

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Byzantine Liturgy and the *Primary Chronicle*

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of
the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Slavic Languages and Literatures

by

Sean Delaine Griffin

2014

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Byzantine Liturgy and the *Primary Chronicle*

by

Sean Delaine Griffin

Doctor of Philosophy in Slavic Languages and Literatures

University of California, Los Angeles, 2014

Professor Gail Lenhoff, Chair

The monastic chroniclers of medieval Rus' lived in a liturgical world. Morning, evening and night they prayed the “divine services” of the Byzantine Church, and this study is the first to examine how these rituals shaped the way they wrote and compiled the *Povest' vremennykh let* (*Primary Chronicle*, ca. 12th century), the earliest surviving East Slavic historical record. My principal argument is that several foundational accounts of East Slavic history—including the tales of the baptism of Princess Ol'ga and her burial, Prince Vladimir's conversion, the mass baptism of Rus', and the martyrdom of Princes Boris and Gleb—have their source in the feasts of the liturgical year. The liturgy of the Eastern Church proclaimed a distinctively Byzantine myth of Christian origins: a sacred narrative about the conversion of the Roman Empire, the glorification of the emperor Constantine and empress Helen, and the victory of Christianity over paganism. In the decades following the conversion of Rus', the chroniclers in Kiev learned these narratives from the church services and patterned their own tales of Christianization after them. The

result was a myth of Christian origins for Rus’—a myth promulgated even today by the Russian Orthodox Church—that reproduced the myth of Christian origins for the Eastern Roman Empire articulated in the Byzantine rite. The present study systematically uncovers this overarching liturgical subtext and reveals a vast web of new and previously undetected meanings in the text of the *Primary Chronicle*.

The dissertation of Sean Delaine Griffin is approved.

Ronald Vroon

Debra K. Shuger

Gail Lenhoff, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2014

For Kate, who is all light.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Abstract</i>	ii
<i>Table of Contents</i>	vi
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	vii
<i>Vita</i>	viii
Introduction	1
Chapter 1: The Liturgical Subtext of Princess Ol’ga’s Baptism and Burial	18
Chapter 2: A “New Constantine” in Rus’: The Liturgical Structure of Prince Vladimir’s Pre-Conversion Biography.....	48
Chapter 3: The Conversion of Prince Vladimir and the Baptism of Rus’	78
Chapter 4: Boris the High Priest and Gleb the Lamb	113
Conclusion	143
<i>Bibliography</i>	148

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Financial support for this study was provided by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and three organizations at the University of California, Los Angeles: the Graduate Division, the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, and the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. I am very grateful for their support. The study would not exist but for the efforts of my advisor, Prof. Gail Lenhoff, who has taught me what it means to be a scholar. The same should also be said of Prof. Ronald Vroon, whose enthusiasm and intellectual rigor attracted me to the field in the first place. My debt to them both is truly immense.

I am also grateful to those who have improved the project. Prof. Debora K. Shuger and Prof. Pierre Gonneau read and commented on draft chapters, and Vitaly Yefimenkov assisted me with the translations from Church Slavonic. A series of conversations with Prof. Simon Franklin yielded valuable insights, as did the comments and questions from audiences at the annual UCLA Medieval and Early Modern Slavic Workshop and the California Medieval History Seminar.

I especially thank my parents, Donald and Joyce Griffin, for their steadfast and unconditional support. They raised an athlete and ended up with a scholar—I hope I have made them proud. I should also express my gratitude to Andrew Gary Hart, the man who first introduced me to the life of the mind and the worship of the Orthodox Church. If I have any worth as a scholar, it is because of him. Finally, I thank my wife, Kate, who was there with me through every page and paragraph. It is to her that I dedicate this work.

VITA

Sean Griffin graduated *magna cum laude* from Pepperdine University in 2005 with a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy and Political Science. In 2010 he was awarded a Master of Arts in Slavic Languages and Literatures from the University of California, Los Angeles. During his studies at UCLA, Sean received a Dissertation Year Fellowship, an Andrew W. Mellon Pre-Dissertation Fellowship, a Fulbright-Hays grant for study abroad, two Title VII awards, and two international travel grants from the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies. In 2013 his article, “Le baptême d’Ol’ga dans le *Récit des temps passés* ou le palimpseste liturgique,” appeared in *Ecrire et réécrire l’histoire russe, d’Ivan Terrible à V.O Kliuchevskii*, a volume edited by Prof. Pierre Gonneau and published by the Institut d’études slaves. A related article, “A ‘New Constantine’ in Rus’: The Liturgical Structure of Prince Vladimir’s Pre-Conversion Biography in the *Primary Chronicle*,” is forthcoming in *On Behalf of All and For All: The Place of Liturgy in Russian Culture*, a volume from Slavica publishers edited by Prof. Ronald Vroon. Finally, in 2014, Sean published an article on Vasilii Rozanov as a part of the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Modernism*.

Introduction

The Byzantine world chronicle is a form of Christian history writing that emerged in Late Antiquity.¹ Its origins are traditionally traced to Eusebius, the bishop of Caesarea, who compiled the first full-scale Christian chronicle in the late third century.² The oldest extant chronicle of Byzantine provenance, that of John Malalas, dates from the sixth century, and it is followed by the Paschal Chronicle in the seventh century, the chronicles of Theophanes, George Syncellus and George the Monk in the ninth, and several versions of Symeon Logothete in the tenth.³ Near the turn of the eleventh century, the East Slavs adopted Byzantine Christianity, and the Byzantine tradition of chronicle writing was established in Kievan Rus'—the first East Slavic polity based in the present-day capital of Ukraine.⁴ The earliest chronicle of the Rus' is the *Povest' vremennykh let* (*Tale of Bygone Years*), which dates to the early twelfth century. This chronicle, better known in English as the *Primary Chronicle*, is the primary object of study in this dissertation.

Since the days of Eusebius, chroniclers had charted the history of humankind from its sacred beginnings, revealing the workings of Divine Providence in the affairs of

¹ Brian Croke, "The Origins of the Christian World Chronicle," *History and Historians in Late Antiquity* (Sydney: Pergamon Press, 1983), 116-131. For more on the ancient origins of chronicle writing, see R. W. Burgess and Michael Kulikowski, "The History and Origins of the Latin Chronicle Tradition," *The Medieval Chronicle*, Vol. VI (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006), 153-179.

² Eusebius first compiled his *Chronicle* in the 280s. He completed the final and most influential version in 325 for the Vicennialia of Constantine I. The span and annalistic layout of this later redaction "became the pattern for chronicle writing in the Middle Ages in both the Greek East and Latin West." Brian Croke, "The Originality of Eusebius' *Chronicle*," *American Journal of Philology*, 103 (1982), 195-200.

³ Cyril Mango, *Byzantium: The Empire of New Rome* (New York: Scribner, 1980), 192.

⁴ For more on Byzantine chronicles in Rus', see O. V. Tvorogov, *Drevne-russkie khronografy* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1975), 3-45.

men. History was important because it had soteriological meaning. All peoples and nations, past and present, were part of a divine economy for the salvation of the world. When the Rus' accepted Byzantine Christianity "one of their tasks was to locate themselves on this imported and unfamiliar map of sacred time and space, to legitimize themselves as part of providential history, to show that they, too, had a place in the divine plan."⁵ The *Primary Chronicle* is one attempt to do so: to reveal the mystery of Christian salvation playing out in the land of Rus' as it had in other lands (and in other chronicles) over the preceding centuries.

The *Primary Chronicle* begins with an apocryphal tale of Noah dividing the earth among his three sons after the biblical flood. There follows a lengthy ethnic history, in which the Rus' and the Slavs are claimed to have descended from the line of Japheth, Noah's third son. With a proper biblical lineage established, the chronicle begins to gradually narrow its focus: first to various Slavic tribes, then to the Poliane of the Kiev region, and eventually to the family who came to rule them, the Rurikids. This change from ethnic history to dynastic history is accompanied by a change in form. Beginning in the mid-ninth century, the chronicle shifts from continuous narrative to annals—a format in which events are recorded chronologically, year by year. The annals portray the founding events of the medieval Kievan state: the invitation to Rurik and his kin (the Rus') to rule over the scattered Slavic tribes in and around Novgorod; their advance southwards "along the way of the Varangians to the Greeks" and the establishment of the Rus' dynasty in Kiev; the continued expansion of the state in the reign of the warrior-

⁵ Simon Franklin, "The Primary Chronicle," *Reference Guide to Russian Literature* (London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1998), 664-666. Prof. Franklin's entry is an eloquent digest of the chronicle's contents and themes, and I have patterned the summary below on this work.

prince, Sviatoslav; the war of succession following his death and the enthronement of Vladimir as Grand Prince of Kiev.

If the first hundred years of annals depict the rise of Rus', the second hundred depict the central episodes of its Christianization: the baptism of Ol'ga in Constantinople; the Conversion of Rus' under Vladimir; the martyrdom of Boris and Gleb; the flowering of Christian culture in the reign of Iaroslav; the founding of the Monastery of the Caves by the hermit Anthony and its growth under the saintly abbot Theodosius. The final half-century of the chronicle describes a period of decline. The Kievan polity is repeatedly beset by rivalries within the princely family and by threats of invasion from without. Here the entries assume an increasingly moralistic tone, as the chronicle appeals to the warring branches of the dynasty to unite and forestall the ruin of Rus'. The chronicle terminates *in medias res* in the year 6618 (1110) with a report about a pillar of fire seen over the Caves Monastery.

In sum, the annalistic records of the *Primary Chronicle* contain two distinctive myths about the house of Rurik. The first is a myth of national origins in which Rurik and his kin establish a powerful Varangian dynasty in Rus'. The second is a myth of Christian origins in which their successors secure the eternal salvation of that land by accepting and spreading the Byzantine faith.⁶ It is the latter myth—and its connection to the services of the Byzantine Rite—that concerns us in the present study.

Manuscripts and Editions

⁶ Burton Mack and his students have used the term “myth of Christian origins” to refer to (and forcefully question) the conventional view of Christian beginnings recorded in the Bible. For a general overview of this school of thought, see Burton L. Mack, Elizabeth A. Castelli, and Hal Taussig, *Reimagining Christian Origins: A Colloquium Honoring Burton L. Mack* (Valley Forge, Pa: Trinity Press International, 1996).

In both Byzantium and Rus', chronicles were the preserve of the educated monastic clergy—men who lived in cloistered Orthodox communities founded on ideals of self-abnegation, tradition and continuity. The monks' approach to chronicle writing reflected their monastic training. Chronicles were prized not for originality, but for their faithful preservation and continuation of what had come before them.⁷ Chroniclers did not simply begin anew: rather, they merged contemporary reports with annals about the reigns of earlier princes—sources that were themselves almost invariably compilations (*svody*) of still earlier annals.⁸ As a result, chronicles copied in the late Middle Ages often contain and preserve chronicle texts of much greater antiquity. Indeed, many of the oldest and most prominent world chronicles survive only as component parts of later chronicle compilations.⁹ This is true of the *Primary Chronicle*: it does not actually survive as a separate text in any medieval manuscript, but only as a component part of chronicles put together in later eras, in lands far from Kiev.

There are three principal versions of the *Primary Chronicle*.¹⁰ The first is preserved in the Laurentian Codex, a manuscript copied by the monk Lavrentii for Prince Dmitrii Konstantinovich of Suzdal' in 1377. The second is found in the Hypatian Codex, a text discovered in the Hypatian Monastery in Kostroma, but believed to have been compiled in Pskov around 1425. And the third version is in the *mladshii izvod* of the

⁷ The *Chronicle* of Eusebius, for example, would be lost but for the Latin translation of Jerome, the Armenian and Syriac versions and excerpts from later Byzantine chronicles. See Croke, "The Originality of Eusebius' *Chronicle*," 196.

⁸ For a more detailed explanation of "svody," see D. S. Likhachev, "Istoriko-literaturnyi ocherk," *Povest vremennykh let*, 3rd ed., ed. V. P. Adrianova-Peretts (Saint Petersburg: Nauka, 2007), 291.

⁹ Croke, "The Originality of Eusebius' *Chronicle*," 196.

¹⁰ Scholars customarily use the term, *Primary Chronicle* (*Nachal'nyi letopis'*), to refer to a complex of materials that includes the earliest redactions of the *Povest' vremennykh let* and the (hypothetical and non-extant) earlier chronicle texts about the history of Rus' that preceded it. As used in this dissertation, the term *Primary Chronicle* refers only to the extant text of the *Povest'* in the Laurentian Codex.

Novgorod I Chronicle.¹¹ Theories and conjectures about the archetype of these three versions are too manifold and diverse to review here, and will be treated, where relevant, in the body of the dissertation.¹² The chronicle text cited in this study is from the Laurentian Codex, as it appears in the third edition of the *Literaturnye pamiatniki* series published in 2007 by the Russian Academy of Sciences, and originally edited by V. P. Adrianova-Peretts.¹³

Sources

The *Primary Chronicle* is a compilation of heterogeneous sources and not a seamless narrative wholly of the chroniclers' own devising. The manuscript's heterogeneity is tied to the circumstances of its creation. Prior to the eleventh century, there is no evidence that the Rus' kept written historical records of their own. Thus, as the first chroniclers set out to document the early history of the land of Rus', they were faced with reconstituting a distant past that was largely unknown and unknowable. Their solution was to construct a version of Kievan history out of the extremely disparate materials that were available: translated fragments of earlier Byzantine chronicles, folk

¹¹ *Novgorodskaia pervaiia letopis'*, ed. A. S. Nasonov (Moscow: AN SSSR, 1950).

¹² On this concept and its application to Medieval Rus' chronicles, see M. D. Priselkov, *Istoriia russkogo letopisaniia* (St Petersburg: Izd. "Dmitrii Bulanin," 1996), 48-84.

¹³ *Povest' vremennykh let*, 3rd ed., ed. V. P. Adrianova-Peretts (Saint Petersburg: Nauka, 2007). Hereafter this edition, which includes detailed essays on the manuscripts, literary context and history with updated commentary by M. B. Sverdlov, will be cited in parentheses. For another academic version of the *Povest' see Polnoe sobranoe russkikh letopisei, Tom 1: Lavrent'evskaia letopis', vyp. 1: Povest' vremennykh let*, 2nd ed. (Leningrad: Izd-vo Akademii nauk SSSR, 1926). Linguists and others may also be interested in: *The Povest' vremennykh let: An Interlinear Collation and Paradosis*, ed. Donald Ostrowski, Horace Lunt, and David J. Birnbaum (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003).

anecdotes, heroic legends, diplomatic treaties, hagiography, stories from the Bible, and tales of Christian Apocrypha.¹⁴

The precise origins of these sources and the history of their interpolation into the chronicle manuscript are problems that have been extensively researched.¹⁵ For over two hundred years, scholars have meticulously identified the materials that comprise the *Primary Chronicle*. They have speculated about earlier non-extant chronicle layers;¹⁶ reconstructed hypothetical *urtexts*;¹⁷ conjectured about the number of chroniclers and their possible identities;¹⁸ and devised broad theories based on linguistic evidence.¹⁹ It is extraordinary, therefore, considering the vast literature on the subject, that scholars have virtually overlooked one of the most important sources of the *Primary Chronicle*: the liturgical texts of the Eastern Orthodox Church. The oversight is the more remarkable,

¹⁴ For more on the apocryphal sources, see Simon Franklin, "Some Apocryphal Sources of Kievan Russian Historiography," *Oxford Slavonic Papers. New Series, XV* (Oxford: 1982), 1-27.

¹⁵ A. A. Shakhmatov, "Povest' vremennykh let i ee istochniki," *TODRL*, v. 4 (Leningrad: 1940). L. V. Cherepnin, "'Povest' vremennykh let', ee redaktsii i predshestvovavshie ei letopisnye svody," *Istoricheskie zapiski*, v. 25 (Moscow: 1948), 293-333. A. A. Gippius, "K problem redaktsii 'Povesti vremennykh let,'" *Slavianovedenie*, no. 5 (2007), 20-44. Konstantin Tsukerman, "Nabliudeniia nad slozheniem drevneishikh istochnikov letopisi," *Boriso-Glebskii sbornik, Collectanea Borisoglebica*, vyp. 1 (Paris: Ukrainian National Committee for Byzantine Studies, 2009), 183-199.

¹⁶ A. A. Shakhmatov, *Razyskaniia o drevneishikh russkikh letopisnykh svodakh* (St Petersburg: Tipografiia M. A. Aleksandrova, 1908).

¹⁷ A. A. Shakhmatov, *Korsunskaiia legenda o kreshchenii Vladimira* (St Petersburg: Tip. Imper. akademii nauk, 1906). L. Müller, "Zur Rekonstruktion des 'Nachal'nyi svod' der altrussischen Chronik aufgrund des 'Skazanie über die Ermordung der Heiligen Boris und Gleb,'" *Festschrift für Max Vasmer zum 70. Geburtstag am 26. Februar 1956*, ed. M. Woltner and H. Braüer (Berlin-Weisbaden: 1956), 341-348.

¹⁸ The *Primary Chronicle* is not a single work of a single author, although that has not stopped scholars from trying to identify the specific compiler of specific chronicle redactions. Because it is impossible to know for certain who worked on the chronicle at any given time, or how many chroniclers shaped it over the course of its development, I have chosen to refer to the creator(s) of the extant text in the plural, "chroniclers." For a review of the extensive scholarly debate on authorship, see O. V. Tvorogov, "Povest' vremennykh let," *Slovar' knizhnikov i khnizhnosti drevnei Rusi XI-pervaia polovina XIV v.* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1987), 337-343.

¹⁹ A. A. Gippius, "Dva nachala Nachal'noi letopisi: K istorii kompozitsii Povesti vremennykh let." *Verenitsa liter. K 60-letiiu V.M. Zhivova* (Moscow: 2006), 56-96. S. M. Mikheev, S.M. *Kto pisal "Povest' vremennykh let"?* (Moscow: Indirk, 2011).

because ninety percent of all surviving manuscripts from the Kievan period are translations of liturgical texts.²⁰ Scholars have searched far and wide for possible sources and all but neglected the main form of native Kievan literacy, the church book.

The *Primary Chronicle* was compiled in the late eleventh century by the Orthodox clergy and monastics of the Monastery of the Caves²¹—that is, by the very segment of the Kievan population specifically devoted to the celebration of the liturgical services. The chroniclers spent their lives praying, chanting, reading and hearing the divine services, and this study is the first to examine how these liturgical habits influenced the composition of the chronicle. What we will see is that Byzantine liturgy was not simply one source among many, or one type of text interpolated into the manuscript. Liturgy, rather, was the chroniclers' main structuring device: the narrative matrix they used to shape the heterogeneous materials at their disposal into a myth of Christian origins for the land of Rus'.

Liturgy could affect the chronicle in this manner because it tells a story. How that story is told—and why it is important for the *Primary Chronicle*—is the subject of the following section.

Byzantine Liturgy: Myth, Rite, Storyworld

When Prince Vladimir converted the East Slavs to Christianity at the end of the tenth century, a ritual system nearly one thousand years in the making was implemented

²⁰ Translations of liturgical texts make up ninety percent of the surviving manuscripts from the eleventh and twelfth centuries, seventy-five percent of the manuscripts from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and over fifty percent of the manuscripts from the sixteenth century. See I. V. Pozdeeva, "Liturgicheskii tekst kak istoricheskii istochnik," *Voprosy istorii* 6 (2000), 112.

²¹ A. A. Shakhmatov, *Povest' vremennykh let* (St. Petersburg, 1916), I-LXXX. M.D. Priselkov, *Istoriia russkogo letopisaniia XI-XV vv.*, 42-43.

in Kiev. This system— what liturgists call the “Byzantine rite”²²—brought a new world to Rus’: the storyworld of Eastern Christian liturgy.²³ Every day, for centuries, a professional caste of bishops, priests and monks ritually reproduced a sacred narrative world inside the cathedrals and churches of Eastern Christendom. Before dawn, deacons intoned the blessing to begin Matins, the morning worship service, and long after dark, near midnight, monks chanted the final prayers before sleep. In between, these *tserkovnoslužiteli* (“servants of the church”) performed a cycle of daily services constructed of thousands of biblical, hagiographical and theological myths.²⁴

The myths were transmitted through a ritual practice that Russian philosopher Pavel Florenskii has described as a “synthesis of the arts.”²⁵ Byzantine liturgy is an elaborate psychosomatic event, incorporating arts as diverse as choreography, poetry, iconography, music, architecture, embroidery and baking. The “synthesis” that the rite

²² For an introduction to the history of the Byzantine rite, see Robert Taft, *The Byzantine Rite: A Short History* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992). The rite is a “hybrid” creation of several major ecclesial and monastic centers of the Late Antique world, most notably Hagia Sophia and the Studios monastery in Constantinople, and the Monastery of St Sabas near Jerusalem. See also Robert Taft, “The Tale of Two Cities: The Byzantine Holy Week Triduum as a Paradigm of Liturgical History,” *Time and Community*, ed. J. Neil Alexander (Washington D.C.: Pastoral Press, 1990), 21-41.

²³ “Storyworld” is narratologist David Herman’s term for “the world evoked implicitly as well as explicitly by a narrative.” A storyworld is the “mental model” that forms in the mind of human beings as they process narrative discourse; it is the “mentally and emotionally projected environment” to which narrative participants “relocate as they work to comprehend a story.” For Herman, stories possess “world-creating power,” and “narrative artifacts” (such as texts or films) “provide blueprints for the creation and modification of mentally configured storyworlds.” Narratives, in other words, encourage readers and listeners to experience *imagined worlds*, to cognitively map out “models of who did what to and with whom, when, where, why, and in what fashion” in that imagined world. See David Herman, *Story Logic: Problems and Possibilities of Narrative* (Lincoln, Neb: University of Nebraska Press, 2002); —, *Basic Elements of Narrative* (Chichester, U.K: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009).

²⁴ Here the term “myth” has the neutral meaning of the “basic narrative of a religion,” and “does not indicate anything about truth-value.” See Gerd Theissen, *The New Testament: A Literary History* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 5. For a brief overview of the concept of myth in New Testament studies, see Norman Perrin and Dennis C. Duling, “The New Testament as Myth,” *The New Testament: An Introduction* (New York: Harcourt Brace Javonovich, 1982), 47-53.

²⁵ Pavel Florenskii, “Khramovoe deistvo kak sintez iskusstv’,” *Sochineniia v 4-kh tt.*, v. 3 (Moscow: Mysl’, 1999), 370-383.

achieves is principally narrative.²⁶ The services tell a special kind of story in a special way. Icons depict the major events and characters of the storyworld; scripture readings, poetic hymns, prayers and creeds recount Christ's earthly life and the lives of the saints; "sermons narrate the event being celebrated...as descriptions of characters and scenes;"²⁷ even eating the Eucharist is the final sequence in the *anamnesis*, or remembrance, of the Last Supper narrative. Byzantine worship immerses participants in a sacred narrative environment—a consecrated space wherein narratives are not "read" like a novel or journal article, but practiced with the whole human organism.

For the Byzantines, liturgy was the consecrated technology for proclaiming Christian mythology. The annual movement through the feasts and fasts of the liturgical year brought Christians into the shared ideational storyworld of Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary and a full cast of biblical and Byzantine heroes: "ancestors, fathers, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, preachers, evangelists, martyrs, confessors, ascetics and every righteous spirit made perfect in faith."²⁸ The services were more than novel, ornate public spectacles. They were the instruments of public conversion, the cultural materials that translated the Byzantine worldview into Rus'. By "doing" the liturgy of the Greeks, the East Slavs encountered, and eventually adopted, the mythmaking practice of Christians throughout the Eastern Roman Empire. In the early twelfth century, this practice—and the narrative world that it "made"—played a seminal role in the creation of the *Primary Chronicle*.

²⁶ This view coincides with that of Mircea Eliade, the noted historian of religion, who believed "that in traditional societies the myth is never separated from the rite: telling the sacred story requires ritual, and intrinsic to the ritual...is the recitation of the myth itself." See Catherine Bell, *Ritual Dimensions and Perspectives* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 11.

²⁷ S. MacCormack, "Christ and Empire, Time and Ceremonial," *Byzantion* 52 (1982), 285-309.

²⁸ The citation is from the anaphora section of the Divine Liturgy.

Myths of Christian Origins: Biblical, Byzantine and Slavic

The storyworld that came to Rus' in the tenth and eleventh centuries was the product of nearly ten centuries of Christian mythmaking. Before the All-Night Vigils and ecumenical councils, before even the Bible, Christianity was a “storytelling community,” a religion formulated as narrative discourse.²⁹ The stories told and retold concerned the life of a supernatural hero, Jesus of Nazareth, and in primitive Christianity these stories were pluriform.³⁰ A “multitude of Christianities flourished in the second century,”³¹ and the version of the religion canonized in the New Testament represents only “a particular form of Christian congregation that emerged by degrees through the second to fourth centuries.”³² During that time, the members of a “centrist” brand of Christianity were “able to create the impression of a singular, monolinear history of the Christian church.”³³ They did so, as Burton L. Mack, explains

...by carefully selecting, collecting, and arranging anonymous and pseudonymous writings assigned to figures at the beginning of Christian time. As they imagined it, this history was foretold by the prophets of the Old Testament, inaugurated by Jesus and his sacrifice for the sins of the world, established by the apostles in their missions, and confirmed by the bishops in their loyalty to the teachings of that illustrious tradition...The problem is that this charter was created for the fourth-century church by means of literary fictions. It is neither an authentic account of

²⁹ Jean-Baptiste Metz, “Kleine Apologie des Erzählens,” *Concilium* 9 (1973), 334-342.

³⁰ Paul F. Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 63.

³¹ Paula Fredriksen, *From Jesus to Christ: The Origins of the New Testament Images of Jesus* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 7.

³² Burton L. Mack, *Who Wrote the New Testament? The Making of the Christian Myth* (San Francisco: Harper, 1995), 6.

³³ *Ibid.* 7.

Christian beginnings nor an accurate rehearsal of the history of the empire church. Historians of religions would call it myth.³⁴

In the fourth century, the emperor Constantine became the patron of this centrist church, and the particular myths believed and recited by the group became the canonical narratives for his new religion of empire. Constantine's conversion represents, therefore, "a crucial turning-point in the evolution of forms of worship."³⁵ As Paul Bradshaw writes:

A very marked contrast can be observed between the form and character of liturgical practices in the pre-Constantinian and post-Constantinian periods. For example, whereas the first Christians saw themselves as set over against the world and its customs, stressing rather what distinguished Christianity from other religions, in the fourth century the Church emerged as a public institution within the world, with its liturgy functioning as a *cultus publicus*, seeking the divine favour to secure the well-being of the state.³⁶

In the post-Constantinian period, the liturgy developed into "a historical remembrance and commemoration of the *past*; a liturgy increasingly splintered into separate commemorations of historical events in the life of Christ."³⁷ The best example of this "historicizing" of Orthodox worship is the evolution of Easter and Holy Week.³⁸ The

³⁴ Ibid. 8.

³⁵ Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship*, 65.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Paul F. Bradshaw, and Maxwell E. Johnson, *The Origins of Feasts, Fasts, and Seasons in Early Christianity* (Collegeville, Minn: Liturgical Press, 2011), 90.

³⁸ The "historicism theory" was originally posited by Gregory Dix in his classic study, *The Shape of the Liturgy*. Since the early 1980s, the theory has been criticized for erecting a false opposition between a supposedly "eschatological" mentality in primitive Christians and a new "historicizing" orientation in the fourth century church. Thomas J. Talley argues that eschatology and historicism are not mutually exclusive, but functioned together from the very beginning of Christianity, as in the Passover piety of the first century. But even Dix's critics, such as Robert Taft, admit that "something new in liturgy appears in the fourth century" and that "there are signs of [historicism] everywhere: the eventual choice of Epiphany and Pentecost as baptismal feasts, the separation of Ascension Thursday from the original unitary Pentecost festivities..." See Thomas J. Talley, *The Origins of the Liturgical Year* (New York: Pueblo Publishing Co., 1990) 39. Robert Taft, "Historicism Revisited," *Beyond East and West* (Washington DC: Pastoral Press, 1984) 15-31.

original Christian festival, Easter had commemorated the incarnation, passion, resurrection, and ascension of Christ in a single annual feast.³⁹ But by the end of the fourth century, this “unitary proleptic experience of the whole mystery of redemption” had evolved into “a series of commemorations recalling the successive phases of its past historical accomplishment: triumphal entry into Jerusalem, betrayal, Last Supper, passion, burial, resurrection.”⁴⁰ Rather than recite the story in a single service, the major events of the salvation narrative were spread out over several separate rites—rites that organized the liturgical week into a narrative sequence.⁴¹

Gradually, over the centuries, the Christian year expanded to include ceremonies for all of the most important events in sacred history. A certain line of feasts, for instance, traced out the (mostly non-biblical) life story of Mary, the “Mother of God,” from her conception (Feast of the Conception of the Theotokos) to her unusual death and burial (Dormition). Another class of eight major feasts commemorated the earthly life of Jesus Christ from his birth (Christmas) to his elevation into the heavens (Ascension). By formatting these feasts onto the cycle of the seasons, calendrical time was narrativized as an on-going, cyclical performance of Orthodox mythology,⁴² thus “making the mission of

³⁹ F. L. Cross, “Introduction,” *St Cyril of Jerusalem’s Lectures* (New York: St Vladimir’s Press, 1977) xix.

⁴⁰ Taft, “Historicism Revisited,” 15.

⁴¹ The narrative played out thusly: Christ raises Lazarus from the dead (Lazarus Saturday) and triumphantly enters Jerusalem (Palm Sunday); at the Last Supper he institutes the Eucharist (Holy Thursday), then is betrayed, tried and crucified (Holy Friday), after which his soul descends into hell (Holy Saturday). On Sunday, after three days in the tomb, Christ rises from the dead (Easter); forty days later, he ascends into Heaven (Ascension), and ten days after that the Holy Spirit descends upon the apostles (Pentecost).

⁴² Jonathan Z. Smith has made the case that fourth-century changes in the liturgy were connected to innovations in Jerusalem’s stational liturgy. In a stational liturgy “all the liturgical action is not concentrated in a single building...but rather is spread throughout all of the major churches in the region—the celebrants moving from one to another locale at various parts of the day to perform different ceremonial functions.” On a feast such as Pentecost, the bishop and congregation would convene at eight different shrines connected to the descent of the Holy Spirit and recite the gospel readings relevant to each place.

Christ, relived each year in the church's feasts, as much a part of the universal order as the waning and waxing of the moon or the apparent movements of the planets."⁴³ From Advent to Theophany, Cheesefare Sunday to Pentecost, the passage of time inexorably carried Eastern Christians through the ritual recitation of the founding myths of their faith.

The myths of the Byzantine rite were not identical with those of the Christian Bible. To be sure, the Old and New Testaments were "read constantly at Orthodox services,"⁴⁴ and recognized by the church as the canonical account of Christian origins. But the Bible does not contain many of the major events, characters and plotlines that appear in the Byzantine storyworld. There are hundreds of secondary myths that run through the liturgical year—myths like Mary's "entrance" as a young girl into the Jewish temple (Entrance of the Theotokos), or the myths about the birth of John the Baptist (Nativity of St John the Baptist) and the finding of his severed head three separate times

Smith theorizes that the structure of the liturgical year developed when these spatial sequences were transposed into temporal ones in order to become transferable. At some point the stational services of the Jerusalem liturgy were planned for locations *other* than the holy shrines where the event took place, and so a new system was needed. That system was the liturgical year: "... through a concentration on the associative dimensions of place together with the syntagmatic dimensions of narrative, a system was formulated that could be replicated away from the place... With few exceptions, the hymns, prayers, scripture lessons, and gestures tied to particular places in the indigenous Jerusalem liturgy could be expropriated and exported. The sequence of time, the story, the festal calendar, have allowed a supersession of place... [it was] through narrative, through an orderly progression through the Christian year, by encountering the *loci* of appropriate Scripture, and not by means of processions and pilgrimage, that memorialization occurred." See Jonathan Z. Smith, *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 93-94.

