the *Chronicle of Ancient Years*. ("After preaching at Sinope Andrew came to Korsun... and proceeded to the mouth of the Dnieper, whence he moved upwards along the Dnieper....") St. Andrew the Apostle is reputed to have placed a cross upon the site which Kiev was one day to occupy and to have predicted that there would arise "a great city and God would erect many churches here."

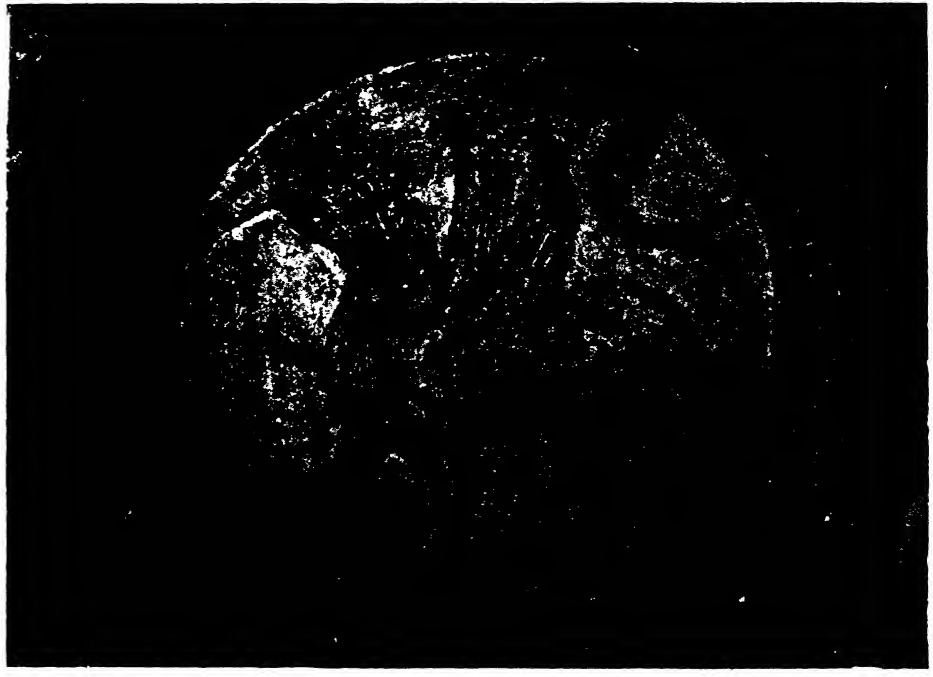
This bit of news is echoed by the church writers of the 4th-5th centuries. Eusebius of Caesarea (died 340) writes that the disciples

of Jesus Christ dispersed in order to preach the Gospel and that Scythia (as the Byzantines traditionally still called our country in the 10th century) was left to Andrew. According to Eucherius of Lyons (died 449) "Andrew soothed the Scythians with his preaching."

The writings of Epifanius of Cyprus (4th century) also indicate that Andrew had been among the Scythians. Academician V. G. Vasilyevsky, from whom we obtain these valuable data, has many facts confirming this. The outstanding piece of research work done by Academician Vasilyevsky justifies the inclusion of this most interesting legend in our annals.

Ignoring the question as to which people or peoples lived in "Scythia" in the 1st century, we have every reason for assuming that Christianity was preached here at an early date even though it had not as yet become the dominating religion.

There is no doubt that the Greeks tried to spread Christianity among their neighbours, and we have reason to believe that the Greek preachers turned their attention to the Tivertsy, Ulichi and Polyane earlier than to other Eastern Slavonic tribes. In the reign of the Roman Emperor Trajan (101-107 of our era) the territory which somewhat later was occupied by the Ulichi and the Tivertsy fell under the power of the Roman Empire and became part of the Trans-Danube Lower Misia,[15] where Christianity was known back in the 2nd century of our era. In the 3rd century, after the Romans left, the Tivertsy and Ulichi remained in direct contact with Lower Misia, which was known as "Little Scythia." In Tomi[16] there already existed an episcopal chair under Diocletian (284-305 of our era). A Greek Christian colony, Tireh, and other Greek colonies were to be found near the mouth of the Dniester. Constantine Porphyrogenitus states that in his time the ruins of six towns which still preserved the fragments of churches and crosses carved in stone could be seen on the lower Dnieper.



Fresco of the stairway in the St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev, 11th-12th centuries

The author of the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* considered it interesting to note that cities existed among the Tivertsy and Ulichi even in his days. ("Their cities exist up till the present time.")

During the reign of Emperor Justinian (527-565) the Ulichi and Tivertsy maintained regular communication with Byzantium, either serving with the Byzantine troops or, together with other Slavs, attacking the Empire. Even though the Polyane were not direct neighbours of the Greeks, they were in very close contact with them. The entire southern part of our country up to the Don was called Scythia by the Greeks, Sarmatia by the Romans, while church writers of the 3rd-5th centuries, Tertullian (died 240), Athanasius of Alexandria (died 373), St. John Chrysostom (died 405) and Ieronim (died 420) considered Scythia, or Sarmatia, one of those countries where Christianity had already been established. "The cold of Scythia burns with the flames of faith." (Ieronim.)

Of course it is impossible from these facts to draw any conclusions as to the extent to which Christianity had penetrated Scythia and had been accepted by the Slavonic peoples and Rūs, but there can be no doubt that they were acquainted with the state religion of the Empire and to a certain extent with Christian ideas.

Nor do we have any doubt whatever as to the statement of the Constantinople patriarch, Photius, to the effect that Rūs* "had changed its Hellenic, profane, heathen teachings ... for the pure and genuine Christian faith." It follows, then, that Christianity had made considerable headway in Rūs even before it gained official recognition there as the dominating state religion.

It stands to reason that the Christian cult was of necessity bound up with the introduction of books. Religious services were

* Nikita of Paphlagonia (9th century) speaking of the invasion of Tsargrad (Constantinople) by Rūs in the 9th century, calls Rūs a "Scythian people."

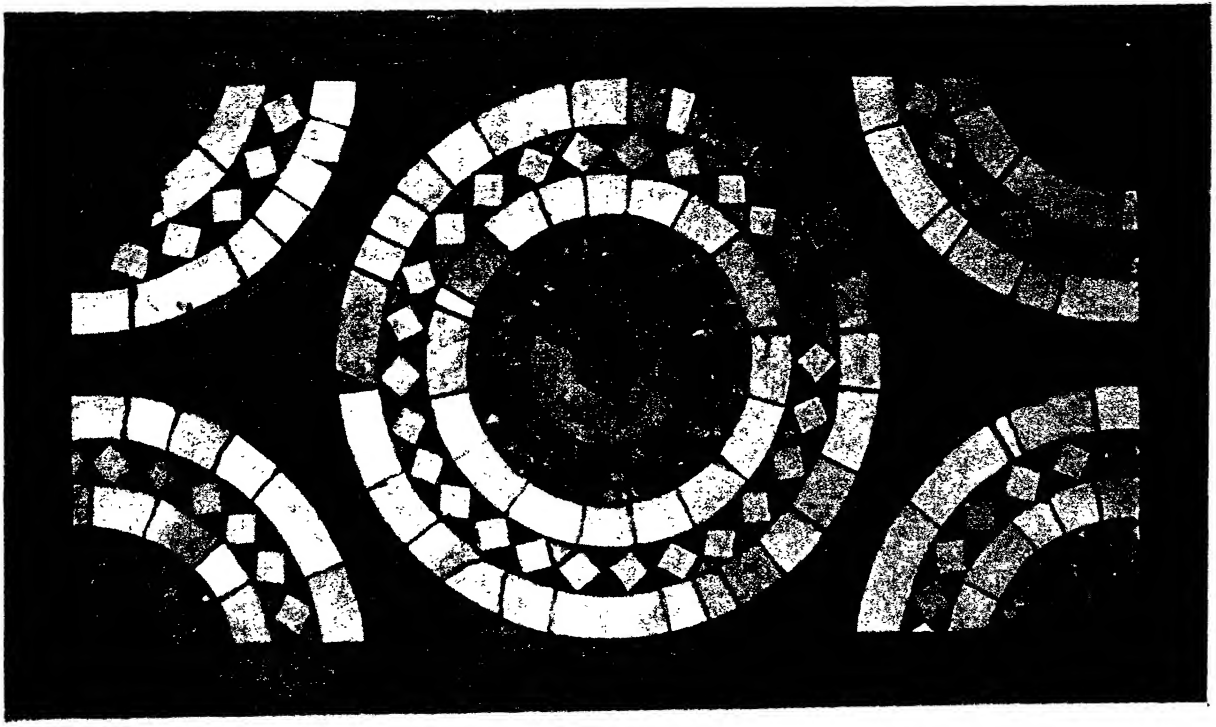
conducted in the Greek language, but we can assume that the Slavonic language was used to some extent and after the creation of a Slavonic written language by the brothers Kirill (Cyril) and Methodius, services were conducted wholly in Slavonic, which meant from Slavonic books. The biography of Kirill contains a statement to the effect that in Korsun he met a certain "Russian" and saw the Gospel and the Psalter written "in the Russian language"—a fact which has greatly perplexed research students. It seems to us, however, that this statement may be accepted literally. It is quite possible that the man was indeed a Russian and that the books were written in the Russian language. We merely lack information as to the characters used in these books. In any case, the need for a written language had appeared in Rūs long before baptism, and a number of data, even though not very clear, point to the fact that the Russians had a written language even before Christianity was recognized as the state religion.

The agreements between the Rūs and the Greeks, drawn up in the Greek language, were translated and written in Russian at that time.

Oleg's agreement with the Greeks speaks of written testaments drawn up by Russians. Igor's agreement of 944 with Byzantium mentions the documents with which the Russian prince was to supply the boats he sent to Greece. Ibn-Fadhlân saw an inscription over the grave of a distinguished Russian. Ibn-al-Kedim saw a Russian inscription on a piece of wood. Finally, a Bulgarian writer of the 9th century, the monk Khrabr, when speaking of the Slavonic people in general, makes the following undated comment:

"Formerly the Slavonic people, being heathens, did not have their own letters, but used special signs for calculations and memoranda."

This comment as to a written language of the Slavs before Christianity can, in any case, refer to the 8th century, for in the



Mosaic floor in the Desyatinny Church in Kiev, 10th century

9th century Western and Southern Slavs were already officially considered Christians.

In the beginning the Slavs used Latin and Greek characters.

"Roman and Greek characters had to be used at first in order to convey Slavonic words, but this was inconvenient."

"... And thus it was for many years," Khrabr adds, and immediately goes on to explain in what respect it was "inconvenient":

"How can one write correctly, in Greek characters, the Slavonic words: *bog*, or *zhizn*, or *tserkov*, or *chayanie*, or *shirota*." (God, life, church, hope, breadth.)

The Greek and Latin alphabets lack many symbols to designate Slavonic sounds which are absent in the Greek and Latin tongues. Kirill and Methodius eliminated this obvious defect. Kirill "created thirty-eight characters, some of which are like Greek letters, others being for Slavonic sounds."

Khrabr's statement is confirmed by another made by the Prussian chronicler Christian, only parts of which, unfortunately, have come down to us. One of these fragments says that Christian had some Russian annals—*Ein Buch in Russischer Sprache, aber mit Griechischen Buchstaben geschrieben*—a book in the Russian language but written with Greek characters.*

It seems, then, that Kirill did not introduce a written language but merely created a Slavonic alphabet. The written language had existed before his day. Christianity, which had long been known among the Slavonic people and, in particular, among the Eastern Slavs, merely increased the need of a written language and undoubtedly hastened the improvement of the Slavs' own alphabet.

Rūs had always been a tempting morsel for both Rome and Constantinople.

When Vladimir, after taking possession of Korsun, negotiated with the Greeks about the hierarchic structure of the Russian

* Voigt. *Geschichte Preussens.* I. *Beilage* IV. *Ss. 667-678.*

church, the pope sent his own envoys to Korsun to keep Vladimir from entering into a church union with the Greeks and to win Rūs over to his side. Although this mission failed, Rome did not consider its cause completely lost and made two more attempts in the same direction during the reign of Vladimir. Envoys were sent to Vladimir from Rome in the years 991 and 1000.

The papal mission of 991 was accompanied by envoys from the Polish and Czech kings, and the second mission, in the year 1000, by envoys from the Czech and Hungarian kings. If we recall the comment in the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* that Vladimir lived "in peace with the neighbouring princes, with Boleslaus of Poland and the Hungarian Stefan and Andrei of Czechia, and there was concord and love among them," (Lavrenty Annals,[17] dated 996), then we can clearly understand this concerted attempt on the part of Rūs's western neighbours to win her over to their side.

In response to these missions Vladimir sent his own envoys to Rome in the years 994 and 1001.

The mission of the year 1000 was sent to Kiev by Pope Silvester II, a famous scholar of his times, tutor of Emperor Otto III, the nephew of Vladimir's wife Anna (his mother was Anna's sister). Thus, Rūs's connections with the western countries and Byzantium were very active and friendly, and the Pope and western Catholic rulers might have had many plans connected with Vladimir, but Rūs had its own policy and preferred to remain true to her alliance with the Greeks. The first Russian metropolitan, the Greek Leon, who was in office when the papal envoys came to Rūs, even wrote an accusatory paper against the Latins as though to justify Vladimir's conduct.

The tale about the trial of faiths, contained in the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* is not far removed from reality. The numerous missions from various countries—incidentally, on matters of religion as well—are a more than likely phenomenon.

Head of a Saint
Fresco in the St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev, 11th century

And so, Rūs cleaved firmly to Byzantium. Did she lose anything thereby? For Russian historians this is by no means a new question; it is one of the so-called "eternal" problems. I shall not discuss the subject beyond emphasizing one aspect of it. There is no doubt that the Byzantine church was more tolerant than the Roman. In contrast to the latter, it permitted the existence of national churches and enabled them to lead their own independent life. And this could not but affect the history of the civilization of those countries which evaded the levelling hand of the Vatican.

It is interesting to note that these very Czech-Moravians whose king tried to prevail upon Vladimir to unite Rūs with Rome, had, more than a hundred years before this, while resting within the bosom of the Catholic Church, themselves appealed to Byzantium with the request to translate the Greek books of worship into the Slavonic language, that is, they raised in a practical way the vital question of establishing their own national church.

The opinion of E. E. Golubinsky, historian of the Russian Church, to the effect that the initiative in this affair must be credited to Kirill, despite the wishes of the Greeks and the complete inaction of the Moravians, sounds absolutely unconvincing to us. How, without the desire of the Moravians themselves, and without the collaboration of Byzantium, could it have beeen possible to send an outstanding Greek scholar, who knew the Slavonic language, to Moravia for such a definite purpose? We know that the activity of Kirill in Moravia was a clarion call for other Slavs as well, and first of all, speaking chronologically, for the vassal of the German Emperor, the Slavonic prince, Kotsel of Pannonia.

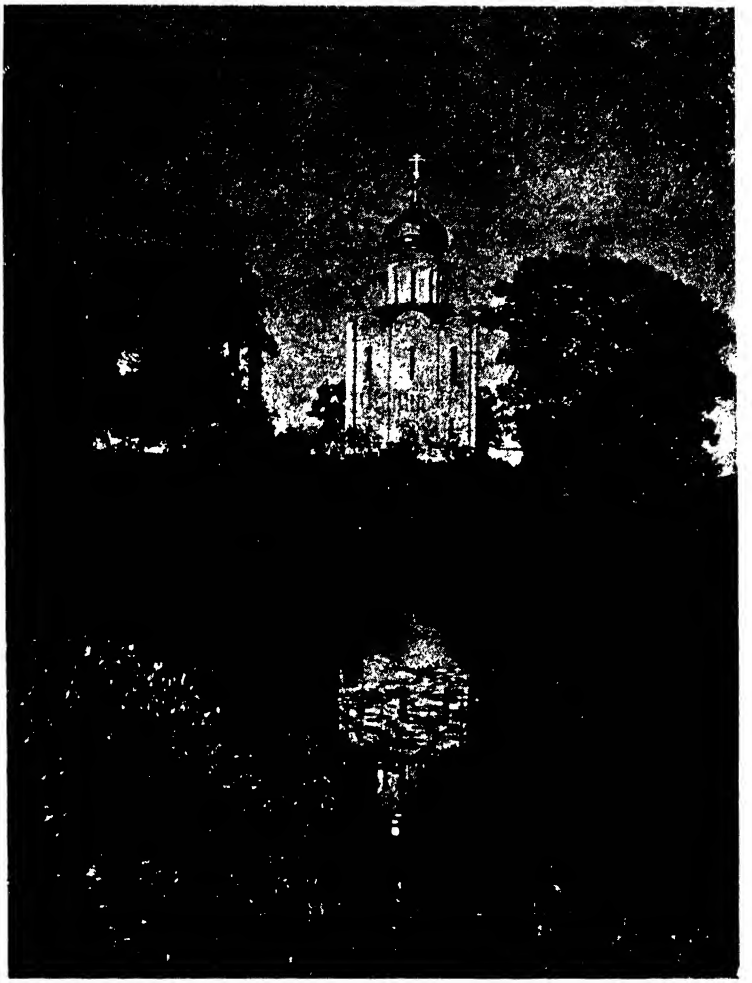
However that may be, Christianity, which had been acquired from the Greeks but which at the same time had not been completely isolated from the West, proved in the end to be neither Byzantine nor Roman, but Russian. And this Russification of

Christian teaching and of the Christian Church began at a very early date, developing in two directions. The struggle for their own national church organization was carried on by the upper classes of Russian society; the princes took part in it, as well as the aristocracy that surrounded them, the higher clergy and various church institutions. The people as a whole waged a struggle for their own religion, sometimes actively coming out in defence of their old faith under the leadership of their priests, sometimes preserving their old beliefs in their everyday life, in spite of all the preaching of the Christian clergy and the influence brought to bear upon them by the authorities. Both these courses, in the final analysis, led to the same result.