⁴³ Edward Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 58.

⁴⁴ As Timothy Ware has written: "...Holy Scripture is read constantly at Orthodox services: during the course of Matins and Vespers the entire Psalter is recited each week, and in Lent twice a week. Old Testament lessons (usually three in number) occur at Vespers on the eves of many feasts; the reading of the Gospel forms the climax of Matins on Sundays and feasts; at the Liturgy a special Epistle and Gospel are assigned for each day of the year, so that the whole New Testament (except the Revelation of Saint John) is read at the Eucharist. The *Nunc Dimittis* is used at Vespers; Old Testament canticles, with the *Magnificat* and *Benedictus*, are sung at Matins; the Lord's Prayer is read at every service. Besides these specific extracts from Scripture, the whole text of each service is shot through with Biblical language, and it has been calculated that the Liturgy contains 98 quotations from the Old Testament and 114 from the New." See Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (New York: Penguin Books, 1993), 201.

(First, Second, and Third Finding of the Head of St John the Baptist). There are other, specifically Byzantine, myths as well: the myth of the finding of the “True Cross” by the empress Helen in 326, and its recovery from the Persians in 627 (Exaltation of the Cross), or the myth that the Virgin’s “veil” miraculously saved Constantinople from a barbarian invasion (Protection of the Theotokos).

The Byzantine ritual world not only includes people and stories not found in the Bible, it also contains significant additions to the gospel narratives. These additions comprise what one Orthodox theologian has called the “Gospel according to the Church,”⁴⁵ since the liturgical texts not only comment on the Gospels, but introduce entirely new scenes into the core Christian narrative. Non-biblical scenes between characters in the Orthodox storyworld are so common, in fact, that there is a specific genre of hymns—“Stavrotheotokion,” chanted on Wednesdays and Fridays and throughout Holy Week—that describe Mary’s lamentations at the foot of the Cross, scenes which are not recounted in the Gospels.

These hymns, and countless others like them, are evidence that Christian mythmaking did not begin and end with the Bible. Rather, through the formation of the liturgical calendar, the local myths of the Byzantines gradually fused with those of the Bible to form a single Orthodox storyworld.⁴⁶ Over time, feasts for emperors, Studite

⁴⁵ Hilarion Alfeyev, “Orthodox Worship as a School of Theology,” Department of External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, tr. William Bush, accessed 2 February 2013, <http://orthodoxeurope.org/page/12/1.aspx>.

⁴⁶ The role of the Bible in the formation of the liturgical year remains unclear. Some scholars see a simple causal relation: the Christian myth was ritualized and became the script for Christian ritual. Other scholars, liturgists in particular, put forward a more nuanced view. Thomas J. Talley has argued, for example, that an “intimate relationship...exists between the gospel tradition and its liturgical employment. The gospels...were shaped by the expectation that they would be proclaimed in public assemblies over a certain period. That period, shaped by those narratives, is the liturgical year.” See Talley, *The Origins of the Liturgical Year*, 235.

ascetics, “passion-bearing” Roman soldiers, Fools-for-Christ, and even the restoration of Hagia Sophia after an earthquake, were interwoven into the Christian calendar alongside older, biblical celebrations. The result was a ritual cycle that proclaimed a distinctly *Byzantine* myth of Christian origins—a series of sacred narratives about the conversion of the Roman Empire, the glorification of the emperor Constantine and empress Helen, and the victory of Christianity over paganism and orthodoxy over heresy. It was this composite mythology, biblical and Byzantine, which entered Rus’ through the liturgical services—and its effect on the formation of the *Primary Chronicle* was profound.

Liturgy in the *Primary Chronicle*

The principal argument of this dissertation is that several foundational accounts of East Slavic history—including the tales of the baptism of Princess Ol’ga and her burial, Prince Vladimir’s conversion, the mass baptism of Rus’, and the martyrdom of Princes Boris and Gleb—have their source in the feasts of the Byzantine liturgical year. The practice of liturgy introduced the East Slavs to the highly formalized narrative archetypes of Orthodox mythology; in the decades following the conversion of Rus’, the chroniclers in Kiev absorbed these archetypes from Byzantine worship and reproduced them in their own tales of the Christianization of Rus’. In so doing, they created a myth of Christian origins for Rus’ modeled on the myth of Christian origins for the Eastern Roman Empire that was articulated in the Byzantine Rite.

In the chapters that follow, I systematically analyze the liturgical elements of ten chronicle entries spanning the sixty-year period from 955 to 1015.⁴⁷ Two of the entries

⁴⁷ Christian discourse in the *Primary Chronicle* changes after 1015. Up to that date, the discourse is primarily liturgical; beyond it, the religious passages exhibit a distinctly monastic ideology. Liturgical

are devoted to Princess Ol'ga (955 and 969), seven to Prince Vladimir (980, 983, 986-989, 996) and one to both Vladimir and Princes Boris and Gleb (1015). Together, these passages constitute the Christian myth of origins for Rus'—a myth that is preserved and promulgated even into the present day by the Russian Orthodox Church.

The aim of this study is to recover the ritual context that surrounded the creation of the myth. My methodology is simple: in each chapter, I use medieval church books to lay bare the liturgical subtexts underlying the major events in the Christianization of Rus'.⁴⁸ In the first chapter, I demonstrate that the tale of Princess Ol'ga's conversion derives, in part, from the tenth-century baptismal rubrics of the "Great Church" (Hagia Sophia) in Constantinople. I also analyze the "liturgical typologies"⁴⁹ in the text: in 955 Ol'ga is depicted as a "Slavic Mary" using hymns from the major feasts of the Theotokos, and in 969 she is cast as the "Slavic Forerunner" using hymns from the Feast of the Nativity of John the Baptist.

elements continue to appear in the chronicle text—typically as isolated citations—but they do not form a deep structural subtext like that found in the passages from 955 to 1015.

⁴⁸ The church books relevant to this study are described in detail in chapter two.

⁴⁹ A typology is a relationship between two historical figures, wherein the one prefigures the other. I use the term, "liturgical typology," to distinguish it from standard biblical typology. In the latter, the persons and events of the Old Testament are understood as prefigurations of the New Testament and its history of salvation. This historical connection is strictly unidirectional. Old Testament types foreshadow later New Testament antitypes: Adam or Moses foreshadow Christ; the crossing of the Red Sea and the eating of manna look forward to baptism and the Eucharist, and so on. Like biblical typology, the "liturgical typology" of the Byzantine rite endows historical figures and events with significance insofar as they relate to the advent of Christ. But the connection is bidirectional. Old Testament figures still point forward to Christ, but post-biblical figures point backwards: for Christ is the "center" of history; the saving narrative; the universal and eternal pattern of human salvation. When the historiography of any era is shaped to this pattern, the result is Christian sacred history. For the classic study on patristic and medieval typology, see Erich Auerbach, "Figura," *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature* (New York: Meridian Books, 1959), 11-71. For a more recent critique, see Richard K. Emmerson, "Figura and the Medieval Typological Imagination," *Typology and English Medieval Literature* (New York: AMS Press, 1992), 7-34.

The next chapters demonstrate that Prince Vladimir’s biography in the chronicle—from his rise to power in 980 to his death in 1015—is patterned after the liturgical image of Constantine the Great. In chapter two, I analyze the liturgical structure of Prince Vladimir’s pre-conversion biography in 980 and 983; and in chapter three I show that the chronicle depicts Vladimir establishing Christianity in Kiev exactly like the Feast of Ss. Constantine and Helen depicts “the apostle Constantine” establishing it in the Roman Empire. I also explain how the chroniclers use the bishop’s prayers at baptism and the consecration of a church to portray Prince Vladimir as the “first bishop” of Rus’.

The fourth chapter is devoted to the martyrdom of Boris and Gleb and the rite that comprises its main liturgical subtext, the Eucharistic canon of the Divine Liturgy. I argue that the passage depicts Boris as a high priest and his brother, Gleb, as a liturgical sacrifice. I also illustrate how several prayers from the Rite of Consecration for a Church may have provided the chroniclers with the overarching narrative structure for their depiction of early Christianity in Rus’.

Ultimately, in the pages that follow I endeavor to prove that the conversion of Rus’ cannot be fully understood without the liturgical mythology of the Byzantine rite. I hope to demonstrate that when a scholar is able to get “inside” the ritual habits of the religion—when she or he can perceive the liturgical rites from within—it opens up a vast and intricate web of previously undetected meanings. The chapters of this dissertation are my attempt to uncover such latent and long-forgotten meanings in the *Primary Chronicle*.

Chapter One

The Liturgical Subtext of Princess Ol'ga's Baptism and Burial

In 6463 (955) Princess Ol'ga travels to Constantinople and visits the court of the emperor Constantine (29).⁵⁰ Constantine is at once taken with his visitor's beauty and intellect, and suggests that she reign with him in his city. The princess cryptically replies that she is still a pagan and will only accept baptism from the emperor himself. The emperor assents and he and the patriarch baptize Ol'ga. Following the service, the emperor summons Ol'ga and asks her to be his wife. "How can you marry me," the princess replies, "after baptizing me yourself and calling me your daughter? This is not lawful among Christians, as you yourself know."⁵¹ The emperor perceives his mistake and replies, "You have outwitted me, Ol'ga"; he then presents Ol'ga with precious gifts and dismisses her (30).

Prior to the journey home, the princess seeks out the patriarch and asks for his blessing. The patriarch gives it and offers a few words of exhortation, after which the princess returns in peace to her own country. Once in Kiev, Ol'ga urges her son, Sviatoslav, to convert to the Christian faith, but he steadfastly refuses for fear that others will mock him. There follows a series of biblical citations on the nature of faith and unbelief, and the passage closes with Ol'ga's hope for the conversion of Rus': "But Ol'ga loved her son Sviatoslav and said, 'May the will of God be done; if God wishes to have

⁵⁰ This is Constantine Porphyrogenitus (*regn.* 912-959), author of *De ceremoniis aulae Byzantinae*.

⁵¹ The princess is alluding to the prohibition in Orthodox canon law that forbids godparents and godchildren from marrying.

mercy on my people and the land of Rus', then may He put in their heart the desire to return to God, as he did for me" (31).

Princess Ol'ga's journey to Constantinople has long fascinated scholars. For more than a century, historians have tried to reconstruct the real events and dates of the princess's conversion,⁵² and philologists have tried to reconstruct the original chronicle text.⁵³ For the philologists, debate has focused on the strange marriage of hagiographic and legendary folk materials in the narrative.

A. A. Shakhmatov perceived the account as a conflation of two sources, a folk legend about Ol'ga's intrigues at the Byzantine court and a clerical tale about her baptism. Shakhmatov believes an original hagiographic tale about Ol'ga was interpolated in the "most ancient layer" (*drevneishii svod*) of 1039—the hypothetical manuscript Shakhmatov envisions as the original Russian chronicle compilation, assembled in connection with the building of the Cathedral of St Sophia and the installation of a Greek

⁵² E. E. Golubinskii, *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi*, T. 1 (Moscow: Univ. tipografiia, 1901), 74-84. G. Ostrogorsky, "Vizantiia i Kievskaiia kniaginia Ol'ga," *To Honor Roman Jakobson*, vol. 2 (The Hague: Mouton, 1967), 1458-73. G.G. Litavrin, "Puteshestvie russkoi kniagini Ol'gi v Konstantinopol, Problema istochnikov," *Vizantiiskii Vremennik* 42 (1981), 35-48. Dimitri Obolensky, "Russia and Byzantium in the Mid-Tenth Century: The Problem of the Baptism of Princess Olga," *GOTR* 28 (1983), 157-71. —, "The Baptism of Princess Olga of Kiev: The Problem of the Sources," *Byzantina Sorbonensia* (1984), 159-76; —, "Ol'ga's Conversion: The Evidence Reconsidered," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* (hereafter HUS) 12-13 (1990), 145-58. M. Featherstone, "Olga's Visit to Constantinople," *HUS* 14 (1990), 294-312. A. V. Nazarenko, "Kogda zhe kniaginia Ol'ga ezdila v Konstantinopol'?" *Vizantiskii Vremennik* 50 (1990), 66-83. Andrzej Poppe, "Once Again Concerning the Baptism of Olga, Archontissa of Rus'," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 46 (1992), 271-277.

⁵³ Shakhmatov, *Razyskaniia*, 111-114. M. D. Priselkov, *Ocherki po tserkovno-politicheskoi istorii Kievskoi Rusi* (St Petersburg: Tipografiia M.M. Stasiulevicha, 1913), 9-13. S. F. Platonov, "Letopisnyi rasskaz o kreshchenii Ol'gi," *Istoricheskii Vestnik* 1 (1919) 285-287. A. G. Kuz'min, *Nachal'nye etapy drevnerusskogo letopisaniia* (Moscow: Iz. MGU, 1977), 340-341. Ludolf Müller, "Die Erzählung der 'Nestorchronik' über die Taufe Olgas im Jahre 954/55," *Zeitschrift für Slawistik* 33 (1988), 785-96. D. S. Likhachev, *Velikoe nasledie: klassicheskiye proizvedeniia literatury drevnei Rusi* (Saint Petersburg: Izd-vo "Logos", 1997), 43-133. D. A. Balovnev, "Skazanie 'O pervonachal'nom rasprostraneni khrisianstva na Rusi': Opyt kriticheskogo analiza," *Tserkov' v istorii Rossii* 4 (2000), 5-46.

metropolitan in Kiev in 1039.⁵⁴ Folk elements, such as the emperor's courtship and the comparison of Ol'ga to the “*tsaritsa efiop'skaia*” (Queen of Sheba), did not appear until 1095, when the editor of the “primary layer” (*nachal'nyi svod*) interwove the two stories.⁵⁵ M. D. Priselkov and A. Poppe also discern two different traditions in the Ol'ga account and accord primacy to the clerical tale.⁵⁶ D. S. Likhachev hypothesizes that the story of Ol'ga's baptism represents the first part of “The Tale of the Spread of Christianity in Rus’,” a hypothetical clerical composition he saw as the foundational narrative in East Slavic chronicles.⁵⁷ For all these thinkers, the church story about Ol'ga is the primary narrative of the 955 account—a narrative obscured by later folk interpolations. A. G. Kuz'min, Ludolf Müller and D. A. Balovnev interpret the passage oppositely. Ol'ga's visit to Constantinople is not a church tale contaminated with folk elements, but a folk legend interrupted by clerical insertions.⁵⁸ S. F. Platonov argues against the folk/clerical interpretation altogether, suggesting that the 955 account should be read as a single, integral composition.⁵⁹

The role of church books in the chronicle story about Princess Ol'ga was first noted by Shakhmatov. He observes that several Biblical citations in the *Primary Chronicle*, including parts from the 955 passage, are insertions from the Prophetologion

⁵⁴ Shakhmatov, *Razyskaniia*, 531-532.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 111-114.

⁵⁶ Priselkov, *Ocherki*, 9-13. Poppe, "Once Again Concerning the Baptism of Olga, Archontissa of Rus'," 274.

⁵⁷ Likhachev, *Velikoe nasledie*, 43-133.

⁵⁸ Kuz'min, *Nachal'nye etapy drevnerusskogo letopisaniia*, 340-341. L. Müller, “Die Erzählung der 'Nestorchronik' über die Taufe Olgas im Jahre 954/55,” 790-796. Balovnev, “Skazanie ‘O pervonachal'nom rasprostranении khristianstva na Rusi’,” 13-17.

⁵⁹ Platonov, “Letopisnyi rasskaz o kreshchenii Ol'gi,” 285-287.

(*Parimiinik* or *Parimii*) — the Orthodox liturgical book that contains Old Testament readings for Vespers.⁶⁰ Nearly ninety years after Shakhmatov, E. A. Osokina was the first scholar to identify the chronicle tradition surrounding Princess Ol'ga with hymnographic formulas from Orthodox liturgical worship.⁶¹

Shakhmatov and Osokina are right to see liturgy in the chronicle accounts about Princess Ol'ga.⁶² The chronicle text comprises forty-four phrases, twenty-eight of which can be traced to three church books: the Typicon, the Menaion and the Euchologion.⁶³ In the following, I briefly review the function of these books within the larger ritual system and then analyze the liturgical elements in the tale of Ol'ga's baptism.

The Church Books

The system of church books used to perform the Orthodox liturgical cycle is complex. As the eminent liturgist, Robert F. Taft, describes its basic arrangement:

Liturgical books are of two kinds: (1) liturgical texts actually used in the services; (2) books that regulate how those texts are to be used. Category 1, the texts themselves, comprise two levels of elements, the *ordinary* and the *proper*. The ordinary of an office is the basic skeleton that remains invariable regardless of the day, feast or season. The proper comprises those pieces that vary according to the

⁶⁰ Shakhmatov, *Razyskaniia*, 164-167.

⁶¹ E.A. Osokina, "Metodologicheskie problemy sootnosheniia gimnograficheskikh i agiograficheskikh proizvedenii," *Gimnologia* 1 (2000), 178-187. Osokina treats the interrelations between Slavonic hymns written for St. Ol'ga and the description of the Princess in the *Stepennaia Kniga*, Russia's first narrative history. Dr. Osokina's unpublished dissertation on the topic was not accessible to me: E.A. Osokina, "Sootnosheniia gimnografii i agiografii na pamiat' kniagini Ol'gi," (Moscow: diss., Institut mirovoi literaturoi im. A.M. Gor'kogo, 1995).

⁶² For an analysis of liturgical language in Kievan Rus', see: Vladimir Vodoff, *Autour du mythe de la Sainte Russie. Christianisme, pouvoir et société chez les Slaves orientaux (X^e-XVII^e siècles)* (Paris: Institut d'études slaves, 2003), 209-218.

⁶³ The twenty-eight phrases with liturgical origins relate to Princess Ol'ga's baptism, interaction with the patriarch, and her attempt to convert her son, Sviatoslav, to Christianity. The sixteen phrases without any liturgical influence pertain to Ol'ga's interaction with the emperor. Thus, Shakhmatov's folk/clerical seam is substantiated by a liturgical analysis of the passage.

calendar. The ordinary is the bearer of each service's immutable thrust: vesper's remains even-song, prayer at sundown to close the day, be it Christmas or any simple feria. The propers nuance this basic thrust with festive and seasonal coloration.⁶⁴

The Euchologion and Menaion belong to different levels in Taft's first category; the Typicon regulates the use of both books and is, therefore, a liturgical text of the second kind.

The Euchologion (*Evkhologii*) is a book of priestly prayers for Matins, Vespers, the Divine Liturgy and the sacraments. During a liturgical service, the officiating priest reads prayers from the Euchologion and follows the directions indicated in the text for each part of the ritual. The book also proscribes certain behaviors for the lay community: when they are to pray, bow their heads, listen to the Gospel, approach for Holy Communion and so on. The church services are carefully choreographed by the liturgical text, and the role of the cleric is to execute the rituals exactly as the books indicate. Deviations, additions or omissions in the service are forbidden.

The most important services in the Euchologion for the 955 account are the initiation rites of Baptism and Chrismation. The clerical narrative of Princess Ol'ga's baptism portrays a pagan neophyte who piously participates in the sacramental mysteries of the Byzantine Church. The story owes less to history than to liturgics—it is a tale *about* baptism that derives from the rubrics and hymnography of the Orthodox baptismal rite itself. In the Euchologion, every word and action for the baptismal ritual is clearly spelled out for the priest performing the service; in the chronicle, the prelate and princess act out these ritual behaviors between baptizer and baptized, as they are prescribed in the church book. For the present analysis, that liturgical text is Miguel Arranz's

⁶⁴ Robert F. Taft, "Mount Athos: A Late Chapter in the Byzantine Rite," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 42 (1988), 179-194.

reconstruction of the initiation rite for an adult pagan baptized according to the ancient Euchologion of the Great Church (Hagia Sophia) in Constantinople.⁶⁵ This was the rite used in Rus' in the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries, and in most respects it resembles the baptismal service used by the Orthodox today.⁶⁶ The initiation ritual at the Great Church consisted of several rites, typically performed over a two-month period. Before the main sacraments of Baptism and Chrismation, there were preparatory services: Reception into the Catechumenate, Renunciation of Heresies, Renunciation of Satan, and Exorcism. Following the sacred mysteries were the rites of Removal of Chrism, Tonsuring, and Churching. As I will show in the textual analysis below, prayers and liturgical instructions from several of these rites figure prominently in the story of Princess Ol'ga's baptism.

The second book necessary for this study is the Typicon (*Ustav*), the service book that regulates the order of divine services at a monastery or church.⁶⁷ As noted previously, the *Primary Chronicle* was compiled at the Monastery of the Caves in the late eleventh century. A few decades earlier, St. Theodosius installed a new rule for liturgical and disciplinary life at the monastery based on the practices of the famous Studite

⁶⁵ Miguel Arranz, "Chin oglasheniia i kreshcheniia v Drevnei Rusi," *Simvol* 19 (1988), 69-101. For the history of the Orthodox initiation rite, see A. I. Almazov, *Istoriia chinoposledovaniia Kreshcheniia i Miropomazaniia* (Kazan, 1884).

⁶⁶ Ibid. 69-75. Arranz's hypothesis that the baptism of Rus' was performed according to the Constantinopolitan rite was confirmed by the discovery of the Sinai Euchologion, a Glagolitic text that dates to the ninth century. Though the fragments of the Sinai manuscript do not contain the Baptism service itself, the manuscripts show the first East Slavic Christians followed the liturgical traditions of the Great Church in Constantinople.

⁶⁷ For the history of the Typicon in Byzantium and Rus', see I. Mansvetov, *Tserkovnyi ustav (Tipik), ego obrazovanie i sud'ba v Grecheskoi i Russkoi Tserkvi* (Moscow: Tipografiia E. Lissiera, 1885). A. A. Dmitrievskii, [Review of I. Mansvetov], *Bogoslovskoi bibliograficheskii listok* 11-12 (1885), 425-445. M. N. Skabalanovich, *Tolkovyi Tipikon. Ob'iasnitel'noe izlozhenie Tipikona s istoricheskim vvedeniem*, T. 1-3 (Moscow: Palomnik, 1995).

monastery in Constantinople.⁶⁸ This liturgical document—which Russian liturgist A.M. Pentkovskii identifies as a Slavonic translation of the *Typicon of Patriarch Alexis the Studite* (TAS)—is extremely valuable.⁶⁹ It provides detailed information on the daily order of liturgical services and indicates the dates, special instructions, moveable hymns and Scripture readings for each feast celebrated at the monastery. The TAS also describes more mundane matters: when and how the monks at the Caves Monastery were to wake up, how they were to pray, stand in church, eat and sleep.⁷⁰ Medieval Orthodox monastic life was highly regimented. Using the TAS, scholars can locate and document the hourly, daily and yearly cycles of liturgical life that surrounded the *Primary Chronicle's* editors.

The third book that plays a role in the 955 passage is the Menaion (*Mineia*).⁷¹ Texts in the Menaion are arranged in twelve volumes, one for every month, and each volume provides the moveable hymnography for feasts commemorated on fixed days of the calendar year. These can be major feasts such as Christmas, Theophany, Annunciation and Dormition or minor feasts dedicated to particular saints and sacred events. The Typicon indicates what hymnography for a particular feast is to be read; the Menaion is the church book where most of those texts are found. Taken together, the

⁶⁸ There are two accounts about how the new typicon came to the Caves monastery. One is found in the vita of St. Theodosius (Feodosii pecherskii) composed by Nestor, and the other—sometimes called the “Tale of How the Monastery was Named after the Caves” (“Skazanie chevo radi prozvasia Pechersk’yi monastyr”)—is from the *Primary Chronicle* for the year 1051. See A.M. Pentkovskii, *Tipikon patriarkha Aleksiia Studita v Vizantii i na Rusi* (Moscow: Iz. Moskovskoi patriarkhii, 2001), 155-159.

⁶⁹ Ibid. 171-175.

⁷⁰ Ibid. 368- 420.

⁷¹ The surviving manuscripts for medieval Slavonic Menaions are incomplete and the history of their formation in early Rus’ represents a considerable problem for scholars. See M.A. Momina, “Problema pravki slavianskikh bogoslužebnykh gimnograficheskikh knig na Rusi v XI stoletii,” *Trudy Otdela drevnerusskoi literatury*, T. XLV (1992), 200-219.

Euchologion, Typicon and Menaion express the theology and religious narrative for each liturgical commemoration in the Church's fixed calendar. In the 955 account, the patriarch addresses Princess Ol'ga in the liturgical language reserved for a special type of saint commemorated in the Menaion texts: the wise and righteous female forbear, the holy mother who through childbearing facilitates the divine economy. In this respect Princess Ol'ga is modeled on the liturgical image of the Theotokos and other righteous forbears such as St Anna, St Elizabeth and St Helen, the mother of Constantine the Great.

Below are the excerpts from Princess Ol'ga's two meetings with the patriarch. The emboldened text represents the chronicle materials that derive from the Orthodox initiation rites and the italicized text signifies materials from the Menaion.

I.

И крести ю царь с патриархомъ. Просвещена же бывши, радовашеся душою и теломъ. И поучи ю патрархъ о вере, рече ей: *«Благословена ты в женах руских, яко возлюби светъ, а тьму остави. Благословити тя хотять сынове рустии в последний родъ внукъ твоихъ».* **И заповеда ей о церковномъ уставе, о молитве, и о посте, о милостыни и о въздержаньи тела чиста. Она же, поклонивши главу, стояше, аки губа напаяема, внимающи ученья, поклонившися патриарху, глаголющи: «Молитвами твоими, владыко, да сохранена буду от сети неприязньны». *Бе же речено имя ей во крещеньи Олена, якоже и древняя цариця, мати Великаго Костянтина.* **Благословию патриархъ и отпусти ю (29).****

The Emperor, together with the patriarch, baptized her. When Olga was enlightened, she rejoiced in soul and body. And the patriarch instructed her in the faith, saying, “Blessed are you among Rus(sian) women, for you have loved the light, and abandoned the darkness. The sons of Rus' shall bless you to the last generation of your descendants.” He taught her the doctrine of the Church, and instructed her in prayer and fasting, in almsgiving, and in the maintenance of chastity. She bowed her head, and like a sponge absorbing water, she eagerly drank in his teachings. The Princess bowed before the Patriarch, saying, *“Through your prayers, Holy Father, may I be preserved from the snares of the devil!”* *At her baptism she was christened Helen, after the ancient Empress, mother of Constantine the Great.* **The Patriarch then blessed her and dismissed her.⁷²**

⁷² All translations into English are the author's own, unless otherwise noted.

II.

Она же, хотящи домови, **приде къ патреарху, благословения просящи на домъ**, и рече ему: «Людѣ мои пагани и сынъ мой, дабы мя Богъ съблюлъ от всякого зла». И рече патриархъ: «**Чадѣ верное! Во Креста крестилася еси и во Креста облечеся, Христосъ имать схранити тя, якоже схрани Еноха в первыя роды, потомъ Ноя в ковчезе, Аврама от Авимелеха, Лота от Содомлянъ, Моисея от Фараона, Давида от Саула, 3 отроци от пеци, Данила от зверий, тако и ты избавитъ от неприязни и от сетий его**». **Благослови ю патреархъ**, и иде с миромъ въ свою землю и приде Киеву (30).

Eager to return home, Ol'ga **went to the Patriarch and requested his blessing** for the journey home, and said to him, "My people and my son are heathen. **May God protect me from all evil!**" The Patriarch replied, "**Child of the faith, you have been baptized into Christ and have put on Christ. Christ knows how to save you. Even as he saved Abraham from Abimelech, Lot from the Sodomites, Moses from Pharoah, David from Saul, the Three Children from the fiery furnace, and Daniel from the wild beasts, he will preserve you likewise from the devil and his snares.**" **So the Patriarch blessed her**, and she returned in peace to her own country, and arrived in Kiev.

The first passage begins with reference to a local ecclesial practice. By using the specialized term, "patriarch" (and not "bishop" or "priest"), the chroniclers concretely connect Princess Ol'ga's baptism to a specific place and liturgical tradition: the Great Church in Constantinople, where the patriarch personally baptized neophytes on Theopany, Pentecost, Lazarus Saturday and Holy Saturday.⁷³ Apart from this hierarchical distinction, the patriarch is not characterized by the same "individuality" that marks the chronicle's description of the emperor. He is neither named—as the emperor Constantine is—nor portrayed as a concrete, personal entity. The patriarch is, rather, the figure of the liturgical celebrant projected and propagated by the service books.

The next line, "When Ol'ga was enlightened (*prosveshchena*), she rejoiced in soul and body," also expresses important ideas from the Orthodox initiation service. In the rubrics of the Great Church, baptism is called "enlightenment" (*prosveshchenie*) and is

⁷³ Miguel Arranz, "Chin oglasheniia..." 75.

linked to the experience of joy.⁷⁴ The call to “rejoice” is repeated in several prayers and hymns during the Baptismal service, such as the first anointing with oil immediately before baptism,⁷⁵ the prayer during the putting on of baptismal garments,⁷⁶ and the hymns that follow immediately thereafter.⁷⁷ In the epistemology of Orthodox initiation, the knowledge of God is irrevocably tied to the experience of joy, an argument Princess Ol’ga herself makes in the 955 passage when she tries to convince her son, Sviatoslav, to convert to Christianity: “My son, I have known God and I rejoice. If you come to know him, you will also rejoice” (30).

That the phrase “body and soul” (*dusheiu i telom*) finishes the chroniclers’ description of the baptismal act is also characteristic of Orthodox liturgical practice. This formula frequently appears in connection to the Eucharist,⁷⁸ and a variation of it appears in the instructions to the priest in the Euchologion following the “Reception into the Catechumenate”:

Приходит хотяй креститися к настоятелю и приемлет благословение, и по благословении же предаст его настоятель искусну священнику, ведущему

⁷⁴ The Feast of Theophany, the Baptism of the Lord, was also called “Prosveshchenie.” For more on the development of these terms, see A.A. Alekseev, *Bibliia v bogosluzhenii: Vizantiisko-slavianskii leksionarii* (Saint Petersburg: Nestor-Isotriia, 2008), 43.

⁷⁵ “*Pomazuetsia rab bozhii IMIAREK eleom vozradovanii vo imia Ottsa i Syna i sviatago Dukha*” / “The servant of God, NAME, is anointed with the oil of gladness in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.” Arranz, “Chin oglasheniia...,” 88.

⁷⁶ “*Odevaetsia rab*” *Khristov, IMIAREK, odezhnie veseliia i vozradovania, vo imia Ottsa i Syna i sviatago Dukha, amin*” / “The servant of Christ, NAME, is clothed in the garments of rejoicing and gladness, in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.” Ibid. 91.

⁷⁷ “*Da vozraduetsia dusha moia o Boge, obleche bo mia v*” *rizu spasenia, i odezhnie veseliia na mia*” / “My soul rejoices in God, who has clothed me in the robe of salvation and the garments of rejoicing.” Ibid.

⁷⁸ It is found, for example, in a pre-communion prayer of a thirteenth-century Slavonic redaction of the Liturgy of St John Chrysostom. See RNB, fond 728 (Sobr. Sofiiskoi biblioteki), № 518, Service Book, XIII c. For dating and description see *Svodnyi katalog slaviano-russkikh rukopisnykh knig, khraniashchikhsia v SSSR XI-XIII vv.* (Moscow: Nauka, 1984), 95-96, 280-281 (№ 312).

божественная писания, и повелит ему ведати хотящаго креститися душевне и телесне.⁷⁹

The one desiring baptism approaches the primate [of the church] and receives a blessing, and after the blessing the primate directs him to an experienced priest, who knows the divine scriptures, and [the primate] entrusts him to test the one desiring baptism in soul and body.

Overall, the chroniclers' phrase is a tidy summary of the Orthodox baptismal act, particularly the few moments before and after the physical act of triple immersion.