Towards the end of the 11th century, *i.e.*, a hundred years after the recognition of Byzantine Christianity as the official religion in Rūs, the Russian clerical and temporal authorities introduced a holiday—the transference of the relics of St. Nicholas—Nikolai Chudotvorets[18] (the Worker of Miracles)—a holiday not accepted either in Byzantium or by the Roman Catholic Church but recognized by the Pope only as a local holiday in Bari. In this the Russian Church manifested its own attitude toward Nikolai, who had long been very popular in Rūs.

At a very early date statesmen and church leaders began to canonize their own Russian saints. It is characteristic in this connection that the first Russian saints were exalted, as Golubinsky very rightly points out, "for political reasons which had nothing to do with faith," and even despite the wish of the official head of the Russian Church, the Metropolitan George, a Greek by nationality.

The state, like the Russian people themselves, obviously endeavoured to make its church a national one. This is also seen from the position in which the first Greek metropolitans sent to Rūs by Byzantium found themselves. In Rūs they encountered a manifest tendency towards church independence.



Pokrov Church on the Nerl near Vladimir
12th century

We have no exact knowledge of the conditions under which the Greek clergy came to Rūs during the reign of Vladimir, but we can see that Vladimir himself took measures to train an adequate number of educated—in the Greek understanding of the term—local people. These measures were very successful, and Vladimir's son, Yaroslav, made an attempt to replace the Greek metropolitan with his own Russian candidate.

The Lavrenty Annals contain the following brief entry under the date of 1051:

"Yaroslav, after assembling the bishops in the Cathedral of St. Sophia, appointed the Rusin, Hilarion, as metropolitan."

The Ipatievsky Annals [19] use the term Rūs instead of Rusin, but the meaning of both entries, is, of course, one and the same. Yaroslav, acting on his own initiative, assembled the bishops and proposed to them his own, Russian, candidate as metropolitan. The bishops, among whom there undoubtedly were Greeks as well, supported his nominee.

This candidate was Hilarion, a most learned and talented Russian, a priest of the prince's suburban village of Berestova.

One of Hilarion's works which has come down to us, the *Discourse Concerning the Old and the New Testament*, gives a clear picture of the author himself and of the high level of culture attained at that time by those strata of Russian society that had an opportunity to study. Hilarion's *Discourse* impresses one not only by its beauty and precise arrangement, but also by its philosophical depth. Undoubtedly Hilarion had a suitable audience. He himself says that he is addressing not just any unversed people, but those "who had profusely drunk of the sweetness of (reading) books!"

As an illustration of Hilarion's style I give the following excerpt from my translation of his *Discourse*, which contains his address to Prince Vladimir:

"Arise, noble man, from thy grave: arise and shake off thy

sleep, for thou art not dead, but sleepest only until the general awakening of all.

"Arise, for thou didst not die because thou couldst not die, believing in Christ, the source of life of the entire world. Shake off thy sleep, raise thine eyes that thou mayest see what honour the Lord hath rendered thee there in heaven and what glory He hath created for thee among thy sons.

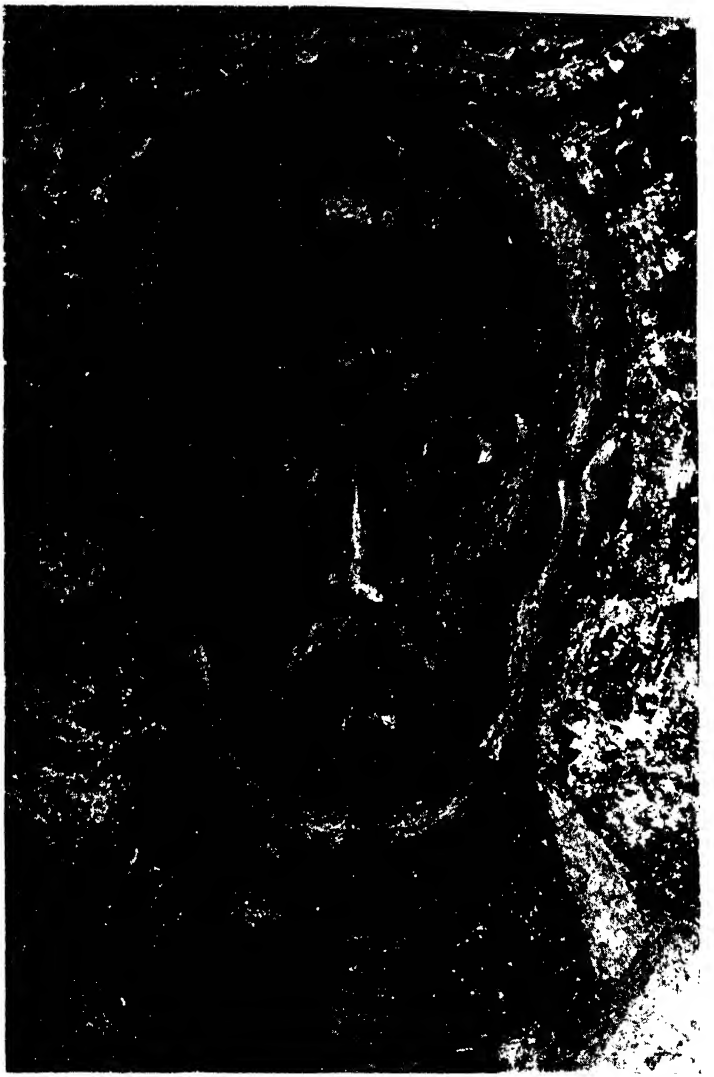
"Arise, gaze upon thy child, George, gaze upon thine offspring, gaze upon thy dear one, upon him whom the Lord hath created from thy flesh and blood, gaze upon him who embellisheth the throne of thy land, and take joy and be happy. Look thou, likewise, upon his faithful wife, thy daughter-in-law, Irina, upon thy grandchildren and greatgrandchildren, how they live, how the Lord preserveth them, how well they profess the faith bequeathed unto them by thee, how often they visit the sacred churches, how they glorify Christ and worship His name. Gaze also upon the city radiant in its majesty, upon the flourishing churches, upon growing Christianity, gaze upon the city consecrated by sacred ikons, shining and fragrant with incense, ringing with praises and divine song.

"And, seeing all this, take joy and be happy and praise the good God, of all this the Creator."

Let us not forget that this was written 160 years before the *Lay of Prince Igor's Regiment.*[20]

Hilarion's *Discourse* enjoyed widespread and merited popularity. The author of the Galich-Volhynia Ipatievsky Annals, a worldly, educated man of the 13th century, not only is acquainted with Hilarion's *Discourse,* but clearly imitates it. Desiring to glorify his town, Vladimir Volynsky, and Prince Vladimir Vasilkovich, the author of the annals addresses him, at that time already dead, with the following words:

"Arise, noble man, from thy grave, arise, for thou didst not die and couldst not die, believing in Christ, the source of life of the entire world. Shake off thy sleep, raise thine eyes that thou



St. Nicholas
Fresco in the St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev, 11th century

mayest see what honour the Lord hath graced thee with there in heaven, and he hath not forgotten thee on earth. Arise, gaze upon thy brother who embellisheth the throne of thy land."*

Yaroslav's choice was a man capable of holding his own among his most learned Greek contemporaries.

After Yaroslav's death Hilarion was replaced by a Greek again, Ephraim, who seemingly aroused the protest of the Russian bishops. Luka Zhidyata, a Novgorod bishop, made some "indecorous speeches" for which, denounced by his servant, he was condemned by Ephraim.

The second attempt to appoint a Russian as metropolitan was made in that very troublous and politically difficult time of the struggle between the Monomakh and Oleg families. The Monomakhs firmly adhered to a national policy and in 1147 the Grand Prince Izyaslav Mstislavich, grandson of Vladimir Monomakh, "independently of the Greeks, with six bishops, appointed Klim, a Russian monk, as metropolitan." (Lavrenty Annals.) The Ipatievsky Annals contain the following details:

"Izyaslav appointed as metropolitan, Klim, a hermit monk from Zarub [21] in the Smolensk princedom. He was such a scholar and philosopher, the like of whom was not known in the Russian land."

Again the initiative came from the prince. He was energetically supported by the Chernigov bishop Onufry who apparently presided over the assembly. Other bishops were also in favour of this candidate, except Manuil of Smolensk (a Greek) and Nifont of Novgorod. True, the latter was dissatisfied not with the candidate but with the fact that the candidate had not been approved by the Greek patriarch (the patriarch did not agree to this act). Onufry of Chernigov, apparently with the support of the prince, found he could get along without the patriarch's blessing, referring

* Ipatievsky Annals, 1871 edition, pp. 606-607.

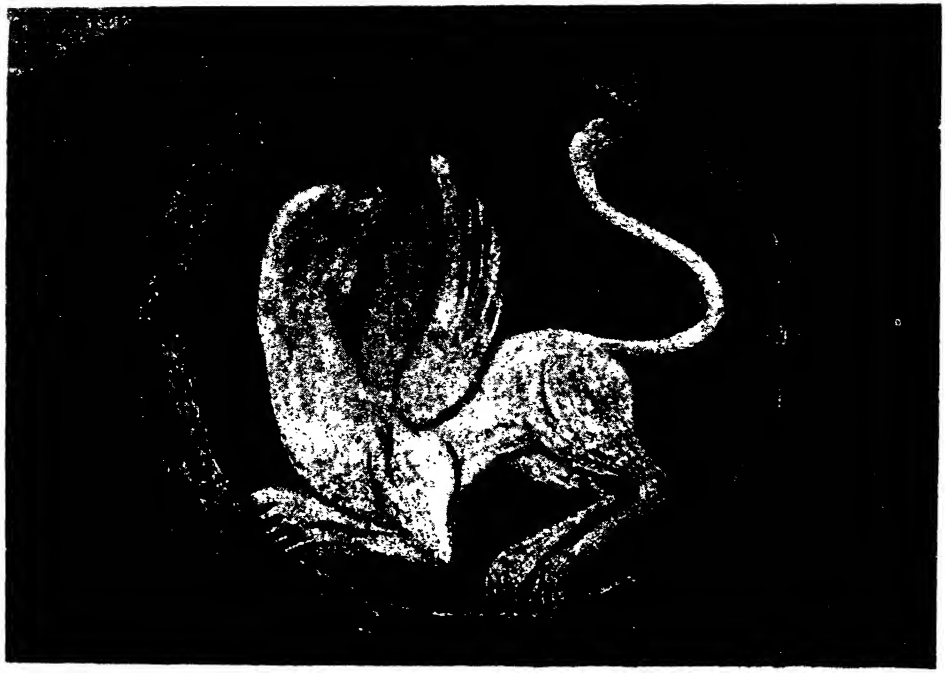
to the presence in Kiev of the relics of St. Kliment, which, in his opinion, was sufficient to vest the new metropolitan with full powers; didn't the Greeks themselves appeal to the relics in such cases? Most of the bishops agreed with this argument, reasoning: "... they appoint a metropolitan with the wisdom of St. Kliment" [meaning his relics—*Author*] (Ipatievsky Annals).

But the matter did not end there. The times were stormy. Events moved quickly and found a direct response in Western Europe and in Byzantium. Occupying Kiev for a short time, Izyaslav's enemy, Yury Dolgoruky, banished Kliment. During the year 1150 Izyaslav drove Yury from the throne twice, and twice the metropolitan Kliment returned with him to Kiev, remaining at his post until Izyaslav's death in 1154.

Yury received a new metropolitan from Constantinople—the Greek Constantine. He began his activity in Kiev by anathematizing Prince Izyaslav, who was already dead at that time, and all of the Russian clergy who had been appointed by Kliment.

A year later Yury died and the Kiev throne was occupied by the son of the anathematized Izyaslav. The metropolitan of Kiev, Constantine, had to flee for his life. Again they were about to send for Kliment, but obstacles arose in the way of his return. The fight had become very acute and the Kiev prince was compelled to compromise: upon the insistence of the Byzantine emperor he accepted the Greek candidate instead of Kliment, but, according to Tatishchev—who could not have invented this fact although he might have retold it in a somewhat biased manner—the prince firmly declared that if in the future the patriarch appointed a metropolitan to Rūs without his, the Kiev Prince's, knowledge and approval, then he, the Prince of Kiev, threatened not to accept the candidate sent him and in general radically to change the attitude of the Russian Church towards the Constantinople patriarch.

Here we see unquestionable attempts to Russify the church power and liberate it from political dependence on Byzantium.



Fresco of the stairway in the St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev, 11th-12th centuries

Another tendency in the same direction, one much more powerful, was that manifested by the people—although they had accepted the new faith from Byzantium, they had not forgotten their old faith which long ago had taken firm root in their everyday life. The new faith could not completely crowd out what was an inherent part of the people themselves. One's manner of living is not borrowed but is built up gradually, and we can see with perfect clarity how it was "built up" in this new stage, how it absorbed and transformed the new element within itself.

The *Lay About How in the Beginning People Were Heathens and Worshipped Idols* contains a very characteristic passage which reflects the spirit of genuine Russian life in the 11th century. It speaks of the Slavs and, of course, of the people of Rūs above all others:

"After the sacred baptism they renounced Peroun and accepted Christ, *but even now in the borderlands they pray to him, the accursed god Peroun and to Khors, and Mokosh, and Vil,* and do this in secret. They cannot give up making sacrifices to Rod and Rozhanitsy...."

That is, side by side with the Christian faith, which had as yet not struck firm root among the people even in such cities as Novgorod, and, all the more so in the backwoods ("in the borderlands") the cult of the ancient gods continued to exist for a long time. Paganism, which had been built by the people themselves during the course of centuries, was dear to the masses inasmuch as this religion, which had arisen in a classless society, did not sanctify elements of class oppression which later religions did. Paganism could not therefore vanish all at once. Man wanted to know the future; man, in his struggle with nature, looked for help, believing in the possibility of bringing influence to bear upon nature by some mysterious means. Hence the belief in fortune-telling, in signs and sorcery, against which the preachers of Christianity fought vainly.

Man is accustomed to hearken to and to notice everything: "the house is cracking, there's a ringing in one's ear, the crow caws, the hen cackles, the dog howls, the mouse squeaks, the cat meows, one meets a monk, one meets a hog," etc.—such was the endless list mentioned in the so-called "false books" (Apocrypha) of pagan forecasts of the future by signs. The priests and sorcerers possessed the secret of divining the future, of influencing the fate of man. The Russian could not give up his beliefs all at once, even if the Christian ideas really reached the very heart of the people. But this was not the case; Christianity spread slowly from the cities to the villages and backwoods, and while penetrating the masses it merged with the old habitual ways of thinking and with their sentiments.

The Russian holidays and the manner of celebrating them illustrate this very fact absolutely unequivocally. The annual pagan holidays were closely intertwined with the Christian. The celebration of the New Year, of spring, bore the Roman name *Calendae*, Kolyada, and coincided with the Christmas of the Christians. The ritual side of the celebration remained purely pagan: on Christmas Eve the Bulgarians, Serbs, Ukrainians, Byelorussians and the people in many places of Russia proper until quite recent times held a ritual feast symbolizing a prayer for abundance and welfare in the coming year. Christmas fortune-telling marked this period from Christmas to Epiphany.

Shrovetide, which was not recognized by the Christian Church, continued to exist on its own. The summer holiday was connected with St. John's Day. The purely Christian holiday of Easter was combined with the holiday of the Sun and Peroun. In some parts of Russia "holy week" is called "thunder week" (the belief exists that thunder during "holy week" presages a good harvest). Peroun, the God of Thunder, was replaced by the prophet Elijah. In Greece Elijah crowded out Zeus. The holiday of Yarila, an ancient Slavonic spring holiday—"the sacred last meal before the

Family of Prince Svyatoslav of Kiev
Miniature of the *Izbornik of Svyatoslav*, 1073

fast"—also continued to live on, although the Stoglav[22] fought against it; and the holiday of Lada[23] ("Foma Sunday") likewise persisted. Friday was also made a holiday in honour of Lada, a rite long preserved in the Ukraine, where the weekly holiday, even as late as the 16th century was not Sunday but Friday, whence we have the veneration of St. Paraskovya Friday among the Russians.

The so-called "evil spirits" who corresponded to the pagan gods of evil that brought misfortunes upon people, were completely absorbed into the Russified Christian conceptions. Witches and sorcerers, the mediums of the evil spirits, remained in the life of the people in spite of the fight against them.

Pagan rites persisted in the numerous survivals in everyday life.

Nowhere do we see the memory of the old pagan beliefs of the Russian people so strikingly reflected as in the *Lay of Prince Igor's Regiment.* Its author was undoubtedly a Christian in his beliefs: glorifying the princes and their retinues "who fought for the Christians against the heathen troops," he contrasts the Christians with the "unholy" and directs his hero, after he is freed from imprisonment, "to the holy Virgin Pirogoshchaya." Yet at the same time he is imbued with the old Russian traditions: he calls the Russian people the grandchildren of Dažbog; Boyan[24]—the grandson of Veles (Volos); the winds—the grandchildren of Stribog.