The patriarch's address to Princess Ol'ga after her baptism ("Blessed are you among Russian women...") is based on a verse found in the Song of the Theotokos (*Pesn' presviatoi Bogoroditse*), the troparion at Vespers for All-Night Vigil, and the Magnificat (*Pesn' Bogoroditse*)—the Orthodox hymn devoted to Mary, which is sung at the ninth ode of the Matins canon. The verse also comprises parts of the Gospel reading (Luke 1:39-49, 56) at Matins for the major Feasts of the Theotokos (Annunciation, Dormition, Presentation of the Theotokos, Nativity of the Theotokos). Thus, the patriarch's first words to Ol'ga are the very words repeated by the Orthodox at every major liturgical veneration of Mary. The patriarch's statement carries considerable historical and theological weight: Ol'ga is "blessed among Russian women" because she is the forbear of Prince Vladimir, the one who converts Rus' to Christianity. The Song of the Theotokos conveys the same notion. Mary is "blessed among women" because she has "born the savior of our souls":

Богородице, Дево, радуйся! Благодатная Марие, Господь с тобою!
Благословенна Ты в женах и благословен плод чрева Твоего, яко Спаса
родила еси души наших.

Rejoice, O Virgin, Theotokos! Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you! Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, for you have born the Savior of our souls.

⁷⁹ Miguel Arranz, "Chin oglasheniia...", 78.

Similarly, Ol'ga will be “blessed by Russian sons until the last generation of her grandchildren” because in the Magnificat Mary prophesies about herself: “For he has looked upon the lowliness of his handmaiden; for behold, henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.” In addition to Marian typology, the patriarch’s phrase, “for you have loved the light, and abandoned the darkness,” conveys the traditional conversion motif of light shining in the darkness (John 1:5). This motif occurs in several places in the initiation ritual, such as the following prayer between the rites of Baptism and Chrismation:

Благословен еси Господи Боже Вседержителю, источниче благих, солнце правды, возсиявый сушим во тьме свет спасения...⁸⁰

Blessed are You, Lord God Almighty, the source of all good things, the sun of truth, the true light of salvation shining in the darkness...

The patriarch addresses Princess Ol'ga as the services address Mary, and then gives religious instruction on five topics: (a) the church typicon, (b) prayer, (c) fasting, (d) almsgiving and (e) continence. All of these themes—except fasting, which would fall under “continuing in the Orthodox faith and doing good deeds”—are explicitly expressed in the instructions from the baptizer to the newly-baptized initiate during the Churching ceremony:

О чадо, внимай же глаголю ти: Во Христа крестился еси, во Христа облечеся. Ему же буди всегда угодная творя во вся дни живота твоего, в православной вере твердо пребывая, в добродетелех житие совершая (с), к духовному отцу послушание и повиновение имея. Никогда же отлучайся церковнаго правила (а) кроме великия нужды, но прилежным тщанием буди всегда упражняйся в молитвах (b) и воздержании (e), и во время пощения не унывай. Руце простирай к милостыни требующим (d) и ко святым церквам и ко убогой чади елика сила. Правду и любовь имей ко всем человеком.⁸¹

⁸⁰ Ibid. 89.

⁸¹ Ibid. 92-93.

O Child, hear what I say to you: You have been baptized into Christ, and have put on Christ. Perform [the deeds] pleasing to Him all the days of your life, steadfastly remaining in the Orthodox faith, in charity living out your life, having deference and obedience to your spiritual father. Never deviate from the church rule except in times of grave necessity, but through strenuous efforts be ever active in prayer and continence, and in times of repentance and fasting do not despair. Give alms, to those who ask and to the holy churches and to the poor as much as you are able. Be honest and loving toward all people.

Princess Ol'ga listens to the patriarch's instructions, bowing her head and body toward the prelate, absorbing his teachings "like a sponge absorbs water" (29). This posture reflects the traditional piety of Orthodox worship, and is attested to in the instructions for initiates in several places of the Baptismal service, where the initiate is instructed to bow his head toward the celebrant or the altar. At the renunciation of heresies:

И тако святитель или священник преже особь поучив оглашенныя, и на мнозе с ними беседаю и глаголя. И потом глаголет молитву оглашенных... И преклоньшу главу приходящему, святитель же или иерей молится над ним, глаголя молитву сию в слух...⁸²

And thus the hierarch or priest beforehand receives the catechumens separately, and he talks with them and discusses many things. And then he says the prayer of the catechumens... And bowing the head of the one who comes forward, the hierarch or priest prays over him, saying this prayer out loud...

And the prayer at the removal of holy chrism:

Одеяйся [или одеявшаяся] в Тя, Христа и Бога нашего, Тебе подклони с нами свою главу, егоже сохрани непобедима подвижника пребыти на всеу вражду носящих на него и на ны, Твоим же...⁸³

Having been clothed in You, Christ our God, and bowing his head to You with us, do now preserve [him] as an invincible spiritual fighter against all the hostility brought upon him and upon us...

⁸² Ibid. 80.

⁸³ Ibid. 94.

As these liturgical texts make clear, the patriarch and Princess Ol'ga are not speaking and acting arbitrarily: they are performing the roles between baptizer and baptized presented in the church books. In this light, Princess Ol'ga's zealous gathering of blessings—she twice receives the patriarch's blessing and initiates their second meeting by seeking out his blessing—reflects not only the traditional pious behavior between clergy and the lay community but behavior which is explicitly outlined in the texts of the baptism service. In the “Instructions to Catechumens” mentioned above, the initiate is instructed to approach and receive a blessing from the liturgical celebrant: “The one desiring baptism approaches the primate and receives a blessing...” Likewise, the instructions from the Churching rite emphasize that deference and obedience should be shown to one's spiritual father at all times.

Text from the Churching ceremony appears again in the second interaction between the patriarch and Princess Ol'ga. The patriarch's statement, “Child of the faith! You have been baptized into Christ and have put on Christ” (“*Chado vernoe! V Khrista ty krestilas' i v Khrista obleklas*”), matches the first line of the prayer, “Child, listen to what is said to you: you have been baptized into Christ, [and] have been clothed in Christ” (“*O chado, vnimai zhe glagoliu ti: Vo Khrista krestilsia esi, vo Khrista oblechesia...*”), and the remainder of the Churching instructions accurately describes Ol'ga's pious behavior and attitude in the scene following her baptism. The opening line from the instructions at the Churching ceremony derives, of course, from St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians (3:27). In Orthodox practice this verse forms the main baptismal hymn, “As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ, alleluia!” (“*Elitsy vo Khrista krestistesia, vo Khrista oblekostesia, alliluiia!*”), which is sung shortly after

the physical baptism of the initiate. During the liturgical year, this baptismal hymn replaces the Trisagion hymn at Divine Liturgy on the holiest days of the Church calendar, such as Pascha and Theophany. Thus, the patriarch's words in the chronicle fulfill the specific instructions in the Constantinopolitan service books and call to mind the one verse from the baptism service that appears at climactic moments in the yearly liturgical cycle.

Another motif from the baptism service that appears in the story of Princess Ol'ga's baptism is the theme of escaping the "snare" or "net" of the devil. Princess Ol'ga asks that the patriarch's prayers preserve her from "the snares of the devil." This notion is found in several places in the baptism service, but nowhere is it more pronounced than at the rite of Exorcism. Examples abound, but the last line of the final prayer from the third exorcism is enough to give the overall gist:

...избавляюща его от всякаго навета сопротивлежашаго, от сретения лукаваго, от демона полуденнаго, и от мечтаний лукавых.⁸⁴

...delivering him from every intrigue of the adversary, from the presence of the evil one, from the demon of noonday, and from evil imaginations.

The patriarch promises Princess Ol'ga that Christ will "deliver her from the snares and nets of the devil,"⁸⁵ and, in so doing, places her in the company of major figures from Old Testament sacred history—Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Lot, Moses, David, the three holy youths, and Daniel. These figures are mentioned in various hymns and canons throughout the liturgical year. But the most likely liturgical model for the 955 passage is

⁸⁴ Ibid. 82.

⁸⁵ The patriarch's promise is immediately fulfilled. Princess Ol'ga "goes in peace" and "arrives in Kiev" shortly thereafter: "*Blagoslovi iu patrearkh", i ide s mirom*" v" *svoiu zemliu i pride Kievu*. To "depart in peace" ("*s mirom izydem*") is a phrase spoken by the deacon or priest at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, prior to the prayer before the ambo (*molitva zaamvonnaia*).

the Feast of the Holy Forefathers, a feast celebrated twice a year in medieval Rus'— in the advent season before Christmas and on the first Saturday of Great Lent. Like the chronicle passage, the hymns for the Feast of the Holy Forefathers include lists of Old Testament figures and describe how God delivered them from danger:

Праотцев собор, празднлюбцы, приидите, псаломски да восхвалим: Адама праотца, Еноха, Ноя, Мелхиседека, Авраама, Исаака и Иакова, по законе Моисея, и Аарона, Иисуса, Самуила и Давида, с нимиже Исаию, Иеремию, Иезекииля, и Даниила, и дванадесять, купно Илию, Елиссея и вся, Захарию, и Крестителя, и проповедавшия Христа, жизнь и воскресение рода нашего.⁸⁶

Come, lovers of the feasts, and praise in psalms the assembly of forefathers: Adam the forefather, Enoch, Noah, Melchizedek, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Ezekiel; after the Law—Moses and Aaron, Joshua, Samuel and David, and with them Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel, and the twelve, together with Elijah, Elisha and all the rest, Zechariah, and the Baptist, and those who preached Christ, the life and resurrection of our race.

Иже святыя отроки из огня избавивый, Владыко, и от уст львовых Даниила, благословивы Авраама, и Исаака, раба Твоего, и сего сына Иакова, благоволивый от семене их быти по нам, да прежде поползнувшия спасеши праотцы наша Крестом Твоим и Воскресением и, расторгнув смертныя узы, совозставиши вся, яже от века суция в мертвых, поклоняющияся Тебе, Христе, Царю веков.⁸⁷

Having delivered the youths from the flames, O Lord, and Daniel from the mouths of lions; having blessed Abraham, and Isaac, Your servant, and his son Jacob; You were well pleased to come from their seed unto us and to save our forefathers through Your Cross and Resurrection, and having destroyed the bonds of death, and having raised all the dead from the ages; we worship You, O Christ, the King of the ages.

The chronicle passage also likens Princess Ol'ga to the Byzantine empress Helen, who plays an important role in Orthodox sacred history, and this comparison has important

⁸⁶ The present study is based on Menaion manuscripts from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. For the sake of comprehensibility, where medieval hymns are preserved in the contemporary service books, I use the contemporary text and cite its location in the medieval manuscripts. A twelfth century manuscript that contains this hymn is: Rossiiskaia natsional'naia biblioteka (hereafter RNB), fond 728 (Sobr. Sofiiskoi biblioteki), № 384, Sticherarion (with musical notation), copied during the prelacy of Novgorod Archbishop Arkadii (1156-1163). See *Svodnyi katalog*, 95-96. Accessed from: http://manuscripts.ru/mns/main?p_text=83860373 (November 2013).

⁸⁷ Ibid.

liturgical associations. In the narrative of the conversion of Rus' that runs throughout the *Primary Chronicle*, Princess Ol'ga and Prince Vladimir are portrayed like the liturgical services portray St. Helen and St. Constantine. In the services, St. Helen is treated as a righteous female forbear after the typology of Mary: she is the mother of the emperor who converts the Roman Empire to Christianity.⁸⁸ Similarly, Princess Ol'ga is the Christian predecessor—the grandmother—of Prince Vladimir, the ruler who converts the Eastern Slavs to Christianity. In the Feast of Ss. Constantine and Helen, Helen's womb is called blessed and holy because it carries Constantine:

Воистинну блаженно чрево и освященна утроба, тебе носившая, царю
мировожденне, христианов радости, Константине Боговенчанне...⁸⁹

Truly blessed is the belly and sanctified is the womb that carried you, O peace-loving emperor, the joy of Christians, O divinely-anointed Constantine...

The Byzantine empress is also described as a “divinely wise” woman who abandons the darkness,⁹⁰ forsakes idols and attains the Kingdom of Heaven:

Светом облиставшися Богоначальным, тьму неразумия оставила еси
воистинну, Богомудрая Елено, приискренно Царю веков поработала еси.⁹¹

⁸⁸ Oskokina, “Metodologicheskie problem...,” 178-187. There also exists a fascinating apocryphal story that connects Princess Ol'ga, Empress Helen, and the Queen of the East (*Tsaritsa Savskaia*)—three characters who are mentioned in the 955 passage. According to a very early legend, the “wood of the True Cross” was first identified by the mysterious Old Testament queen as Solomon was building his great temple. It was rediscovered, centuries later, by the Empress Helen (an event celebrated at the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross). Finally, a piece of the cross was brought to Kiev by Ol'ga following her trip to Constantinople. See M. N. Skaballanovich, “Znachenie prazdnika Vozdvizheniia Kresta Gospodnia,” *Vozdvizhenie Chestnogo i Zhivotvoriashchego Kresta Gospodnia* (Kiev: Izd. Prolog, 2004), 232-236, 249-250.

⁸⁹ The citation here is from the contemporary Feast of Ss. Constantine and Helena. See Meneia. Mai., T. 2 (Moscow: Izd. Russkoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi, 2002), 344. I have yet to locate the hymn in twelfth or thirteenth century texts; however, given the remarkable continuity between the medieval and contemporary celebrations of this feast, it is likely the hymn was included in medieval manuscripts. Regardless, the hymn is an excellent summary of the mother-son theme that runs throughout the hymnography devoted to Constantine and Helen.

⁹⁰ This phrase also describes Ol'ga's baptism in the chronicle: “*Blagoslovena ty v ruskikh, iako vozliubi svet*”, *a t'mu ostavi*.”

⁹¹ Menai. Mai., 347.

You shone with divine light, and truly abandoned the darkness of foolishness, O divinely wise Helen, having likewise become a slave to the King of all ages.

Веровавши в Господа жива, еже быти всем подающаго, мерзских и суетных идолов мертвенная отинула еси служения и прияла еси радостно, Елено, Царство Небесное.⁹²

O Helen, having actively believed in the Lord Who gives being to all; you forsook the service of vile, vain and dead idols, and joyfully accepted the Heavenly Kingdom.

The liturgical presentation of St Helen—and the saintly type of “holy mothers,” in general—is patterned on the major feasts of the Theotokos. As discussed above, Orthodox hymnography emphasizes that by giving birth to God in the flesh, Mary becomes the unique intercessor between God and His creation. This image of Mary is highlighted in the Old Testament readings from Vespers on her feast days. In these readings Mary is called the “House of God” and “Gate of Heaven” and likened to a ladder descending from heaven to earth (Gen. 28:10-17; Ezek. 43:27-44:4). These images are understood in New Testament typology as a prefiguring of the incarnation of Christ in Mary’s womb. Mary is the medium—metaphorically, the *ladder* and the *gate*—through which God united Himself to the created universe. Building on this liturgical typology, the church books portray St Helen as a “Byzantine Mary” because she is the “ladder” and “gate” through which Orthodox Christianity is established in the Roman Empire. The same liturgical model applies to Princess Ol’ga in the Primary Chronicle: she is the “Slavic Mary” because through her seed, Prince Vladimir, Orthodox salvation appears in Rus’.

⁹² Gosudarstvennyi istoricheskii muzei (hereafter GIM), Sinodal’noe sobr., № 166, Service Menaion for May (with musical notation), XII c. See *Svodnyi katalog*, 125-126 (№ 89). Accessed from: http://manuscripts.ru/mns/main?p_text=26361893 (November 2013).

Ultimately, the tale of Princess Ol'ga's baptism is a complex and creative liturgical rendering of an unrecorded event from early Kievan history. The narrative action—what actually happens, what the patriarch and princess do—derives from the prayers, hymnography and rubrics of the baptismal rite. Princess Ol'ga is baptized by the patriarch (rubrics); she is enlightened and rejoices in body and soul (baptism); she is given basic instructions in the piety of the Orthodox faith (hurching); she behaves piously and respectfully to her spiritual father, the patriarch, asking his blessing and bowing her head (Renunciation of Heresies, Churching); and she twice asks to be saved from the devil and “every evil” (Reception into Catechumenate, Exorcism). The “theology” of Princess Ol'ga's conversion—what it means, both for her and for her people—is provided by feasts in the Menaion. Like Mary, St Helen and other righteous women before her, Princess Ol'ga's faithfulness prefigures a major event in Christian sacred history: the mass baptism of Rus' in 988.

Princess Ol'ga the Forerunner

This image of Ol'ga as the “forerunner” of Christianity in Rus' is further developed in the 6477 (969) passage. Like the 955 account, the 969 text combines folk and clerical tales,⁹³ and the liturgical worship of the Byzantine Church again shapes the religious narrative. The liturgical model this time is the Feast of the Nativity of St John the Forerunner, celebrated by the Orthodox on 24 June. If in the earlier passage Princess Ol'ga is the holy mother who gives birth to Christianity in Rus', in 969 she is the “morning star” before the dawn, the herald who presages the salvation of Rus'.

⁹³ Shakhmatov, *Razyskaniia*, 114-117.

Princess Ol'ga's typological image proves to be fluid: no longer the Slavic Mary from the story of baptism, Ol'ga is recast as the Slavic Forerunner and praised exactly as the liturgical services praise St John. In fact, the panegyric (*pokhvala*) to Ol'ga is the liturgical composition *par excellence* in the *Primary Chronicle*. In no other place does one service so shape one chronicle entry— of the seventeen phrases in the *pokhvala*, sixteen are liturgical references, and all but five come from the Feast of the Nativity of St John.⁹⁴

Critical literature on the passage offers several theories about the religious character of Princess Ol'ga's depiction. A. A. Shakhmatov conjectures that the *pokhvala* originally constituted part of a “special tale” (*osobaia povest'*) about the baptism and burial of Princess Ol'ga. This “special tale” preceded the compilation of the *Primary Chronicle*, and served as the single source for the clerical narratives in both 955 and 969.⁹⁵ D. S. Likhachev also thinks the baptism and burial tales are related— not as an independent “special tale,” but as the first two parts of a larger (and hypothetical) tale on the beginning of Christianity in Rus'.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ The few references not from the Feast of the Nativity of St John, far from taking away from the liturgical import of the account, only add to the sophisticated liturgical web the chronicler creates. These exceptions mainly occur in the scriptural composite that concludes the passage, wherein Princess Ol'ga is simultaneously associated with St John the Baptist, St John Chrysostom, St Helen and the Orthodox requiem and baptism services.

⁹⁵ Ibid. Shakhmatov also believes the “special tale” was the source for the *Prolozhnoe zhitie* for July 11, a text that closely resembles the *pokhvala* to Ol'ga in the *Primary Chronicle*. N. I. Serebrianskii disagrees with Shakhmatov and considers the Prologue to be the product of South Slavic hagiographic influence. See N. I. Serebrianskii, *Drevnerusskie kniazheskie zhitia*, 23-24. For an analysis of the structural complexity of the *pokhvala*, see A. A. Gogeshvili, *Akroskikh v "Slove o polku Igoreve" i drugikh pamiatnikakh russkoi pis'mennosti XI-XIII vekov* (Moscow: [A.A. Gogeshvili], 1991), 51-59.

⁹⁶ D. S. Likhachev, *Russkie letopisi i ikh kul'turno-istoricheskoe znachenie* (Moscow: Izd. AN SSSR, 1947), 63-66. Likhachev perceives the typological models in the 955 and 969 chronicle entries— Ol'ga as the harbinger of Christianity in Rus', Ol'ga and Vladimir as the new Helen and Constantine—but does not discern their liturgical orientation.

Roman Jakobson sees the origins of Ol'ga's *pokhvala* differently. He believes the chronicle text praising Ol'ga reflects remnants of a tenth-century homiletic *pokhvala* to the Czech martyr, Liudmilla.⁹⁷ Jakobson's argument rests on the shared terminology between a Latin sermon, "Factum est," about Princess Liudmilla and the chronicle accounts about Princess Ol'ga. In both documents, a royal forerunner of Christianity in the Slavic lands is described as "the morning star" and "the dawn before the light."⁹⁸ For Jakobson, this coincidence is evidence of Czech influence in the *Primary Chronicle*. He does not consider that Czech and Russian manuscripts may share a common liturgical source: the church feasts for earlier Christian "forerunners" such as St John the Baptist and St Helen. A corrective to Jakobson's approach is provided by E. A. Osokina in her aforementioned dissertation, "Sootnosheniia gimnografii i agiografii na pamiat' kniagini Ol'gi." Osokina analyzes the interrelations between Ol'ga's *pokhvala*,⁹⁹ Liudmilla's vita and several liturgical services, including the Feast of Ss. Constantine and Helen, the Akathist to the Theotokos, and original Slavonic hymnography composed for Ol'ga's veneration in Rus'. The scholar's liturgical analysis confirms the important interface between history writing and hymnography in Rus'.

The textual analysis that follows indicates how precise that interface could be. The chronicle entry for 969 is not a loose collection of hymnographic formulas and liturgical associations. Rather, it is a scrupulous depiction of Princess Ol'ga crafted from specific hymns and readings from the Feast of the Nativity of St John. This observation

⁹⁷ R. O. Jakobson, "Russkie otgoloski drevnecheshskikh pamiatnikov o Liudmile," *Kul'turnoe nasledie Drevnei Rusi (Istoki. Stanovlenie. Traditsii)* (Moscow: 1976), 46-50.

⁹⁸ Ibid. Jakobson also suggests the chronicle's depiction of Ol'ga and Vladimir follows established hagiographic models for Liudimilla and Viacheslav from the Czech tradition.

⁹⁹ Osokina's concern is not the *pokhvala* from the Primary Chronicle, but two later versions: an early fourteenth-century version in the *Prolozhnoe zhitie* and a sixteenth-century version in the *Stepennaia kniga*.

carries with it an important liturgical component, since a liturgical analysis of the *pokhvala* reveals concrete links between the chronicle passage and a particular set of rubrics: the Typicon of St Alexis the Studite installed at Kiev Pecherskii monastery in the late eleventh century. Neither the Typicon of the Great Church, nor the contemporary Russian typicon can account for the full correspondence between Ol'ga's *pokhvala* and the Feast of the Nativity of St John. Only the Typicon of St Alexis contains the moveable Communion verse (discussed below) that appears at the conclusion of the 969 account. The evidence thus suggests that the version of Ol'ga's *pokhvala* in the *Primary Chronicle* only received its final form under the editorship of the monk-chroniclers at the Monastery of the Caves.

In the excerpt below, the emboldened text represents chronicle materials that derive from the Feast of the Nativity of St John, the italicized text signifies materials from the Baptism service, and the underlined text indicates Old Testament lectionary readings.

Си бысть **предътекущая крестьянстей земли, аки деньница предъ солнцемъ** и аки **зоря предъ светомъ**. Си бо съяше аки луна в нощи, тако и си в неверныхъ чловецехъ светящеса аки бисеръ въ кале: кални бо беша грех, не омовени крещеньемъ святымъ. *Си бо омыся купелью святою, совлечеса греховною одеждевъ ветхаго человека Адама, и въ новый Адамъ облечеса, еже есть Христосъ.* Мы же рцемъ къ ней: **Радуйся, руское познание къ Богу, начатокъ примиренью быхомъ.** Си первое вниде в царство небесное от Руси, **сию бо хвалят рустие сынове аки началницу, ибо по смерти моляше Бога за Русь.** Праведныхъ бо душа не умирают, яко же рече Соломанъ: «Похвала праведному възвеселятся людье», бессмертье бо есть память его, яко от Бога познавается и от человекъ. Се бо вси чловеци прославля ють, видяща ляжашая в теле на многа лет, рече бо пророкъ: «Прославляющая мя прославлю». О сяковых бо Давидъ глаголаше: **«В память вечную праведникъ будетъ, от слуха зла не убоятся; готово сердце его уповати [на] Господа, утвердися сердце его и не подвижется.»** Соломанъ бо рече: «Праведници въ веки живутъ, и от Господа мзда имъ есть и строенье от Вышняго. Сего ради приимуть царствие красоте и венець доброте от руки Господня, яко десницею покрыеть я и мышцею защитить

я.» *Защититъ бо естъ сию блажену Вольгу от противника и супостата дьявола (32-33).*

Olga was **the precursor of the Christian land, even as the dayspring precedes the sun and as the dawn precedes the day.** For she shone like the moon by night, and she was radiant among the infidels like a pearl in the mire; since the people were soiled, and not **yet purified of their sin by holy baptism.** *But she herself was cleansed by this sacred purification. She put off the sinful garments of the old Adam, and was clad in the new Adam, which is Christ.* Thus we say to her, **Rejoice, Russian knowledge of God, the beginning of reconciliation.** She was the first from Rus to enter the kingdom of God, **and the sons of Rus thus praise her as their leader, for since her death she has interceded with God in their behalf.** The souls of the righteous do not perish. As Solomon has said, “The nations rejoice in the praise of the righteous, for his memory is eternal, since it is acknowledged by God and men.” For all men glorify her, as they behold her lying there in the body for many years. As the prophet has said, “I will glorify them that glorify me.” Of such persons David also said, **“The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance, he shall not be afraid of evil tidings. His heart is fixed, trusting in Jehovah, his heart is fixed and will not be moved.”** And Solomon said, “The righteous live forever, and they have reward from God and grace from the Most High. Therefore shall they receive the kingdom of beauty, and the crown of goodness from the hand of the Lord. With his right hand will he cover them, and with his arm will he protect them.” *For he protected the sainted Olga from the devil, our adversary and foe.*

The identification of Princess Ol’ga with St John is explicit from the first phrase: Ol’ga is *pred’tekushchiia* because in Orthodox liturgical tradition St John is *predtecha*, or “Forerunner.” This designation is used in the titles for six of the seven feasts that commemorate St John in the liturgical year, such as the Nativity of the Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John (the feast’s full name), or the Finding of the Head of John the Forerunner, commemorated on 29 August. The term *predtecha* also appears frequently in the hymnography devoted to St John, as in the following stikhira from Vespers:

Проповедникъ былъ еси Агнца Божия и Слова, Иоанне пророче и Предтече, прорицаеши будущая и предглаголеши концемъ: се Агнецъ Божий, вземляй мира грехи и подавай всемъ велию милость.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ Stikhirar’ mineinyi, notirovannyi, stikhiri s 12 dek. po 31 avg (RNB, Sof. 384).

You were the Prophet of the Lamb of God and Word, O John the prophet and Forerunner, predicting the future and foretelling the end: “Behold, the Lamb of God, [Who] takes on the sins of the world and grants great mercy to all.”

Ol’ga is called the *den’nitsa pred’ solntsem’* and the *zoria pred’ svetom’* for similar reasons. The Slavonic word *dennitsa* means “morning star” or “dawn,”¹⁰¹ and the hymnography about St John repeatedly refers to him as a “star” (*zvezda*), “the dawn” (*zaria*) or as the “dayspring from on high” (*zaria, vostok svishe*), another term for the dawn, indicating the particular point on the horizon where the sun rises.¹⁰² In the following stikhera from Lauds, for instance, St John is the “star of stars” and the “dayspring from on high”:

Звезда звезд, Предтеча от неплодныя утробы на земли раждается днесь,
Иоанн Боговожденный, и Христову являет зарю, восток свыше, в правое
верных прехождение.¹⁰³

The star of stars, the Forerunner, is born today on earth from a barren womb, John the lover of God, revealing the dawn of Christ, the dayspring from on high, which rightly guides the faithful.

Another hymn from Matins emphasizes that John is the “lamp of the Light” who goes before the Word of God like a “shining star”:

Днесь Света светильник предпутие творит пришествию Божия Слова, яко
звезда светлая...¹⁰⁴

Today the Light of the lamp, like a shining star, prepares the way for the coming of the Word of God...

¹⁰¹ *Polnyi tserkovno-slavianskii slovar’*, ed. G. D’iachenko (Moscow: Izd. Moskovskogo Patriarchata, 1993), 140.

¹⁰² *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. James Orr (Wilmington, Del.: APA, 1915).

¹⁰³ *Meneia. Iun’*, T. 2 (Moscow: Izd. Russkoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi, 2002), 306.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.* 290.

The Studite canon chanted during Matins also presents the image of St John as the “star before the sun.” As in the following verse:

Днесь пустынный гражданин Иоанн рождается, покаяния проповедник и благодати свидетель истинен, Предтеча Слова и Свету предсияющая звезда.¹⁰⁵

Today the citizen of the desert John is born, the preacher of repentance and the true witness of grace, the Forunner of the Word and star shining before the Light.

The next few sentences emphasize Ol’ga’s spiritual purity. As one of the few Christians in Rus’, she is likened to the moon that shines in the night,¹⁰⁶ and is praised for “washing away the filth of her sins by holy baptism, putting off the Old Adam and putting on the new Adam, which is Christ.” This theological statement is a loose paraphrase of the Epistle reading for the “Commemoration of the Dead” (1 Cor. 15:42-49), a very ancient reading found as early as the Euchologium Sinaiticum, the ninth-century Glagolitic Euchologion discovered at St. Catherine’s Monastery on Mt. Sinai in 1975.¹⁰⁷ The liturgical inference here is simple enough. In a passage about the passing of a saint (and there are clear hagiographical overtones) the chronicler draws on materials from the Orthodox ceremony for commemorating the dead.

But there is another possible liturgical source for this phrase: the Great Water Blessing, the service of sanctification for the water used during baptisms and on the Feast of Theophany, one of the most important feasts of the year, celebrated on 6 January. A

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. 301.

¹⁰⁶The *pokhvala* probably describes Princess Ol’ga as one who “shines like the moon” because one ancient hymn for Constantine and Helen—a hymn not preserved in the contemporary services—compares Constantine to the sun and Helen to the moon. See Mineia sluzhebnaia na mai, notirovannaia (GIM, Sinod. 166).

¹⁰⁷ M. Baker, “The New Testament Lections in the Euchologium Sinaiticum,” *Polata Knigopisnaitia* 25-26 (1994), 120-169.

prayer from that service asks God to bless the baptismal waters, so that the baptized may “put off the old man” and be “clothed in the new”:

Ты даровал еси нам свыше паки рождение водою и Духом. Явися, Господи, на воде сей, и даждь претворитися в ней крещаемому во еже отложить убо ветхаго человека, тлеемаго по похотем прелести, облещися же в новаго, обновляемаго по образу создавшаго его: да быв сраслен подобию смерти Твояе крещением, общник и воскресения будет: и сохранив дар Святаго Твоего Духа и возрадив залог благодати, примет почесть горняго звания, и сопричтется перворожденным написанным на Небеси, в Тебе Бозе и Господе нашем Иисусе Христе.¹⁰⁸

You have given us from on high a new birth through water and the Spirit. Therefore, O Lord, manifest Yourself in this water, and grant that he who is baptized in it may be transformed; that he may put away from himself the old man, which is corrupt through the lusts of the flesh, and that he may, in like manner, be a partaker of Your Resurrection; and having preserved the gift of Your Holy Spirit, and increased the measure of grace committed to him, he may receive the prize of his high calling, and be numbered with the firstborn whose names are written in heaven, in You, our God and Lord, Jesus Christ.

As noted earlier, the Orthodox baptism rite significantly shapes the 955 passage. And in that account, when the chronicler describes Ol’ga’s baptism he does so with the hymns, readings and rubrics of the baptism service itself. The same technique prevails in Princess Ol’ga’s *pokhvala*: materials from the initiation service are used when the chronicler turns to Ol’ga’s baptism.¹⁰⁹ That the same rite continues to influence the 969 account supports Shakhmatov’s hypothesis that the tales of Ol’ga’s baptism and burial were originally a single work.