Christianity was absorbed by the Russians in a peculiar manner, like everything which in one way or other came to them from without. The ability of the Russian people to create their own culture and to transform what they borrowed from other peoples is reflected in the fate of the Christian religion in Rūs no less strikingly than in the Slavonization of the Variags and many other peoples.

This ability of the Russian people to assimilate and to transform the assimilated is strikingly reflected in art.

There was hardly another land in mediaeval times where one could encounter so many cultural cross-currents as in Rūs. Byzantium, the peoples of the East and the Caucasus, Western Europe and Scandinavia surrounded Rūs. Persian fabrics, Arabian silver, Chinese fabrics, Syrian articles, Egyptian crockery, Byzantine brocades, Frankish swords, and other things went to Rūs, and, needless to say, served not only as objects to be used by the rich classes of Russian society, but also as models of style in art.

All of these elements were transformed by the artistic genius of Rūs and became part of original Russian art. The explanation for this indisputable fact is to be found in the antiquity and stability of the Russian people's own traditions.

The idols, altars, princely palaces, large and beautiful buildings, the city walls and towers were created in accordance with a definite system, definite technical methods and in a definite style.

The style of the stone buildings which appeared later is genetically connected with the old canons of the pre-stone period. Painting of a sort was also known in pre-Christian times. A specimen of pagan sculpture has been preserved in a cave on the bank of the River Buzh which flows into the Dniester. There is a large, intricate relief on the wall of the cave, depicting a kneeling man praying before a holy tree and a rooster sitting on it. To one side of him there is a deer which may possibly be a sacrifice offered up by the man. Above, in a special frame, there is an undeciphered inscription.

When, in connection with the recognition of Christianity as the state religion, Greek engineers and artists came to Kiev, they had to take into consideration and conform with the tastes of the princes and the Russian aristocracy, who had their own opinion about what the costly buildings in the capital ought to be like.

Neither in Byzantium nor in the West could one find a temple with thirteen cupolas. This is a purely Russian phenomenon, the heritage of wooden architecture applied to stone structures. The

first St. Sophia Cathedral in Novgorod was of oak and had thirteen cupolas. The Kiev Sophia, which was of stone, also had thirteen cupolas. The Desyatinny Church, likewise made of stone, had twenty-five cupolas. This old tradition persisted in wooden architecture for a very long time and, incidentally, has come down to us in a wooden twenty-three domed church in the Kizhsky Pogost.[25] The fusion of elements of the East and the West in a unique Russian form can be seen in the Chernigov Spas Cathedral.

We can trace the same phenomenon in painting. Wherever Russian artists may have studied, they chiefly adopted the technique and were interested in the style, but they employed foreign patterns and their acquired skills in an original way. In the *Izbornik (Miscellany) of Svyatoslav*[26] of 1073 a group portrait has been preserved of Svyatoslav and his family, which has been made in the style of the Byzantine family groups of owners or buyers of books. All the members of the prince's family are pictured here in Russian attire adapted by the Russian prince's court. It is characteristic that all the members of the prince's family wear necklaces of coins—an ornament that is purely Russian. The Greek artist who painted Yaroslav and the members of his family in the Kiev Sophia of course had to take into consideration the Russian national features of the life of the prince's court, all the more so since many Russian artists participated in the work of decorating the Sophia.

Kiev icon painters back in the 11th-12th centuries had spread their highly developed art throughout all Rūs—to Kholm of Galich, to Rostov, Suzdal, Vladimir.

Andrei Bogolyubsky, Prince of Vladimir and Suzdal, a great builder and art connoisseur, carried an icon made by the Kiev master, Alimny, with him to Suzdal Rūs. Another icon, that of the Mother of God, the work of a Constantinople master, also was brought from Kiev to Vladimir-on-the-Klyazma.

The attitude of Russian painters to the image of St. Nicholas is very significant. On the fresco in the Kiev Sophia this pure-blooded Greek, under the brush of Russian masters, became a typical, old Russian who decidedly lacked all his own national features.

We can find Byzantine, Sassanian, Armenian and Roman features in all the works of architects, painters, and book miniaturists, but they were all transformed into a special Russian school of architecture and painting.

The same is true of the language. We are able to state that the Antes spoke Russian, but to what extent the Russian language was then developed we, unfortunately, cannot determine since that language has not reached us.

In "*Russkaya Pravda*"[27] (Russian Right) we find a reflection of the most ancient Russian language, which was close to the language of the people. By that time the language had already acquired a certain wealth of means of description. It was the language of the masses, simple and clear, but at the same time it had already developed definite morphological and syntactical forms.

This language feared no "influences" whatsoever. It could merely become enriched with new words and phrases, without in the least losing its national characteristics.

Original Bulgarian books or translations which abounded in Bulgarian expressions, influenced the Russian book language. Many Bulgarian expressions became part of the language of the educated classes and to some extent of the language of the people, but they did not change its Russian character.

The language of that masterpiece of ancient Russian literature, *Lay of Prince Igor's Regiment*, has its roots deep in the oral poetry of the people, upon which the author drew for his astonishing similes, metaphors and other figures of speech.

The Russian literary language, with the peculiarities of the folk dialects, kept firm hold all over the tremendous territory of

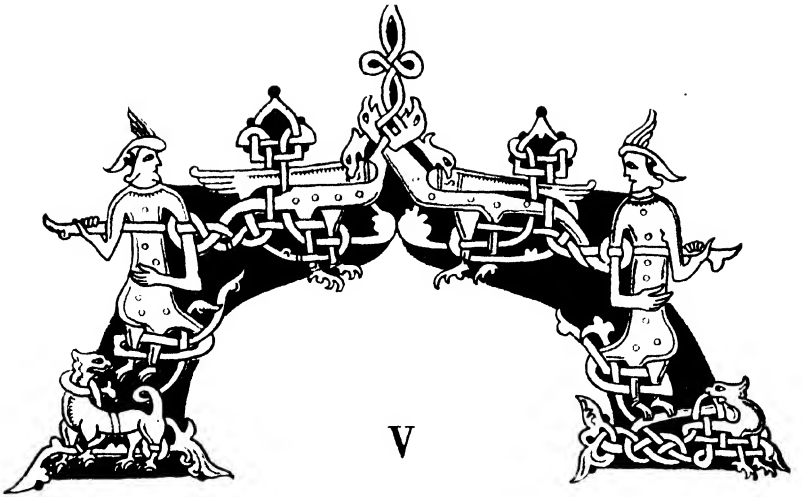
Our Lady Orant
Icon from Yaroslavl, 12th-13th centuries

Rūs. From the ice-bound shores of the northern seas to the Black Sea shores basking in the southern sun, from the Carpathians to the Volga and the Oka, wherever the Russian lived—in legal documents and in historical tales, in poetry and in prose—one finds the same, exact, flexible, picturesque language.

It is worthy of mention that the Russian who could wield the pen was able to select a form of expression suitable to his thoughts and feelings.

The igumen (superior) Daniel, who kept a diary of his voyage to Jerusalem (1106-07) declared that he was planning to write "not subtly but simply," that is, he knew the various literary methods but deliberately rejected a florid style.

A striking indication of the high level of development of the Russian language is the excellent Russian translations of foreign works, which appeared in Rūs in the 11th century. Outstanding among these is the superb translation of Joseph Flavius's *Judaic War*.



V

THE ATTITUDE OF THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE TO THEIR HISTORICAL PAST

THE CREATION of a Slavonic alphabet and the translation of Greek books into Russian were extremely important for Rūs. But this was by no means, however, the starting point of Russian culture. Even before the appearance of a written language and for some time after its appearance there existed, parallel to it, a culture to which little or no attention has been paid, an attitude that is entirely unmerited. And yet, how can one explain, for instance, the preservation, for the distant descendants of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, of thousands of facts concerning various aspects of the life of other peoples, facts which were only partially recorded at a later date, other than by the circumstance that every people has its own culture dating back to a period before the appearance of a written language, a period which is of great interest and deserves most serious consideration?

Here is what Caesar writes of the Gallic Druids*: they were exempt from state services, including military service, and from paying taxes. Their duties included prolonged study which continued for about twenty years. They had to learn by heart, in verse form, all that was known about astronomy and geography, natural science and theology. They were obliged to hand on their knowledge to their pupils. They were forbidden to resort to writing because they did not want the knowledge to become accessible to the people at large and because that which was written down was not retained in the memory so well.

Seneca said the same thing several decades later:

Certior est memoria, quae nullum extra se subsidium habet. (Ep. 88, 28.)

It is interesting to note that everything they had to learn was presented in the form of verse, since verse is remembered more easily and more exactly: you cannot omit any word from a poem.

During the period before the appearance of a written language, a definite group of songs had historical significance.

The main aim of oral composition on historical subjects was to preserve for the people the memory of their heroes—their names and feats. The songs also devoted much attention to the genealogy of the heroes, thus unnoticeably becoming a chronicle of events connected with certain historical personages. Court feasts were usually attended by bards—storytellers who glorified princes and kings, both them and their forefathers.

This is a universal phenomenon and it is natural that it was also to be observed among the Slavonic peoples and in Ante-Rūs in particular.

In this connection we are interested not merely in the fact that there existed poets and bards who dealt with historical themes, but in the very contents of their historical songs, in the subject

* Caesar, De Bello Gallico, lib. VI, cap. IV.

Musician

Fresco of the stairway in the St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev, 11th-12th centuries

matter of their byliny and tales. Interest in one's past, the need to establish the relationship between the past and the present are features which testify to a definite level of civilization and of man's consciousness of his adherence to an ethnic and political unit.

Information about the Ante *skazyteli* or storytellers comes from days long past.

As regards Rūs herself, besides the byliny, songs and tales which reach us now in the form of written literature, we have definite knowledge about the names of the great masters in this field.

Boyan, the famous "nightingale of the days of old" sang his songs to the accompaniment of the *gusli* (psaltery), composing them in honour of historical personages who had glorified themselves by their deeds. "When he wanted to sing in honour of anyone, he released ten falcons at a flock of swans . . . and sang a song to old Yaroslav, to the valiant Mstislav . . . to the splendid Roman Svyatoslavich." Boyan's living strings "sang the glory of the princes." Although the unknown author of *Lay of Prince Igor's Regiment* set himself the task of singing according to "the byliny of our time and not according to Boyan's imagination," that is, he wanted to be more concrete (adhere more to facts) than Boyan, who gave full vent to his poetic imagination, yet he was essentially the same type of bard of historical events and of great people.

It is not difficult to guess how this task was accomplished. We can say without any exaggeration that history itself marched in poetic form before the audiences of the bards, who displayed a profound grasp of events, gave fine characterizations of the statesmen and had a keen appreciation of men and their deeds. Even if we grant that there was some exaggeration as, for instance, in the byliny that have come down to us, yet the sense of the most important events has not been distorted.

After the victory of Daniil of Galich over the Yatvags, the hero of the victory was extolled by his contemporary bards ("they were glorified in song," *i. e.*, Daniil and his father Roman). The

"famous bard" Mitus, who was taken away from the ruler of Peremyshl by Daniil as a prisoner, refused to sing before the prince who had captured him ("his pride would not let him serve Prince Daniil"). True, this was as late as the 13th century, but it is part of an old tradition which existed side by side with the written language. Undoubtedly there were similar songs about Oleg as well, and about Svyatoslav, just as there had been about others at a much earlier date.

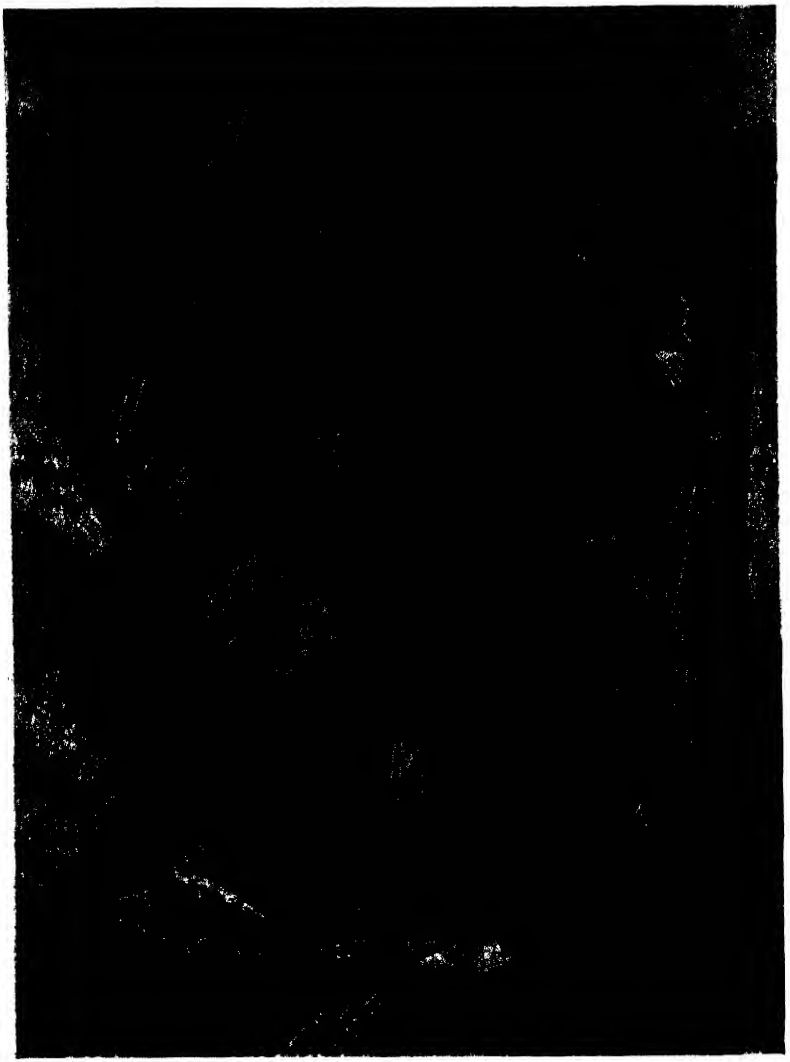
The bards composed songs and sang them because the subjects of their compositions attracted audiences, arousing interest in the feats of their heroes. In this manner was the history of Rūs compiled and preserved before the existence of a written language.

Our first historians, the annalists, fully appreciated the great significance of oral legends handed down in the form of historical songs, tales and byliny, and attempted to summarize the material at their command and thereby satisfy the political and cultural interests of their contemporaries.

"The Kiev folk saga," writes V. O. Klyuchevsky, "can be clearly traced as one of the basic sources of the symposium (*Chronicle of Ancient Years—Author*) covering the 9th and the entire 10th century; its traces are even noticeable in the beginning of the 11th century in the story of the struggle of Vladimir against the Pechenegs. From the fragments of the Kiev byliny which have been preserved in this symposium, one can conclude that by the middle of the 11th century an entire cycle of historical-poetic legends had been composed in Kiev Rūs, the main subject of which was the campaigns of Rūs against Byzantium."*

If Klyuchevsky had confined himself to the dates he had indicated here, we would be compelled to suggest a correction to what he says. However, a few pages later he himself points out that

* V. O. Klyuchevsky. Course in Russian History. I. 1908, p. 96.



Our Lady of Vladimir
Icon, 11th-12th centuries, brought from Constantinople

even the earlier, pre-Kiev period in the history of the Russian people has been preserved for us in these very songs. We hear "the distant echo of a whole cycle of Slavonic songs about the Avars, which were composed in the Carpathian mountains." (*Tale About the Obry* [Avars], end of the 6th and beginning of the 7th centuries—*Author.*)

There is no need at this time to enlarge upon certain passages in the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* which can be traced to songs and byliny. There are quite a few such places: there is the tale about Kiy, Shchek, and Khoriv, about the revenge of Olga, the feasts of Vladimir, the taking of Korsun, the marriage of Vladimir to Rogneda (Ragnilda), the combat between Mstislav and Rededya, the description of Svyatoslav, and others. Our students of literature who are specialists in this field have even found some fragments of verse in entries in the annals, which have been derived from oral sources. It is not only reasonable but fully natural for oral verse to exercise such influence upon written prose.

Furthermore, it should be stated outright that during the period when the written language was not so widespread the poet as a historian was much more important than later, and incomparably greater ability was required of the illiterate poet-historian than of the literate "recorders" of individual facts. It is easy to understand why the latter did not appeal to the Muses; for only to "people of high spiritual power did Zeus send inspiration." Whereas a person without any talent whatever could keep a record of events.

Lest I be accused of making unfounded statements I wish to quote an excerpt from the Frankish annals of the St. Amanda Monastery.

687. War of Pipin in Testry, where he conquered the Franks.
688, 689, 690.... 701 (no entry).

702. Death of King Hildebert.
703-707 (no entries).
708. Death of Drogon in spring.
709. Pipin set out for Swabia against Vilary.
710. Pipin again went to Swabia against Vilary, etc.

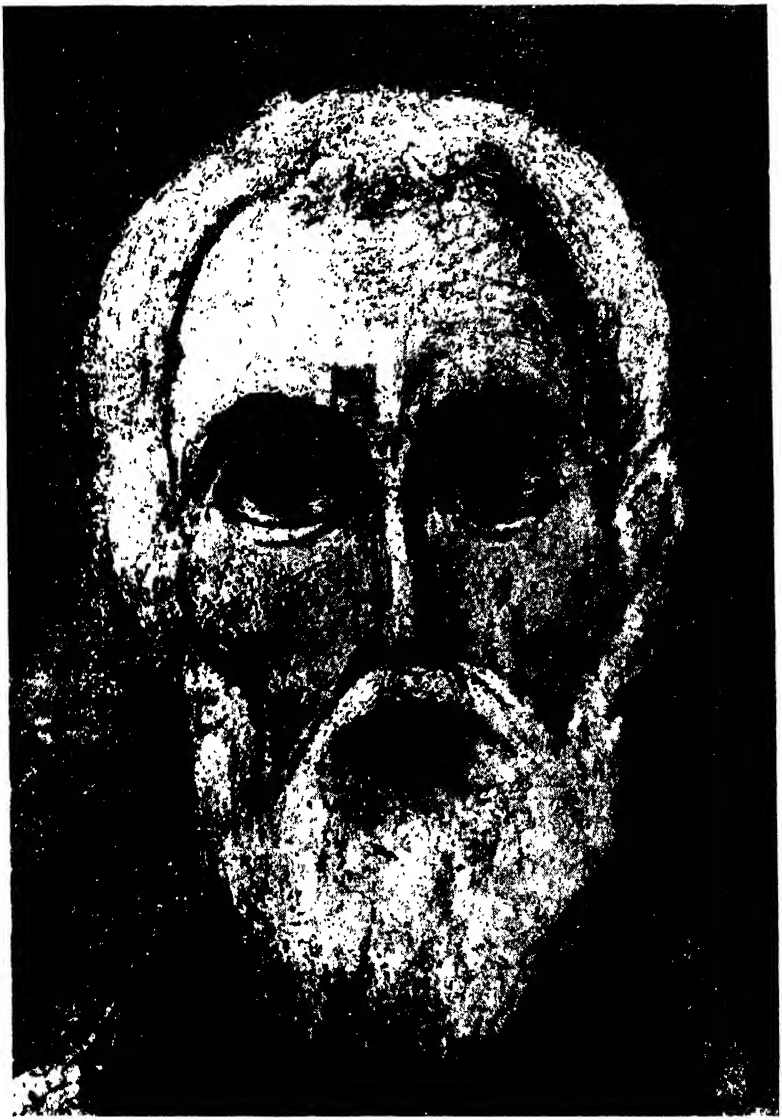
Similar records were kept in Rūs long before the first general history of Russia was compiled. This was demanded by the prince's court, the centre from which the prince of Rūs administered and the place where problems of internal and international policy were decided.

It is difficult to determine the date when such record keeping began. What can be said with certainty, however, is that this practice had become well-established since the days when the state power in the large political centres became strong, and especially when Kiev became the capital of the great Russian state, that is, beginning with the second half of the 9th century.

As the international connections of Rūs were extended and the administrative apparatus and technique grew more intricate, the need for an exact recording of political events became ever more urgent. To facilitate these records special calendars existed both in the West and here, the necessary facts being entered under the corresponding years. There is reason to believe that each new Kiev prince started new records of his own.

The *Chronicle of Ancient Years* seems to contain definite hints at such a situation. This same *Chronicle of Ancient Years* also bears traces of some kind of summaries of events, which were also needed for practical purposes. Special sections were introduced in the *Chronicle*: "From the death of Svyatoslavl to the death of Yaroslavl 85 years elapsed, and from the death of Yaroslavl to the death of Svyatopolk—60."

I. I. Sreznevsky presumes, not without grounds, that this was an attempt of one person to sum up the events from Svyatoslav



Head
Fresco in the St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev, 11th century

to Yaroslav and of another to do the same for the period from Yaroslav to Svyatopolk. However, this was not the first endeavour of its kind, nor could it as yet be considered a historical work.

If this is so, what should be said about the Greeks who, in the opinion of some people, created our written history, and in the opinion of others taught us how to write it?

The first opinion, which is absolutely unfounded and contradicts all the facts at our disposal, must be decidedly rejected. There is some basis for the second opinion, but it must be defined more exactly.

There's no gainsaying that the Russians learned a great deal from the Greeks, and through them became acquainted with the forms of literary productions as well. At an early date they began to read the Greek chroniclers. In this respect Rūs became the pupil of the Greek masters.

But this concerns form only. As regards content it must be said that, like all other peoples, the Russians, at a certain stage in the development of their own civilization, found it necessary, without any outside influence being brought to bear upon them, to look back upon their past and to interpret it for themselves. This need is a very old one. At one time it was satisfied by poets, bards, and the tellers of stories. Now came a public order for a history of their native land, and the opportunity for filling the order was at hand. Specimens of this type of literature were to be found in translations from the Greek. The preparatory work had been done a long time ago, and the talent and inspiration were to be found in the Russian people themselves.

Whereas mere literacy was sufficient for the recording of facts, the interpretation of the facts and the creation of a consecutive systematic history of one's people and state demanded both talent and learning.

There were many gifted people among the Antes. For instance the Greeks could not have entrusted the command of their fleet

to a person who was not capable, and the Ante, Dobrogast, in the middle of the 6th century bore the title of "military tribune," and was in command of the Pontine fleet at a critical moment in the war between Byzantium and the Persians. This was not an isolated case; nor was it, however, a mass phenomenon.

When and how did learned people appear in Rūs, people equal to the task of creating a general systematic history of their country?

It is a well-known fact that ever since the time of Vladimir Svyatoslavich there officially existed a state school in Kiev. Immediately upon Vladimir's return from his Korsun campaign, when he arrived in Kiev with his wife—the sister of the Greek emperor—surrounded by a suite of learned Greeks, he "began to take the children from the aristocracy and to give them book learning."

"Book learning" was not merely a knowledge of reading and writing, but a systematic education, the study of the sciences of the time. The *Chronicle of Ancient Years* speaks in terms of high praise of the Kiev metropolitan, Ioann II (died 1089), a Greek:

"He was a man who had acquired book knowledge . . . and there had been no one like him before in Rūs and there will not be after him."

The metropolitan Kirill I, also a learned man (died 1233), according to this same *Chronicle* was "very learned and proficient in interpreting the books of God."

The *Chronicle* says similar things of two Russian metropolitans: the famous Hilarion "was a charitable, learned and pious man"; Kliment "was such a scholar and philosopher the like of which had not lived in the Russian land."

Yet speaking of Prince Boris Vladimirovich, Nestor is much more restrained: the prince "had been taught to read and write" but had not had any "book learning." About the Greek metropolitan, Ioann the eunuch, who undoubtedly was a well-learned man, it is said that he "was a man unlearned, simple in mind and speech."

It is perfectly clear that "book learning" did not signify a school where one learned the elements of reading and writing but a school where the sciences were taught and where, for those times, an advanced education was given. It was not in this school that one learned to read and write. There had been literate people in Rūs long before Vladimir. The children of the "elite"—that is, of the older warriors, the princes' retinue, the boyars, were, of course, selected for school not to be trained as sextons nor even as ordinary priests, but to become learned people and statesmen who would be capable of maintaining intercourse with Byzantium and other countries.

In addition to this state school in Kiev there were other cities which offered many opportunities for learning. Thus, for instance, Feodosy of Pechersky had, in his childhood, obviously studied either in Vasilyev or in Kursk "with one of the teachers," and, as Nestor says (maybe with some exaggeration), "he soon learned the first phase of science," that is, he had not merely learned to read and write but had taken a certain course of study.

The statement contained in the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* about the establishment of a state school in Novgorod by Yaroslav may be interpreted somewhat differently:

"When Yaroslav came to Novgorod he selected 300 children of church wardens and priests for instruction."

Inasmuch as it refers to the "children of priests" we can assume that the training of an educated clergy was implied here.

There were libraries for continuing and improving one's education as well as for self-education. They were introduced into the Russian monasteries together with the Studium monastery regulations. A special brother was in charge of the library. On his instructions the brethren were to report at certain hours to read books. Some of the brethren were engaged in copying books. While Feodosy was the superior, a monk by the name of Hilarion lived at the Pechersky Monastery and was "skilled in writing books."

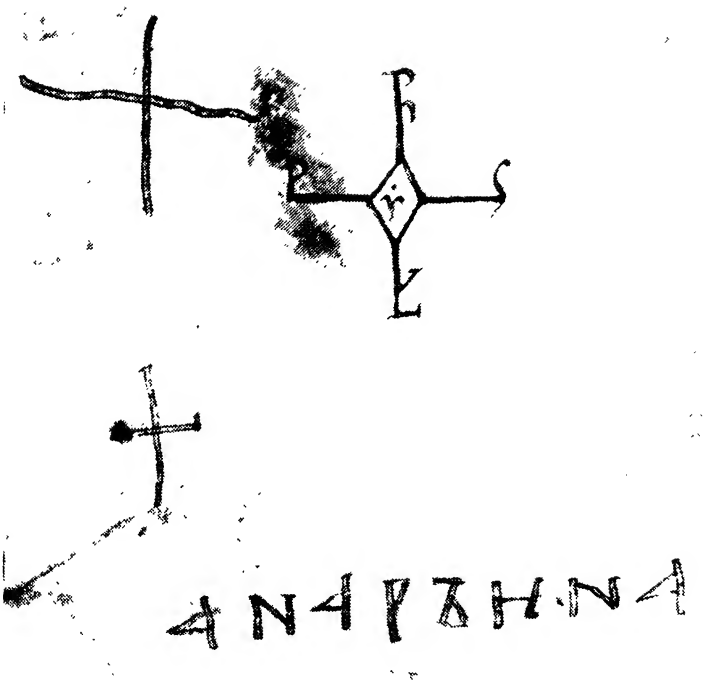
The monk Nikon bound them. And in the evenings Feodosy himself would sit down at a corner of Nikon's table and spin the threads needed to sew up the books.

Some of the brethren had libraries of their own. The monk Grigory, a disciple of Feodosy's, had no possessions but could not refrain from collecting books. However, his books began to vanish, and so in order not to tempt the thieves he presented part of his books "to the ruler of the town" and sold the others. The money thus received he distributed to beggars. But his craving for books persisted and he started accumulating a library again.

A Pechersky monk Nikita while at the monastery learned the Old Testament by heart; Damian did not sleep nights but read books, and Feodosy encouraged "book worship." Books accumulated and were painstakingly preserved. They were, of course, necessary for literary works emanating from this monastery.

According to the annals, Yaroslav "placed many books in the church of St. Sophia, which he himself had founded." He was a great lover of books himself, and appreciated the significance of book collections. His son, Svyatoslav, filled his chambers with books. Prince Svyatoslav Nikolai Davidovich (Svyatosha) spent his fortune on books and presented them to the Pechersky Monastery.

Theology was not the only subject of these books, just as it was not the only subject taught in the state and even private schools. There are substantial grounds for presuming that Rūs adopted the curriculum of the Constantinople schools. According to the *Life of Feodosy of Pechersky*—a work which warrants credence inasmuch as it belongs to the truthful pen of Nestor—Feodosy in his childhood studied under "one of the teachers." The Kursk pedagogue taught his pupil not only to read and write: under his guidance Feodosy "learned the whole course of elementary instruction" ("grammar"). The term is very significant. This gradation persisted for a long time in the theological schools: grammarians, rhetoricians, philosophers and, finally, theologians. The



Actual signature of Anne, daughter of Yaroslav Mudry and wife of the French king, Henry I. The signature (Queen Anne) was affixed to a document of King Philip I, son of Henry I, sent to the abbey of Soissons, 1063

The crosses alongside and above her signature indicate the signature of the state leaders of France. There, too, is the "signum" of King Philip I

boy Feodosy could take only the first course of instruction with the provincial schoolteacher, but that certainly included more than mere reading and writing. In the state schools of Kiev and Novgorod the course of study of the young people approximated that of the Greek schools.

Proof of this can be found in the correspondence between the metropolitan Kliment and the Smolensk presbyter Foma (12th cent.). Feeling he had the support of Prince Rostislav Mstislavich and taking advantage of the fact that Kliment was in disgrace, Foma took the liberty of rebuking the metropolitan (that same Kliment, otherwise known as Klim the "Rusin," whom Prince Izyaslav Mstislavich had demonstratively appointed metropolitan) for his vanity, expressed in the fact that, praising himself and, pretending to be a philosopher, he wrote "from Omir (Homer—*Author*) Aristotle and Plato." Kliment did not deny the fact that he had used his knowledge of Homer, Aristotle and Plato, but in self-defence declared that he had used Greek literature only to acquire a more profound understanding of the Holy Scriptures inasmuch as the inner meaning of the scriptures was higher than the literal, the sensuous. In other words, he used the teachings of the Greek philosophers as a method.*

Kliment owed his knowledge of the Greek authors (Foma most likely knew them also) to school and to the libraries of the metropolitan and the monasteries.

No less significant in this respect is the example of Kirill of Turov who astonishes us not so much by his ability as by his learning. He had an excellent knowledge of the literary methods of the finest Greek writers and skilfully employed them in his own Russian works.

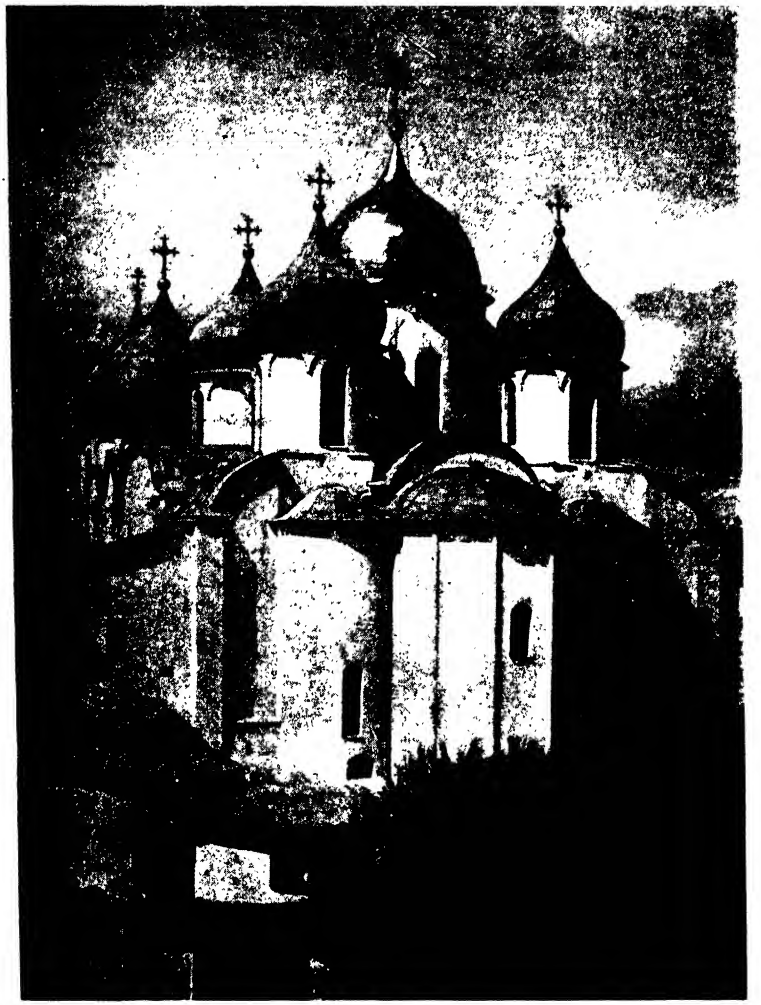
* Kh. Loparev.—*Message of the Metropolitan Kliment to the Smolensk Presbyter Foma*, St. Petersburg, 1892; N. Nikolsky. *The Literary Works of the Metropolitan Kliment of Smolensk, Writer of the 12th Cent.*, St. Petersburg, 1892.

The library of the metropolitan in Kiev, needless to say, also contained the Greek classics, inasmuch as the metropolitans oftener than not were Greeks. The same may be said of the episcopal libraries.

Archives were preserved with equal care. The archive documents were preserved in the church of Ilia in Kiev. Other churches to a greater or lesser degree preserved records of events and people noteworthy in one or another respect. The churches also kept paschal tables with notes on various happenings. The cathedrals in Kiev, Novgorod, Polotsk, Rostov and other cities had their own libraries and archives. The Kiev Sophia was especially interesting in this respect. Here, as in the Novgorod Sophia, princes were crowned, here they assembled for negotiations, and the *vetche* or popular assembly met within its gates. With the cathedral assuming such importance, the records of the events that took place there necessarily were of a political nature.

The *Chronicle of Ancient Years* in the form in which it has come down to us is a production on which several generations of annalists worked, editing and continuing the work of their predecessors. Each of them was the son of his times and of his surroundings, but they were all children of the one Motherland and they all replied essentially to the one question: How was the great state formed, which was "known and heard in all corners of the earth"? But before such a question could be asked the state itself had to grow up and take its place in the world of those times. Only a nation that had come to realize its own significance could create a work worthy of itself.