The next phrase in the *pokhvala*—“Rejoice, Russian knowledge of God”—reflects the standard hymnographic practice of beginning certain laudatory verses with

¹⁰⁸The text here is from a contemporary service book. Manuscript evidence indicates the prayer was used in medieval Rus’. See RNB, fond 728 (Sobr. Sofiiskoi biblioteki), № 526, Service Book. Described in I. Kuprianov, “Obozrenie pergamennykh rukopisei Novgorodskoi Sofiiskoi biblioteki,” *Izvestiia ORIA S 6*, 313-316. See also M. Zheltov, daikon. “Chin Bozhestvennoi liturgii v drevneishikh (XI-XIV vv.) slavianskikh Sluzhebnikakh,” *Bogoslovskie trudy*, vyp. 41, 272-359.

¹⁰⁹ The final line of the passage is also an example of the baptismal “voice,” reiterating the “snare of the devil” motif from the Exorcism rite.

the phrase, “Rejoice!” (*Raduisia!*). Thus, at the very least, the chronicler is praising Ol’ga as the services customarily praise a saint. There is another interpretation, however. In his 1871 monograph, *Drevnerusskie zhitiia sviatykh kak istoricheskii istochnik*, V. O. Kliuchevskii theorizes that elements in Orthodox saints’ lives (*zhitiia*) developed from the kondak and irmos, the hymnographic genres that follow the sixth ode of the canon at Matins.¹¹⁰ The kondak gives the basic story of the saint, to whom the irmos then offers poetic praise beginning with the standard formula, “Rejoice!” (*Raduisia!*). This liturgical trope is also repeated in the *oikos* sections of an akathist hymn, a paraliturgical document dedicated to a certain saint or sacred event. The original akathist, and by far the most important, was composed in honor of Mary in the sixth century, and is still read at special services during Great Lent even to the present day. Thus, as in the story of her baptism, in 969 Ol’ga is described using the liturgical language associated with Mary, the Mother of God.

Further, the notion that Princess Ol’ga is the “beginning” (*nachatok*) of reconciliation with God in Rus’ corresponds to the following stichera from the Nativity of St John, where the Forerunner is praised as “the beginning of our salvation” (*nachatok nashego spaceniia*):

Подобает Иоанну благовоние, подобает Крестителю песней красота, сей бо проповеда начаток нашего спасения, възгравыйся во чреве и вопия в пустыни: покаятеся, Царев воин, Предтеча благодати, Агнца провозвещающа и Спаса моля о душах наших.¹¹¹

Let us worthily honor John with fragrances; let us worthily honor the Baptizer with a song of beauty, for he preached the beginning of our salvation, leaping in the belly and crying out in the wilderness, the warrior of the King and the

¹¹⁰ V. O. Kliuchevskii, *Drevnerusskie zhitiia sviatykh kak istoricheskii istochnik* (Moscow: Nauka, 1988), 360-367.

¹¹¹ Stikhirar’ mineinyi, notirovannyi, stikhiri s 12 dek. po 31 avg (RNB, Sof. 384).

Forerunner of grace, proclaiming the Lamb, and praying to the Savior for our souls.

Overall, this short phrase from the *pokhvala* (“Rejoice, Russian knowledge of God, the beginning of reconciliation”) conveys three levels of liturgical subtext: Ol’ga is commemorated in the formulas reserved for Orthodox saints and simultaneously associated with both St John and the Theotokos.

The lines following these once again identify Prince Ol’ga as a “forerunner.” This time she is the first of the East Slavs to enter heaven, the one who prepares the way for her people to follow. The passage’s continuity with the 955 account is again evident: the patriarch’s prophecy at Ol’ga’s baptism that she will be “blessed by Russian sons until the last generation of her grandchildren” is confirmed, for she is “praised by Russian sons as the founder (*nachalnitsa*)” of Christianity in Rus’. The masculine form of this term, *nachal’nik*, is used in the liturgical services to describe Christ, who is called the “founder [or leader] of our salvation” (*nachal’nik spaseniia*).¹¹² The theological idea that Princess Ol’ga continues to pray to God for Rus’ even after her death reflects the standard Orthodox belief that the saints in heaven continually pray for the salvation of those on earth. This sentiment is one of the most common tropes in Menaion hymnography, and is particularly common in the *stikhera* genre, where saints are regularly imagined as praying for the salvation of the souls of the faithful still on earth.

The scriptural interpolations that conclude the 969 entry are representative of the way Sacred Writ often functions in the Primary Chronicle. On the surface, the readings appear to be excerpts from two of the seven Sapiential books, or “Wisdom Books,” of the Septuagint Old Testament— Proverbs and the Wisdom of Solomon. In the chronicler’s

¹¹² *Polnyi tserkovno-slavianskii slovar’*, 338.

monastic world, however, these readings did not represent biblical so much as liturgical sources. The selections, in fact, are citations and paraphrases from the Prophetologion (*Parimii*), the liturgical book that contains the Old Testament readings for the most important feasts of the liturgical year. In the 969 account, three of the four citations from this church book derive from two feasts. The line that opens the scriptural composite and the line that concludes it correspond to the readings at Vespers from the Feast of All Saints.¹¹³ Of the two excerpts that fall in between, the first is a precise citation of the third reading at Vespers for the Feast of St John Chrysostom.¹¹⁴ The second excerpt, attributed to the Prophet David, is perhaps the most multivalent liturgical association in the entire Primary Chronicle. Empirically, the text reproduces the exact Communion verse for the Feast of the Nativity of St John (Ps. 112:6-8),¹¹⁵ making it consistent with the chronicler's earlier treatment of Princess Ol'ga in the passage. The term "Memory Eternal" (*Vechnaia Pam'iat*), moreover, is the climactic phrase sung during an Orthodox requiem, or *panikhida*. This phrase is traditionally used exclusively to remember Orthodox faithful but *not* saints. At the canonization service, "Memory Eternal" is sung one final time before the momentous transition to "We Magnify" (*Velichanie*), the hymn used to praise canonized saints. One of the only exclusions to this provision in all the hymnography of the Orthodox Church is none other than the Feast of Ss. Constantine and

¹¹³ "Праведныхъ бо душа не умираютъ" can be read as a paraphrase of Wisdom of Solomon 3:1: "Праведныхъ души в руке Божией...упование ихъ безсмертия исполнено." The final citation is taken word-for-word from Wisdom of Solomon 5:15: "Праведницы во веки живут, и в Господе мзда их, попечение ихъ у Вышняго. Сего ради примутъ царствие благолепия, и венецъ доброты отъ руки Господни: зане десницею покрываетъ я, и мышцею защититъ ихъ."

¹¹⁴ Proverbs 29:2: "Похваляему праведнику, возвеселятся людие: безсмертие бо есть память его, яко отъ Господа познавается и отъ человекъ..."

¹¹⁵ Pentkovskii, *Tipikon patriarkha Aleksii*, 348-349.

Helen.¹¹⁶ St Helen is one of the liturgical models for Princess Ol'ga in 955, and so the association is plausible. And if that is the case, then Princess Ol'ga is simultaneously linked to three different liturgical myths (those of John the Forerunner, the empress Helen, and the Orthodox requiem service) all in a single phrase from Psalm 112.

Taken *in toto*, these “biblical” readings express the remarkable inner unity of the Orthodox liturgical system and its masterful reformulation in the *Primary Chronicle*. In a single scriptural composite, Princess Ol'ga is added to the communion of saints (All Saints), simultaneously presented as a Christian Forerunner (Nativity of St John), Holy Mother (St Helen) and Enlightener (St John Chrysostom), and, in a passage about her funeral, described using the ancient hymn for the Orthodox deceased (“Memory Eternal”). Thus, far from being a simple “biblical” tribute to Princess Ol'ga, the 955 *pokhvala* proves to be an extraordinarily sophisticated expression of Byzantine liturgical mythology.

¹¹⁶ A.A. Lukashevich, “Vechnaia Pamiat’,” *Pravoslavnaia Entsiklopediia* 7 (Moscow: Iz. Moskovskogo Patriarkhata, 2004), 93.

Chapter Two

A “New Constantine” in Rus’: The Liturgical Structure of Prince Vladimir’s Pre-Conversion Biography

He is the new Constantine of mighty Rome, who was himself baptized and who baptized his subjects; for Vladimir imitated the deeds of Constantine himself...For even if he was formerly given to evil and unclean lusts, he later devoted himself to repentance, as the Apostle instructs: “But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.”

Primary Chronicle, 6523 (1015)

Perhaps the most important non-biblical character in the Byzantine storyworld is the Holy Equal of the Apostles Emperor Constantine the Great.¹¹⁷ In a series of feasts celebrated throughout the liturgical year—the Feast of Ss. Constantine and Helen foremost among them—Constantine is depicted as an emperor-apostle commissioned by God to convert the Roman Empire to Christianity. The story, as told in the church books, is built on three typologies. Constantine is a wise and righteous king (like David), who consecrates a great temple (like Solomon), following a direct and miraculous conversion (like the apostle Paul).

This liturgical myth about Constantine is the model for Prince Vladimir in the *Primary Chronicle*. The prince’s entire biography—from his earliest conquests to his post-conversion building projects—is designed to portray him as a “new Constantine”; as the apostle-king of Rus’ who imitates “the deeds of Constantine himself” (58). The chronicle not only reconstructs Vladimir’s conversion and baptism after Constantine’s: it also reconstructs the prince’s pagan past using episodes from the lives of Constantine’s three types in the hymnography. In so doing, the chronicle conforms the conversion of

¹¹⁷ This is his official title in contemporary church books.

Rus' to the story of the conversion of the Roman Empire preserved in the Byzantine church books.

This chapter examines the opening segments of Prince Vladimir's conversion narrative in 6488 (980) and 6491 (983)—entries that recount the prince's exploits as a pagan ruler in the years before his baptism. The 980 account begins with Prince Vladimir in Novgorod, preparing for war against his brother, Prince Iaropolk. Before launching the campaign, Vladimir sends word to Rogvolod, the ruler of Polotsk, that he wishes to marry his daughter, Rogneda. The father asks Rogneda if she desires to marry Vladimir, and the young woman haughtily replies that she will not draw off the boots of a slave's son, and prefers to marry Iaropolk (36). Vladimir, upon receiving Rogneda's reply, organizes an army and attacks Polotsk; he captures the city, kills Rogvolod and his two sons, and takes Rogneda as his wife.

Immediately thereafter, Vladimir mounts a campaign against Iaropolk. Unprepared to meet his brother in battle, Prince Iaropolk shuts himself up in Kiev with his people and one of his military advisors, a general named Blud. Unbeknownst to Iaropolk, Prince Vladimir sends treacherous proposals to Blud, and the general agrees to betray Iaropolk. By means of a ruse, Blud convinces Iaropolk to flee from Kiev and take refuge in Rodne. Now outside the capital, Blud persuades Iaropolk that Vladimir cannot be defeated, and counsels him to make peace with his brother. Against the wishes of a different advisor, Variashko, who fears for Prince Iaropolk's life, the prince assents: he returns to his former castle, now inhabited by Vladimir and his retinue, to appear before his brother and express his readiness to accept any terms he might offer. As Iaropolk enters the castle to meet Vladimir, two Varangians stab him in the breast with their

swords; at the same time, Blud closes the doors behind his former patron to prevent Iaropolk's troops from defending their besieged prince.

With Prince Iaropolk dead, Vladimir begins to reign alone in Kiev, taking his brother's throne and wife. The woman, a former nun, soon bears Vladimir a son, Sviatopolk. The prince also begins to construct idols on the hills surrounding Kiev, a practice the chronicler strongly condemns: "The people sacrificed to them, calling them gods, and brought their sons and their daughters to sacrifice them to these devils. They desecrated the earth with their offerings, and the land of Rus' and this hill were defiled with blood" (ibid.).

The second half of the 980 passage emphasizes Prince Vladimir's prodigal lifestyle, particularly his sexual appetite: "Now Vladimir was overcome by lust for women...He had three hundred concubines at Vyshgorod, three hundred at Belgorod, and two hundred at Berestovo...He was insatiable in vice...[and] even seduced married women and violated young girls, for he was a lover of women like unto Solomon" (ibid.). Here again, the chronicle foreshadows the conversion of Rus', noting that Solomon ended his life as a polytheist, while Vladimir moved from idol worship to monotheism. The passage concludes with two citations from Proverbs, the first about the "evil woman" whose "feet go down to death" and "steps take hold on hell" (Prov. 5:3-6), and the second about the "virtuous woman" whose "price is far above rubies" (Prov. 31:10-31).

At first glance, the chronicle entry for 980 is a conflation of two folk tales about Vladimir winning a bride.¹¹⁸ The opening tale, which concerns the courtship of Rogneda

¹¹⁸ Shakhmatov, *Razyskaniia*, 137. B. Sokolov, "Epicheskie skazaniia o zhenit'be kniazia Vladimira (Germano-russkie otnosheniia v oblasti eposa)," *Uchenye zapiski Saratovskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta imeni N.G. Chernyshevskogo*, v. 1, No. 3 (1923), 69-122. D. S. Likhachev, "'Ustnie letopisi' v sostave Povesti vremennykh let," *Istoricheskie zapiski*, v. 17 (1945), 201-224.

and the taking of Polotsk, appears twice in the Laurentian codex, first in the condensed version examined here and later in expanded form under the year 6636 (1128).¹¹⁹ A. A. Shakhmatov believes both versions of the tale originated in Novgorod and derive from a *bylina* about Rogneda. Shakhmatov designates the second tale, in which Prince Vladimir goes to war against Prince Iaropolk, as a folk legend, and attributes it to the “most ancient layer” (*drevneishii svod*) of the chronicle composition. S. M. Mikheev also identifies Vladimir’s campaign against Iaropolk with the oldest chronicle layer, but views the Rogneda episode as a later interpolation from the “Nikon layer” (*svod Nikona*, 1070s).¹²⁰

A. A. Shaikin discerns fairytale elements in the chronicle plot about Vladimir’s ascendancy to power.¹²¹ Vladimir, the youngest brother, the son of a slave, accepts that which the older brothers reject (Novgorod), and is scorned by a beautiful bride (Rogneda), only to overcome these obstacles, win the maiden and become the Grand Prince of Kiev. S. Ia. Senderovich also reads the story of Vladimir’s political victory as a tale of the younger brother’s triumph over the older, but ascribes this to the influence of the Old Testament: as God chose Jacob over the older Esau, so Vladimir is chosen to rule Rus’ over his older brother, Iaropolk (461-499).¹²²

Typically, scholars treat the chronicle entry for 980 separately from the story of the conversion of Rus’, which they identify with the chronicle entries for 986-988. The exception here is Shakhmatov, who discerns two fragments from an original tale about

¹¹⁹ Shakhmatov, *Razyskaniia*, 247-251, 471.

¹²⁰ Mikheev, *Kto pisal “Povest’ vremennykh let”?*, 108.

¹²¹ A. A. Shaikin, *Povest’ vremennykh let: istoriia i poetika* (Moscow: Russkaia panaroma, 2011), 104-105.

¹²² S. Ia. Senderovich, “Metod Shakhmatova, rannee letopisanie i problema nachala russkoi istoriografii,” *Iz istorii russkoi kul’tury*, v. 1 (Moscow: Drevniaia Rus’, 2000), 461-499.

the baptism of Rus' in the 980 passage: the information on Vladimir's construction of idols and its condemnation by the chronicler with a verse from the Old Testament, Ezekiel 18:23 ("But our gracious God desires not the death of sinners..."); and the text about Vladimir's sexual debauchery, and likeness to Solomon, ending with the interpolation of Psalm 147:5 ("Great is the Lord..."). Shakhmatov's claims are inseparable from his theory on the "Kherson Legend" and require a brief explanation.

In 1906, Shakhmatov published a seminal philological study on the conversion of Prince Vladimir and the baptism of Rus', *Korsunskaiia legenda o kreshchenii Vladimira* (*The Kherson Legend of the Baptism of Vladimir*). In the study he presents a "comparative historical" analysis of several redactions of Vladimir's vitae, the chronicle account, and a third, independent tale, "Slovo o tom, kako krestisia Vladimir, vozmia Korsun" ("The Story of How Vladimir was Baptized, While Taking Kherson"). Questions about the origins of these manuscripts and the possible relations between them long preceded Shakhmatov's study. In the mid-nineteenth century, Metropolitan Makarii of Moscow theorized that Vladimir's *zhitiia* were the original source for the story of the prince's baptism, a conjecture later supported by E. E. Golubinskii.¹²³ At the turn of the twentieth century, N. K. Nikol'skii debunked Makarii's claims, arguing that the "Slovo o tom, kak krestisia Vladimir..." was the original written record of the baptism of Rus', and persuasively showing that the *zhitiia* could not be the first accounts, since they derived from the chronicle tale.¹²⁴

¹²³ Makarii, Metropolitan of Moscow, "Pamiat' i pokhvala kniazuiu russkomu Vladimiru," *Khristianskoe chtenie*, no. 2 (1849), 317-329. E. E. Golubinskii, *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi*, v. 1 (Moscow: Univ. tipografiia, 1901), 133, 224.

¹²⁴ N. K. Nikol'skii, "K voprosu o istochnikakh letopisnogo skazaniia o sv. Vladimire," *Khristianskoe chtenie*, no. 7 (1902), 89-106.

Shakhmatov's ground-breaking hypothesis in *Korsunskaiia legenda* is that all of the manuscript traditions mentioned above—the *zhitiia*, the chronicles and the “Slovo o tom, kak krestisia Vladimir...”—are based on a common source-text: an original, non-extant tale about the baptism of Prince Vladimir.¹²⁵ Shakhmatov calls this hypothetical, reconstructed tale the “Kherson Legend” and attributes its authorship to Greek clergy serving at the Church of the Tithes in the last quarter of the eleventh century.¹²⁶ In his view the clerics combined “two narratives from two different historical and cultural worlds” into a single story of military triumph, divine intervention and national conversion.¹²⁷ The first narrative concerned Prince Vladimir's miraculous healing and conversion in Kherson, and originated as an oral legend among the Greek population of that city. The second story arose in the “semi-pagan” court circles of eleventh-century Kiev and took the form of a *bylina* about Prince Vladimir's siege of Tsar'grad (Constantinople) and forced marriage to the Byzantine *tsarevna*.¹²⁸ In an act of “poetic creativity,” the author of the Kherson Legend merged these “epic” and “hagiographic motifs” with “historical facts” about Vladimir's siege of Kherson and marriage to a Byzantine princess.¹²⁹ Thus, as Shakhmatov sees it, the legend has little to do with “historical reality.” The story is an inventive composite of facts, folklore and religious

¹²⁵ Shakhmatov, *Korsunskaiia legenda*, 10-20, 59-65, 82-83.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.* 120.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.* 133.

¹²⁸ Shakhmatov believes the original version of the *bylina* recounted Prince Vladimir courtship of a Greek princess, who haughtily refuses to marry a barbarian. To win the bride Vladimir sieges “Tsar'grad” (Constantinople); eventually, he takes the city, deflowers the princess in the presence of her parents, murders them, and returns with his bride to Kiev.

¹²⁹ Shakhmatov, *Razyskaniia*, 133-137.

fiction, aimed at refiguring Vladimir's military triumph against Byzantium as an event necessary for the conversion of Rus'.

There is an important link between Shakhmatov's reconstruction and the Byzantine rite, a connection overlooked by the philologist himself. Nearly every example of liturgical discourse that appears in the chronicle from 980 to 1015 also appears in Shakhmatov's hypothetical text.¹³⁰ The scholar discerns a "subtext" beneath the religious materials in the story of the baptism of Rus', and assumes that subtext is a single, non-extant historical manuscript, the Kherson Legend. Shakhmatov fails to distinguish the *liturgical origin* of these materials, and, as a result, he does not recognize the real, unifying subtext behind Prince Vladimir's depiction in the Primary Chronicle: the liturgical image of Constantine the Great from the Feast of Ss. Constantine and Helen. This feast plays a minor role in the chronicle's composition as early as the 955 account and begins to exert significant influence in the 980 passage.¹³¹

A "New David" and "Libertine Like Solomon"

The story of the baptism of Rus' is structured to show Vladimir doing "the deeds of Constantine" as an "Enlightener" and "Equal of the Apostles." And since David and Solomon are types for Constantine in the festal hymnography, the chronicle shows Vladimir doing the deeds of these characters, as well. In the 980 passage, Vladimir is

¹³⁰ Shakhmatov, *Korsunskaiia legenda*, 110-120.

¹³¹ That the monks of the Monastery of the Caves celebrated the Feast of Ss. Constantine and Helen is attested to by the "Typikon of Patriarch Alexis the Studite," the typikon installed at the monastery by St. Theodosius in the eleventh century.

portrayed as a “great sinner,”¹³² and his unrighteousness is modeled on that of the Jewish kings: the prince is David because he murders a man and takes his wife in adultery; he is Solomon because he builds idols and keeps a harem.

Orthodox typology so dominates the chronicle’s depiction of Prince Vladimir that even his sins are patterned after the sins of Constantine’s liturgical types (David, Solomon and Paul) in the hymnography. The story of Prince Vladimir’s campaign against Iaropolk is a good example of this: a folk tale about a prince winning a bride is merged with the Old Testament narrative of David and Bathsheba. The conflation is designed to portray Vladimir as a “new David” on the model of St. Constantine, who is repeatedly figured as a “new David” in the festal hymnography. Consider the following *sedalen* from the Feast of Ss. Constantine and Helen:

Новый был еси Давид образы, рог свыше восприем царствия верх твой:
елеем бо Духа помаза тя, славне, Пресущное Слово и Господь. Отонудуже
приял еси и скиптр, премудре, царский, прося нам велия милости.¹³³

You became a new David in manner, receiving the horn of the kingdom upon your head. The Lord and transcendent Logos anointed you with the oil of the Spirit, O glorious one. Therefore you received the royal scepter, O most wise one, and entreat for us great mercy.

The Matins prokeimenon also compares Constantine to the god-anointed king and repentant adulterer (“*Voznesokh izbrannago ot liudei Moikh, obretokh Davida, raba Moego*”/ “I have raised up one chosen out of My people; I have found David My

¹³² Shakhmatov believes elements of the Kherson Legend characterized Vladimir as a “great sinner,” and points to the *bylina* motif of “winning a bride” and the description of Vladimir’s wives and concubines in the 980 passage as evidence of his “prodigal living.” *Razyskaniia*, 135.

¹³³ The historical development of the Feast of Ss. Constantine and Helen is extremely complex. As in the previous chapter, the Slavonic hymns cited in the body of this study are from a contemporary Menaion, and the footnote for each hymn provides the citation for the twelfth and thirteenth century manuscripts in which a version of that hymn may be located. In this case, the manuscript is: Mineia sluzhebnaia na mai, RNB, fond 728 (Sobr. Sofiiskoi biblioteki), № 202, Service Menaion for May (“Putiatina Mineia”), XI c. For dating and description see: *Svodnyi katalog*, 63-64 (№ 21). Sof. 202, eleventh century. Accessed from: http://manuscripts.ru/mns/main?p_text=16723192 (June 2013).

servant”) as does the alleluia verse at Divine Liturgy (“*Pomiani, Gospodi, Davida, i vsiu krotost’ ego...*”/“Remember, O Lord, David and his meekness...”).

Prince Vladimir’s identification with King David is more sophisticated. II Samuel 11 recounts how David initiates an affair with a married woman, Bathsheba, and sends her husband, Uriah, to die on the battlefield. The parallels between this story and the chronicle account of Vladimir’s campaign against Iaropolk are striking:

1. In both stories, a “chosen” king commits grave sins in order to gain a beautiful, forbidden woman. In 2 Samuel, Bathsheba is married and “very beautiful to look upon.” In the chronicle text, the “Greek woman” is doubly forbidden: not only is she Vladimir’s brother’s wife, but also a former nun, who was “married to Iaropolk on account of the beauty of her countenance” (35).
2. In the biblical narrative, David plots to kill Bathsheba’s husband with the help of a military leader, Joab; in the chronicle tale, Vladimir plots to kill Iaropolk through the machinations of a treacherous general, Blud.
3. Once Uriah is dead, David takes Bathsheba as his wife, and she bares him a son. “But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord,” and He causes the child to fall ill and die. A similar plot unfolds in the chronicle: with Iaropolk dead, Prince Vladimir takes his wife, and she bares him a son, Sviatopolk “the accursed.” Sviatopolk does not perish at birth, but lives on to murder his brothers, Boris and Gleb, before dying a terrible death “persecuted by the wrath of God” (64). Similar to 2 Samuel, the 980 passage explains Sviatopolk’s “accursed” life as the result of his father’s sin: “From a sinful root evil fruit is produced, inasmuch as his mother had been a nun, and, also, Vladimir lived with her without having married her” (37).
4. When King David is confronted with his evil-doing by the prophet Nathan, he repents and, according to Orthodox tradition, composes Psalm 50, the penitential psalm *par excellence*, recited several times a day in the Byzantine liturgical cycle. God accepts David’s contrition, and Bathsheba bares him a second son, Solomon the Wise, the beloved of the Lord, who reigns over Israel for forty years. In the chronicle, Vladimir repents, and fathers Yaroslav the Wise, the righteous king who avenges the murder of Boris and Gleb and reigns over Kievan Rus’ for close to forty years (1019-1054).

These parallels suggest that a sophisticated subtext informs the 980 chronicle entry. As in Princess Ol’ga treatment in 955 and 969, the chronicler identifies members of the Rurik dynasty with various characters and events from sacred history, and

discretely withholds the main typology behind the passage while foregrounding a secondary comparison. In 955, Princess Ol'ga is identified with the empress Helena, even as the patriarch addresses her with words reserved for the Theotokos; in 969, she is treated as the "Forerunner," and yet the name of St John the Baptist is never mentioned. The 980 passage employs the same device: Vladimir acts like David, but is openly compared only to Solomon.

The Vladimir-Solomon typology is also represented in the Feast of Ss.

Constantine and Helen, as in the second *sticheron* at Vespers:

Дал еси, Человеколюбче, благочестивому Твоему угоднику Соломонову мудрость, Давидову кротость и апостольское православие, яко царей Царь, господствующих всех Господь. Темже Твое человеколюбное смотрение славим, Иисусе Всесильне, Спасе душ наших.¹³⁴

Thou didst give to thy pious favorite, O Thou Who lovest mankind, the wisdom of Solomon, the meekness of David and the Orthodoxy of the apostles, in that Thou art the King of kings and Lord of lords. Wherefore, we glorify Thy loving dispensation, O almighty Jesus, Thou Savior of our souls.

The events in the 980 passage, however, are modeled on the first book of Kings, chapter eleven:

But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites: Of the nations concerning which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the

¹³⁴ RNB, Q.I.25, Service Menaion for May (fragment of a service for Constantine and Helen), end of XII-beginning of XIII c. See *Svodnyi katalog*, 173 (№ 156). Accessed from: http://manuscripts.ru/mns/main?p_text=38495485 (June 2013).

Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and went not fully after the Lord, as did David his father.

In the 980 entry, Prince Vladimir also loves “many strange women.” The chronicle lists five foreign wives: “His lawful wife was Rogneda...By her he had four sons: Iziaslav, Mstislav, Iaroslav and Vsevolod...The Greek woman bore him Sviatopolk; by one Czech he had a son, Vysheslav; by another, Sviatoslav and Mstislav; and by a Bulgarian woman, Boris and Gleb” (37). In addition to wives, the chronicle numbers Vladimir’s concubines at eight hundred, making him “a libertine like Solomon. For it is said that Solomon had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines” (ibid.). Also like I Kings, the 980 passage shows Vladimir constructing idols and gives their names: “Vladimir then began to reign alone in Kiev, and he set up idols on the hills outside the castle with the hall: one of Perun, made of wood with a head of silver and a mustache of gold, and others of Khors, Dazh’bog, Stribog, Simar’gl, and Mokosh” (ibid.).

The crucial difference between the two accounts is that Solomon’s idolatry occurs at the close of his life, and Vladimir’s near the beginning. In I Kings 11, lust leads Solomon away from monotheism, a move the editor of the Primary Chronicle interprets as leading to his damnation: “He was wise, yet in the end came to ruin” (ibid.). Vladimir, on the other hand, moves from polytheism to the worship of the one true God: “Vladimir, though at first deluded, eventually found salvation. Great is the Lord, and great is his power, and of his wisdom there is no end” (ibid.). This phrase from the Psalms is also the prokeimenon verse from the Sunday of the Last Judgment, a pre-Lenten feast dedicated to Christ’s second coming. As in other places in the Primary Chronicle, a liturgical citation is used to link Kievan history with specific Byzantine feast days. In this case, the

chronicler passes judgment on Solomon and Vladimir, and concludes his verdict with a key verse from the Orthodox feast about the final judgment of humankind.¹³⁵

The religious typology evident in the 980 chronicle entry extends as far as the 6545 (1037) passage. As noted above, Vladimir is a type of David because he is a “new Constantine,” and Constantine is a “new David.” But the chronicler uses the Vladimir-David typology to biblicalize other characters and events in Kievan history as well. Thus: Sviatopolk is cast as the accursed first son of an unholy union (like David’s first son with Bathsheba), and Iaroslav is celebrated as the second “blessed son” from a “lawful wife” (like Solomon from Bathsheba). This analogy clarifies the meaning of the two interpolations from Proverbs that conclude the 980 chronicle entry: Sviatopolk is the “evil fruit” of an evil woman (Prov. 5:3-6), and Iaroslav, a new Solomon from the good wife (Prov. 31:10-31).¹³⁶

The 980 chronicle entry is unique because both typologies—Vladimir as David, and Vladimir as Solomon—draw on biblical narratives never recited during Orthodox worship. Neither 2 Samuel 11, nor 1 Kings 11 appears in the Byzantine lectionary. There can be no doubt, therefore, that the editors of the passage were familiar with portions of the Christian Bible not included in the Prophetologion, the Byzantine church book that contains selected Old Testament readings.

¹³⁵ Psalm 147:5 is a prokeimenon verse chanted at several feasts in the liturgical year. I attribute the verse to the Sunday of the Last Judgment for two reasons: first, it punctuates a statement about God’s judgment, and, second, it inaugurates a series of motifs from that feast which appear throughout Prince Vladimir’s biography; most notably in the 6494 (986) account, when Vladimir reacts very strongly to the icon of the Last Judgment shown to him by the philosopher; and in the 6504 (996) passage, where the prince’s charitable deeds are depicted as a response to the hymns and Gospel readings from the Sunday of the Last Judgment.

¹³⁶ A. Poppe has argued that Boris and Gleb’s mother was Vladimir’s Byzantine wife, the Princess Anna. See A. Poppe, “Losers on Earth, Winners from Heaven. The Assassinations of Boris and Gleb in the Making of Eleventh-Century Rus’,” *Quaestiones Mediae Aevi Novae*, 8 (2003), 133-168.

This observation requires careful interpretation. On the surface, it suggests the Bible, and not the Byzantine rite, is the principal model for the passage. That conclusion, however, betrays a post-Reformation bias that privileges text over ritual and the Bible over liturgy. The chroniclers were monks and—in their monastic-liturgical world—the service books regulated the use of the Bible, and not vice versa. The same principle applies in the *Primary Chronicle*. Biblical narratives are employed, but only as part of a greater liturgical structure.

In the 980 passage, the chroniclers' recourse to the Bible is dictated by the nature of Byzantine worship itself: the services glorify saints, and very rarely narrate earthly transgressions. In many respects, liturgical hymnography is like the icons that decorate an Orthodox Church. Written according to strict iconographic canons, these pictures present a highly stylized, homogenous image of sanctity. Icons are not portraits of a historical person, but rigidly regulated visual patterns of glorified human beings.