When, by authoritative order of Prince Oleg, Kiev was declared the "mother of Russian cities," Rūs already had a rich past. She could tell of the Novgorod Slavs and of the non-Slavic peoples of the Baltic, of the established intercourse between the Slavs and the Arabs and the neighbouring Scandinavian countries, sometimes peaceful and at other times hostile, of the invitations to Variag



St. Sophia Cathedral in Novgorod
middle of the 11th century

mercenary forces, of the leader of one of these forces, who succeeded in usurping the power in Novgorod. Even more could be said about Kiev as one of the oldest Russian cities, of its international position on the road from the East, which was highly cultured at that time, to the West, of its ties with Byzantium, the Caucasus and Central Asia, of the first Kiev princes, of the attempts of the Variags to secure possession of this large centre on the Dnieper, etc. But all these interesting and important facts were, in the eyes of our first historians, the annalists, relegated to a place of secondary importance in comparison with the unification of the separate parts of Rūs into one united state under the leadership of a new dynasty, the Rurik. or. to be more exact, the Igor dynasty, inasmuch as the dynastic tie with Rurik is very obscurely and artificially established in the *Chronicle of Ancient Years.*

This event is so emphatically stressed in the works of our first historians, the annalists, who worked under the direct supervision of this same dynasty and in its interests—which, it is the conviction of the annalists, were inseparable from the interests of the nation—that for a long time it hypnotized the historians who came later and who, without any justification, overlooked the Rurik period in the history of the Russian people. So strong was the influence of the *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, so great the force of tradition!

The achievements of archeology, ethnography, philology and the criticism of written source material have shattered this "tradition" completely and for all time. Now when we read the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* we discover new meaning in it, interpret it other than it was interpreted by Schlözer, Karamzin, or even S. M. Solovyev.

That most enlightened of states of the world of those days, Byzantium, was excellently informed about Rūs, more so than any other country. Its old ties with Rūs even determined Rūs's acceptance of Christianity from Byzantium. But it was this very step

which threatened to cost Rūs so dear. The complications that arose in this connection profoundly stirred society in the 11th-12th centuries. As a matter of fact, the Russian land became a metropolis of the Constantinople patriarch, and in Byzantium the church and lay authorities were in close union. The emperor headed both the empire and the church. It is quite comprehensible, then, that the metropolitan sent to Kiev by Byzantium became the head of the Russian church, while remaining, before and above all else, the representative of the authority of the Constantinople patriarch and, thereby, of the Byzantine emperor. This position of the Kiev metropolitan could not, of course, fail to arouse conflicts on matters of great principle among the Russian princes and in Russian society. The attempt of Yaroslav to end this ambiguous situation can therefore be readily understood. Yaroslav tried to enhance the importance of his capital and to fashion it after Constantinople: he laid the foundations for a new Kremlin, built the "Golden Gates," erected the St. Sophia Cathedral, and a number of churches and monasteries after it. Kiev competed with Constantinople.

Long before this (since 989) there had been a thirteen-cupola wooden Sophia in Novgorod and soon after, one appeared in Polotsk, symbolizing the cultural and political unity of the three greatest centres of Rūs. It must not be forgotten that in Novgorod and in Kiev and very likely in Polotsk as well, the single cult of Peroun had once been widespread. The St. Sophia bound Rūs with Byzantium ideologically but, as facts show, this by no means signified that Rūs was ready to subordinate herself to Byzantium and to lose her own identity.

Yaroslav very definitely conducted his own national policy, and his conflict with Byzantium came to a head in 1043 when Russian troops, under the leadership of Vladimir, Yaroslav's son, marched against it, a campaign which a Byzantine statesman called a war of "barbarians" against the Greek "hegemony." This campaign

Deisis (Prayer)
Icon in the Uspensky Cathedral in the Moscow Kremlin, 12th century

proved a failure as far as Rūs was concerned, but Yaroslav did not lay down his arms, and in 1051 he decided upon a very bold step—he appointed a Russian as metropolitan. The Greeks correctly interpreted this step of Yaroslav's, but could not make up their minds to sever relations completely and therefore consented to a compromise: after Hilarion, Kiev accepted a Greek metropolitan and Yaroslav's son Vsevolod married a princess from the house of the Monomakhs.

The Kievo-Pechersky Monastery[28] came into being soon after the appointment of the first Russian metropolitan, Hilarion. The monk Anthony, its founder, at first even took up his abode in the very cave where Hilarion had worked before him.

Able men began to gather about Anthony, people who at various times came to play an important role in the church and political life of Rūs. Here we meet the "great Nikon," who continued the compilation of the most ancient annals; the very notable public and political figure of Feodosy; Varlaam, son of the distinguished Kiev boyar Ephraim, later the bishop of Pereyaslavl. Four years later the Kievo-Pechersky Monastery was already well known. Regular intercourse was established between the monastery and the prince's court. Yaroslav's oldest son, Izyaslav, began coming to the monastery with his retinue to ask Anthony to pray for and to bless them—this, needless to say, for deeds of considerable political importance. And other princes, boyars and merchants came to the monastery of the reverend father Feodosy to be blessed before undertaking anything, to render thanksgiving upon its termination; they prayed and asked the monks to pray for them; they sacrificed "from their estates for the consolation of the brethren and for the building of the monastery," they carried on conversations there, thought aloud and confessed to the superior and to the brethren.

"The Pechersky Monastery was the focus in which merged the diffused rays of Russian life, and in this concentrated light

an observing monk could see the Russian world of those days from many more aspects than any layman." (Klyuchevsky.)

From the moment of its foundation the monastery became Yaroslav's support in his endeavour to secure the independence of the church; it became the centre of Russian national thought, the seminary and school of Russian hierarchs. "Many bishops (about 50) were appointed throughout Russian land" from this very place, as the bishop Simon emphasized in his letter to the black-frocked Polikarp of Pechersky about the year 1225.

The growing political significance of the monastery and the direction of its activity could not, of course, fail to disquiet the Greek metropolitan, whose new flock was not the "barbaric" herd the Constantinople authorities were at first inclined to consider it, but an alert, active people who by no means intended to be under the Greek thumb and who had all the material and spiritual possibilities to do as they intended.

There are several facts which enable us to feel the tenseness of the public movement. As a result of the complications between the monastery and the metropolitan, the "Great Nikon" was forced to leave the monastery and spend three years in Tmutarakan. Anthony, too, was compelled to abandon the monastery.

It should be recalled that after the death of Yaroslav the power fell into the hands of his three sons: Izyaslav, Svyatoslav and Vsevolod, who concluded an agreement among themselves. However, this triumvirate was not a very stable one. Each of its members had political views and plans of his own. Izyaslav, who was an undeniable westerner, and who, besides, was married to a Polish woman, leaned towards Poland and the West. Vsevolod, married to a Greek who came from the royal house of the Monomakhs, was Byzantine in his sympathies. The Russian national interests found strongest support in Svyatoslav.

During the uprising of the people of Kiev against Izyaslav in 1068 the monastery and no doubt Anthony himself participated

Feodosy
Detail of the icon, "Our Lady of Pechersky" in the Svensky Monastery, near Bryansk, 13th century

in the movement to some extent, and when Izyaslav with the help of the Poles regained the Kiev throne, Anthony, in order to save himself from the prince's wrath, was compelled to leave the city secretly during the night. He was taken by Svyatoslav to the latter's patrimonial city of Chernigov. Feodosy likewise did not remain passive although his attitude towards Izyaslav was different. He recognized him and in this respect remained firm to the end, but he, also, was uneasy because of Izyaslav's attraction to Catholicism and Poland. Feodosy selected a safer manner of action—that of admonition. A message from Feodosy to Izyaslav, which has come down to us, contains accusations and warnings:

"Thou, son, beware of men of alien religious faiths," Feodosy wrote, "and of all their speeches, for our land hath become filled with that evil belief."

"It is not fitting, son, to praise an alien faith: for he who praiseth an alien faith defameth his own faith."

"Thou, son, be on thy guard against them, and praise thine own faith incessantly, do not become intimate with them, but avoid them and by good deeds follow the precepts of thine own faith."

His words, "guard thy daughters, do not marry them off to them, and take no wives from among them" were directed right at Izyaslav, who was married to a Polish Catholic, maintained constant ties with Poland and was surrounded by Poles (even his son Mstislav had Polish bodyguards).

How noble was the national feeling of this Pechersky monk can be seen from the characteristic reservation the author makes in his "Message":

"Help not only (people) of thine own faith, but of an alien also: if thou seest anyone unclad, or hungry, or cold, or in distress, whoever he may be, a Jew or a Moslem or a Bulgarian, or a heretic or a Catholic or any other heathen—help everyone and relieve him of his distress, as thou canst."

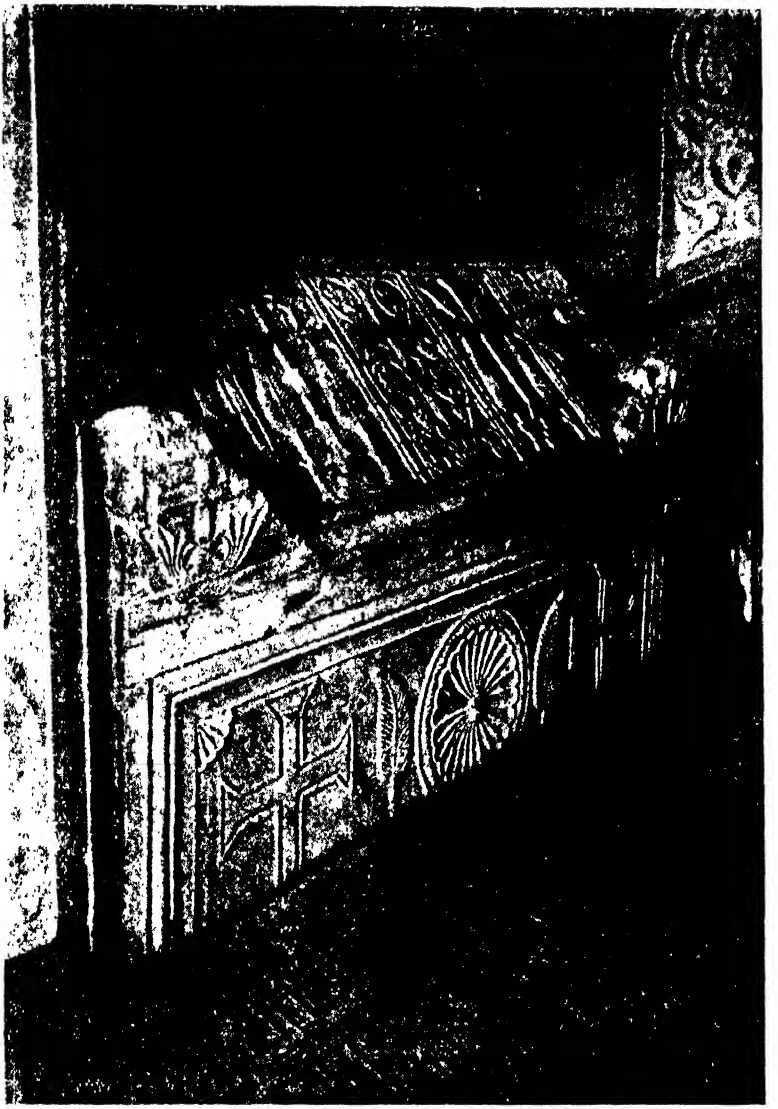
No narrow nationalism this!

The "Message" was of little avail: when Izyaslav was in exile abroad for the second time, he sought help not only from his relative, the Polish king Boleslaus, but also appealed to the German emperor, Heinrich IV and to Pope Gregory VII himself, whose power he promised to recognize in case of his safe return to Kiev.

Whether or not Feodosy knew of Izyaslav's foreign adventures, in any case he was very staunch in defending Izyaslav's rights to the Kiev throne when it was occupied by his brother, Svyatoslav. Relations between Feodosy and the court became so tense that a rupture threatened. Svyatoslav was on the point of depriving Feodosy of his liberty. The situation was saved by the intervention of the courtiers and the brethren. Feodosy made peace with Svyatoslav and permitted him to be mentioned in the church services, but only second, after Izyaslav. Nikon refused to be reconciled, preferring to banish himself again to Tmutarakan.

Svyatoslav, on his part, expressed a readiness to come to an agreement with the monastery and even presented it with a prince's field, which was adjacent to it; he also took part personally in the laying of the foundation for a stone church for the monastery. And when, shortly after this, Feodosy fell hopelessly ill, Svyatoslav and his son Gleb came to his deathbed and listened to his last wishes. Feodosy asked the prince to take the monastery under his protection. This was very important inasmuch as the Greek metropolitans continued to look askance at the activity of the Pechersky Monastery. Feodosy knew, of course, that he and Svyatoslav thought alike on this matter, for the prince had opposed the Byzantine claims upon Rūs more than once. The metropolitan did not even live in Kiev during his rule, preferring to reside in Pereyaslavl with the Grecophile Vsevolod, who was hostile to Svyatoslav.

Feodosy died in 1074, and two years later Svyatoslav also passed off into eternity. Vsevolod installed himself on the Kiev throne. A half year later Izyaslav returned from exile, he whose interests Feodosy had defended so zealously.



Sarcophagus of Yaroslav Mudry (the Wise) in the St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev. Died in 1054

The change of princes on the Kiev throne found reflection in the inevitable change of abbots: Stefan was expelled by the brethren and in his place Nikon was installed; he was loyal to Izyaslav and had by this time (after Svyatoslav's death) returned to Kiev. However, Izyaslav's unexpected death on the battlefield (Oct. 3, 1078) once more upset all the cards and the calculations of the political circles of Kiev. The power passed into the hands of Vsevolod who had for a long time been closely connected with the imperial Byzantine court and who was held in great favour by the emperor Michel VII Ducas. Two of his letters to Vsevolod, which have come down to us and which have been brilliantly commented upon by V. G. Vasilyevsky, are perfectly clear on this subject.

For fully comprehensible reasons friendly relations were established between Vsevolod and the metropolitan, and once more hard times set in for the Pechersky Monastery. In counterbalance to the Pechersky Monastery Vsevolod built a monastery of his own, the Mikhailovsky Vydubitsky [29] and showed great concern for its welfare. When the consecration of the stone church of this new monastery was celebrated, the metropolitan took a most active part in it, while decidedly refusing to manifest any interest whatever in the Pechersky Monastery. Nikon, the Pechersky superior, had to put up with a great deal. Unfortunately, the annals written by Nikon at that time have not come down to us. Without doubt the spirit of the Pechersky Monastery pervaded them, that is, they were permeated with an all-Russian patriotic feeling which was so unacceptable to the Greek metropolitan and his supporters.

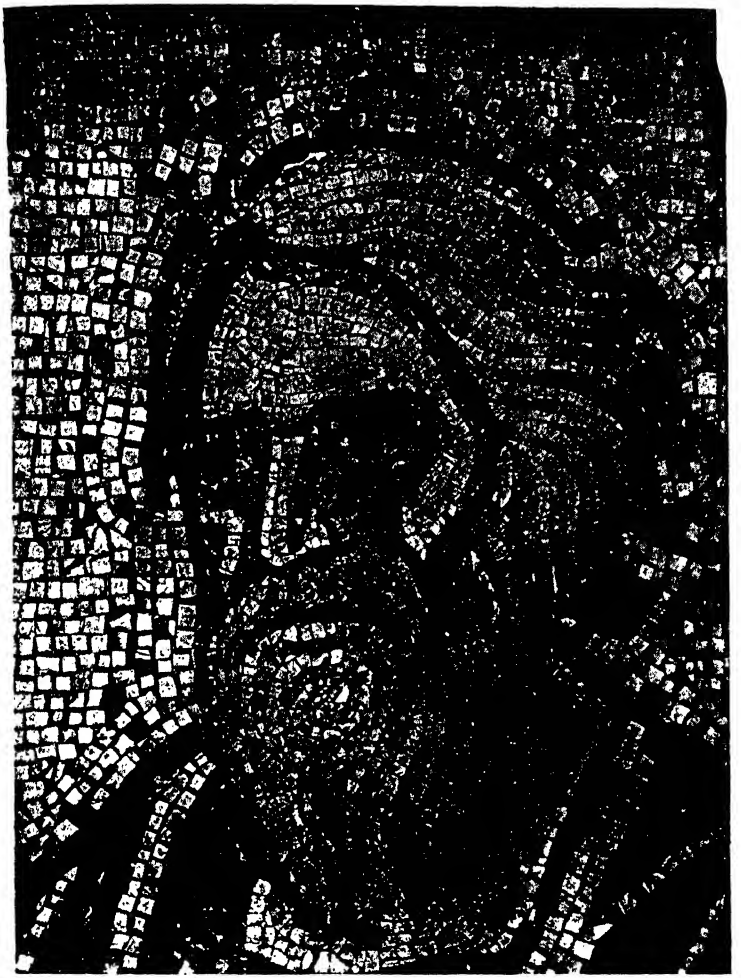
Other works were written in the monastery while Feodosy was still alive. Later they were included in still others which have come down to us (*In memory and praise of St. Vladimir*,[30] and *The Legend of Boris and Gleb*[31]). Both of these works are by no means abstract compositions: they radiate profound patriotic feeling, and discuss and solve very acute problems.

The Greeks by no means welcomed the appearance of Russian saints and did everything they could to hamper the endeavours of the Russians to canonize their own people. Only with difficulty and very unwillingly was the metropolitan compelled to recognize the sanctity of the first Russian saints, Boris and Gleb.* Even longer and more determined was the opposition of the Greeks to the canonization of Olga, Vladimir and Feodosy. A widespread struggle was waged about this question of primary importance—was the Russian land to be culturally independent or continue under the tutelage of the Greeks?

The Greeks could not fail to notice the use their Russian flock made of its first success. Boris and Gleb were very quickly and readily recognized by all of Rūs. Russians, princes and others began to erect temples in their honour and showed concern about the magnificence of these temples.

Boris and Gleb became manifest rivals of St. Sophia. Sadko, a rich Novgorod merchant, erected at his own expense an imposing temple in Novgorod in honour of Boris and Gleb. With the consent, of course, of the Novgorod *vetche* and the bishop, he selected a site in the Kremlin for this temple, where at one time the first

* According to the annals, the Greek metropolitan strongly doubted the sanctity of the brother princes and only after their relics had been transferred to the new church in Vyshgorod, which had been built by Prince Izyaslav, and when the church, during the ceremony, was "filled with fragrance," the metropolitan was horrified: "for he had not believed in their sanctity," as a Russian patriotic annalist comments on this incident. The metropolitan "prostrated himself and asked forgiveness." The Russian land unhesitatingly welcomed the glorification of its first saints with the greatest joy and zeal. Their memory was celebrated most solemnly and the date, July 24, was included among the great annual holidays: ". . . the holiday of Boris and Gleb is a newly instituted holiday on Russian soil." (Lavrenty Annals, 1093.) The next Russian to become a saint was Feodosy of Pechersky, who was included in the sinodik[32] upon order of the Kiev prince, Svyatopolk Izyaslavich.



Head of the Apostle
Mosaic in the Mikhailovsky-Zlatoverkhy (Dmitrov) Monastery in Kiev, 11th-12th centuries

wooden Sophia had stood, just opposite the new Sophia, as though he were challenging her. At various times seven more churches were built in Novgorod in honour of these same saints.

It was more difficult to organize such a demonstration in Kiev, where there was a Greek metropolitan. But a temple to Boris and Gleb appeared at the old, favourite suburban residence of the Kiev princes, Vyshgorod, where the relics of the first Russian saints were transferred with exceptional solemnity. A special holiday to commemorate this event was instituted, the Transference of the Relics of Boris and Gleb, and deep political significance was attached to it. The Temple of Boris and Gleb in Vyshgorod occupied the most honoured place among the sanctuaries of Kiev. It is not an accident that Vladimir Vladimirovich of Galich, upon his arrival in Kiev together with Yury Dolgoruky, considered it necessary to go to Vyshgorod first of all:

"... He went to Vyshgorod to kneel before the holy martyrs, and after kneeling before the holy martyrs he went to the temple of St. Sophia."

In the given instance the Sophia came second. Temples were also erected to these saints on the Alta River on the site where Boris had been killed, in Pereyaslavl Russky, in Rostov, Chernigov, Ryazan, Pskov, Grodno, Polotsk, Murom and in other cities. For one or another reason the memory of Boris and Gleb was celebrated six times a year.

It is very interesting to note that several years after the glorification of Boris and Gleb in Rūs, the cult of these saints was instituted in Czechia. A special chapel was built in the Sazavsky Monastery in their honour. The cultural and political bonds between these two Slavic peoples had found a new form of expression.

The Pechersky Monastery, the seat of Russian national culture, responded to the "holiday of the Russian land" by compiling biographies of the first Russian saints. This task was entrusted to

the most outstanding literary talent the monastery possessed—the monk Nestor.

The stubborn refusal of the Greeks to encourage the endeavours of the Russian people in this direction is quite comprehensible. And equally comprehensible is the fact that the Russians did not lay down their arms but continued the fight.

The idea that Prince Vladimir and his mother Olga were in no way inferior to Emperor Constantine and his mother Helena and were fully worthy of canonization had been advanced a long time before and in quite definite form in *In Memory and Praise of St. Vladimir*. These ideas and sentiments were supported by the famous and unsurpassed Hilarion, who repeated them from the metropolitan's pulpit when he occupied it. The Greeks regarded his attitude as a challenge and accepted the challenge.

The general situation which had arisen about this question in Rūs prompted the Greeks and their Russian followers as to the tactics to be pursued. They realized that they could not confine themselves merely to prohibitions in a place where people knew how to think and back their thoughts with arguments of shattering force. They had to fight with the same weapon and, upon the initiative of the Greeks, a counter-offensive was prepared. A pasquinade against Vladimir came out, in which the author attempted to show that Vladimir was a debauchee who scorned no means for the satisfaction of his insatiable lust. His harem failed to satisfy him—and so he had even dishonoured Rogneda and had abandoned her. He had done the same with the daughter of the Prince of Korsun—had dishonoured her and then married her off to one of his warriors. This same Vladimir had demanded the sister of the Byzantine emperor, falsely promising to marry her, and only a miracle had saved her from disgrace: an eye disease which afflicted Vladimir forced him to repent and to keep his promise. What sort of candidate for sainthood was such as he, if only difficult circumstances and not his own good will

Ornament
Fresco of the St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev, 11th century

led him to be baptized? How could he be called a Russian Constantine?

In the same manner did the Greeks attempt to parry another attack against them coming again from the Pechersky Monastery. Nestor put out his *Life of Feodosy* which quite definitely and convincingly proved it was necessary to canonize the worthy Russian zealot, Feodosy. In reply to this proposal, which was unacceptable to the Greeks, there appeared a life of Anthony, which has not reached us. In it the services of Feodosy were disregarded while Anthony, the minion of the Greeks, occupied a place of primary importance. Anthony's biography emphasizes the exceptional services rendered to Russian Christian education by the Greek Athos,[33] in whose name Anthony was active in Rūs. It was he who was the real founder of the Pechersky Monastery; it was he, and not Feodosy, who introduced the Greek monastic regulations into the monastery; he laid the foundations for the stone church and cells and he, in a miraculous way, continued to concern himself about the needs of the monastery even after his death. In a word, the Pechersky Monastery was the work of the Greeks.

This move of the Greeks found no response among the Russians and was soon forgotten. However, the Pechersky monks drew another conclusion from the indisputable facts of Anthony's biography. Since Athos took part in spreading culture in Rūs, and since Athos itself was not under the authority of the patriarch, but directly subordinated to the emperor, it followed that the Pechersky Monastery should also be subordinate to the Russian prince and in no way dependent upon the Greek metropolitan.

Prince Vsevolod, in spite of his ties with Byzantium, was a Russian and could not be indifferent to the aspirations of his compatriots. Ivan, superior of the Kievo-Pechersky Monastery, succeeded in winning a certain favourable attitude towards his monastery, although only towards the end of Vsevolod's rule: the prince permitted him to transfer the relics of Feodosy to the stone

church, but neither he himself nor the members of his family attended the ceremony.

In his annals the Pechersky superior Ivan determined to say a few words in justification of Vsevolod, who had already died by this time, namely, that Vsevolod had been sick and decrepit, had not administered his affairs himself but had left them to the younger men of his retinue. Seemingly neither side had been able to come to an understanding with the other.

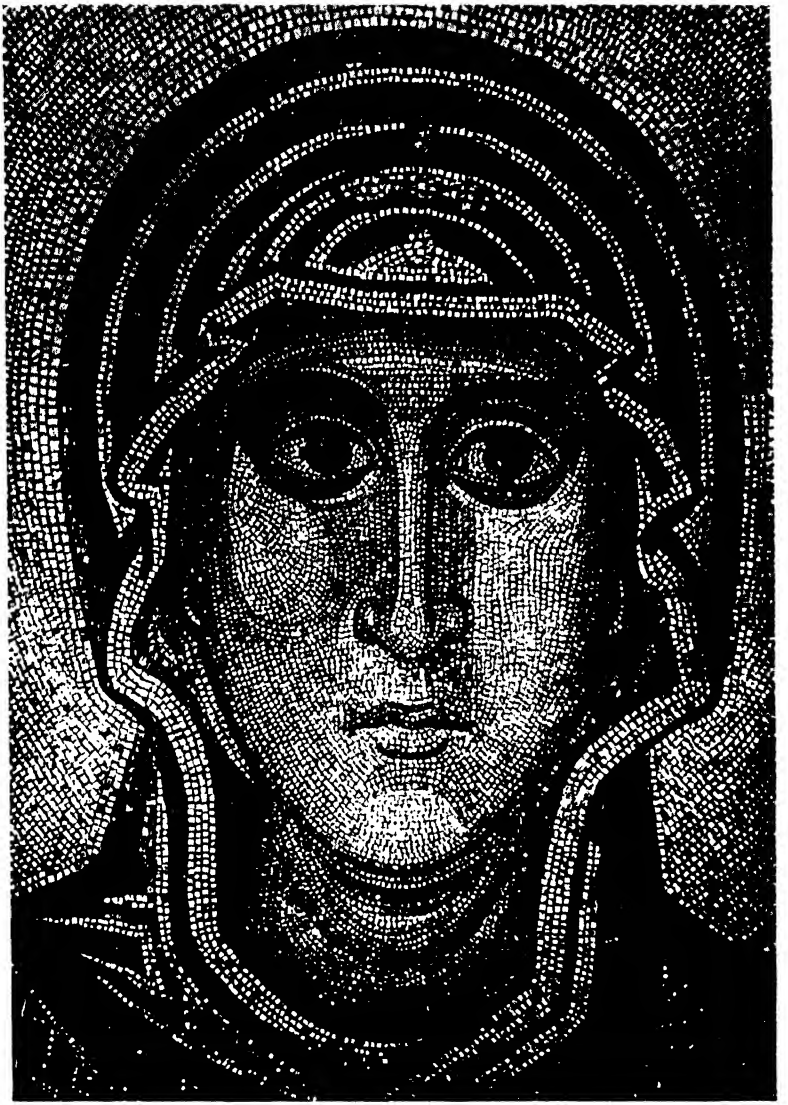
When Svyatopolk Izyaslavich, who was hostile to the Vsevolod dynasty, became prince, superior Ivan was arrested for his opposition to Svyatopolk and was exiled to Svyatopolk's ancestral domain in the town of Turov.

In spite of the many objectionable aspects of both his character and behaviour, this prince had one positive quality which found recognition in the Pechersky Monastery and, in particular, by Nestor: Svyatopolk proved to be a supporter of that all-Russian tradition, which, like an unquenchable fire, was incessantly kept alive in this most ancient of Russian monasteries. This friendliness towards the Pechersky Monastery was encouraged by the dissension between Svyatopolk and the Kiev metropolitan Nikolai (1096-1101) and his successor Nikifor (1104-1121). Finally Svyatopolk ventured upon a step which Russian patriots had been awaiting for a long time: he consented to the canonization of Feodosy, although not to the fullest extent. It was also with Svyatopolk's participation that the superior of the monastery was raised in rank, becoming an archimandrite.

Even this fragmentary information which has been preserved to our day enables us to feel the quickened pulse of the social life.

Meanwhile Nestor, in his cell, was making preparations for his historical work, which was soon entrusted to him by an official order.

Nestor comprehended his task in a very broad way. He rewrote and completed the work of his predecessors, considerably



Head of an Orant

Mosaic in the St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev, 11th century

extending its chronological limits, and devoted much space to Prince Svyatopolk, obscuring the dark sides of his activity and emphasizing the favourable aspects. In this he was undoubtedly prompted by a feeling of gratitude for Svyatopolk's kindly attitude to the Pechersky Monastery and for his support of its program.

Nestor paid heavily for this expression of sympathy for Svyatopolk as soon as Vladimir Monomakh, Svyatopolk's opponent, came to power after Svyatopolk's death.

Vladimir Monomakh differed from his predecessor in many respects. He was already 60 years old when he ascended the throne of Kiev. Brilliantly educated for his times, with great experience in military and international affairs, having studied the people about him and at the same time appreciating the needs of the masses, he was able to draw up a plan of action that was based on the careful calculation of a realistic statesman who knew the difference between the desired and the possible. His basic aim—to save the Russian state from complete disintegration—he achieved at the cost of necessary compromises: princes of large domains who had kept aloof were permitted to remain in their princely domains provided they recognized the Kiev prince, who personified the unity of the Russian land.

Fully understanding the significance of the various political trends, which had become more strained during the last years of Svyatopolk's reign and which had manifested themselves so violently in the days following his death, Monomakh disapproved of the activity of the Pechersky Monastery and of Nestor in particular. The keeping of the annals was turned over to the family monastery of the descendants of Vsevolod Yaroslavich, and came to the hands of Silvester, superior of the Mikhailovsky-Vydubitsky Monastery. He was told not merely to continue the work of his predecessors but to rewrite it anew according to instructions received from Vladimir Monomakh himself. This order of the supreme authority reflected its distrust of Nestor and his monastery,

and the course taken by him, which formed the basis of his life's work, was condemned.

In its consequences the step that was taken extended far beyond the walls of the Pechersky Monastery, beyond the boundaries of Kiev itself. It was a step of all-Russian significance. For a long time after this Nestor's name became a thing of odium. It was even removed from the book which, to be exact, really was the work of his pen; it was only permitted that his name be implied under the anonym of the "monk of Feodosy's Pechersky Monastery." Much time was to elapse before his name was resurrected and resounded throughout the world.

Such were the social and political conditions under which the first systematized work on the history of Rūs came into being. It appeared in spite of everything, and the difficulties which its authors had to surmount are clear testimony of their understanding of its importance. They fought for every idea, because these ideas were something one could not regard with indifference.

If we bear in mind that parallel to this main line of Russian annal writing there were supplementary ones, and that annals were compiled in Novgorod, Galich, and Pereyaslavl, that both the clergy (in monasteries and bishoprics) and laymen (at the prince's court) engaged in writing annals, then it becomes obvious that the people of Rūs were tremendously interested in the history of their own country.

Much was written, but Nestor's work remained the unshakable foundation for all books on history written in the years that followed. The *Chronicle of Ancient Years* is a work of human genius, one to which fate has ensured unfading interest during the course of centuries. The book was read with excitement and interest when first released from the hands of its author, nor can it be read with indifference today.

In addition to numerous Russian editions, the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* was translated and published abroad. Excerpts from

The Assumption

Icon in the Desyatinny Monastery in Novgorod, 12th-13th centuries

it were quoted by Herberstein, in 1771 a German translation was made in Göttingen (Schlözer, vol. I, p. XXI), in 1860 it was published in Latin in Vienna by Fr. Miklošič. At the same time Kotkowsky in Kiev published it with a translation in the Polish language. A German translation was made by Josef Miller in Berlin in 1812, a French translation in Paris in 1834 by Louis Paris, a Swedish translation in Helsingfors in 1849; it was translated into the Czech language in 1864 by Jaromĭr Erben in Prague, into the Danish language in 1859 by Smith in Copenhagen. Louis Leger translated part of the annals in 1868 into French as an appendix to his doctor's dissertation, *The Nestor Annals*. He also made a complete translation of these annals in 1884, and that same year they came out in Lvov in Latin, the translation having been made by K. Luchakovsky. The *Chronicle* was also translated into English in 1930 by S. H. Cross.

How can one explain such a profound, unrelaxing interest in a work written 900 years ago in Kiev? How can one explain its extraordinary influence upon the subsequent historiography on Russia, both Russian and non-Russian? It is no secret that the plan developed in the *Chronicle* proved to be so viable that neither Karamzin, Solovyev nor Klyuchevsky could deviate from it. And, to be exact, neither have we any grounds for deviating far from it.

For the reading public of the 11th-12th centuries, it was a living word about their motherland, about its past and its present, about the great work of the preceding generations, which culminated in the formation of a mighty state. In our days it is a source of knowledge of the past of Rūs, a source which, in its way, is unique, and gives, if not a complete, yet a systematized truthful and logical account of the ancient history of Russia.

The Russian land did not live an isolated life; it grew, strengthened and won a place for itself in world history, constantly coming in touch with other peoples. Its first historians could not fail to be interested in these ties, inasmuch as they were part of

the life of the Russian people. Hence the universal interest in "Nestor" (as the *Chronicle* is referred to). Inasmuch as the history of the Kiev state is a very important part of universal history, this book, written by a man from Kiev about his own state, could not and cannot fail to be of interest to the historian of any European or Asiatic country.

What astonishes us above all else is his broad approach to the question of Rūs's place in world history. Nestor seeks a place for the Slavs among the peoples of the world, in order then logically to approach the question of the Eastern Slavs.

After paying tribute to the idea of Slavic unity, and issuing a call for Slavic cultural unity through language and education just at the time when the Slavonic people were living through a very difficult period (the Moravian state had been crushed by the Hungarians in the beginning of the 10th century, the Bulgarian kingdom by Byzantium in the beginning of the 11th century; the Polab and Baltic Slavs yielded to German pressure and, together with the Czechs and Poles, to Catholic influence), Nestor hastens to move on to the main subject of his study—the fate of the Russian people.

He is very well acquainted with the geography of his country, and charts, with exactitude, the place where he intends to describe the life of his compatriots, but he pays chief attention to that period of their history which began with the new dynasty, the Rurik.

The dynasty saved the Russian and many non-Russian peoples from "internecine war"; by "great effort" it rallied them in one united state; even now, when "internecine war" is consuming Rūs with new force, the dynasty must save the political unity of the country—such is the idea that permeates the entire literature of those times and the period that followed, reaching its highest expression in the *Lay of Prince Igor's Regiment.*

Pride in their past, fear for the future and an appeal for the defence of the integrity of the motherland—this ideological back-

Ornament

Mosaic in the Mikhailovsky-Zlatoverkhy (Dmitrov)
Monastery in Kiev, 11th-12th centuries

bone of the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* is evidence of the political maturity both of its authors and those for whom it was written.