The hymnographic image of a saint is similarly idealized. The historical peculiarities of his person are de-emphasized, and his life conformed to canonical narratives. King David, the liturgical figure, is not a murderer, but a meek and faithful ruler; King Solomon, not an idolatrous polygamist, but a divinely wise king who builds and consecrates a great temple. In the liturgy, the saints are heroes, not evildoers. So if Vladimir is to sin as David and Solomon sinned, the model is necessarily biblical, since “sinful” stories have little place in the hymnography and Scripture readings for saints.¹³⁷

¹³⁷ A notable exception to this rule is the liturgical image of St Paul, which figures prominently in the 983 and 988 passages. Another exception is St Mary of Egypt, whose former life as a prostitute is frequently alluded to in the church services. In both cases, the past of each figure is invoked as a lesson in repentance: the saints are praised for the sinful ways they abandoned, and for the rigorous piety to which they subsequently adhered.

The main purpose of the 980 passage is to conform the image of Prince Vladimir to two major liturgical types for St Constantine. In the next major passage, under the year 983, the chronicler lays the groundwork for the third, and most important, liturgical typology—the identification of Constantine with St. Paul, the persecutor turned apostle. Before turning attention to that comparison, however, I will examine a different problem in the 983 passage: the possible connections between the “Tale of the Varangian Martyrs” and the Byzantine feasts for martyrs.

6491 (983): The “Tale of the Varangian Martyrs”

The 983 chronicle passage contains the “Tale of the Varangian Martyrs” (“Skazanie o variagakh-muchenikakh”), a short hagiographical entry about the martyrdom of two Vikings, a father and son, instigated by Vladimir and his boyars following the prince’s victory over the Yotvingians. Returning to Kiev after the battle, Prince Vladimir and his people make sacrifice to idols and cast lots for a youth and a maiden to sacrifice to the gods (38). Through the envy of the devil, the lot falls on the son of a Christian Varangian. “For the devil, though he had dominion over all the rest, could not suffer this youth. He was like a thorn in the devil’s heart, and the accursed one was eager to destroy him, and provoked the people to do so” (ibid.).

When messengers arrive to retrieve the boy, his father refuses to give him up and makes an eloquent argument against idolatry. The messengers return to Kiev and report the Varangian’s refusal; enraged, the people take up arms and storm his house, demanding that he surrender his son that they might offer him to the gods. The Varangian refuses again, at which point the mob attacks and kills both father and son.

The chronicle entry concludes with a series of pious reflections on martyrdom and the future conversion of Rus’.

Scholarship on the “Tale of the Varangian Martyrs” mostly concerns the relationship between the chronicle text and the Prologue entry¹³⁸ for 12 June, though speculation about the name of the older Varangian has also generated considerable debate.¹³⁹ Scholars generally make one of three arguments. The majority—which includes V. P. Ardianova-Peretts and more recently D. A. Balovnev, B. M. Kloss and A. M. Vvedenskii—contend that the chronicle account is the original text upon which the Prologue is based.¹⁴⁰ A. A. Shakhmatov reverses that order, arguing that the Prologue is the original account and served as the model for the chronicle composition.¹⁴¹ A third position, variously enunciated by A. N. Nasonov, D. S. Likhachev and P. V. Lukin, attributes the origins of both texts to an older, non-extant source.¹⁴² Shakhmatov and

¹³⁸ On the contrast between the Old Russian Prolog and the Greek Synaxarion, see O. V. Loseva, *Zhitiia russkikh sviatykh v sostave drevnerusskikh prologov XII-pervoi treti XV vekov* (Moscow: Rukopisnye pamiatniki drevnei Rusi, 2009), 23- 29.

¹³⁹ A. A. Shakhmatov, “Kak nazyvalsia pervyi russkii sviatoi muchenik?”, *Izvestiia Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk*, v. 1, no. 9 (1907), 261-264. A. V. Markov, “Kak zvali pervykh sviatykh muchenikov na Rusi,” *Sbornik khar’kovskogo istoriko-filologicheskogo obshchestva*, v. 18 (Khar’kov: 1909), 437. S. Rozhnetskii, “Kak nazyvalsia pervyi russkii sviatoi muchenik?” *Izvestiia otdeleniia russkogo iazyka i slovesnosti*, v. 19, no. 4 (1915), 94-98. A. A. Turilov, “‘Chelovek bozhii imenem’ (Ob imeni starshego variaga muchenika),” *Vostochnaia Evropa v drevnosti i srednekov’e: iazychestvo, khristianstvo, tserkov’* (Moscow: 1995), 20-22. A. V. Nazarenko, *Drevniaia rus’ na mezhdunarodnykh putiakh. Mezhdistsiplinarnye ocherki kul’turnykh, torgovykh, politicheskikh sviazei IX-XII vekov* (Moscow: Iazyki russkoi kul’tury, 2001), 382-384.

¹⁴⁰ V. P. Ardianova-Peretts and I. P. Eremin, “Zhitiia v russkoi literature XI-nachala XIII veka,” *Istoriia russkoi literatury*, v. 1 (Moscow: Iz. AN SSSR, 1956), 315-346. Balovnev, “Skazanie ‘O pervonachal’nom rasprostraneni khristianstva na Rusi’,” 5-46. M. Kloss, “Zhitiie Fedora variaga i ego syna,” *Pis’mennye pamiatniki istorii drevnei Rusi. Letopisi. Povesti. Khozhdeniia. Poucheniia. Zhitiia. Poslaniia. Annotirovannii katalog-spravochnik* (St Petersburg: Blits, 2003), 213-214. A. M. Vvedenskii, “Zhitiie variagov-muchenikov (funktsionirovanie legendy v letopisi i v prologe,” *Drevniaia rus’. Voprosy medievistiki*, v. 38, no. 4 (2009), 63-72.

¹⁴¹ Shakhmatov, *Razyskaniia*, 26-27, 335-336.

¹⁴² A. N. Nasonov, *Istoriia russkogo letopisaniia XI- nachala XVIII veka; ocherki i issledovaniia* (Moscow: Nauka, 1969), 23-26. Likhachev, “‘Ustnie letopisi’ v sostave Povesti vremennykh let,” 201-224. P. V.

Likhachev's conclusions are creatively synthesized in a recent study on the Sinai palimpsest by A.A. Pichkhadze, who suggests that the story of the Varangian martyrs originated as part of Likhachev's hypothetical "Tale of the Spread of Christianity in Rus'," a proto-text that was first reworked into the Prologue, then reworked again to form the chronicle passage.¹⁴³

These differences aside, scholars share the assumption that the story of the Varangian martyrs is a conventional *vita* fashioned after earlier Byzantine lives of the saints. But that is not necessarily the case, for where it concerns martyrdom, Orthodox hagiography and hymnography share the same narratives. Some scholars, moreover, are convinced that these narratives developed out of the hymns chanted during liturgical worship.¹⁴⁴ And if the first Byzantine lives derived from festal hymnography, it is possible the original Kievan lives of the saints arose in the same manner—especially given the way liturgy shapes other hagiographical passages in the Primary Chronicle.

"General Martyrs" and Varangian Martyrs

The "Tale of the Varangian Martyrs" exactly reproduces the story of Christian martyrdom articulated in Orthodox hymnography. In fact, the events of the 983 passage repeat verbatim the contents of several hymns from the general services to martyrs. Consider the following *sticheron*:

Lukin, "Skazanie o variagakh-muchenikakh v nachal'nom letopisanii i Prologe: tekstologicheskii aspect," *Drevniaia rus'. Voprosy medievistiki*, v. 38, no. 4 (2009), 73-96.

¹⁴³ A. A. Pichkhadze, and V. A. Romodanovskaia, E. K. Romodanovskaia, "Zhitii kniagini Ol'gi, variashskikh muchenikov i kniazia Vladimira v sostave Sinaiskogo palimpsesta (RNB Q.p.I.63)," *Ruskaia agiografiia. Issledovaniia. Publikatsii. Polemika*. (St Petersburg, 2005), 302-303.

¹⁴⁴ V. O. Kliuchevskii, *Drevnerusskie zhitii sviatykh kak istoricheskii istochnik* (Moscow: Nauka, 1988), 360-367.

Мучителя беззаконна, беззаконно повелевающаго, поклонитися и чести принести безсловесным богом бездушным блаженнии, мудре посрамите, мученцы великоименитии. И пострадавше терпеливно и законно, венцы исплетосте победы, о мире молящися.¹⁴⁵

The lawless tormenter unlawfully commanded you, O blessed and greatly renowned martyrs, to bow down before and worship the dumb and lifeless gods, but with your wisdom you put him to shame. And having patiently and lawfully suffered, you plaited [for yourselves] crowns of victory, and pray for the world.

This narrative appears again in the Vespers service for a single martyr:

Многообразными мучении, лютой мучитель казем злым предав казнити многотрадальное и многотерпеливое тело твое, Богомысленне (Имярек), не отверглся еси Христа, ни кумиром пожерл еси: но терпел еси яко иному страждущу, ожидая будущаго воздаяния и безсмертнаго Богословия.¹⁴⁶

Using various tortures, the fierce tormentor gave your much-suffering and long-enduring body over to cruel execution, O Godly-minded (Name); yet you neither denounced Christ, nor offered a sacrifice to the idols, but endured as though someone else was suffering, awaiting future reward and the immortal Theology.

And again in another *sticheron* from the same service:

Кровию твоею честною землю освятил еси, и скверныя крови упразднил еси, приносимыя бесомъ беззаконно, и венець нетленный прияль еси, на версе твоёмъ всечестне. Темже молися, даровати душамъ нашимъ миръ и велию милость.¹⁴⁷

With your honored blood consecrating the earth and abolishing the defiled blood-sacrifice offered lawlessly unto demons, O all-honored one, you received an incorruptible crown upon your head. Therefore pray for our souls to be granted peace and great mercy.

As these hymns indicate, the liturgical archetype for martyrdom is comprised of several fixed narrative events—the same events that comprise the “Tale of the Varangian Martyrs”:

1. Satan incites the persecution of Christians.

¹⁴⁵ Mineia Obshchaia (Moscow: Izd. Sovet Russkoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi, 2002), 79-85.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

Byzantine hymnographers consistently identify Satan and his demons as the source of Christian persecution. Earthly actors may carry out the tortures and executions, but it is the “prince of this world” who stands behind the bloodshed. As the first *sticheron* at Vespers for “General Martyrs” suggests:

Просветившеся Духом Святым, прехвальнии, на миродержца ополчитесь, и козни его мужески победите, пособием Божиим на него подвигшеся. Тем днесь пресветлую вашу память совершающе, по долгу хвалами ваше почитаем страдание.¹⁴⁸

Enlightened by the Holy Spirit, O most praiseworthy ones, you have taken up arms against the prince of this world and with God's help obtained victory over his snares; wherefore celebrating today your most illustrious memory, we with praises dutifully honor your sufferings.

In Orthodox hymnography, the persecution of Christians is the cooperative work of evil forces, seen and unseen. Visible, this-worldly agents (the unruly mob, imperial executioner or wild beast) kill the Christian, as otherworldly agents (the Devil or demons) provoke and oversee the murder.

A similar structure informs the “Tale of the Varangian Martyrs.” The lot falls on the Varangian’s son through the envy of the devil. And it is the devil who is eager to destroy the boy and who provokes the pagans of Kiev, those human beings still under his dominion, to murder him. The Varangian, being a Christian, discerns the demonic forces at work against him and speaks against them: “I will not give up my son to devils” (38). Thus, in the chronicle, as in the church books, the true “cause” of Christian martyrdom lies in an unseen spiritual reality. The Varangians’ demise is conceived as a local, visible manifestation of the universal, invisible war waged in all ages between Christians and the “evil one.”

2. *A “lawless” or “wicked” ruler commands a Christian to sacrifice to idols.*

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

3. *The Christian steadfastly refuses to offer sacrifice, often making an eloquent apology for his or her faith.*

The “Diocletian Persecution” (or “Great Persecution”) was the last and most severe persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire.¹⁴⁹ In the first years of the fourth century, the emperors Diocletian and Galerius issued a series of edicts, “Against the Christians,” and demanded universal sacrifice to the traditional gods. Thousands of Christians refused and were summarily executed. One lasting image from this persecution—martyrs fearlessly rebuking the emperors’ demand to sacrifice to idols—became an important topos in Byzantine hymnography.¹⁵⁰ In the verses cited above, for instance, the “lawless tormenter unlawfully” commands the martyrs to “bow down before and worship the dumb and lifeless gods.” In another hymn, the martyrs are “crushed with a shower of stones at the command of the tyrant.”

Other hymns emphasize the martyrs’ victory over their persecutors. In one place the martyrs are praised for “wiping out tyrants,” a theme repeated again in a verse from Matins:

Законными обычаями мученическими победивше гордаго мучителя, и венцы приясте праведныя всечестнии.¹⁵¹

Following the martyrs’ ways, you conquered the proud tormenter, and received the crowns of the righteous, O all-honored ones.

Hymns from the service to martyrs also draw attention to the protagonists’ inspired defense of the Christian faith—the “wisdom” that “puts [the tyrant] to shame” and abolishes “the blood-sacrifice offered lawlessly unto demons.” A hymn at Matins states

¹⁴⁹ Michael Gaddis, *There Is No Crime for Those Who Have Christ: Religious Violence in the Christian Roman Empire* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2005), 29.

¹⁵⁰ The topos also likely derives from the story of the three holy children in the fiery furnace from Daniel 3:26-56, a story repeated in canticles seven and eight of the moveable canon(s) chanted daily during the Matins service.

¹⁵¹ Mineia Obshchaia, 79-85.

that the martyrs, “strengthened by the power of God, destroyed the polytheistic darkness and deceit of the idols.” And another verse from that service affirms: “With words taught by the Holy Spirit the martyrs abolished the foolishness of idols.”

The hymnography also highlights the martyrs’ role in the triumph of Christianity over paganism:

Чуднии Божественнии, премудрии страстотерпцы, песньми священными да почтутся: Троицу бо несозданную пред враги священно проповедающе, многобожную угасиша леств кровными излиянии, и славу прияша неувядаемую.¹⁵²

Let us honor the wondrous, divine and most wise passion-bearers with sacred odes; for with the spilling of their blood they have sacredly confessed the uncreated Trinity before their enemies, extinguished the deceit of polytheism, and received the never-fading glory.

The “Tale of the Varangian Martyrs” tells the same story as these hymns. In the passage “lawless” tormenters—Vladimir and his elders and boyars—command the Varangian to hand over his son as a sacrifice to idols. The Varangian refuses and renounces the practice of idolatry. “These are not gods,” the Varangian states, “but only idols of wood... [Idols] do not eat, or drink, or speak; but are fashioned by hands out of wood...” (38). The Varangian’s response is a paraphrase of Psalm 115:4-8. The martyr, “with words taught by the Holy Spirit,” answers his persecutors with the “inspired” words of sacred scripture:

Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them.

The second part of the Varangian’s speech is intended to “extinguish the deceit of polytheism.” Confronted with pagan idol worship, the martyr eloquently expounds the

¹⁵² Ibid.

basic tenets of monotheism: “But the God whom the Greeks serve and worship is one; it is he who has made heaven and earth, the stars, the moon, the sun, and mankind, and foreordained him for life on earth...” (ibid.). When, later in the passage, the angry mob sieges his house, the Varangian again challenges their beliefs: “If they are gods, then let them send one of the gods and take my son” (38-39).

Thrust into the role of martyr and confessor, the Varangian repeats the main three arguments against paganism expressed in the hymns: a) there is one God, the creator of all; b) idols are man-made and powerless; c) those who sacrifice to them are “deceived” by the devil and unwittingly sacrifice to demons. Thus not only the narrative, but also the “theology” of the 983 passage are in line with the liturgical depiction of martyrdom: the Varangian faces the same situation as the martyrs in the hymns, and offers a similar apology for the faith.

4. *The Christian bravely endures severe bodily torments.*

5. *The Christian “defeats” his persecutors by dying for the faith, at which point he is numbered among the righteous and awarded a crown from heaven.*

In Orthodox hymnography, the martyr archetype is constructed as a heroic contest, as in the following *sticheron* chanted twice during Matins:

Мученицы христовы прехвальнии, гонителей стремления, и нуждную смерть нивчтоже вменившие, и благодержностно ополчившися мужемудренно к борением, победоносною славою одеястесь, и причтостесь всем праведным, с нимиже вас всегда хваляще, ублажаем.¹⁵³

O most praiseworthy martyrs of Christ! Having counted as nothing the efforts of the persecutors, you daringly, wisely and manfully prepared for struggles. Arraying yourself in victorious glory, you were numbered with all of the righteous. Together with them, we praise and ever bless you.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

If, under torture, the Christian renounces Christ, he prolongs his earthly life, only to lose eternal salvation—a victory for the devil. But if the Christian endures torment and remains “steadfast in the faith,” he dies victorious, having “bruised the head of the serpent” in a wise and manful struggle. “For his exploits,” the martyr “obtains great honors...from the hand of the Almighty”: he is awarded the “crown of victory” and “numbered among the righteous” in “the never-fading glory” of the saints.

The Varangians’ deaths are sketched in similar terms. The father and son suffer a violent end at the hands of godless persecutors, only to be declared victors over Satan and companions of the saints: the “two holy fathers trampled upon him [the Devil], having received the heavenly crown in company with the holy martyrs and the righteous” (39).¹⁵⁴ Fittingly, the 983 passage ends with these words, bringing the “Tale of the Varangian Martyrs” to a close with a traditional formula used to conclude Byzantine hymns to the martyrs.

Paul the Persecutor, Vladimir the Persecutor

The Varangians’ martyrdom is only one part of the sophisticated, three-part liturgical subtext that structures the 983 passage. The second part concerns Vladimir’s role in the Varangians’ murder—a role designed to identify the prince with St Constantine’s third liturgical type, the apostle Paul. The liturgical services model Constantine’s conversion after Paul’s experience on the road to Damascus, a story preserved in Acts 26 (and also the epistle reading for the Feast of Ss. Constantine and Helen). In that passage, Paul testifies before King Agrippa that he was a zealous Jew, a Pharisee of the “straightest sect,” who “persecuted” Christians and “compelled them to

¹⁵⁴ The term “holy fathers” (used here in the chronicle) is a standard liturgical address to the saints.

blaspheme.” Because Paul begins his conversion narrative as a faithful practitioner of a non-Christian faith, the chroniclers present Vladimir in the same light: in 983, the prince dutifully makes sacrifice to the gods and approves the boyars’ proposal to offer human sacrifice. To be a type of Paul, however, Vladimir needs to be more than an idolater. He must also be a persecutor, an aspect of the apostle’s biography that the chroniclers provide for Vladimir in a creative way.

Like many stories of good and evil, the Byzantine liturgical myth includes a cast of villains, evil characters (such as Satan, the demons, tyrants, apostates, even dragons and serpents) who fight against Christianity and the salvation of the world. In all of the Primary Chronicle, there is only one place where a hero of Eastern Slavic history assumes the role of a liturgical villain, and that is the “Tale of the Varangian Martyrs.” The chroniclers’ strategy is clever. They insert Vladimir at the beginning of an existing hagiography, reconfiguring the narrative so that the prince’s military victory—and conspicuous role in the attendant pagan festivities—initiates the chain of events leading to the Varangians’ demise. The tale begins, like so many entries in the Primary Chronicle, as a record of military triumph. But as soon as “the lot falls” on the Christian Varangian, the passage becomes a saint’s life, and Vladimir becomes a standard type of liturgical villain: the proud and godless pagan persecutor.

Structurally, therefore, the 983 account is similar to the 980 entry. In the earlier passage, the chronicler uses biblical narratives to portray Vladimir “the great sinner” as a type of David and a type of Solomon, two of the three liturgical types for St Constantine. In 983, the chronicler uses a liturgical narrative to associate Vladimir with another famous sinner connected to Constantine, the apostle Paul. That the chronicler edits the

passage to effect this Constantine-Paul-Vladimir typology is evident from the story of Vladimir's conversion in 988, a topic that is treated at length in the next chapter.

The “Thirteenth Apostle” in the “Tale of the Varangian Martyrs”

The third layer of liturgical subtext in the 983 passage is articulated in the pious meditations that conclude the account, and involves several major feasts in the Byzantine liturgical year, such as the Feast of Ss. Constantine and Helen, the Feast of the Elevation of the Cross, and the feasts for each of the twelve apostles. The Byzantine rite tells a very specific story about the spread of Christianity in the apostolic and post-apostolic church. The central figures in this story are the apostles, those select few disciples chosen by Christ and sent out to baptize and enlighten the world. Consider the following *sticheron* from the “General Service to Apostles”:

Юже проидосте тварь просвещше, спасовы учиницы, леств идольскую яко хврастие попаливше учении вашими, языки от неразумия глубины, к божественному разуму уловивше спасосте: и ныне молитесь Христу, яко да милостив нам будетъ в день судный.

O disciples of the Savior, you traveled the creation, enlightening it, and burning, like dry sticks, the deceit of the idols. You delivered the nations from the depths of ignorance, drawing them to the understanding of things divine. And now pray to Christ to be merciful to us on judgment day.¹⁵⁵

The hymnography depicts the apostles as “divine trumpets” proclaiming salvation to a world sleeping in “the darkness of deceit”:

Божественнии трубы Утешителя, возглашающе дыхание словес спасения, миру возгласите и иже во мраце прелести спящыя къ свету богоразумия возставивше приведите, божественнаго света апостоли, моляще Христа Бога спастися душам нашим.

¹⁵⁵ Mineia Obshchaia, 46-52.

O divine trumpets of the Comforter, proclaiming the inspired words of salvation: proclaim [these words] to the world, O apostles of divine light, and bring to the light of divine knowledge those who sleep in the darkness of deceit, awakening them, while also entreating Christ God that our souls may be saved.

Not only does the apostles' instruction free the faithful from idolatry, it also "vanquishes evil spirits," delivering them "from every attack and mischief of the demons, and from transgressions and captivity to the evil one."¹⁵⁶

The 983 account is fascinating because the devil himself recognizes and proclaims these very ideas about the apostles. In the chronicle text, the evil one rejoices at the Varangians' death, and believes he has a permanent habitation in Rus' precisely because the apostles never preached there. The devil admits that the apostles' instruction enlightens the world and frees it from his captivity. What the devil does not realize—and what the pious meditations make plain—is that the apostles' special successor, Constantine, the "thirteenth apostle,"¹⁵⁷ is also endowed with these powers, *and his apostolic deeds can be duplicated in foreign lands*. Constantine shares in the grace and authority of the apostles, and so will Vladimir: soon, in 988, he will be called by God to drive the devil out of Rus' as a bishop and king.

Thus, the "Tale of the Varangian Martyrs" ends on a prophetic note, but only for those familiar with the elaborate liturgical story about Constantine's election into the

¹⁵⁶ In the Slavonic: "От всякаго обстояния, и вреждения бесовскаго, и прегрешения, и злаго пленения избавите, верою васъ восхваляющихъ, божественнии апостоли блаженнии."

¹⁵⁷ Constantine considered himself the "thirteenth apostle" and constructed the Church of the Holy Apostles (*Hagioi Apostoli*) with this designation in mind. As the bishop Eusebius writes in the *Vita Constantini*: "He had in fact chosen this sight in the prospect of his own death, anticipating that with an extraordinary fervor of faith that his body would share [the] title with the Apostles themselves, and that he should thus even after death become the subject with them of the devotions which should be performed in their honor at this place. He accordingly ordered that twelve cenotaphs be set up as sacred pillars in honor and memory of the apostolic number, and that his own sarcophagus be placed in the center of these..." See Charles M. Odahl, *Constantine and the Christian Empire* (London: Routledge, 2004), 271.

ranks of the apostles. In the hymnography, Constantine is specially called to apostolic service “from above by Christ God” and given a very powerful “gift from on high”: a one-of-a-kind weapon with which he may conquer all “visible and invisible enemies.”

That weapon is the Cross:

Оружие крепчайшее царю Константину дал еси, Крест Твой честный, имже царствова на земли праведне, просияв благочестием, и Царствию Небесному сподобися милосердием Твоим, с нимже Твое человеколюбное смотрение славим, Иисусу Всесильне, Спасе душ наших.¹⁵⁸

Thou didst give the mightiest weapon to the emperor Constantine, Thy precious Cross, by which he reigned on earth righteously, shone forth in piety, and has been vouchsafed the Kingdom of Heaven by Thy loving-kindness. And with him we glorify Thy loving dispensation, O almighty Jesus, thou Savior of our souls.

Or as a *sticheron* at Matins describes it:

Царь царей и Бог, богатыми дарованиями украшая достойных, Сам с Небесе, якоже Павла преславнаго, знамением Крестным тебе, Контсанине, улови: сим, рек, побеждай враги твоя. Егоже взыскав с матерью богомудрую и обрет, якоже желал еси, сих державно в бегство обратил еси. С нею убо моли о православных людех и христолюбивом воинстве, и о всех, память твою совершающих верно, единого Человеколюбца, избавитися всякаго гнева.¹⁵⁹

God, the King of kings, Who adorns the worthy with rich gifts, captured you from Heaven with the sign of the Cross, as He had the all-glorious Paul, O Constantine, saying: "By this vanquish your enemies!" And having sought the cross with your divinely-wise mother, and found it as you desired, you mightily put the enemies to flight. With her, therefore, entreat Him Who alone loves mankind for the Orthodox people and the Christ-loving army, and for all who faithfully celebrate your memory, that they may be delivered from all wrath

Here, the hymnography explicitly connects the emperor’s famous vision of a cross shining in the sky with his mother’s discovery of the “true cross” in Jerusalem fifteen

¹⁵⁸ Mineia prazdnichnaia (sluzhebnaia na mai) (RNB, Q.p.I. 25). See also Mineia sluzhebnaia na mai (“Putiatina Mineia”) (RNB, Sof. 202).

¹⁵⁹ Stikhirar' mineinyi, notirovannyi, stikhiry s 12 dek. Po 31 avg. (RNB, Sof. 384).

years later in 327. This type of anachronism occurs often in the services. As another hymn describes the events:

Первый царь во христианех, от Бога, Константине, скиптр восприял еси:
тебе бо явися в земли крыемо спасительное знамение, имже и языки вся
покорил еси под ноги римлян, оружие неборимое имеяй, животворящий
Крест, блаженне, имже и превелся еси Богу нашему.¹⁶⁰

As the first emperor among Christians, O Constantine, you received a scepter from God. For to you was revealed the sign of salvation hidden in the earth, with which you subdued all nations beneath the feet of the Romans, having as your invincible weapon the life-creating Cross, O blessed one, by which you have been brought to our God.

This notion of the cross as a weapon given by God to a chosen and anointed ruler is also conveyed at the Feast of the Elevation of the Cross, a service that specifically celebrates Empress Helen's finding of the "true cross":

В светосиянен звездами образ предпоказа, Кресте, победу одоления
благочестивому царю великому, егоже мати Елена изобретши, мироявленна
сотвори, и ты днесь воздвижуще, верных лица, зовем: просвети ны
светлостию твоею, Кресте живоносный, освяти ны крепостию твоею,
всечестный Кресте, и утверди ны воздвижением твоим, воздвигаемый ко
ополчению врагов.¹⁶¹

O Cross, image radiant with the light of the stars, you foreshown the token of victory to the great and pious emperor, whose mother, Helena, found and revealed you to the world. Today we, the choirs of the faithful, elevating you, cry out: "Illumine us with your splendor, O life-bearing Cross! Sanctify us with your might, O most precious Cross! And establish us by your elevation, O you who are lifted up against the array of the enemy!"

In the liturgical myth, Constantine uses the "true cross" and the "orthodoxy of the apostles" to liberate the world from idolatry and the power of Satan. The "Tale of the

¹⁶⁰Two hymns very similar, though not identical, to this hymn may be found in: Mineia sluzhebnaia na mai, notirovannaia (GIM, Sinod. 166).

¹⁶¹ An abbreviated version of this hymn appears in: Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv drevnikh aktov (hereafter RGADA), fond 381 (Biblioteki Moskovskoi Sinodal'noi tipografii), № 84, Service Menaion for September, dated 1095-1096 (folia 9-176v), XIII c. (folia 1-8v). See *Svodnyi katalog*, 46-47 (№ 7). Accessed from: http://manuscripts.ru/mns/main?p_text=32821351 (June 2013).

Varangian Martyrs” promises the same destiny for Rus’. Though “at this time the Russes were ignorant pagans,” the chronicle reads, the evil one’s “ruin was approaching.” The devil’s demise “approaches” because he will soon “be expelled by the *true cross* [emphasis mine] even from these lands.” The text continues:

“Here,” the accursed one thought, “I shall have for myself a habitation, for here the apostles have not taught, nor the prophets prophesied.” He knew not that the prophet had said, “I will call those my people who are not my people.” And of the Apostles it is said: “Their message has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the end of the universe.” And even if the apostles themselves were never here, however, their teaching resounds like trumpets in the churches throughout the world. By their instruction, we vanquish the enemy—the devil, trampling him under our feet, as these two holy fathers trampled him, having received the heavenly crown in company with the holy martyrs and the righteous (39).

The chroniclers introduce their counterargument to the devil’s statement with a telling phrase, “The devil knew not...” By using this juxtaposition, the chroniclers set up an interesting situation: the devil knows (presumably, from first-hand experience) that the apostles have the power to expel him. But he “knows not” that the “true cross” and the “apostles’ instruction” also possess this power. As should be clear by now, these phrases introduce an important liturgical subtext to the passage, for the “true cross” is a weapon given by God exclusively to Constantine—a chosen ruler called to apostolic kingship.¹⁶²

The chroniclers further hint at their intentions in the citations. The first—“I will call those my people who are not my people”—comes from the Hosea 2:23, although it is far better known from the ninth chapter of Paul’s epistle to the Romans, a text read at the Divine Liturgy in the fourth week after Pascha. Coincidence or not, in a passage that sets up Vladimir as a type of Paul (and foretells his role in the conversion of pagan Rus’),

¹⁶² The “true cross” the chronicler mentions here almost certainly refers to the legendary tale about Princess Ol’ga bringing a piece of the “Life-Giving Cross of the Lord” (*Zhivotvoriashchego Dreva Gospodnia*) back to Kiev from Constantinople. See Skaballanovich, “Znachenie prazdnika Vozdvizheniia Kresta Gospodnia,” 232-236, 249-250.

the chroniclers use a veiled citation from that very apostle—a citation which, in context, refers to the Lord’s mysterious plans for the conversion of the Gentiles.

The second citation clearly reveals the liturgical sources of the chroniclers’ argument. The text reads: “Likewise it is written of the Apostles, “Their message has gone out into all the earth and their words unto the end of the world” (*ibid.*). This verse is from the nineteenth Psalm, where it has no relation to the apostles. The chroniclers—clerics immersed in the daily practice of the Byzantine rite—link the Psalm to the apostles because it is the main Prokeimenon verse sung at every feast for each of the twelve apostles during the liturgical year. In contemporary church books, moreover, this verse is chanted several times at feasts commemorating all “Equals to the Apostles,” including Constantine, Helen, Vladimir and Ol’ga.

The connection between the ‘salvation of Rus’ and the apostles (and “Equals to the Apostles”) is foregrounded again in the next sentence: “Though the Apostles had not been there in person, their teachings resound like trumpets in the churches throughout the world. Through their instruction we overcome the hostile enemy” (*ibid.*). Earlier, it was noted that the services describe the apostles as “divine trumpets of the Comforter” and “divine trumpets of preaching.” The chronicle take the analogy a step further: though the time of the apostles has passed, their teaching continues “to resound like trumpets” in liturgical services performed “in churches throughout the world”—services that enable the faithful to “overcome the hostile adversary” like the apostles of old.

The underlying implication here is that *someone* will bring these services to Rus’; *someone* will build the churches in which they are celebrated; *someone* will expel the devil with the true cross. For those who know the Byzantine liturgical myth, the

chronicle is making the very specific promise that a “new Constantine” will soon appear in Rus’ and convert the realm to the Byzantine Orthodox faith. These events—as well as the identity of this new apostle-king—are vaguely foreshadowed at the beginning of the passage, when the chronicle describes the location of the Varangians’ residence: “Now there was a certain Varangian whose house was situated by the spot where now stands the Church of the Holy Virgin built by Vladimir” (38). For an Orthodox audience, this remark is particularly meaningful. It signals that the Varangians will die as martyrs and, in Tertullian’s famous phrase, their blood “will be the seed of the church”¹⁶³: thirteen years later, in 996, the very ruler who oversees their death will build and personally consecrate the Church of the Tithes on the spot where they perished.