Every educated Russian of the 11th-12th centuries not only had to have an excellent mastery of the Russian literary language, not only had to fathom the dogmas of his Christian faith, and have an understanding of logic (all of this was called the "doctor's art") but above all he had to have a good knowledge of the history of his own country. Many are the things that prove this contention. The higher clergy, the princes, boyars, writers and poets knew the history of Rūs. Hilarion was excellently informed in this field. And the author of *Lay of Prince Igor's Regiment* simply amazes us by the breadth of his historical knowledge and by his profound understanding of historical events.

Who were their teachers? Whence this knowledge? There is but one answer: the source of their knowledge was the annals, and, first of all, the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* "whence came the Russian land." In Carpathian Galich or in Great Novgorod, in Vladimir-Volynsky or Vladimir-on-the-Klyazma, or in distant Tmutarakan, wherever Russian people lived, this book was the source from which they came to realize their national and cultural unity, learned to respect and love their past, to be proud of their common ancestors, who had shed their blood in defence of the independence of their Motherland.

The beacon lit in the 11th century in Kiev in honour of the Russian land illuminated her further path. Nor has it gone out even now.

Vladimir Monomakh's very considerable participation in the compilation of this famous work was no mere accident—he was one of the most striking and significant figures in the Kiev period of Russian history.

Besides being deeply interested in the history of his land, he had a very definite understanding of current affairs, and a definite

idea as to where to lead his country. With an excellent appreciation of the political significance a book on the history of the country would have, Vladimir Monomakh knew just what things ought to be emphasized in such a book, what should be its basic idea. In addition to this, he valued literature, which was not an alien subject to him. What literary style and talent he displayed in a letter to his cousin and ideological enemy, Prince Oleg Svyatoslavich of Chernigov! The letter was inspired by sorrowful happenings. Oleg Svyatoslavich was not only an adherent of a new political system for Rūs which was unacceptable to Monomakh, he was not only an antagonist of Monomakh's in the latter's struggle for the integrity of the Kiev State, but he was also guilty of the death of Monomakh's own son, a youth who fell in battle against Oleg Svyatoslavich.

The brother of the dead man addressed his father, Vladimir Vsevolodovich, with the suggestion that he cease fighting, and make peace with Oleg in the interest of the state.

"Let us humble ourselves and make peace," he wrote his father, ". . . but let us not ruin our Russian land."

Who, other than Vladimir Monomakh, felt this call so close to heart? Vladimir sincerely and eagerly responded to the appeal.

"I, who have suffered so much and am so mournful!" he begins his letter.

Meditating upon the transitoriness of earthly things, Monomakh writes:

"What are we? Sinning, depraved people, alive today, dead tomorrow, today in honour and glory, tomorrow in the grave, unconscious, and others already dividing up what we had managed to collect."

Monomakh goes on to speak of the murder of his son.

"When they killed my child before your eyes, when you saw his blood and his withering body, which was like a flower that

Archdeacon Lavrenty

Mosaic in the Mikhailovsky-Zlatoverkhy (Dmitrov) Monastery in Kiev, 11th-12th centuries

had just blossomed, like a sacrificial lamb, standing over him and looking into the thoughts deep within you (you felt):

" 'Alas! What have I done? I have exploited his youth; for the sake of the falseness of this world I have sinned and brought tears to my father and mother!' "

Vladimir suggests to his cousin that he repent before God and make peace with him, Vladimir, and asks that he send the young widow of his dead son to him, for she is completely innocent, "there is no evil nor good in her."

Vladimir wants to embrace her and, instead of singing wedding songs, he wants to bemourn her dead husband—because of my sins,—the author continues—I did not see her wedding and her joy.

"For the sake of God, let her come to me as soon as possible, with the first envoy: we will weep together, I shall seat her beside me, and she will sit there, inconsolable, like a turtle-dove on a dry branch. But I shall find consolation in God. That was the path of our forefathers and our fathers."

The letter ends with the same idea with which it began:

"I wish no one evil, but good do I wish to my brothers and the Russian land."

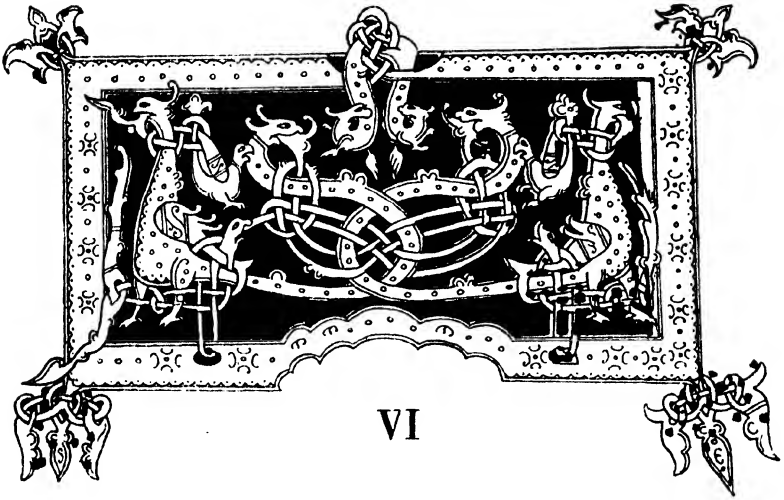
Vladimir Monomakh also develops this basic idea in his literary work which he vests in the form of instructions to his children. The author very well knew, however, that not only his children would read it. ("My children or whoever may read it.")

This work of Monomakh's, written with as much talent and literary taste as the letter, is much broader in content: the problems touched upon here are of major state significance. In brief form it presents the same ideas as those that permeate the *Chronicle of Ancient Years*—the struggle against the senseless feudal wars in the name of preserving the unity of Russia. When already an old man, standing on the brink of the grave, the author recalls his personal life and his role in the life of the state. He himself tried not to take part in these feudal wars, took measures to estab-

lish peace in the land, concerned himself about the greatness of Rūs, so that her enemies might not "brag" at her expense. He thought of the poor bondsman and of the miserable widow. The warrior, legislator, judge and master fuse into one image of the prince who is the head of the state and upon whose shoulders rests a most responsible cause.

Silvester, the superior of the Vydubitsky Monastery of the Monomakh family, apparently had had many conversations with his prince before the latter charged him with such a responsible mission as to rewrite the *Chronicle of Ancient Years*.

Let us grant that they were both sometimes limited in their judgments, which reflected a manifest preponderance of the interests of the class that was strongest economically and politically. We must take into consideration the times, the historical situation not only in Rūs but throughout the world outside, with which the Rūs of those days was so closely bound, and must admit that Monomaxh in his *Pouchenie* (Instructions) as well as the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* outstripped their contemporaries, saw farther ahead than very many Russian and not only Russian statesmen of that epoch. The entire 12th century in Rūs, in spite of the incipient disintegration of the Kiev state, was a century of manifest progress.



VI

CAUSES OF THE DISINTEGRATION OF KIEV RŪS. BLOW DEALT RUSSIAN CIVILIZATION BY THE MONGOLS

THE "Empire of the Rurik Dynasty," like the other feudal states, proved unstable. The grown economic and political significance of the nobility and the development of towns led to the formation of new economic and political centres; each of them, intent upon carrying out its own local tasks, opposed the Kiev prince and thus prepared the dismemberment of the state.

Kiev lacked the forces necessary to overcome these separatist tendencies. But among the subjects of the Kiev state there were many who clearly realized the danger of dismembering Rūs, and who exerted great effort to defend the unity of the state.

In this struggle of two currents we see the clashing of two important trends in social and political thought.

The idea of a state authority whose central task was to preserve the unity of the state runs all through the *Chronicle of Ancient Years*. The author uses this idea perfectly consciously and skilfully. His explanation of the appearance of the Ruriks in Rūs is based on a theory popular in Europe at that time—that of "inviting" the supreme authority. Internecine warfare which corroded the Novgorod land prompted the people of Novgorod to seek new princes who would unite the hostile elements:

"Let us seek a prince for ourselves, who will rule us and judge according to the law."

The prince would be invited to establish a social and political order. According to the conception of the Russians of the 11th century, the first Ruriks met these demands.

The Russians of the 11th century formed an equally clear idea of the essence and character of the political structure of their state. The prince was the head of the state, his power was indivisible and permanent.

Rurik "will bequeath his princedom to Oleg," that is, Rurik's power, through his own will, goes over to Oleg who was entrusted with the care of Rurik's son, Igor, who was under age. Prince Igor, just as Oleg, wielded undivided authority. ("And Oleg ruled over the Polyane and Drevlyane, Severyane and Radimichi, and fought with the Ulichi and the Tivertsi. . . ." "Oleg marched against Byzantium. . . ." "And Oleg ordered all his people. . . ." "And Oleg equipped his troops. . . ." "And Oleg ordered. . . ." etc., etc.)

His undivided rule is also reflected in international relations: he concluded international agreements in his own name. "All countries" knew that the power in Rūs belonged to that of a single person and took this into consideration. "And Oleg reigned in Kiev and lived in peace with all countries." "Igor, when he began to reign in Kiev, was at peace with all countries." Vladimir "lived in peace with all the neighbouring princes."

Prince Yaropolk of Kiev and his wife Irina, praying to Apostle Peter

Miniature from the Trir Psalter, 11th century

As regards home affairs the princes "arrange" their own land, that is, they regulate relations through legislation. The prince's government imposes the taxes, collects them, has the treasury at its command, confirms the ownership of land, appoints its representatives in various places, and controls their activity.

When at times there were complications, when the power of one or another prince was disputed by any of his relatives and when, at last, the state troubles were settled, the annalist with utter satisfaction announced the fact of the restoration of the usual order. After Svyatoslav's death his sons came into conflict: one of them (Oleg) was killed; another (Vladimir) fled from Novgorod "beyond the sea"; Yaropolk was victorious, and he "appointed his *posadniks* or governors in Novgorod and ruled alone in Rūs." When Vladimir succeeded in driving out Yaropolk, the annalist again emphasized: "And Vladimir ruled alone in Kiev."

The important, grave events that followed the death of Vladimir Svyatoslavich led the author of the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* to political reflection: "God gives the power to whomever he wishes; the Supreme Being appoints whomever he desires as the caesar or prince. To that land which pleases God, he gives a caesar or prince who is righteous and who loves justice and truth, and he appoints a sovereign and a judge who sits in judgment. If the princes are righteous, the country is forgiven her sins; if the prince is evil and a rogue, then God sends his punishment on the land, inasmuch as the prince is the head of the land."

We have before us a complete theory of the state. Each state has its own head, a caesar or a prince. The state power is of divine origin. Whatever the land, such is the prince: a righteous prince is given to a righteous land. A righteous prince can even turn away from the land the deserved wrath of God. Evil and roguish princes are sent to the land as punishment.

It is not difficult to see that here we have the familiar features of the Byzantine conception of state power, which came to Rūs together with Christianity, but at the same time we cannot fail to recognize the existence in Rūs of definite conditions which serve as a basis for the generalizations made by the Russians. Life itself raised certain questions and demanded replies to them. Byzantium's experience merely helped Rūs to formulate these replies.

Anyone who attacked the authority—according to the theory—opposed God. It is "God's wrath" that pursues Svyatopolk Okayanny (the accursed), who led the Poles and Pechenegs against Russia and killed three of his own brothers. From Svyatopolk's grave "there emanates ... a very foul odour." "It was God who sent punishment on the Russian princes."

Yaroslav, who defeated Svyatopolk, evoked the obvious sympathy of the *Chronicle*:

"Yaroslav and his retinue, after having been victorious and having occupied Kiev, wiped away the sweat after their hard labour."

Yaroslav's merit lies in the restoration of single authority in the state. True, this was followed by a decade during which Russia was split up into two parts, but they were ruled by two strong princes who established order in their respective princedoms:

"Civil wars and rebellions ceased, and great peace settled on the land."

And when once again the entire power proved to be in Yaroslav's hands, the annalist comments:

"After that Yaroslav took over the entire power and became the sovereign of all Russian land."

Yaroslav held the power firmly in his hands during the last eighteen years of his life. But he could not avert the events that were coming to a head. On the eve of his death he had to take account of the new political conditions in Rūs: before him were

St. Demetrius of Thessalonica

Mosaic in the Mikhailovsky-Zlatoverkhy (Dmitrov) Monastery in Kiev, 11th-12th centuries

his children who had succeeded in binding their fates with the newly developed political centres and with the local nobility, who had grown rich. All that Yaroslav could do was to counsel his sons to live in peace as much as this was possible. In his will he appeals to the patriotic conscience of his children:

"Live in accord"; "live peacefully, heeding one another"; "I give the throne to my oldest son who is to take my place ... obey him as you have obeyed me"; "if you live in friendship among yourselves, God will be with you and will subdue your enemies for you"; "If you live in hatred, rebellion and quarrels, then you yourselves will perish and you will ruin the land of your fathers and of your grandfathers, which they have acquired by their great labour."

Yaroslav speaks too much of love among his sons. He had to "divide" the Russian land among his children, and this division in itself boded no good. He had every reason for being uneasy as to the future of the Russian land.

After Yaroslav's death the former unity of Rūs was shaken. The large local centres assumed a new tone. They did not wish to remain under the command of the Kiev princes, and began to feel such a position humiliating to them. They selected their own prince. As *Lay of Prince Igor's Regiment* so aptly puts it, he who was small among them became great ("and the princes began to consider the small great"). It is not accidental that this same poet mournfully notes that "the times of Yaroslav have passed." They had indeed passed, but they were not forgotten. There were still many people in Rūs, among them the author of the *Lay of Prince Igor's Regiment*, to whom the past was dear. Above all, there were the masses, the people who had suffered from senseless feudal wars, and men distinguished by statesmanship and strong will.

We will hardly err in placing Vladimir Monomakh first among these men. He well remembered and highly appreciated his

grandfather Yaroslav whom, in his *Pouchenie* (Instructions), he called "blessed and glorious," and whom he tried to imitate (not without success), although his own position was undoubtedly more difficult: the large cities and local nobility had already managed to taste of political independence; the princes, whom they usually invited at their own discretion, had already succeeded in binding their own interests with the new centres, and Kiev itself had already changed: the "Mother of Russian cities" was honoured more in reminiscence than as a genuine political authority.

Vladimir Monomakh was faced by a very big and difficult task: to save the great temple, which was still held very dear but which many had already abandoned, from falling to pieces completely. According to a picturesque and truthful description of the Russian land of those days, the entire country suffered, "the sons of Dažbog are perishing, internecine wars among the princes have shortened the years of human life." At that time very rarely did "ploughmen call to each other" on Russian soil, "the ravens often caw there, sharing the corpses, and crows arrange to fly to the feast."

The attempt to unite the princes at the grave of Boris and Gleb under the slogan of fraternal unity and love proved futile. The conference of princes summoned by Vladimir Monomakh in 1097 submitted verbal assurances that they would live in accord and help each other against the aggressor, but ended with the blinding of the most gifted of the princes, Vasilko, and an outburst of new internecine war.

The uprising of the people of Kiev against their oppressors in the city and countryside in 1113 frightened the nobility. They became more tractable and sent for Vladimir Monomakh, realizing well enough that this meant a partial renunciation of their separatist tendencies and the recognition of the program of political unity about old Kiev as their centre.

Elizabeth Yaroslavna
Fresco in the St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev, 11th century

For twelve years Vladimir Monomakh held power firmly, and brought back the days when the Kiev prince was the power within the state and in the world abroad. The author of the *Lay of Prince Igor's Regiment* regrets that "it was impossible to nail old Vladimir to the hills of Kiev," then the banners of the princes would not wave "discordantly" and the princes could not sow arrows on Russian soil. This most outstanding poem of ancient Rūs is permeated throughout with the thought of her lost unity and an appeal for its restoration.

The middle of the 12th century was a period of violent struggle between two opposing currents: the Oleg and the Monomakh dynasties; the former declared their princedoms their own; the others still retained hope of seeing Rūs strong again as a united land. In the noise of these battles we can clearly discern the clash of ideas and feelings, the presence and trend of which it is highly important for the historian of civilization to note. There was no let-up in the tensity of the struggle of ideas, a struggle which was a concomitant of the life of Kiev Rūs during the period of her political unity; rather, it augmented and assumed new forms, coursing along a new channel. The acuteness which this struggle assumed can be seen even from the eagerness with which the Oleg clan in alliance with the Polovtsy attacked Kiev.

"Great misfortune overtook the Russian land"—we read in the Lavrenty Annals under the date 1203—"the like of which Kiev had not known since the days of baptism. There had been invasions and seizures, but such misfortune had never before occurred: not only was Podolia captured and burned, but they also took Vyshgorod, and plundered the metropolitan's temple of St. Sophia, and plundered the Desyatinny Holy Virgin (the church) and the monasteries; they stripped the icons and took away several, as well as sacred crosses and sacred vessels and books and the robes of their first saintly princes, which they had hung up in the sacred churches in memory of themselves."

A large number of cultural treasures were destroyed and with them perished for all time the precedential significance of Kiev. The children renounced their mother, each went his own way, they engaged in struggle against each other and weakened themselves and their Motherland which, but so recently, had been glorious and invincible.

The civilization of Kiev Rūs, which was the fruit of a long creative life of the people, did not perish even when the "Empire of the Rurik dynasty" fell to pieces.

Each of these pieces not only succeeded in preserving within itself the old cultural heritage, but continued to develop this heritage still further. In each of these parts an art and literature of its own flourished. Each of these parts wrote its own history, interpreting its life and international relations in its own way. But not one of these historical works severed its ties with the cradle of its culture, or renounced the rich Kiev heritage, and invariably begins its own history from Nestor's great book.