Understood in its native liturgical context, therefore, the 983 passage proves to be substantially more than a saint’s life. The chronicler intertwines three narratives, each of which originates from the liturgical worship of the Byzantine Church. To briefly review:

1. The story of the Varangians’ martyrdom repeats the main narrative chanted at Byzantine feasts for martyrs.
2. The chronicler uses this martyr narrative to portray Prince Vladimir as a type of liturgical villain (the pagan persecutor), thereby conforming his biography to St Paul’s—the third, and most important, liturgical type for Constantine.
3. The passage concludes with a series of liturgical allusions, mostly concerning the apostles and St Constantine, that herald the imminent appearance of a “new Constantine” and “Equal of the Apostles” in Rus’.

Before Prince Vladimir can do “the deeds of Constantine” as the apostle to the Eastern Slavs, however, he must undergo a conversion like Constantine’s—a story the chronicler begins two years later in the chronicle entry for 986.

¹⁶³ Tertullian, *Apologeticus*, tr. Alexander Souter and John Eyton Bickersteth Mayor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1917).

Chapter Three

The Conversion of Prince Vladimir and the Baptism of Rus'

In 6494 (986) representatives of Islam, Catholicism, Judaism and Orthodoxy travel to Kiev and present their respective faiths to Prince Vladimir. The final missionary to the Kievan court is a Greek philosopher. The prince asks the philosopher why God would descend to earth and endure pain, and the philosopher responds with an extensive exposition of the Old and New Testaments, a section of the chronicle known as the Philosopher's Speech. The philosopher tells Prince Vladimir the history of the whole world from its beginning, and concludes the speech by showing him a curtain depicting the Last Judgment, with the righteous going to their bliss in Paradise on the right side, and sinners on their way to torment on the left. The prince is impressed by the speech and image, but declines to be baptized, telling the philosopher that he wishes to further investigate all of the faiths.

The baptism story continues in the chronicle entry for the next calendar year, 6495 (987), the so-called "Testing of the Faiths" passage. Prince Vladimir dispatches ten good and wise men to inspect the religious rituals of the Muslim Bulgars, the German Catholics, and the Byzantine Orthodox in Constantinople. Little attention is given to the first two expeditions, but the third is described in sumptuous detail: the emissaries arrive in "Tsar'grad" (Constantinople), where the emperor, learning of their mission, orders the Patriarch to celebrate a hierarchical Divine Liturgy. The chronicle passage carefully describes the incense, priestly garments, and hymns of the pontifical services, and the beauty of the church building. The service makes a strong impression on the emissaries.

They return to Rus' and describe the otherworldly beauty and splendor of the Greek rites to Vladimir and his boyars. The boyars subsequently endorse the Greek faith and remind Vladimir that if the Greek faith were evil, it would not have been adopted by his grandmother Ol'ga. Vladimir then asks his boyars where he should be baptized, and they answer that the decision is his.

Here the chronicle text for 987 unexpectedly ends, and the 6496 (988) entry begins with the Kherson Legend, in which Prince Vladimir, still unbaptized, has laid siege to the Greek city of Kherson. The siege continues until a Khersonite named Anastasius shoots an arrow into Vladimir's camp with instructions to take the city by cutting off the underground water supply. The prince looks to heaven and vows that, should the instructions prove successful, he will be baptized. Shortly thereafter, the flow of water into Kherson is stopped, the inhabitants surrender, and Vladimir and his retinue enter the city. Victorious, the Kievan prince sends a message to the Byzantine emperors, Basil and Constantine, threatening a similar siege of Constantinople unless their sister is given to him in marriage. The emperors answer that they cannot marry her to a pagan, but if he is willing to be baptized, he will gain her as a wife, inherit the kingdom of God, and be their companions in the faith. Prince Vladimir agrees to their request, acknowledging that he has tested their law and found the Greek faith and services pleasing. After continued negotiations, the emperors send their sister, Princess Anna, and a cohort of priests to Kherson for the baptism of her husband-to-be. The princess is reluctant to leave, suggesting that death would be better than the arranged marriage, but her brothers convince her that she must do her part to turn the land of Rus' to repentance and save the Greek land from a terrible war.

Arriving in Kherson, the princess finds Vladimir blind from a disease of the eyes, a misfortune the chronicler attributes to divine providence. The princess instructs Vladimir to accept baptism immediately; otherwise, he will not be cured. Vladimir receives her message, and declares that if he is healed, then the God of the Christians is truly great. The bishop of Kherson, together with the princess' priests, baptizes Prince Vladimir and he miraculously regains his sight. Following Vladimir's miraculous healing, the priests explain to him the tenets of the Orthodox faith, a catechesis that comprises several parts. Vladimir is taught two Trinitarian creeds, instructed to revere the traditions of the Church councils concerning icons, relics and the cross, and exhorted to deny the teaching of the Latin West.

The catechesis complete, Prince Vladimir conducts Princess Anna, a company of clerics, and the relics of Ss. Clement and Phoebus back to Kiev, along with a selection of sacred church instruments and icons seized from Kherson. Once ensconced in the capital, the prince begins the work of converting his realm: he orders idols to be overthrown, cut into pieces and burned, and at his command the idol of Perun is ceremoniously cast into the Dnieper river. Next, Prince Vladimir summons the whole city to the Dnieper, where with the priests of the Princess and those from Kherson, Vladimir presides over the baptism of Rus'. The 988 passage closes with a triumphant panegyric, mostly composed of citations from Holy Writ, celebrating the people of Rus' as "a new Christian people, the elect of God" (54).

The chronicle entry for the following year, 6497 (989), is a brief report on Prince Vladimir's church-building efforts. The prince brings in Greek artisans to construct a church dedicated to the Theotokos; upon its completion, Vladimir entrusts the church to

Anastasius of Kherson, appoints Khersonian priests to serve in it, and bestows upon the church all the images, vessels, and crosses which he had taken from that city. The story continues seven years later in the entry for 6504 (996), when Vladimir enters the completed church and prays for the newly Christian people of Rus’.

In 6523 (1015), Prince Vladimir passes away while preparing for war against his son, Iaroslav. The prince is mourned by boyars and beggars alike as a blessed protector and benefactor and his body interred at the Church of the Holy Theotokos. There follows an extensive panegyric (*pokhvala*) to Vladimir that makes the case for his canonization. The story of the baptism of Rus’ comes to a close with this panegyric, and the 1015 passage continues with the tale of the martyrdom of Princes Boris and Gleb, to which we will return in chapter four.

The chronicle account of Vladimir’s conversion, summarized above, does not reflect the historical events surrounding the Christianization of the East Slavs.¹⁶⁴ E. E. Golubinskii argues that there is “nothing true” about the missionary visits to Prince Vladimir in 986 or the Testing of the Faiths passage in 987 (105-110).¹⁶⁵ N. I. Miliutenko suggests the earliest Slavic chronicles “remained silent” about the “real circumstances of the baptism of Rus’” and A. Poppe suggests this silence stemmed from political considerations embarrassing for Byzantium.¹⁶⁶ In his view, Vladimir laid siege

¹⁶⁴ Shakhmatov, *Korsunskaiia legenda*, 3.

¹⁶⁵ Golubinskii, *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi*, 105-110.

¹⁶⁶ N. I. Miliutenko, *Sviatoi ravnoapostol'nyi kniaz' Vladimir i kreschenie Rusi* (St Petersburg: Izd. Olega Abyshko, 2008), 228.

to Kherson at the request of Byzantine emperors who did not have the military might to retake it from a pretender to the throne.¹⁶⁷

A. A. Shakhmatov, on the other hand, theorizes that the “circumstances and influences” of the conversion were simply “forgotten,” a situation that compelled chroniclers “to build an edifice upon the sand, to resort to borrowings and analogies.”¹⁶⁸ For Shakhmatov, the account of Prince Vladimir’s baptism in the *Primary Chronicle* is a literary invention, a product of creative writing and editing in which several “contradictory sources” are “artfully combined.”¹⁶⁹ These sources include the aforementioned Kherson Legend (*Korsunskaia legenda*) and an older story about the conversion of Rus’ from the “most ancient” chronicle layer (*drevneishii svod*).

Shakhmatov believes the *drevneishii svod* recounted the missionary visits to Prince Vladimir’s court and the Philosopher’s Speech, and concluded with the prince accepting baptism from the philosopher in Kiev.¹⁷⁰ In 1095, the editor of the “primary layer” (*nachal’nyi svod*) ostensibly merged this story with the legend of Prince Vladimir’s baptism following the siege of Kherson. To accommodate the new sequence of events, the chronicler rewrote the ending of the older chronicle story—so that Vladimir declines baptism from the philosopher—and created the entire 987 “Testing of the Faiths” passage

¹⁶⁷ A. Poppe, “The Political Background of the Baptism of Rus’,” *The Rise of Christian Russia* (London: Varorium Reprints, 1982), 197-244.

¹⁶⁸ Shakhmatov, *Razyskaniia*, 154.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Shakhmatov also attributes the devil’s lament, the command to teach children literacy, the “pious meditations” on the baptism of Rus’, and the “pokhvala” to Vladimir to the *drevneishii svod*.

in order to provide a logical bridge between the two tales.¹⁷¹ Thus, in Shakhmatov's view, the four main stories put forward as the conversion of Rus' in the *Primary Chronicle*—the missionary visits, the Philosopher's Speech,¹⁷² the Testing of the Faiths, and the Kherson legend—are the work of three generations of ecclesiastical history-writers: the editor of the *drevneishii svod* (1039), the editor of the *nachal'nyi svod* (1095), and Greek clerics serving at the Church of the Tithe in mid- to late-eleventh century Kiev.¹⁷³

Objections and corrections to Shakhmatov's analysis are too numerous and diverse to fully catalogue here. His influence is clearly evident in the research of such scholars as D. S. Likhachev and L. Müller, who perceive the baptism story as a conflation of the Kherson legend and a second, earlier source, as well as those, like L. V. Cherepnin and A. S. Nasonov, who connect the Kherson Legend to the clerics at the Church of the Tithes.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷¹ Shakhmatov thinks the emissaries' visits to Germany and Bulgaria in the "Testing of the Faiths" passage were invented by the author of the chronicle entry; he attributes the story of their transcendent experience at Hagia Sophia, however, to the Kherson Legend, where it originally followed Vladimir's negotiations with the tsars. See Shakhmatov, *Korsunskaiia legenda*, 92.

¹⁷² The origin of the Philosopher's Speech is a controversial topic. N.K. Nikol'skii believes it is an independent work that was interpolated into the PVL in "a finished form." In *Razyskaniia o drevnorusskikh letopisnikh svodakh*, Shakhmatov conjectures that the Philosopher's Speech derives from a Bulgarian legend about the conversion of Prince Boris. Later in his career, Shakhmatov changes his mind, and makes the case that the 986 passage was composed and compiled by the editor of the "nachal'nyi svod," and based on the "Khronograf osobago sostava." Whatever its origins, the source is assuredly *not* liturgical: the speech includes several narratives and scripture citations that never occur in the Byzantine liturgical cycle. Furthermore, the speech focuses on the major events in the life of Christ that are biblical stories, and makes no mention of the "Feasts of the Theotokos" that figure so prominently in the Orthodox liturgical year. See Nikol'skii, "K voprosu o istochnikakh..." 89-116; Shakhmatov, "Povest' vremennykh let..." 123, 146-147. For a review of the critical literature on the Philosopher's Speech, see N. I. Miliutenko, "K voprosu o nekotorykh istochnikakh Rechi Filosafofa," TODRL, v. 55 (2004), 9-17.

¹⁷³ Shakhmatov, *Korsunskaiia legenda*, 60; *Razyskaniia*, 328-341.

¹⁷⁴ D. S. Likhachev, *Russkie letopisi i ikh kul'turno-istoricheskoe znachenie* (Moscow: iz. Akademii nauk SSSR, 1947), 58-75. Ludolf Müller, "Rasskaz 'Povesti vremennykh let' o kreshchenii Vladimira," *Poniat' Rossiiu: istoriko-kul'turnye issledovaniia* (Moscow: Progress-traditsiia, 2000). L. V. Cherepnin, "'Povest'

The most significant departure from Shakhmatov's interpretation is the work of A. A. Gippius, a linguist who employs innovative linguistic methods to identify and reconstruct hypothetical "stratifications" in the chronicle text.¹⁷⁵ Analyzing the "structural contradictions" and "linguistic heterogeneity" of the chronicle manuscripts, Gippius charts out an original and provocative textual history for the conversion of Rus' passages. The linguist believes that the story originated as a "general epic" about Vladimir's "choice of faiths," and ended with Vladimir's baptism in Kiev.¹⁷⁶ This account was "radically restructured" in the 1070s, when the Testing of the Faiths passage was removed, and the Kherson Legend became the new narrative for the prince's baptism. Some twenty years later, in the "Kiev-Pecherskii primary chronicle layer of the 1090s," the chronicler re-inserted the Testing of the Faiths, added the story of Prince Vladimir's blinding, the anti-Latin polemic, the symbol of faith, and the *pokhvala*, and re-oriented the entire account around a new ideology that emphasized the special historical mission of Rus' as a "new" and "God-chosen" people.¹⁷⁷

S. M. Mikheev offers an even more provocative history of the chronicle's conversion narrative. Relying on "clear linguistic markers" to distinguish between chronicle layers, Mikheev argues that the earliest East Slavic historical record—which he calls the "ancient tale" (*drevnee skazanie*, 1017)—did not report the conversion of Rus' at

vremennykh let, ee redaktsii i predshestvovavshie ei letopisnye svody," *Istoricheskiye zapiski*, v. 25 (1948), 293-333. A. S. Nasonov, *Istoriia russkogo letopisaniia XI- nachala XVIII veka* (Moscow: Nauka, 1969), 20-34.

¹⁷⁵ A. A. Gippius, "Dva nachala Nachal'noi letopisi: K istorii kompozitsii Povesti Vremennykh let," *Verenitsa liter. K 60-letiiu V.M. Zhivova* (Moscow: 2006), 56-96.

¹⁷⁶ Gippius, "Kreshchenie Rusi v Povesti vremennykh let: k stratifikatsii teksta," *Drevniaia Rus' . Voprosy medievistiki*, v. 3 (2008) 20-23.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

all.¹⁷⁸ It was not until the late 1070s that the author of the “svod of Nikon” (*svod Nikona*) “independently created” the first account of the baptism of Rus’, which included both “the story of Vladimir’s baptism in Kherson,” the “baptism of the Kievans,” and the founding of the Church of the Tithe.¹⁷⁹ In Mikheev’s view, the other parts of the chronicle account—including Vladimir’s dialogue with the philosopher, the Testing of the Faiths passage, and the mass baptism—were interpolated or composed by the author of the *nachal’nyi svod* in the 1090s.¹⁸⁰

For all their differences in methodology, Gippius and Mikheev reach the same conclusion as their predecessors: the *Primary Chronicle* combines two separate traditions about Prince Vladimir’s conversion, a tale about a Greek philosopher who travels to Kiev and preaches to Vladimir, and a tale about the prince’s baptism following the siege of Kherson. The question that neither Gippius, nor Mikheev—nor Shakhmatov, for that matter¹⁸¹—sufficiently addresses is *why* the chronicler merges these two traditions. Fortunately, M. D. Priselkov takes up this problem in his fascinating study from 1913, *Ocherki po tserkovno-politicheskoi istorii Kievskoi Rusi X-XII vv. (Essays on the Ecclesial-Political History of Kievan Rus’ in the 10-12th Centuries)*.

Priselkov presents an intriguing, if highly speculative, hypothesis on the origins of Orthodoxy in Rus’. He believes generations of Kievan rulers tried, and failed, to secure

¹⁷⁸ Mikheev, *Kto pisal “Povest’ vremennykh let”?*, 109.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.* 154-161

¹⁸¹ In his two major works on the story of the baptism of Rus’, Shakhmatov is at pains to prove that his hypothetical reconstruction, the Kherson Legend, truly existed in independent form, and that this story underlies all extant versions of the conversion of Rus’. He is unusually reticent about the reasons the editor of the *nachal’nyi svod* combined the two tales, stating only that the original story of Vladimir’s baptism in Kiev was “changed under the influence” of the “more enduring and rewarding” Kherson Legend. See Shakhmatov, *Razyskaniia*, 154.

an independent church hierarchy from both Rome and Constantinople. Finally, in 987, Vladimir turned to a “third center of Christianity”: King Samuel and the Bulgarian Patriarchate at Ohrid.¹⁸² For close to five decades, the scholar argues, Rus’ remained a diocese of Ohrid, a situation that changed only in 1037, when Iaroslav the Wise secured a metropolinate from the Patriarch of Constantinople.¹⁸³

Priselkov contends that the chroniclers deliberately ignored this “real history” of the baptism of Rus’, and instead combined two Greek polemical sources—the Philosopher’s Speech and the Kherson Legend—in order to “show that the real church and Christianity only began with the establishment of the Greek metropolinate.”¹⁸⁴ Skilled in church politics, the chroniclers knew that Constantinople “stubbornly resisted” the canonization of Vladimir precisely because he had “guided [Rus’] out of the control of the Empire toward the Ohrid archbishopric.”¹⁸⁵ For Vladimir to be canonized, the editors believed, the story had to be changed. So they merged the Philosopher’s Speech with the Kherson Legend, and recast the prince as a “true follower of Greek Orthodoxy and its hierarchy.”¹⁸⁶ Ultimately, in Priselkov’s interpretation the story of the baptism of Rus’ is an exercise in ecclesial diplomacy. The chronicler accepted the Greek version of

¹⁸² M.D. Priselkov, *Ocherki po tserkovno-politicheskoi istorii Kievskoi Rusi X-XII vv.* (St Petersburg: Tip. M. M. Stasiulevicha, 1913) 154-161. Priselkov speculates that Princess Ol’ga represented a Christian political party that came to power during the reign of her husband Igor, and that her trip to King Otto the Great, the founder of the Holy Roman Empire, was an attempt to gain a western episcopacy for Rus’ after the Greeks failed to deliver on the promises they made on her famous diplomatic mission to Constantinople in 955.

¹⁸³ Ibid. 80-81

¹⁸⁴ Ibid. 84

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid. 304

events, while shrewdly rearranging the story to give Prince Vladimir a biography worthy of canonization in the eyes of the Constantinopolitan church.

Byzantine Liturgy and the Baptism of Rus'

Like Shakhmatov before him, Priselkov does not suspect the influence of Byzantine liturgy in the story of the baptism of Rus'; as a result, original and compelling as his theories may be, they are often inaccurate. The historian's chief error is that he misidentifies the chroniclers' motives. He believes the editors of the *nachal'nyi svod* subverted the "facts" about Kiev's original ecclesial independence under the Bulgarians in a bid to improve Vladimir's chances for glorification by the Greeks. A medieval churchman reading the account, however, would have immediately recognized that the story was not composed to appease the Greek patriarchate. Indeed, for those aware of the chronicle's liturgical subtext (and surely the clerics of that time were aware of it) the passage must have read as a direct challenge to Byzantine ecclesial hegemony. Here was the story not of Kiev's subjugation to the Greek hierarchy, but of the founding of a canonical and independent episcopal see; the story of a bishop-king converting Rus', not a Greek philosopher; the story, in short, that made Vladimir equal to Constantine, and the Kievan church equal to the church in Constantinople.

A churchman's reading of the passage would so significantly differ from Priselkov's for the simple reason that the cleric spent his life serving the Byzantine rite. Year after year at liturgy the clergy prayed an elaborate myth about St Constantine and his Christianization of the Roman Empire. The following hymn from the Feast of Ss. Constantine and Helen eloquently expresses the basic plot:

Свет пресветлый, царская звезда не вечерняя, от неверия в веру Божества прешедши, приведесе освятити люди и град и, образ Креста на Небеси виде, услыша оттуду: сим побеждай враги твоя. Отонудуже прием разумение Духа, священник извещен и царь, елеем утвердил еси Церковь Божию, православных людей, отче, егоже и рака исцеление точит, Константине равноапостольне, молися о душах наших.¹⁸⁷

The all-radiant light, the royal and never-waning star, passing from unbelief to faith in the Godhead, was led to sanctify his people and city; and, beholding the image of the Cross in the sky, he heard a voice therefrom say: "By this conquer your enemies!" Wherefore, receiving the understanding of the Spirit, and confirmed as a priest and king, you established the Church of God with oil. Your relics, O father, grant healing; O Constantine, equal of the apostles, pray for our souls.

The hymn depicts the emperor in four different roles. He is a convert who miraculously hears a voice from the sky and passes “from unbelief to faith in the Godhead;” an Orthodox *basileus* who conquers his enemies with the “image of the Cross;” a “priest” who with oil “establishes the Church of God;” and a sainted “equal of the apostles” who intercedes on behalf of the faithful. Singing, hearing and praying this myth over the years, the monks of the Monastery of the Caves came to possess a clear picture of what the life (and after-life) of a holy royal baptizer should look like.

The chroniclers also understood that presenting Vladimir as a holy royal baptizer entailed considerably more than the mechanical combination of separate Greek tales: it required the skillful appropriation of Byzantium’s own ritual narratives. If Rus’ was to enjoy native saints and a native hierarchy, then it needed a myth of Christian origins that justified them. And so—at whatever time the chronicle came to assume its present form, whether that was 1095 like Shakhmatov and Priselkov believe or a different date—the editors of the *Primary Chronicle* redacted the extant tales of the baptism of Rus’ into a

¹⁸⁷ A slightly different version of this hymn, which identifies Constantine as a bishop and not a priest, may be found in: Stikhirar' mineinyi, notirovannyi, stikhiri s. 12 dek. Po 31 avg. (RNB, Sof. 384). This distinction is an important piece of evidence for one of the arguments made later in the chapter.

new narrative that showed Vladimir establishing Christianity in Kiev exactly like the Byzantine rite shows “the apostle Constantine” establishing it in the Roman Empire. No longer would Vladimir convert under the spell of a Greek philosopher, but by the direct and miraculous intervention of God Himself. And no longer would the Greeks appear as the saviors and baptizers of Rus’: a Slavic bishop-king, chosen by God and enlightened by holy baptism, would personally bring the Orthodox faith to his people.

Three Conversions: Paul, Constantine, Vladimir

One of the chroniclers’ first tasks in the creation of this myth was to conform the story of Vladimir’s conversion to the story about Constantine’s conversion that they knew from the liturgy. In the divine services, the emperor’s religious transformation is represented as a momentous, instantaneous, and miraculous event. On the eve of battle, Constantine sees a vision of the cross in the sky and goes on to conquer his enemies with the aid of the Christian God. At the same time he experiences life-changing inner revelations about the nature of the Divinity—revelations similar to those experienced by the apostle Paul on the road to Damascus.¹⁸⁸ Tellingly, this narrative from the twenty-sixth chapter of the Book of Acts is the epistle reading for the Feast of Ss. Constantine and Helen. At that service, just after chanting several hymns about Constantine’s conversion, the deacon loudly intones:

¹⁸⁸ This connection between Vladimir and Paul has been noted before. A. V. Nazarenko believes that “in the most ancient tradition, the conversion of Vladimir was in some way or another likened to the conversion of the Christian-persecuting Paul.” Nazarenko traces this motif to “several Latin-language sources of the first third of the eleventh century,” particularly the “Chronicon Theitmari.” In a different study, S. Senderovich argues that before Vladimir’s canonization in the thirteenth century, his image underwent a “process of mythologization.” This process included several typologies from the Old and New Testaments, but none as important as the Vladimir-Paul comparison, a typology “which formed the figure of St Vladimir in early Kievan historiography.” See V. Nazarenko, *Drevniaia Rus’ na mezhdunarodnykh putiakh*, 435-451. S. Senderovich, “Sv. Vladimir: k mifopoezisu,” *TODRL*, v. 49 (1996), 300-313.

Then Agrippa said unto Paul, You are permitted to speak for yourself. Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself: I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before you, touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews: Especially because I know you to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech you to hear me patiently. My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most strait sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee... And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities. Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? it is hard for you to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who are you, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom you persecute. But rise, and stand upon your feet: for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of these things which you have seen, and of those things in the which I will appear to you; Delivering you from the people, and from the Gentiles, to whom now I send you, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision...”

(Acts 26:1-5, 12-20)

That this epistle is read on Constantine’s feast day suggests that the emperor’s conversion on the Milvian Bridge is of the same kind, and of the same importance, as Paul’s conversion on the road to Damascus. A similar claim is repeated throughout the hymnography for the feast:

Креста Твоего образ на Небеси видел и, якоже Павел, звание не от человек прием, в царех апостол Твой, Господи, Царствующий град в руке Твоей положи, егоже спасай всегда в мире молитвами Богородицы, едине Человеколюбче.¹⁸⁹

Having beheld the image of Your Cross in the sky, and, like Paul receiving a call not from men, Your apostle among kings placed the imperial city in Your hands, O Lord. Save it ever in peace, by the prayers of the Theotokos, O You who alone love mankind.

¹⁸⁹ Two similar hymns may be found in: Mineia sluzhebnaia na mai (“Putiatina Mineia”) (RNB, Sof. 202).

In another hymn, the emperor is apostrophized as the “apostle Constantine,” and is said to have received “like the godly Paul... a divine gift from on high”:

Юношеский провождая возраст, якоже Божественный Павел, с Вышних
приял еси Божественное дарование и лютаго борца рать всеоружеством
Креста низвергл еси, царей похвало, Константине равноапостоле, о нас ко
Господу молися, спастися душам нашим.

Passing through young age, like the godly Paul you received a divine gift from on high, and with the full armor of the Cross you annihilated the warfare of the cruel adversary. O apostle Constantine, equal of the apostles, pray to the Lord for us, that our souls be saved.¹⁹⁰

These hymns combine the key motifs from Paul’s conversion narrative with the details of Constantine’s military conquest. Like Paul, God “appears unto” Constantine in a vision of light in order to make him a “minister and witness” to the gentiles, “to open their eyes, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.” Also like Paul, Constantine is “not disobedient to the heavenly vision”: he heeds the unexpected message and commits himself to the service of the God of the Christians.

The feast spells out these parallels to show that Paul was specially called from above by Christ to be the twelfth disciple, and that nearly three hundred years later Constantine was called in the exact same way to be the thirteenth. Thus, even Constantine’s claim to apostleship is constructed on the precedent of an earlier sacred narrative. In the New Testament the church canonized the story of Paul’s unusual election into the ranks of the apostles, and centuries later Byzantine hymnographers appropriated the narrative to justify Constantine’s elevation to that same rank.

The myth’s development did not end there, however. A few more centuries passed, the story was translated into Slavonic and chanted throughout Rus’ at the Feast of Ss. Constantine and Helen. The clerical editors of the *Primary Chronicle* served this

¹⁹⁰ Stikhirar' mineinyi, notirovannyi, stikhiri s. 12 dek. Po 31 avg. (RNB, Sof. 384)

feast every year on 21 May and, over time, the service itself taught them that to construct a canonical argument for Vladimir's glorification they had only to employ the methods developed by Byzantine hymnographers in their liturgical depiction of the first Christian emperor. The feast proclaimed Constantine "equal to the apostles" because he converted like Paul and repeated the apostle's works. Using the same logic, the chroniclers could proclaim Vladimir "equal to the apostles" by writing him a conversion and biography similar to those of Paul and Constantine.¹⁹¹ Once this liturgical "methodology" is recovered, the series of events in chronicle entries 986 to 988 become more comprehensible. Vladimir declines baptism because a "new Constantine" is not converted by human reasoning, but called from on high by God.

This notion that God calls unbelievers to apostolic service appears throughout the hymnography for Paul and Constantine. In Paul's case, particular stress is laid on his initial persecution of the church and subsequent repentance:

Досадитель и гонитель Церкви был еси, Павле всеблаженне, с Небесе же зван быв, защитил еси сию преславно, ейже ныне моли избавитися от бед и спастися душам нашим.¹⁹²

You were a tormenter and persecutor of the Church, O most blessed Paul, but when you were called from heaven, you defended it gloriously. Pray now that she [the Church] be delivered from misfortunes, and that our souls be saved.

Similar to Paul, Constantine is praised for "passing from unbelief to belief," and for "following" the divine call and forsaking the religion he was born into:

¹⁹¹ Metropolitan Hilarion drew on similar sources in his "Sermon on Law and Grace." See K. K. Aken'tev, "Slovo o zakone i blagodati' Ilariona Kievskogo. Drevneishaia versiiia po spisku GIM Sin. 591," *Vizantinorossika*, v. 3 (St Petersburg: *S. Peterburgskoe Obshchestvo vizantino-slavianskikh issledovani*, 2005) 116-152.

¹⁹² Stikhirar' mineinyi, notirovannyi, stikhiri s. 12 dek. Po 31 avg. (RNB, Sof. 384)

Возмездия Небесная получить потщался еси, темже зовущему, Богомудре, последовал еси, и тьму оставил еси, отче, преданныя ти лести, и светильник Духом Божественным был еси.¹⁹³

You strived to receive heavenly rewards; and when called, O divinely wise father, you followed Him Who called you, and forsook the darkness of the falsehood bequeathed to you, and through the Divine Spirit you became a luminary.

Other places in the service for Constantine suggest that God “pursues” his chosen ones, and one hymn even describes God hunting the emperor like prey:

Не от человек звание приим, но яко Божественный Павел, имел еси сие паче свышше, преславне Константине, от Христа Бога. Знамение бо Креста на небеси виде, сим уловился еси, яко добрейший лов, о сем и победитель противу видимых и невидимых врагов явился еси непобедим. Темже молим тя, яко тепла молитвенника, земнии, достойно память твою почитающе, в дерзновении испросити нам просвещения, очищения и велия милости.

You did not receive your name from men, but, like the divine Paul, you had it from Christ God on high, O all-glorious Constantine. For, beholding the sign of the Cross in the sky, you were caught like goodly prey, and you have been shown to be an invincible victor over enemies visible and invisible. Wherefore, we on earth entreat you as a fervent advocate, that with boldness you request for us enlightenment, cleansing and great mercy.

Prince Vladimir’s situation in the *Primary Chronicle* is analogous to that of his typological models. Like Paul, he has persecuted Christians and like Constantine he was born into a pagan faith. There is also evidence that he is being “pursued” by God: in 986, a Greek philosopher is sent to him in Kiev, and in 987 his emissaries are granted a vision of “heaven on earth” in Constantinople (49). The most convincing parallels, however, occur in the 988 passage, when the prince lays siege to Kherson. That Vladimir’s conversion occurs during a military campaign is to be expected, since that is also the story the liturgy tells about Constantine. In fact, nearly every hymn on the emperor’s feast day connects his conversion to the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312.

¹⁹³ A similar hymn is located in: Mineia sluzhebnaia na mai (“Putiatina Mineia”) (RNB, Sof. 202).

The feast presents the emperor's conversion as the necessary result of an empirical proof concerning the Christian God. The cross appears in the sky as the "sign" by which Constantine will conquer; he conquers using that sign as his battle standard; ergo, the God of the Christians is the true God. A comparable proof is built into the story of Vladimir's siege of Kherson. Vladimir, too, receives a "sign" from on high when Anastasius shoots an arrow into the enemy camp with instructions on how to take the city. Upon reading the instructions, Vladimir makes a vow based on the same logic that governs the hymnography for Constantine. Raising his eyes to heaven, the prince declares: "If these instructions prove successful, I will be baptized!" (50). As unexpected as Vladimir's pronouncement may be, his underlying deduction is clear: if he conquers with the help of the Christian God, then that God is necessarily the true God.

The same reasoning prevails at Prince Vladimir's baptism in Kherson following the siege; only this time the subtext is the ninth chapter of the Book of Acts,¹⁹⁴ a scripture that adds several important details to the story of Paul's conversion. Following Saul/Paul's vision of Christ, the passage continues:

...Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink. And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus... Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem... But the Lord said unto him, Go your way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel... And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul,

¹⁹⁴ The Book of Acts has a distinctive place in the scripture readings for the Byzantine rite. Selected passages, such as the epistle reading for the Feast of Ss. Constantine and Helen cited above, are read from the *Apostol* (Epistle Book) at various feasts throughout the year—a usage similar to other epistolary books of the New Testament. What makes the Book of Acts unusual is that it is read in its entirety just before the beginning of Paschal Matins, the first service of the midnight Orthodox Easter vigil.

the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto you in the way as you came, has sent me, that you might receive your sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.

Acts 9: 8-18

The parallels between this passage and the chronicle account are arresting. Paul is blinded by a vision of Christ, and Vladimir is blinded by “divine providence” (50).¹⁹⁵ Ananias is sent against his will to baptize a dangerous enemy of the faith, and Princess Anna is sent against her will to baptize (and marry) a dangerous enemy of Orthodox Byzantium. Paul is miraculously healed the moment Ananias lays hands on him, and Vladimir is miraculously healed as soon as “the Bishop [lays] his hand on him” (ibid.).

The two healings also represent a proof of the Christian God similar to that granted to Constantine. Paul is blinded by Christ and then healed at His command. Likewise, when Princess Anna tells Vladimir that baptism will cure his blindness, the prince responds, “If this proves true, then truly the God of the Christians is great” (ibid.). Here again, the Christian God is tested and the empirical results “prove” His divine power.

Hymnography from the Feast of Ss. Peter and Paul further elaborates on the story of Paul’s baptism and reveals another similarity between the apostle and Prince Vladimir;

¹⁹⁵ The Paul archetype is so central to Constantine’s conversion that Byzantine hymnographers artificially integrate a blindness motif into the emperor’s story: Чувства простер к Небеси и звездную навькнув доброту, от сих тайноучим бывая всяческих Господа, крестное же оружие посреде облиста, написуя о сем побеждати и державным быти. Темже, души твоя отверз очеса, письмо прочел еси и образу научився, Константине всечестне, моли Христа Бога согрешений оставление даровати празднующим любовию святую память твою./ Having stretched forth thy senses toward heaven and acquired the beauty of the stars, thou wast taught by them the mysteries of the Lord of all; and the weapon of the Cross shone forth in their midst, signifying that in which thou shouldest conquer and achieve dominion. Wherefore, opening the eyes of thy soul, thou didst read the writing and learn the image. O most honored Constantine, entreat Christ God, that He grant remission of offenses unto those who celebrate thy holy memory with love.

namely, that being blinded and healed is a revelatory, enlightening experience. As one hymn describes it:

Хотяй просветити вселенную омрачается, Анания же к сему послася,
душевное же просвещение даий и телесное от Божественнаго явления, сосуд
избран показав того.

He who would enlighten the whole world was struck blind; but Ananias was sent to him, imparting unto him enlightenment of soul and body through divine revelation, and showing him to be a chosen vessel.

Another hymn suggests that Paul's blinding gave him special insight into the nature of the Triune deity:

Будущее возвещая тебе сияние благочестия, Павле, и лести очищение,
Христос явлься на горе молниезрачен, очи помрачает плотския, душевныя
же вразумляет Тройческим разумом: славно бо прославися.

Declaring to you the coming effulgence of piety and the cleansing away of falsehood, O Paul, Christ, Who showed Himself to be as bright as lightning on the mountain, dimmed your bodily eyes while enlightening the eyes of your soul with the understanding of the Trinity: for gloriously is He glorified.

Still another hymn interprets Paul's blindness as an "earthly darkness" that allows one to perceive a higher, noetic light:

Свыше зван быв, а не от человек, егда земная тьма, помрачи очи телесныя,
нечестия обличая сетование, тогда Небесный свет облиста мысленнии очи,
благочестия открывая красоту. Темже познал еси изводящаго свет из тьмы,
Христа Бога нашего, Егоже моли спасти и просветити души наша.

Called from on high, and not by men, when earthly darkness covered your bodily eyes, putting an end to your ungodly plans, a heavenly light illumined your noetic eyes, disclosing the beauty of piety. Wherefore, you recognized Christ our God Who brought forth light out of darkness. Pray that He save and enlighten our souls.

The chronicler treats Vladimir's experience of blindness in identical fashion. The loss and restoration of his sight is not merely a physiological event—it is a pathway to spiritual revelation. Like Paul and Constantine, the prince's conversion is not so much a

matter of faith, as it is a direct, indubitable, first-hand experience of the divine. In the prince's own words: “Now I have known the true God” (50).

Here, at last, are the words of a “New Constantine,” and from this phrase forward the *Primary Chronicle* depicts Vladimir as a new and transformed human being. Gone is the lustful, deceitful, marauding pagan warrior of the earlier chronicle entries, and in his place appears a holy prince—apostle and bishop *ad extra*—on a mission to liberate Rus’ from the devil and baptize his people into the Byzantine faith.

Prince Vladimir, the “First Bishop” of Rus’

From the moment Prince Vladimir emerges from the baptismal font, he begins to imitate the deeds of the “apostle Constantine.” Still in Kherson, the prince founds a church and “selects clerical instruments and icons,” and then sets off for Kiev with “the Princess and Anastasius and the priests of Kherson, together with the relics of St Clement and of Phoebus his disciple” (52). For those familiar with the canons of the Orthodox Church, this description of Vladimir’s departure is extremely revealing. The prince is leaving Kherson with all of the elements necessary for the canonical founding of an Orthodox church—the relics of martyrs, clerical vessels, icons, priests—with one striking exception: there is no mention of a bishop, and in Orthodox tradition only a bishop can consecrate a new church.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁶ Anastasius of Kherson, the man who shoots an arrow into Vladimir’s camp during the siege, is identified as a bishop in the Novgorodian First Chronicle, but is never referred to as such in the *Primary Chronicle*. It is possible, therefore, that the chroniclers in Kiev removed any mention of Anastasius’ clerical rank precisely in order to cast Vladimir in the role of bishop.

This omission in the chronicle is connected to Constantine's unique position in the church hierarchy. In the fourth century *Vita Constantini*, Eusebius recounts the emperor's own attempt at defining that position:

Once when he was entertaining bishops at a banquet, [Constantine] said... "while you are bishops of the things inside the Church, I too am a bishop appointed by God of the things outside of it."¹⁹⁷

Contemporary scholars interpret the final enigmatic phrase—"episkipos...ton ekstos" in the original Greek¹⁹⁸—to mean that Constantine saw himself as "entrusted with the external care and protection of the church," a calling that entitled him (and future Byzantine emperors) to "a quasi-clergy status with special liturgical privileges not shared by other laypersons."¹⁹⁹

The divine services represent these liturgical privileges rather liberally, and at times portray the emperor as a bishop invested with sacramental power. The hymn cited above, for example, calls Constantine a priest and specifically states that he establishes the Church "with oil" [emphasis mine] because during the rite of consecration of a church an Orthodox bishop consecrates the altar table with a special type of oil called holy chrism.²⁰⁰ A twelfth-century version of this hymn, moreover, explicitly identifies Constantine as a *sviatitel'*, the term for a saint of episcopal rank. This identification is

¹⁹⁷ Charles M. Odahl, *Constantine and the Christian Empire*, 245. For more on Constantine's position within the church, see W. Seston, "Constantine as a 'Bishop'," *The Journal of Roman Studies*, v. 37 (1947), 127-131. Daniel de Decker and Ginette Dupuis-Masay. "L' 'episcopat' de l'empereur Constantin." *Byzantion*, v. 50 (1980), 118-157.

¹⁹⁸ Odahl, *Constantine and the Christian Empire*, 246.

¹⁹⁹ Robert Taft, *Through Their Own Eyes: Liturgy as the Byzantines Saw It* (Berkeley: InterOrthodox Press, 2006), 108-109.

²⁰⁰ In Church Slavonic holy chrism is normally referred to as мýро (*miro*) but is also called елей (*elei*), most notably in the prayers of Chrismation.

further reinforced by the Gospel reading selected for the emperor' feast day, John 10:1-16, the scripture also read on general feast days for a sainted bishop.²⁰¹

The liturgical context suggests, therefore, that the princely retinue departs from Kherson unaccompanied by a Greek *episkipos* because Prince Vladimir is the bishop who will baptize Rus' and consecrate its churches. This episcopal role is confirmed by the chronicler's depiction of the mass baptism of the Kievan population in 988 and the consecration of the "Church of the Tithes" in 996. In both passages, the prince presides over the liturgical rites and prays the prayers that a presiding bishop would pray at the sacraments of baptism and the consecration of a church.²⁰² At the mass baptism, Vladimir accompanies the priests into the baptismal waters and "when the people were baptized," he rejoices "that he and his people now knew God" (53). The prince then "looks up to heaven" and prays:

«Христе Боже, створивый небо и землю! Призри на новыя люди сия, и дажь имъ, Господи, уведети Тебе, истиньнаго Бога, яко же уведеша страны хрестьяньскыя. Утверди и веру в них праву и несовратьну, и мне помози, Господи, на супротивнаго врага, да, надеяся на тя и на твою державу, побежю козни его (ibid.).»

"O Christ God, who has created heaven and earth! Look upon these new people, and grant that they may know You, the true God, as other Christian nations have known You. Confirm them in the true and inalterable faith, and help me, O Lord, against the hostile adversary, so that hoping in You and Your might, I may overcome his machinations."

²⁰¹ In contemporary practice the Gospel reading for the Feast of Ss. Constantine and Helen has been abbreviated to John 10: 1-9, and the reading for bishops is John 10:9-16. The Typicon of Alexis the Studite indicates that the twelfth century reading for Constantine's feast day combined these two passages. See Pentkovskii, *Tipikon*, 345.

²⁰² As noted earlier in this study, the East Slavs were likely baptized according to the rites of the Great Church in Constantinople (Arranz, "Chin oglasheniia i kreshcheniia v Drevnei Rusi," 69-75). While any ordained priest could ostensibly perform these rites, at the time of the conversion of Rus' the ritual likely retained the distinctly episcopal (indeed, patriarchal) cast of the Constantinopolitan rites.

Vladimir's prayer combines several elements of the bishop's prayers from the Orthodox initiation rites. The prince assumes the traditional posture of Orthodox prelates at prayer and begins with a standard liturgical address, "O Christ God" (*Khristos bozhe*), that the bishop twice uses in the prayers of exorcism.²⁰³ The prince asks God "to look upon these Your new people" because the bishop petitions God several times to gaze upon the neophytes awaiting illumination: in the third exorcism prayer, he asks the Lord "to look upon Your servant" ("*prizri na raba Tvoego*") and during the "Reception into the Catechumenate" he prays, "Let Your eyes ever look upon him with mercy..." ("*Da budut ochi Tvoi vziraiushche na nego milostiiu vynu...*").²⁰⁴

Prince Vladimir calls his subjects "new people" because the bishop's prayers repeatedly represent baptism as the entrance into a new and everlasting life. Consider the prelate's final prayer before the immersion ceremony:

Владыко Господи Боже наш, призови раба Твоего, [имярек], ко святому Твоему Просвещению, и сподоби его великия сея благодати святаго Твоего Крещения. Отреши его ветхость, и обнови его в живот вечный...²⁰⁵

O Master, Lord our God, call Your servant, (name), to Your holy illumination, and grant unto him that great grace of thy Baptism. Put off from him the old man, and renew him unto life everlasting...

Vladimir's next request—that his subjects may know "the true God"—is derived from the bishop's prayers during the "Second Catechumenate" service. Christ is referred to as the "true God" three times during this ritual, and one prayer explicitly requests that God "fill

²⁰³ Arranz, "Chin oglasheniia...", 82.

²⁰⁴ Ibid. 76-77

²⁰⁵ Ibid. 88

[the neophyte] with the faith, hope and love which are in thee, that he may know that thou art the only true God...²⁰⁶

Vladimir's concluding petition is a slight reworking of a line from the bishop's first prayer at the Chrismation service. In the chronicle, the prince asks God to "confirm his people in the true faith," and save him from the "machinations" of the devil (50), and during the sacrament the bishop prays:

Сохрани его в Твоем освящении, утверди в православной вере, избави от лукаваго, и всех начинаний его...²⁰⁷

Preserve him in Your sanctification, confirm him in the Orthodox faith, and deliver him from the devil, and all his evil machinations.

These parallels are evidence enough that the author of the 988 passage is using the same narrative technique employed in the 955 account to depict Princess Ol'ga's baptism. In that passage, the patriarch and princess act out the roles of baptizer and baptized, as proscribed in the baptismal rubrics of the Great Church. These rubrics are put to use again in 988, as Prince Vladimir enters the Dnieper and baptizes his people with the prayers and gestures traditionally performed by the Patriarch of Constantinople.

Following the mass baptism Prince Vladimir continues to perform the duties of a bishop and "new Constantine." He orders "churches to be built where idols previously stood" and assigns "priests throughout the cities," inviting "the people to accept baptism in all the cities and towns" (53). These activities reflect Constantine's deeds in the services:

Благочестиваго Константин память яко миро истощеваемо, днесъ возсия: Христа бо возжелев, идолы пренебреже, храм воздвиг на земли распеншемуся нас ради, на Небесех же восприя надежды венец.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁶ Ibid. 81

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

The memory of the pious Constantine hath shone forth today, poured out like myrrh; for, desiring Christ, he spurned the idols, raising up a temple on the earth to Him Who was crucified for our sake; and in the heavens he has received the crown of hope.

The temple referred to here is likely Hagia Sophia, the “Great Church” that Constantine founded as the ecclesiastical center of his new Christian empire in 326.²⁰⁹ Vladimir imitates the emperor in this regard in 989 when he orders the construction of “a church dedicated to the Holy Mother of God” that will become the future ecclesiastical center of Orthodox Rus’, better known as the Church of the Tithes (54). Seven years later, in 996, the prince, “seeing the church completed,” enters it and prays a second episcopal prayer:

«Господи Боже! Призри с небесе, и вижь. И посети винограда своего. И сверши, яже насади десница твоя, новыя люди си, им же обратилъ еси сердце в разум, познати тебе, Бога истинного. И призри на церковь твою си, юже создах, недостойный рабъ твой, в имя рожьшая тя матере, присноведья Богородица. Аже кто помолиться въ церкви сей, то услыши молитву его молитвы ради пречистыя Богородица» (55).

“Lord God! Look down from heaven, behold and visit your vineyard, and perfect what your right hand has planted. Make these new people, whose heart you have turned unto knowledge, to know you as the true God. Look upon this your church which I, your unworthy servant, have built in the name of the Ever-Virgin Mother of God who bore you. And whoever may pray in this church, hear their prayers, for the sake of the prayers of the Immaculate Mother of God.”

The opening verse of this prayer unequivocally confirms Prince Vladimir’s status as the first “bishop” of Rus’. At the celebration of a hierarchical Divine Liturgy, during the Thrice Holy Hymn (*Trisviatoe*), the presiding bishop processes out from the altar and blesses the congregation with two special candles, a *dikirion* and a *trikirion*. As he performs the blessing, the bishop looks to heaven and prays Psalm 80:14-15, the verse with which Prince Vladimir begins the prayer above: “O Lord, look down from heaven,

²⁰⁸ Stikhirar' mineinyi, notirovannyi, stikhiri s. 12 dek. Po 31 avg. (RNB, Sof. 384)

²⁰⁹ Odahl, *Constantine and the Christian Empire*, 237.

and behold, and visit this vine, and perfect that which thy right hand hath planted.”

Perhaps no other liturgical prayer is as connected with the figure of the bishop as this prayer. It is one of the few prayers publicly recited at a hierarchical Divine Liturgy that is never recited at a non-Hierarchical Divine Liturgy. The chronicler is going to great lengths, therefore, to concretely portray Vladimir as the bishop who is consecrating the Church of the Tithes.

The next line of the prayer—“Make these new people, whose heart thou hast turned unto knowledge, to know thee as the true God” (55)—returns to the “new people” motif from Vladimir’s earlier baptism prayer, and likely derives from the baptismal service. In one of the final prayers before baptism, the bishop expresses a very similar sentiment:

О Господи спасе наш иже всем хотяй спастися и в разум истины приити,
возсияти свет разума в сердцах (sic) наших...²¹⁰

O Lord, our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, shine the light of knowledge into our hearts...

Vladimir is blessing a church, however, not baptizing a nation, and the concluding phrases of his prayer correspond to the prayers of consecration for a church.²¹¹ The prince asks God to look down on the church that he, an unworthy servant, has built in the

²¹⁰ Arranz, “Chin ovlasheniia...,” 86.

²¹¹ I. E. Danilevskii rightly observes that Vladimir’s prayer resembles Solomon’s prayer at the dedication of the Temple in Jerusalem from 3 Kings 8:22-30. In medieval Rus’, however, this biblical text was most likely meditated through two liturgical services: 1) the Rite of Consecration of a Church, in which several of the bishop’s prayers are modeled on Solomon’s prayer; and 2) the special rite used for the inauguration of Hagia Sophia, a service that included a vesperal reading from 3 Kings 8. This ancient service eventually became the basis for the later Feast of the Consecration of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and is also preserved in certain parts of the contemporary rite of consecration for a church. In contemporary service books, moreover, the scripture from 3 Kings is the first vesperal reading for the Feast of Ss. Constantine and Helen. See I. N. Danilevskii, *Povest’ vremennykh let: Germenevticheckie osnovy izucheniia letopisnykh tekstov* (Moscow: Aspekt Press, 2004), 108. K. K. Akent’ev, “Mozaiki Kievskoi sv. Sofii i “Slovo” Metropolita Ilariona v vizantiiskom liturgicheskom kontekste,” *Vizantinorossika*, v. 1 (St Petersburg: S. Peterburgskoe Obshchestvo vizantino-slavianskikh issledovani, 1995), 75-94.

name of the Theotokos and to hearken to the prayers of those who will pray therein. Similar petitions are made throughout the consecration service, but two prayers in particular reflect the prince's concerns. In the First Prayer for the Consecration of a Church (*Nachal'naia molitva osvishcheniia khrama*), the bishop asks that God would receive the prayer of his "unworthy servants," so that they may "complete the consecration of this church...built in the name of the holy [name of saint to which the church is dedicated]."²¹² And in the Prayer at the Bowing of Heads (*Kolenopreklonnaia molitva osviashcheniia khrama*), the bishop petitions God to look upon the church and hear the prayers offered by the faithful:

...во еже быти очесами Твоим отверстым нань день и ночь, и ушесам Твоим внемлющим в молитву приходящих в него со страхом Твоим и благоговейством, и призывающих всечестное и покланяемое имя Твое: да елика воспросят у Тебе, и услышиши на небеси горе, и сотвориши, и милостив будеши.²¹³

...Let Thine eyes be open upon it day and night and let Thine ears be heedful of the prayer of those who shall enter therein in Thy fear, and in devoutness, and shall call upon Thine all honorable and worshipful Name; that whatsoever they shall ask of Thee, Thou wilt hear it in heaven above and wilt show mercy and be gracious unto them.

Prince Vladimir's decision to dedicate the church to Mary and his appeal to the prayers of the *Bogoriditsa* are connected to another solemn Constantinopolitan liturgical rite: the yearly commemoration of Constantine's formal dedication of the city on 11 May 330.²¹⁴

²¹² M. S. Zheltov, "Chin osvishcheniia khrama i polozheniia sviatikh moshchei v vizantiiskikh Evkhologiiakh XI veka," *Relikvii v isskustve i kul'ture vostochnokhristianskogo mira* (Moscow: 2000), 114.

²¹³ Ibid. 116

²¹⁴ The eleventh of May subsequently became a standard date for the consecration of important churches in Rus'. The Church of the Tithes was consecrated on 12 May 996 (the nearest Sunday to that date) and the Church of the Holy Wisdom in Kiev on 11 May 1046. See Aken'tev, "Mozaiki Kievskoi sv. Sofii..." 81. For more on the history of the dedication of Constantinople, see Odahl, *Constantine and the Christian Empire*, 243.

Each year on that day, the patriarch presided over several services that emphasized Mary's unique role as the protector and intercessor of the city. The festivities began with vespers the evening before, where—in the troparion of the feast—the celebrants repeatedly declared Constantinople to be “the City of the Theotokos.”²¹⁵ The next morning, at matins, the patriarch led a large procession from the Great Church to the Forum and the first antiphone from Marian feasts was chanted: “Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Saviour, save us!”²¹⁶

As these verses indicate, the Byzantine rite clearly links the dedication of Constantine's Christian capital with the Mother of God and her intercessory prayers. Thus, when Prince Vladimir dedicates the Church of the Tithes to the Theotokos and asks for her intercessions, he is doing more than consecrating a single church: he is dedicating his newly Christian capital to the Mother of God, in the manner that the patriarch of Constantinople rededicated the Byzantine capital to her each 11 May. As in his earlier prayer at the mass baptism, Vladimir is once again imitating the deeds of Constantine by performing the liturgical roles proscribed for the Patriarch in the rubrics of the Great Church.

The Devil at Baptism

There is a second character in the story of the baptism of Rus' whose representation derives from the liturgy and sacraments of the Great Church, and that

²¹⁵ Juan Mateos, *Le Typicon de la Grande Église* (Roma: Pont. Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1962), 286.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.* 287

character is the devil. As the citizens of Kiev are being baptized in the Dnieper, the devil “groans, lamenting”:

«Увы мне, яко отсюда прогоним есмь! Сде бо мняхъ жилище имети, яко сде не суть ученья апостольска, не суть ведуще Бога, но веселяхъся о службе ихъ, еже служаху мне. И се уже побеженъ есмь от неведгласа, а не от апостоль, не от мученикъ, не имам уже царствовати въ странах сихъ» (53).

“Woe is me! I am banished from here! I thought to find myself a home [in this land], for the apostles’ teaching was not here; nor did they know God, but I rejoiced in the service of those who served me. And now I am conquered by the ignorant, and not by apostles or martyrs. I will no longer be able to reign in these lands.”

Shakhmatov notes the “intimate connection” between the devil’s words in this passage and his statement in the “Tale of the Varangian Martyrs.”²¹⁷ In both places, the devil confesses that the apostles’ teaching has the power to expel him and fails to recognize that Prince Vladimir also possesses this power as an “equal of the apostles.” The crucial difference between the passages is that in 983 the prince’s authority to drive out the devil is connected with the power of the “true cross,” while in 988 that authority is linked to the sacramental power of Orthodox baptism, and the rite of Exorcism in particular.

The chroniclers again make use of a sophisticated narrative device. As Prince Vladimir and the priests of Kherson perform the baptism of Rus’, the chroniclers creatively imagine the devil’s perspective on the event, as it is depicted in the three exorcism prayers that precede the immersion ritual. These prayers directly address the devil as a personal being and command him to depart. The devil is “banished” from Rus’, therefore, because the bishop prays:

Запрещает тебе, диаволе, Господь пришедый в мир и вселивыйся в
человецех, да разрушит твое мучительство, и человеки измет...²¹⁸

²¹⁷ Shakhmatov, *Razyskaniia*, 471.

²¹⁸ Arranz, “Chin oglasheniia...,” 81-82.

The Lord bans you, O devil, He who came into the world, and dwelled among men, that He might overthrow your tyranny and deliver men...

Further, the devil no longer has a “home” in Rus’ because the prayers repeatedly portray him making a home in the body of unbaptized human beings, as in the second exorcism prayer:

Господи Саваоф, Боже Израилев, исцеляяй всякий недуг, и всякую язю, призри на раба Твоего, взыщи, испытай и отжени от него вся действия диаволя, запрети нечистым духом, и изжени я, и очисти дела руку Твоею, и острое Твое употребивый действие, сокруши сатану под нозе его вскоре, и даждь ему победы на него и на нечистыя его духи...²¹⁹

Lord of Sabaoth, the God of Israel, Who heals every malady and every infirmity: Look upon Your servant; prove him and search him and root out of him every operation of the devil. Rebuke the unclean spirits and expel them, and purify the works of Your hands; and exerting Your great power, speedily crush down Satan under his feet; and give him victory over the same, and over his unclean spirits...

Also, the devil no longer enjoys the “service” of the citizens of Kiev because during the Renunciation of Satan service neophytes of the Great Church renounced the devil fifteen times with the words:

Отричуся сатаны и всех дел его и всея службы его и всех ангел его и всего студа его...²²⁰

I renounce satan and all his works, and all his service, and all his angels, and all his pride...

This liturgical subtext indicates that the chronicler’s depiction of the devil is intended as satire. In both passages the devil derides Rus’, even as he betrays his own miscomprehension. He mocks the ignorance of others and yet is unable to perceive the cause of his own expulsion: that the “apostles’ teaching” is transmitted through the

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Ibid. 85.

services of the Byzantine rite, and that “ignorant” Vladimir is performing these services as the “first bishop” of Kiev.

“Praises” to the Baptism of Rus’ and “Praises” to Vladimir

The preceding analysis has shown that Prince Vladimir baptizes his subjects with the prayers of the baptismal rite and consecrates churches with the prayers of the rite of consecration for a church. These services continue to figure prominently in both the panegyric on the baptism of Rus’ that concludes the 988 entry and in the panegyric to Vladimir upon his death in 1015. The earlier panegyric is a scriptural composite that contains approximately twenty phrases, and seventeen of these are citations from Holy Writ. Each citation is recited at some point in the Byzantine liturgical year, and exactly half of the phrases are connected to either the baptism and church consecration rites or the Feast of Theophany, the liturgical service that commemorates Christ’s baptism in the Jordan River.

The composite begins with a paraphrase of the epistle reading at the ninth hour of Theophany (Titus 3:5). The next line of the text—“Blessed is the Lord Jesus Christ, who loved his new people and enlightened them with holy baptism” (53)—reproduces the first prayer at the Reception into the Catechumenate (“Blessed is the Lord God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...”²²¹) *and* repeats the “new people” and “enlightenment” motifs that occur in many of the baptism prayers already cited in this chapter. These motifs appear again in the middle of the passage (“innumerable multitudes came to God, enlightened by holy baptism”) and at the end of the account when the Kievans are called a “a new Christian people, chosen by God” (53-54). The panegyric also repeats the first line of an

²²¹ Ibid. 76

ancient baptism prayer (“Great art thou, O Lord, and wonderful are Thy works...”/ “*Velii esi Gospodi, i chudna dela Tvoia...*”²²²) that the bishop prays three times at the Blessing of Waters on Theophany, as well as a verse from the epistle reading at Baptism (Rom. 6:3), a verse from the Gospel reading for the forefeast of Theophany (Luke 3:3), and a lengthy citation from Psalm 145—the first psalm read during the solemn rite for blessing the altar table in the eleventh century rubrics for the consecration of a church.²²³

Themes from Orthodox baptism also appear in the “praises to Vladimir” in 1015:

Се есть новый Костянтинъ великаго Рима, иже крестивъся сам и люди своя: тако и съ створи подобно ему. Аще бо бе и преже на сквернъную похоть желая, но после же прилежа к покаянью, яко же апостоль вещаваеъ: «Идиже умножится грехъ, ту избобильствуеъ благодать.» Дивно же есть се, колико добра створилъ Русьстей земли, крестивъ ю. Мы же, хрестьяне суще, не въздаем почестья противу оногъ възданью. Аще бо онъ не крестилъ бы насъ, то ныне были быхомъ в прельсти дьяволи, яко же и прародители наши погынуша. Да аще быхом имели потщанье и мольбы приносили Богу за нь, в день преставленья его, и видя бы Бог тщанье наше к нему, прославилъ бы и: намъ бо достоить за нь Бога молити, понеже темь Бога познахом. Но дажь ти Господь по сердцю твоему, и вся прошенья твоя исполни, его же желаше царства небеснаго. Дажь ти Господь венець с праведными, в пици райстей веселье и ликъствованье съ Авраомомъ и с прочими патриархы, яко же Соломонъ рече: «Умершю мужю правенду, не погыбаеъ упованье.» Сего бо в память держать русьстии людье, поминающе святое крещенье, и прославляють Бога въ молитвахъ и в песнехъ и въ псалмехъ, поюще Господеви, новии людье, просвещени Святымъ Духомъ, чающе надежи великаго Бога и Спаса нашего Иисуса Христа въздати комуждо противу трудомъ неиздреченьную радость... (58).

He is the new Constantine of mighty Rome, who was baptized and who baptized his subjects; for Vladimir imitated the deeds of Constantine. And even if he was formerly given to evil and unclean lusts, he later devoted himself to repentance, as the Apostle instructs: “But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” It is truly marvelous what benefits Vladimir conferred upon the land of Rus’ by

²²² Nicholas Denysenko, *The Blessing of Waters and Epiphany: The Eastern Liturgical Tradition* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Co., 2012), 83.

²²³ Zheltov, “Chin osviashcheniia khrama...,” 115. Another liturgical cluster in the baptism panegyric comes from the Feast of the Entrance of the Lord into Jerusalem, also known as Palm Sunday. The second antiphone (Ps. 116:2), third antiphone (Ps. 136:1), and alleluia verse (Ps. 95:1-2) from this feast all appear in the first few lines of the praises.

baptizing it. But we Christians do not render him honor equal to his deeds. For if he had not baptized us, even now we would remain under the diabolical delusions in which our forefathers perished. If we had been zealous, and prayed for him on the day of his death, then God, seeing how we honor him, would have glorified him. And in fact we should pray to God for him, since through him we have known God. And may God give to you according to your heart, and fulfill all your requests, granting you the kingdom of heaven which you desired! May God crown you among the righteous, and give you the sweetness of the food of paradise, and exultation with Abraham and the other patriarchs! For as Solomon said: “When the righteous man dies, his hope perishes not.” The people of Rus’ honor his memory, remembering their holy baptism, and glorify God in prayers and hymns and psalms, singing to God as His new people, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, maintaining the hope of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who will give to each of us ineffable joy according to our deeds...

The chroniclers make their plea for Vladimir’s canonization by appealing to the specifically sacramental role that the prince plays in the conversion of Rus’. Vladimir is a saint because “he baptized his subjects;” because of “the benefits [he] conferred upon the land of Rus’ by baptizing it;” because he was the sacramental minister “through [whom, the Rus’] have known God,” and who liberated them (presumably, with the exorcism prayers) from “the diabolical delusions in which [their] forefathers perished.” And Vladimir has yet to be glorified, the chroniclers explain, not because of a deficit of saintliness on the prince’s part, but owing to the lack of zeal and piety exhibited by the faithful at the time of his death. The chroniclers then offer their own zealous prayer for Vladimir (“And may God give to you according to your heart...”) comprised of a vesperal reading from the Feast of All Saints (Ws. 3:4) and other images from the hymnography of that feast, such as the crown of righteousness and the communion of saints surrounding the patriarch Abraham.²²⁴

The *pokhvala* concludes with an intriguing image of Vladimir being liturgically commemorated in Rus’. The faithful “honor his memory” and “glorify God in prayers

²²⁴ GIM, fond 80370 (Sobranie Voskresenskogo Novo-Ierusalimskogo Voskresenskogo monastyrja), № 27, Festal Triodion (with musical notation), late XII c. See *Svodnyi katalog*, 158-159 (№ 136).

and hymns and psalms”—two tropes often used in Byzantine hymnography to refer to the commemoration of saints at liturgical worship. Consider the following *sticheron* from the Feast of All Saints:

Приидите вси вернии, святых всех всеславную память, во псалмех, пениих и песнех духовных восхвалим: Крестителя Спасителя, апостолы, пророки и мученики, священноначальники, учителя же и преподобныя, постники и праведныя, и святых жен боголюбное состояние...²²⁵

O come all you faithful, let us praise in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, the glorious memory of the saints: the Baptist of the Lord, the apostles, prophets and martyrs, bishops and teachers, fasting monks and the righteous, and the holy women who love God...