The masses, who had never forgotten their unity and had always been interested in their past, fully appreciated their ancestors, of whom they were duly proud, ancestors who had selflessly given their energy and their lives for their people and for their state—these masses preserved in their oral creations the memory of that brilliant period in their history and handed down their historical reminiscences to our days.

Their subtle understanding of historical events and of the people who took part in them is amazing. Our modern historians would find it far from useless to pay heed to the criticism and characterizations emanating from the people.

Prince Vladimir of Kiev is the central figure in these reminiscences. Knights endowed with the finest qualities, which the Russian considered inalienable for his heroes—wisdom, strength, bravery and a readiness to die for one's country—flock to him from all corners of the vast Russian land. Ilia of Murom, the son

Anna Yaroslavna

Fresco of the St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev, 11th century

of a peasant, was endowed with all these qualities. He is the most popular hero of the people. It is not difficult to guess the social medium in which this character developed. It is the same medium which has handed this character down to us: the peasant North has preserved these legends for us, legends forgotten in those very places where the heroes themselves had once been active. The Russian, who had been torn away from Kiev both by space and by time, never ceased to feel drawn to his ancient, glorious capital.

No matter what the blows that fell upon the Russian land, no matter how hard life was for the Russian, no matter where fate or his own inexhaustible enterprise took him—he was always true to himself and had faith in himself.

Faith in the triumph of truth warmed him and bolstered up his hopes even when the circumstances seemed to be utterly hopeless. Russian folk tales are replete with this faith in the triumph of justice, in the inevitability of the defeat of evil.

These moral treasures of the Russian masses were the source that inspired the thoughts and feelings of the poets, writers and artists from times of old down to our days.

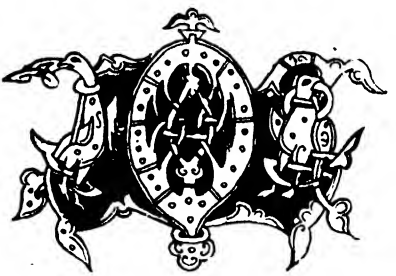
There is little likelihood of error if we say that no other people the world over had to experience so much, make so many sacrifices for itself and for others, as the Russian people. Who had not attacked the Russian land? But all hostile attempts were smashed by the staunchness and might of Rūs.

The hardest of all these trials was the appearance of the Mongol hordes in Europe, when they came down on a Rūs weakened by her dismemberment. This blow was dealt when Russian civilization was at a high level of development, and delayed its further advancement for a long time. The movement of the Mongols in Asia and Europe, the formation of a world Mongolian power which extended from Mongolia to the Carpathians are facts of universal history. Many civilizations perished at the heavy hand

of the nomad and semi-nomad Mongols. Only a small part of western Europe, which was shielded by the Russian people, remained intact.

"The Tatars did not resemble the Moors. When they conquered Russia they did not present her with the science of algebra or an Aristotle." (A. S. Pushkin.)

The Tatar invasion, which the dismembered Rūs was unable to repel in spite of the heroism and the boundless courage of each besieged town and each of its defenders, weakened Rūs but failed to rob her of her creative forces.



NOTES

[1] *St. Sophia Cathedral*—the cathedral of St. Sophia, Kiev, founded in 1037 and completed in 1049 by Prince Yaroslav—(p. 7).

[2] *Marmora*—Marble quarries in the outskirts of Constantinople—(p. 8).

[3] *Desyatinny Sobor*—church built in Kiev in 989 by Grand Prince Vladimir. Was called the Desyatinny Sobor (Cathedral of the Tithes) because a tenth part (desyataya) of the income of the princes went to maintain it—(p. 8).

[4] *Korsun or Khersones*—Greek colony on the Crimean Peninsula (5th-6th centuries before our era), later belonged to the Romans; in the 15th century fell into decline—(p. 8).

[5] *Spas Cathedral*—Church erected to the Saviour (*Spasitel*) in Chernigov in the 11th century—(p. 9).

[6] *Tmutarakan*—Capital of the Tmutarakan principality on the shore of Kerch Strait—(p. 9).

[7] *Oleg Agreement*—agreement of Prince Oleg of Kiev with the Greeks (911) defining the political and economic relations between Byzantium and Rūs—(p. 17).

[8] *Khazar Khanate*—Khazar state along the lower reaches of the Volga, northern foothills of the Caucasus and on the Don, 7th-10th centuries—(p. 22).

[9] *Slavia*—Novgorod land which consisted of several non-Slavonic peoples of the Baltic, who formed a certain political and cultural unit about Novgorod—(p. 26).

[10] *Chronicle of Ancient Years*—The Nestor Chronicle or First Annals—ancient annals, source of the history of Kiev Rūs, which have come down to us. These annals throw light upon the events up to 1100—(p. 26).

[11] *Olvia*—A Hellenic colony founded in the 7th cent. B.C., along the northwestern part of the Black Sea shore, near the Southern Bug—(p. 28).

[12] *Kuyavia*—middle part of the Dnieper region with Kiev as its head—(p. 32).

[13] *Artania*—seemingly the Azov region—(p. 32).

[14] *Dažbog*—god of the sun and fertility; *Stribog*—god of the wind; *Khors* and *Simargl*—gods of the people of the East; *Mokosh*—goddess of the Finnish tribes—(p. 38).

[15] *Lower Missia*—region on the Balkan Peninsula (Bulgaria)—(p. 44).

[16] *Tomi*—city in Misia (Bulgaria)—(p. 44).

[17] *Lavrenty Annals*—Russian annals compiled during the reign of Vladimir of Suzdal by the monk Lavrenty in 1377—(p. 50).

[18] *St. Nicholas—Nikolai Chudotvorets (The Worker of Miracles).* St. Nicholas, archbishop of Myra in Lucia, who is worshipped in the East and West as a saint—(p. 54).

[19] *Ipatievsky Annals*—annals compiled in southwestern Rūs, in the Galich-Volhynia princedom—(p. 57).

[20] *Lay of Prince Igor's Regiment*—very ancient memorial of Russian poetry dating back to the end of the 12th century. The poem described the campaign of Prince Igor of Novgorod-Seversky against the Polovtsi in 1185—(p. 58).

[21] *Zarub*—a city in Kiev Rūs on the bank of the Dnieper opposite the mouth of the Trubezh River—(p. 61).

[22] *Stoglav*—Assembly (1551) during the reign of Ivan IV, which passed a number of reforms on unifying the cult and rites. The decisions of the Assembly were divided into a hundred chapters (*sto glav*) whence came the name *Stoglav*—(p. 69).

[23] *Lada*—Ancient Slavonic goddess of fertility—(p. 69).

[24] *Boyan*—a bard mentioned in *Lay of Prince Igor's Regiment.* He sang of the princes who were his contemporaries (Yaroslav the Wise, and others), 11th century—(p. 69).

[25] *Kizhsky Pogost*—volost, administrative-territorial unit to the north of Lake Onega—(p. 71).

[26] *Izbornik (Miscellany) of Svyatoslav*—a book of selected works of religious and philosophical content, compiled for Prince Svyatoslav in 1073—(p. 71).

[27] *Russkaya Pravda*—a volume of Russian laws which have come down to us in three versions, 11th-13th centuries—(p. 72).

[28] *Kievo-Pechersky Monastery*—founded in Kiev in the 11th century—(p. 97).

[29] *Mikhailovsky-Vydubitsky Monastery*—founded in 1070 near Kiev, on the bank of the Dnieper—(p. 105).

[30] *In Memory and Praise of St. Vladimir*—a literary work dedicated to the glorification of Prince Vladimir the Saint—(p. 105).

[31] *The Legend of Boris and Gleb*—a story about the killing of the princes Boris and Gleb, written at the end of the 11th or beginning of the 12th century—(p. 105).

[32] *Sinodik*—a list of orthodox zealots, deemed worthy of eternal memory—(*footnote* p. 106).

[33] *Athos*—a narrow, mountainous peninsula, one of the projections of the Khalkidike peninsula on which a monastery was built approximately in the 17th century. Later the place became the focal point for a number of monasteries and was a sort of centre of the eastern orthodox world—(p. 113).

NAME INDEX

Alimny, craftsman—monk of the Kievo-Pechersky Monastery, a painter.

Andrei (Udalrikh, Andrikh, Andronik)—Czech king, 10th cent.

Athanasius of Alexandria (293-373)—bishop of Alexandria, Egypt.

Batu (died 1255)—khan of the Golden Horde. Conquered Rūs in the 13th century.

Boleslaus II the Bold (1058-1080)—son of the Polish king, Kasimir I.

Boleslaus the Brave (992-1025)—Polish prince.

Boris and Gleb (Vladimirovichi)—sons of the Kiev prince Vladimir. Boris—Prince of Rostov. Gleb—Prince of Murom. They were killed by their brother Svyatopolk during the fight for the Kiev throne in 1015. Were the first canonized saints.

Constantine Porphyrogenitus (905-959)—Byzantine emperor.

Daniel—igumen (superior). Made a pilgrimage in 1106-1107 to Tsargrad (Constantinople) and Palestine and left a description of this journey, which has come down to us: *The Pilgrimage of Superior Daniel to the Holy Land.*

Daniil of Galich—Prince of Galich-Volhynia (1238-1264).

Dobrogast—distinguished Ante in command of the Pontine fleet during the war between Byzantium and the Persians (554-556).

Dobrynya—a ruler appointed by Prince Vladimir Svyatoslavich in Novgorod.

Ephraim—Metropolitan of Kiev, Greek. Is mentioned in the annals of 1055.

Epiphanius of Cyprus (367-403)—bishop of Salamis (this city now no longer existent) on the Island of Cyprus. Church writer. His chief works were devoted to refuting heresy.

Eucherius of Lyons (died 449)—church father and church writer.

Eusebius of Caesarea (died 340)—Bishop of Caesarea, savant, church historian.

Feodosy of Pechersky—superior and founder of the Kievo-Pechersky Monastery, 11th cent.

Foma—Smolensk priest, 12th cent.

Gleb (died 1078)—Prince of Novgorod, oldest son of Svyatoslav Yaroslavich, Prince of Kiev.

Golubinsky, E. E. (1834-1912)—historian of the Russian church.

Heinrich of Latvia—historian of the 13th century, author of chronicles for the period 1184-1225.

Hilarion—Metropolitan of Kiev (1051). Brilliant writer.

Ieronim (approx. 340-420)—Catholic church figure and writer.

Igor—son of Rurik, Grand Prince of Kiev (912-945).

Izyaslav Mstislavich—Grand Prince of Kiev, grandson of Vladimir Monomakh (1150-1154).

Izyaslav Yaroslavich—Grand Prince of Kiev (1054-1078, with intervals); took part in the struggle of the sons of Yaroslav for the Kiev throne. Returned to Kiev three times, the last time being 1077-1078.

Karamzin, N. M. (1766-1826)—Russian writer and historian.

Kasimir I (died 1068)—Polish king.

Khrabr (Black frock)—Bulgarian monk (9th, and beginning of 10th cent.).

Kirill (Cyril) I—Metropolitan of Kiev (nicknamed the philosopher), a Greek (1223-1233).

Kirill (Cyril) and Mefody (Methodius) (827-869 and 820-885)—brothers, missionaries, born in Saloniki (Solunya). Preached Christianity among the western Slavs and created the Slavic alphabet.

Kirill (Cyril) of Turov—bishop, outstanding Russian church writer of the 12th century.

Kiy, Shchek, Khoriv—three legendary brothers to whom the first Russian annals ascribe the founding of the city of Kiev.

Klim (Kliment) (the same as Klim Smolyatiya)—Metropolitan of Kiev (1147-1154), Russian church writer.

Klyuchevsky, V. S. (1841-1911)—well-known Russian historian.

Kosma—Russian craftsman, taken captive by the Tatars.

Kotovsky, Y.—philologist and student of the Slavonic language and literature; publisher of *Nestor Annals*—19th cent.

Kotsel of Pannonia—Prince of Slavonic Pannonia or Platensky (today—Hungary) in the 9th century.

Kuyuk-Khan (born about 1206, died in 1278)—grandson of Genghis Khan, took part in the campaign of Batu against Rūs.

Leon (Lev)—first metropolitan of the Russian Church, sent from Constantinople (991).

Luke Zhidyata—Novgorod bishop, Russian writer (1036-1059).

Manuil—Smolensk bishop, 1137.

Mefody (Methodius)—see Kirill and Mefody.

Miklošič (1813-1891)—philologist and student of the Slavonic language and literature.

Mitus—bard, mentioned in the annals among the servants of a Ryazan boyar, Konstantin (1240).

Mstislav Izyaslavich—Prince of Volhynia; Grand Prince of Kiev (1167-1169).

Mstislav Vladimirovich (died 1036)—Prince of Tmutarakan.

Nestor (1056-1114)—monk of the Kievo-Pechersky Monastery, writer, author of the *Legend of Boris and Gleb* and of the *Life of Feodosy of Pechersky*. He is credited with having compiled one of the editions of the first Russian annals.

Nikita of Paphlagonia (died about 890)—bishop in Paphlagonia (Asia Minor).

Nikon the Great (died 1088)—superior of the Kievo-Pechersky Monastery; is considered to have continued the most ancient annals.

Oleg—Prince of Novgorod who seized Kiev and became the Grand Prince of the United Novgorod and Kiev states (supposedly 879-912).

Oleg Svyatoslavich (died 1115)—Prince of Chernigov, favoured the dismemberment of Rūs.

Olga—wife of Prince Igor of Kiev. Left with her young son, Svyatoslav, after the death of Igor, she herself undertook the administration of the state (945-957).

Olgovichi—line of Chernigov princes, decendants of Oleg Svyatoslavich.

Paul of Khaleb (or Aleppo)—archdeacon, son of the Antioch patriarch Makary. Author of *Travel Notes of the Antioch Patriarch Makary in the Middle of the 17th Century.*

Procopius of Caesarea—historian of the early Byzantine epoch (6th cent.).

Rededya (died 1022)—according to the testimony of the annals was Prince Kasozhsky (Cherkessky).

Rogneda (Ragnilda)—wife of Prince Vladimir Svyatoslavich, daughter of Prince Rogvolod of Polotsk.

Roman Svyatoslavich (died 1079)—Prince of Tmutarakan.

Rostislav Mstislavich (died 1168)—Prince of Smolensk. Not long before his death he became the Prince of Kiev.

Rurik—Variag viking, legendary founder of the princely dynasty in Novgorod (9th cent.).

St. John Chrysostom (Golden-Mouthed) (345-405)—important church figure and writer. Was born in Antioch, Syria. In 397 was selected archbishop in Constantinople, was subjected to persecution, and twice removed from his office.

Silvester (died 1123)—superior of the Mikhailovsky-Vydubitsky Monastery, who re-edited the Nestor annals and continued them until 1123.

Simon—bishop of Vladimir from 1215 to 1226; author of eight stories about monks of the Kievo-Pechersky Monastery, written by him for his friend, the monk Polikarp.

Solovyov, S. M. (1820-1879)—outstanding Russian historian.

Sreznevsky, I. I. (1812-1880)—famous Russian philologist and student of the Slavonic language and literature.

Stefan of Hungary (975-1038)—first king of Hungary.

Svyatopolk Izyaslavich—Grand Prince of Kiev (1093-1113).

Svyatopolk Vladimirovich (Okayanny)—Prince of Turov. Took part in the fight of the sons of Vladimir for the Kiev throne. Was the Prince of Kiev in 1015-1018.

Svyatoslav (Nikolai) Davidovich (Svyatosha)—Son of the Prince of Chernigov David Svyatoslavich; became a monk and assumed the name of Nikolai.

Svyatoslav of Chernigov—son of Yaroslav; received Chernigov from his father; Grand Prince of Kiev (1073-1076).

Tatishchev, V. M. (1686-1750)—first Russian historian who made a study of the ancient Russian annals.

Tertullian (died 240)—church writer. Born in Carthage.

Theophile—author of the tractate *Diversarum Artium Schedula*, end of 9th cent.

Varlaam—son of the noble boyar Ephraim. Second half of the 11th cent.

Vasilko Rostislavich—Prince of Trembowla, treacherously blinded in 1097 by Svyatopolk Izyaslavich, Prince of Kiev, and David Igorevich, Prince of Volhynia.

Vasilyevsky, V. G. (1838-1899)—well-known historian. Byzantine scholar.

Vladimir Monomakh (Vsevolodovich)—Grand Prince of Kiev (1113-1125).

Vladimir Svyatoslavich (978-1015)—Grand Prince of Kiev.

Vladimir Vasilkovich—Prince of Volhynia (1269-1288).

Vladimir Vladimirovich of Galich (died 1152)—Prince of Galich.

Vsevolod, son of Yaroslav—Prince of Pereyaslavl. Grand Prince of Kiev in 1078-1093.

Yaropolk Svyatoslavich—brother of Vladimir Svyatoslavich. Took part in the fight for the Kiev principality, which arose between him and his brothers after the death of their father, Prince Svyatoslav. Was killed in 978.

Yaroslav Vladimirovich (1019-1054)—Prince of Kiev.

Yury Dolgoruky—Prince of Rostov-Suzdal, who fought against Izyaslav Mstislavich for the Kiev throne, which he occupied three times. His third reign in Kiev lasted from 1155 to 1157.