That the chronicle account of Prince Vladimir's life ends with an image of his liturgical commemoration is emblematic of the “Christianizing” function of liturgy—that is, the function by which liturgy draws newly converted cultures into the Orthodox storyworld.

Liturgy is permeable. The rite not only sends myths out into the world, it also receives new myths back into itself. In medieval Christendom, this interaction was crucial to the formation of local sacred history. The practice of liturgy taught newly converted communities the narrative models for constructing a native Christian mythology. Gradually, perhaps over several generations, the community adopted these models and reconstructed its own past as an Orthodox myth. This process continued until the church canonized the community's myth, at which point local history became sacred history and native heroes and events became a part of the liturgical storyworld.

Such is the case with Prince Vladimir in the *Primary Chronicle*: the editors adopted the liturgical models for St Constantine and created a local myth about “St Vladimir.” This myth was canonized some 150 years later, in the late thirteenth century, and a liturgical feast dedicated to the prince's memory began to be celebrated each 15

²²⁵ Ibid.

July. Even into to the present day, this feast—the Feast of the Holy Equal of the Apostles and Great Prince Vladimir—continues to proclaim the story about Vladimir that appears in the Primary Chronicle.²²⁶ This is the “Christianizing” function of liturgy: the rite generated the myth of St Vladimir, the rite conditioned subsequent generations to canonize it, and, once canonized, the rite made Vladimir a sacred member of the liturgical storyworld. And for a medieval Orthodox audience, as soon as the story became a part of that sacred ritual realm, it was no longer one “history” among others—it was true and saving, like all of the stories of Christ and his saints.

²²⁶ In the contemporary service, Prince Vladimir is a “second Constantine in word and deed” (“Vtoryi ty byl esi Konstantin slovom i delom”) and a “second Paul” healed from blindness (“...Khrista, izbravshago tia, iako vtorago Pavla, i ottriashchago slepotu vo sviatei kupeli...”). The hymnography also depicts him destroying idols, founding the Church of the Tithes and enlightening the Russian land with baptism.

Chapter Four

Boris the High Priest and Gleb the Lamb

The *Primary Chronicle* entry for 6523 (1015), in addition to the passing of Vladimir, also recounts the double murder of Princes Boris and Gleb. The story begins in Berestovo, where Vladimir unexpectedly dies while preparing for war against one of his sons, Iaroslav. Another son, Prince Sviatopolk, immediately occupies the throne in Kiev and moves to secure it by eliminating all rivals among the other sons, Boris and Gleb included. Sviatopolk sends messages to Boris promising peace, even as he secretly dispatches assassins to Al'ta with orders to assassinate the young prince (59). Boris learns of the plot beforehand, yet refuses to resist the attack; his murderers approach while the prince is at prayer and attack "like wild beasts" (59). The first attack is not enough, however, and Sviatopolk sends two Varangians to finish the murder. They arrive to find the prince still breathing and plunge a sword into his heart.

Sviatopolk next turns attention to Prince Gleb. He again resorts to deception, telling his brother that their father is sick and wishes to see him. Gleb sets off for Kiev at once, but is intercepted en route by messengers from a fourth brother, Iaroslav. They report the deaths of Vladimir and Boris, and warn Gleb of Sviatopolk's intentions. But, like his brother, Gleb refuses to defend himself. The assassins arrive and order Gleb's servants to murder their master; a cook named Torchin obeys, takes up a knife and kills the prince. The narrative concludes with an extensive panegyric, praising the two brothers as martyrs, healers and heavenly protectors of the land of Rus'.

The chronicle entry for 1015 is only one of several literary texts about Boris and Gleb that survive from the pre-Mongol period. These include liturgical offices, readings from the *Parimii*, thematic sermons, and a variety of short and long biographies. The critical literature devoted to this corpus is extensive and extremely contradictory. After more than a century of debate, there is still little consensus about many of the most elementary claims involving the princes. Scholars disagree about the historical sequence of events underlying the narratives; the relative age and provenance of the manuscripts; and the origins and nature of the early cult.²²⁷ A particularly vast literature exists on the relations of the *Primary Chronicle* account and two early hagiographies, the *Narration and Passion and Eulogy to the Holy Martyrs Boris and Gleb* (*Skazanie, i strasti, i pokhvale sviatuiu mucheniku Borisa i Gleba*) and the *Lectio on the Life and Death of the Blessed Passion-Bearers Boris and Gleb* (*Chtenii o zhitii i pogublenii blazhennuiu strastoterptsu Borisa i Gleba*).²²⁸

There is some mention of Byzantine liturgy in the scholarship on Boris and Gleb. Gail Lenhoff has stressed the role of ritual commemoration in her study of the cult and texts;²²⁹ N. S. Seregina has examined the *stikhery* chanted on the brothers' feast day;²³⁰

²²⁷ For two recent reviews of the research on this subject, see S. M. Mikheev, "Sviatopolk" *sede v Kieve po ottsi*: *Usobitsa 1015-1019 godov v drevnerusskikh i skandinavskikh istochnikakh* (Moscow: Institut slavianovedeniia RAN, 2009), 10-18. Tsukerman, "Nabliudeniia nad slozheniem drevneishikh istochnikov letopisi," 183-199.

²²⁸ Shakhmatov devotes the longest chapter in *Razyskaniia* to this problem. He shows that the *Lectio*, unlike the *Narration*, did not rely on the extant chronicle manuscripts, but derived from the *drevneishii svod* of 1039. He also hypothesizes that by comparing the *Lectio* with the extant chronicle passage, he can reconstruct the original story about Boris and Gleb. See Shakhmatov, *Razyskaniia*, 57-80. For additional studies on the topic, see Ludolf Müller, "O vremeni kanonizatsii sviatykh Borisa i Gleba," and Andrzej Poppe, "O zarozhdenii kul'ta sviatykh Borisa i Gleba i o posviashchennykh im proizvedeniakh," *Russia Mediaevalis*, 8 (1995), 5-20, 21-68.

²²⁹ See Gail Lenhoff, *The Martyred Princes Boris and Gleb: A Socio-Cultural Study of the Cult and the Texts*, UCLA Slavic Studies 19 (Columbus, OH: Slavica Publishers, 1989), 55-77.

and A.N. Uzhankov has used the early services to help date the official canonization.²³¹

Other scholars have looked to Byzantine sources for models of the princes' veneration.

Milos Velimirovic, Felix Keller, and V.B. Kry'sko have documented the Greek origins of

the Slavonic hymnography to Boris and Gleb, and Monica White has detailed the

influence of Byzantine military saints on the cult.²³² Some claims are considerably more

speculative: S.A. Ivanov has argued—without any textual evidence—that the martyrdom

is patterned after the cult of Nikephoras II Phokas, the Byzantine emperor murdered by

his relative and friend, John Tzimiskes.²³³ More recently, S. Iu. Temchin has proposed

that the murders are modeled on a sermon by St John Chrysostom devoted to the

²³⁰ N.S. Seregina, *Pesnopeniia russkim sviatym: po materialam rukopisnoi pevcheskoi knigi XI-XIV vv. "Stikhirar' mesiachnyi* (Saint Petersburg: Rossiiskii institut istorii iskusstv, 1994), 75-101.

²³¹ A. N. Uzhankov, "Sviatye strastoterptsy Boris i Gleb: k istorii kanonizatsii i napisaniia zhitii" *Drevniaia Rus': Voprosy medievistiki*, no. 2 (Moscow: ISRAN, 2000), 37-49. The date of the brothers' canonization is unknown, as is the date of the compilation of the first services in their honor. Shakhmatov dates the canonization to as early as 1020, and asserts that by 1039 the chronicler was writing about "already glorified saints." Abramovich and Müller suggest the brothers were glorified sometime between 1035-1039, while Sreznevskii, Karger, Poppe and others put the date at 1072 or later. See I. I. Sreznevskii, "Drevnie izobrazheniia sviatykh kniazei Boris i Gleba," *Khristianskie drevnosti i arkheologiiia*, IX (1882), 31. Shakhmatov, *Razyskaniia*, 58. D. I. Abramovich, ed., *Zhittia sviatykh muchenikov Borisa i Gleba i sluzhby im*, Pamiatniki drevne-russkoi literatury 2 (Petrograd: Tipografiia Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk, 1916), XX. M. K. Karger, "K istorii kievskogo zodchestva XI v. Khram-mavzolei Borisa i Gleba v Vyshgorode," *Sovetskaia arkheologiiia* XVI (1952), 77-99. A. Poppe, "Chronologia utworow Nestora hagiografa," *Slavia Orientalis* 14, 3, (1965), 301-305.

²³² Milos Velimirovic, "The Influence of the Byzantine Chant on the Music of the Slavic Countries," *Proceedings of the XIIIth International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, ed. J.M. Hussey, D. Obelensky and S. Runciman (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 119-147. Felix Keller, "Das Kontakion aus der ersten Sluzba für Boris und Gleb," *Schweizerische Beiträge zum VII. Internationalen Slavistenkongreß in Warschau, August 1973*, ed. Peter Brang, Harald Jaksche and Hildegard Schroeder, *Slavica Helvetica* (Lucerne: C.J. Bucher, 1973), 65-73. V.B. Kry'sko, "O grecheskikh istochnikakh i rekonstruktsii pervonachal'nogo teksta drevnerusskikh stikhir na Borisov den'," *Miscellanea Slavica: Sbornik statei k 70-letiiu Borisa Andreevicha* (Moscow: Indirk, 2008), 92-109. Monica White, *Military Saints in Byzantium and Rus, 900-1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

²³³ S. A. Ivanov, "Nesol'ko zamechanii o vizantiiskom kontekste borisoglebsogo kul'ta," *Boriso-Glebskii sbornik, Collectanea Borisoglebica*, vyp. 1 (Paris: Ukrainian National Committee for Byzantine Studies, 2009), 353-364.

Bethlehem infants²³⁴—parallels that A. M. Ranchin has dismissed as “commonplaces” in the church literature, lacking any direct relation to Boris and Gleb.²³⁵

The tale of Boris and Gleb is intriguing because it is the first passage in the *Primary Chronicle* possibly influenced by native services for native East Slavic saints. The extant version of the tale is from the Laurentian Codex and was compiled in the early twelfth century, “by which time the first services to Boris and Gleb had already undoubtedly entered the corpus of the fundamental church books of the Russian Orthodox Church.”²³⁶ The editor who compiled the chronicle had likely celebrated the Feast of Boris and Gleb and knew its contents first-hand. Thus, for the first time we are presented with a chronicle story about East Slavic saints that may have drawn from the Slavonic services written specifically for those saints.

I am not able to fully treat this topic here. It suffices to say that the chronicle tale and the first service do exhibit some similarities.²³⁷ Overall, however, the sources depict the brothers rather differently: the service portrays them primarily as healers and

²³⁴ S. Iu. Temchin, “‘Se nest’ ubiistvo, no syrorezanie’: agiograficheskii obraz vifleemskikh mladentsev kak kontseptual’naia osnova Borisoglebskogo kul’ta,” *Imenoslov. Istoriiia iazyka. Istoriiia kul’tury*, ed. F. B. Uspenskii (Moscow: Universitet Dmitriia Pozharskogo, 2012), 216-230.

²³⁵ A. M. Ranchin, “Pochitanie sviatykh Borisa i Gleba: k voprosu ob obraztsakh,” *Tezisy dokladov uchastnikov VII mezhdunarodnoi konferentsii “Kompleksnyi podkhod v izuchenii drevnei Rusi* (Moscow: RAN, 2013), 113-114.

²³⁶ Krys’ko, “O grecheskikh istochnikakh,” 95.

²³⁷ Consider the following hymn from the earliest known liturgical service for Boris and Gleb: “Кыми похвальными и венцы венчаимъ певаемая, разделеная телесами и съвкупленая душею, верньнымъ людемъ теплая застпника, земля русьскыя увобрение и всея вселенья наслажение, мужемьнымъ съмысломъ бесовьскую дъръжаву раздрушивъша, Христовомъ подобием, подающаго мирови велию милость?” (Abramovich, *Zhitiia*, 137). The first line of this hymn matches the first line of the *pokhvla* in the *Primary Chronicle* (*s’vкуплена teloma pache zhe dushama*), and the hymn, again like the *pokhvla*, praises the brothers as “protectors of the land of Rus” who “destroy the power of demons.” Moreover, the original service twice compares Boris to St Stephen—in one place calling him a “second protomartyr Stephen the great” (ibid. 137-141)—thus making explicit a typology that is only implied in the *Primary Chronicle* (a typology discussed at length later in this chapter).

intercessors, while the chronicle (minus the *pokhvala*²³⁸) mostly focuses on their “passion” and personal sacrifice. I am inclined to agree therefore with those scholars—such as Shakhmatov and N. S. Seregina—who view the chronicle tale as the original source and the first services as derivative.²³⁹

This is not to suggest that Byzantine liturgy is absent from the story of the brothers’ martyrdom. Much to the contrary, the tale of Boris and Gleb is the most intricate articulation of Byzantine liturgy in all of the *Primary Chronicle*. The passage transforms political fratricide into an act of martyrdom, and it does so by conforming the events of a dynastic succession dispute to the sacred myths of the Byzantine rite. There are four levels of liturgical subtext in the tale, and I analyze them below in order from the least to the most complex.

1. Abel, Stephen the Protomartyr, and the Unmercenary Healers, Cosmos and Damian

As with Princess Olga in 955 and Prince Vladimir in 980-988, the chronicler provides Boris with a typology from the Old Testament, the New Testament and the Byzantine liturgical myth. Each period of Orthodox sacred history is represented, and the more ancient the typology, the simpler it is to identify. Boris is a type of Abel, for example, because he is murdered by his brother, Sviatopolk, who is twice compared to Cain (59-60).

²³⁸ As I document below, the *pokhvala* inserted at the end of the tale “praises” Boris and Gleb as martyrs and healers using the hymnography for martyrs and healers. It makes sense, therefore, that this section of the chronicle entry, taken from the services, would thematically reflect the services, and differ from the main narrative.

²³⁹ Shakhmatov rejected P. V. Golubovskii’s claim that the chronicle tale is based on the *Parimii* readings, arguing instead that the “factual parts” of these readings probably derived from the chronicle (1908, 48). Further, N.S. Seregina has noted that the contents of one early hymn correspond to the contents of the *Narration, Lection* and chronicle account; she has also traced another hymn to the “*pokhvala*” that concludes the *Narration*. See N.S. Seregina, *Pesnopeniia russkim sviatym*, 90-94.

The New Testament typology is more complicated. In the final line of his last prayer, Boris petitions God to not count Sviatopolk's deed as a sin (59). The petition matches the final line of the apostle Stephen's prayer in the seventh chapter of the Book of Acts. In that passage—which is also the epistle reading for Stephen's feast day (27 December)—the saint is stoned to death by a large crowd and with his last breath he cries out, “Lord, lay not this sin to their charge!” (Acts 7:60). This petition is also frequently encountered in the hymnography to St Stephen, as in the troparion of the feast:

Подвигом добрым подвизался еси, первомучениче Христов, и апостоле, и архидиаконе Стефане, и мучителей обличил еси нечестие, камением бо побиен от рук беззаконных, венец от яже свыше десницы приял еси и к Богу зывал еси, вопия: Господи, не постави им греха сего.²⁴⁰

O protomartyr of Christ, apostle and archdeacon Stephen, you fought the good fight, and exposed the ungodliness of the tormenters. For when you were stoned to death at the hands of lawless men, you received a crown from the right hand on high, and you called to God, crying out, "O Lord do not charge this sin against them!"

Like the apostle, Boris suffers at the hands of “lawless” and “godless men,” and “receives a crown from Christ God” (61). Moreover, in Orthodox liturgical practice St Stephen alone is called “protomartyr” (or “first martyr”) and this unique designation naturally explains his typological relation to Boris, the first martyr from among the East Slavs.²⁴¹

The third typology, from Byzantine sacred history, emerges in the *pokhvala* to Boris and Gleb that concludes the tale. The excerpt is comprised mostly of standard hymnographic formulas for a class of Byzantine saints known as “Unmercenary Healers”

²⁴⁰ I did not have access to a medieval manuscript of the Menaion for December. This citation is from the contemporary church books: Mineia. Dekabr'. T. 2 (Moscow: Izd. Moskovskoi Patriarkhii, 2002), 406.

²⁴¹ Boris' typological association with Stephen is also articulated in Gleb's prayer upon receiving the news of his brother's death. Gleb laments: “If I had seen, O my brother, your angelic face, I would have died with you” (60). Boris' face is described as “angelic” because that is how Stephen's face is described in Acts 6:15: “And all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.” This image also occurs several times in the hymnography for St. Stephen.

(Bezerebreniki). These are Christian physicians, such as St Panteleimon (27 July) or Ss. Cyrus and John (31 January), glorified for healing the sick free of charge. Saints of the same class are often venerated very similarly, and the precise typological model for Boris and Gleb would be indecipherable but for a series of liturgical citations that appear midway through the panegyric. Beginning with the second call to “Rejoice!” the text contains verses from the first three stikhera at Vespers for the Feast of Ss. Cosmos and Damian (November 1). The verses in the chronicle appear consecutively and follow the exact order in which they are chanted during the service. The chronicle text reads:

Радуйтася, небесная жителя, въ плоти ангела быста,
единомысленая служителя верста единообразна, святымъ единомудушна;
темъ стражующимъ всем исцеленье подаета (61).

Rejoice, heavenly dwellers, angels in the flesh, servants one in mind, companions one in image, of one soul with the saints, granting healing to all that suffer.

And the first stichera sung at Vespers reads:

Вещи возгнушашася на земли тлеемая, Небесножителие же во плоти якоже Ангели явишася, единомудреннии сожителе, сопруг единоправный святых и единомудушный. Темже страждущим всем врачевания подают, безсребренно дарующе благодеяния требующим, яже летным сим достойно почтим праздником, Христу со дерзновением молящихся о душах наших.²⁴²

Having disdained the corruptible things on earth, like dwellers of heaven and angels in the flesh, companions one in mind, friends of one soul and one heart with the saints. They grant healings to all who suffer, bestowing benefactions upon those in need, without exacting any fee. Let us honor them worthily with an annual festival, for with boldness they pray to Christ for our souls.

The chronicle text continues:

Радуйтася, Борисе и Глебе богомудрая, яко потока точита от кладязя воды живоносныя исцеленья, истекають вернымъ людемъ на ицеленье.

Rejoice, Boris and God, the divinely wise, for like torrents you stream out life-bearing waters of healing, and pour out healing on the faithful.

²⁴² Stikhirar' mineinyi, notirovannyi, stikhiry s 12 dek. Po 31 avg. (RNB, Sof. 384).

And that verse reflects the second stichera of the feast:

Всю всельшая в себе Троицу, двоица приснопамятная, Косма и Дамиан Богомудрии, яко потоцы источают от источника живоноснаго воды врачеваний. Ихже и мощи страсти осязанием врачуют, и самая токмо имена недуги от человекот отгонят, всех притекающих спасительная пристанища о Христе, и со дерзновением молятся о душах наших.²⁴³

Having made themselves the abode of the Trinity, the ever-memorable pair, the divinely wise Cosmos and Damian, pour forth like torrents the waters of healing from the life-bestowing well-spring; and their relics cure suffering by their touch; and their very names drive out the infirmities of men, of all who seek saving shelter in Christ; and they pray with boldness for our souls.

The parallels continue in the following line of the chronicle:

Радуйтася, лукаваго змия поправша, луча светозарная явистася, яко светило озаряюща всю землю Руськую, всегда тму отгоняща, являющася верою неуклонною.

Rejoice, you that trample the evil serpent, appearing as light-bearing rays that illuminate like beacons the entire Russian land, ever driving away the darkness, and immutable in faith.

And in the third stikhera chanted at Vespers:

Все отринувше страстное мучительство и всяко размышление лукаваго змия поправше о Христе, святии безмездницы, Космо и Дамиане, светобразни явистеся, яко светила, озаряюще всю подсолнечную Богознаменьми всегда, тьму отгоняюще и недуги благодатию и всем спасителие являющеся, верою неуклонною творящим святую память вашу, премудрии.²⁴⁴

Having spurned the tyranny of suffering and, in Christ, trampled down every plot of the evil serpent, O holy unmercenary ones, Cosmos and Damian, ye were shown to be as radiant as beacons, ever illumining the whole world with divine signs, driving away darkness and infirmities by grace, and showing yourselves to be the saviors of all who with steadfast faith celebrate your glorious memory, O all-wise ones.

The chroniclers select Cosmos and Damian as models for Boris and Gleb because they are twin brothers, honored as a pair, and venerated for their healing powers. The

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

typology is suitable, given that all the earliest records about Boris and Gleb—including the first liturgical service, attributed to Met. John—mention the brothers’ miraculous healings of the sick and the lame.

The typologies in the 1015 account principally reflect the chroniclers’ narrative concerns. But there is another, more intriguing, explanation for why these three saints (Able, Stephen, and Cosmos/Damian) are specifically chosen as types for Boris. Before turning attention to that explanation, however, I want to examine the second level of liturgical subtext in the 1015 passage: the services of Passion Week (*Strastnaia nedelia*) and the “passion bearing” saints of the Orthodox Church.

2. *The “Passion” of Boris*

The betrayal and murder of Prince Boris is modeled on the passion of Jesus Christ. And for the chroniclers of Rus’—as for the Orthodox of today—the passion signified far more than a certain set of Gospel narratives. It was a weeklong liturgical commemoration, the holiest week of the Christian year, during which the clergy and faithful ritually reenacted, day by day, the decisive events of Christ’s final days: the entrance into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday); the Last Supper and Gethsemane (Holy Thursday); the arrest, trial and crucifixion; the removal of Christ’s body from the cross and its burial in the tomb (Holy Friday). The services culminated, of course, with Pascha (Easter), the “feast of feasts” and “holy day of holy days” celebrating Christ’s resurrection from the dead.

That Passion Week is first and foremost a liturgical event does not mean the Bible plays no part in it. To the contrary, Gospel accounts of the passion are read throughout the week, often in composite, and apropos of the events of the day. The Gospel reading

at Divine Liturgy on Holy Thursday, for instance, combines five excerpts²⁴⁵ and recounts the institution of the Eucharist, the betrayal of Judas, and Christ’s prayer in the garden. This service is followed in the evening by the Matins service for Holy Friday, a unique rite centered on the solemn reading of “The Twelve Gospels of the Passion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”²⁴⁶ In both services, the hymnography compliments and elaborates on the Gospel readings. There is no distinction, no divide, between the biblical and liturgical elements: the whole service, Gospels and hymns together, constitutes the Passion story. And it is this story that informs the chronicle tale—for what happens to Jesus Christ on Holy Thursday and Holy Friday is also what happens to Prince Boris in 1015. Consider the following:

I. Christ is the beloved Son of the Heavenly Father (Luke 3:22; Mt 17:5), and Boris is “beloved of his father more than all” (59).

II. Christ rejects violence and worldly power, and refuses to use his Father’s legions of angels to defend himself, after which he is abandoned by his disciples (Mt 26:51-56).²⁴⁷ Boris rejects the Kievan throne and refuses to use his father’s soldiers to march against Sviatopolk, after which he is abandoned by the army.

III. Judas secretly plots with the chief priests to betray Christ (Luke 22:3). Sviatopolk goes by night to Vyshgorod and secretly plots with the boyars there to betray Boris.

²⁴⁵ The five excerpts come from Mt 26:1-20; John 13:3-17; Mt 26:21-39; Luke 22:43-44; Mt 26:40-75; 27:1-2.

²⁴⁶ The twelve Gospel readings are John 13:31-18:1, John 18:1-29, Mt 26:57-75, John 18:28 - 19:16, Mt 27:3-32, Mark 15:16-32, Mt 27:33-54, Luke 23:32-49, John 19:38-42, Mark 15:43-47, John 19:38-42, Mt 27:62-66.

²⁴⁷ These events are summarized in the seventh antiphon from the Twelve Gospels service on Holy Friday: “Емшым Тя беззаконным, претерпевая, сице вопиял еси, Господи: аще и поразисте пастыря, и расточисте дванадесать овец ученики Моя, можах вящше нежели дванадесать легионов представити ангелов: но долготерпелю, да исполнятся, яже явих вам пророки Моими, безвестная и тайная, Господи, слава Тебе.”/ “As You permitted the transgressors to arrest You, Lord, You said to them, ‘Even though you struck the shepherd and scattered the sheep, namely My twelve Disciples, I could summon more than twelve legions of angels. But I forbear, so that the unknown and secret things that I showed you through My prophets may be fulfilled.’ Glory to You, O Lord!”

IV. Christ is “betrayed with a kiss” by the “lawless Judas.”²⁴⁸ Boris is murdered by Sviatopolk, a man “full of lawlessness,” after receiving tidings of peace (59).

V. Christ knows of his impending death, does not resist it, and is found by his enemies praying in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-46; Luke 22:39-46). Boris knows of his impending death, does not resist it, and is found by his enemies praying the Matins canon.

VI. Christ is scourged, “surrounded by many dogs,”²⁴⁹ and suffers on the Cross; soldiers are sent to expedite the process and, finding him already dead, one of them pierces his side with a spear (John 19:31-35). Boris also endures prolonged suffering: his murderers “fall upon him like wild beasts and pierce him with spears” (59). The initial attack does not kill him, however, and Sviatopolk sends two Varangian soldiers to finish the job. One of the soldiers draws his sword and “pierces Boris through the heart” (ibid.).

The representation of martyrdom as an *imitatio Christi* is an ancient hagiographical device. In some texts, such as the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* (mid-second century), the martyr is explicitly identified as an imitator of Christ.²⁵⁰ In others—as is the case with Boris in 1015—the presentation is subtler: “The martyrs imitate Christ in their words and

²⁴⁸ The chronicler’s demonization of Sviatopolk may derive, in part, from the portrayal of Judas on Holy Thursday and Holy Friday. The hymnography on these days is devoted as much to Judas’ perdition as it is to Christ’s sacrifice. The following troparion—chanted three times at the beginning of the Holy Friday Matins service—is representative: “Егда славнии ученицы на умовении вечери просвещахуся, тогда Иуда злочестивый сребролюбием недуговав омрачашеся, и беззаконным судиям Тебе праведнаго Судию предает. Видь, имений рачителю, сих ради удавление употребивша! Бежи несътыя души, учителю таковая дерзнувшия: иже о всех благий, Господи, слава Тебе.”/ “While the glorious Disciples were being illumined at the washing of the feet during the Supper, then, too, did Judas the ungodly one, succumb to darkness, being sick with avarice. And he delivered You, the righteous Judge, to lawless judges. Look here, O lover of money, and see the one who for money’s sake hanged himself. Flee from the greed that made him dare commit such a deed against the Teacher. O Lord benevolent to all, glory to You.”

²⁴⁹ The hymnography on Holy Friday intensifies and adds to the Gospel narratives, as in the following troparion and stikhera: 1. “Обыдоша яко пси мнози, и удариша, Царю, ланиту Твою заушением, вопрошаху Тя, Тебе же ложна свидетельствовашу: и вся претерпев, всех спасл еси.”/ O King, they surrounded You like many dogs. They struck You and slapped You in the face, and they questioned You. Furthermore they bore false witness against You. And patiently enduring everything, You saved us all. 2. “Пагубное соборище богомерзких, лукавующих богоубийц сонмище, предста Христе Тебе, и яко неправедника влечаше Зиждителя всех, Егоже величаем.”/ “The violent band of soldiers who hated God with the assembly of evildoers, murderers of God, came upon You, Christ, and dragged You off as a culprit, the Maker of all things. And we magnify You.”

²⁵⁰ Candida R. Moss, *The Other Christs: Imitating Jesus in Ancient Christian Ideologies of Martyrdom* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 4.

gestures, mouthing scripture and retreading the path blazed by Christ. But the imitation is never explicitly identified in the account; Christ is ‘invisible.’²⁵¹

The key event of the *imitatio* is suffering. The martyrs suffer as Christ suffered on the Cross. This motif appears often in the hymnography for martyrs, as in the following sticheron from Vespers for the Feast of St Panteleimon:

Да радуются собори верных по всей земли в празднственный день памяти страстотерпца Христова Пантелеимона, страсть приемшаго за Ижи страсть крестную претерпевшаго, Царя Христа, и гордыню безбожных низложившаго дерзостно, егоже молим прилежно во двory райския достигнути верою твоящим память его.²⁵²

All around the world, congregations of the faithful rejoice on [this] festive day honoring the passion-bearer of Christ, Panteleimon. For having accepted the passion, like Christ the King endured the passion of the cross, he achieved the courts of paradise, and [now] prays diligently for those who honor his memory with faith.

This hymn introduces the term, “passion bearer” (*strastoterpets*), an important concept in the Orthodox theology of martyrdom, and one that plays a significant role in the chronicle tale. All martyrs in the Eastern Church are called “passion bearers,”²⁵³ and the theology behind the designation is unmistakably Pauline: by suffering in the name of Christ, martyrs come to “bear” his passion in their own bodies. They not only suffer “like” Christ; they mystically co-suffer with Christ. Their “passion” reenacts and *shares* in his original passion.²⁵⁴

²⁵¹ Ibid.

²⁵² Mineia. Iiul'. T. 3 (Moscow: Iz. Moskovkoi Patriarkhii, 2002), 160.

²⁵³ V. M. Zhivov, *Sviatost': Kratkii slovar' agiograficheskikh terminov* (Moscow: “Gnozis,” 1994).

²⁵⁴ “Long before the persecutions of Decius and Diocletian, Christians had begun to identify their sufferings...with those of their suffering Messiah. The close association and indeed identification of communal and personal afflictions with those of Christ played an instrumental role in shaping and defining emerging Christian identities” (Moss, *The Other Christs*, 19). A few relevant verses from the epistles of Paul include “I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the

What the chroniclers do in 6523 (1015) is appropriate this theology of “passion bearing” and separate it from the other traditional topoi of the martyr’s *passio*. The emphasis shifts away from pagan persecution and the confession of faith—the standard idiom that we saw in the “Tale of the Varangian Martyrs”—and onto the *imitatio Christi*. Martyrdom is refigured as dying *like Christ*, not necessarily dying *for Christ*. Boris may therefore be venerated as a martyr because he suffers and dies as Christ suffers and dies—voluntarily, meekly, “like a lamb led to the slaughter” (Isaiah 53:7).

This concern to present Boris as a passion bearer is the reason he famously “dies twice” in the passage.²⁵⁵ If Boris perishes immediately, without the kind of prolonged suffering experienced by Christ on the cross, then there is no passion, only murder. But by drawing his death out across two separate attacks, the chroniclers provide Boris a “cross”—a way to bear Christ’s passion in his own body.

The manner of Boris’ death is also revealing: a soldier pierces his heart with a sword. The act likely derives from a genre of Orthodox hymns known as “stavrotheotokia” (*krestobogorodichen*). These are the special hymns, mentioned briefly in the first chapter, that poetically depict Mary’s experience at Golgotha, as she stood and wept at the foot of the cross. The hymns vividly record Mary’s anguish; she suffers as her son suffers, in the same place and at the same time. And one of the main metaphors for Mary’s suffering, in hymn after hymn, is a particular act of violence: her heart is pierced by a sword. The following verses are representative:

afflictions of Christ” (Col. 1:24); “Henceforth, let no man trouble me; for I bear in my body the marks of Christ” (Gal. 6:17); “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me” (Gal. 2:20).

²⁵⁵ See I. P. Eremin, *Literatura drevnei Rusi* (Moscow: Nauka, 1966), 25-26.

Оружие сердце Твое пройде, Пречистая, егда Сына Твоего на Кресте видела еси и вопияла еси: не безчадну Мя покажи, Сыне Мой и Боже Мой, соблюдыи Мя по рождестве Деву.²⁵⁶

A sword pierced your heart, O most Pure One, when you beheld your Son upon the Cross, and you cried out weeping: “Do not make me childless, O my Son and my God, who preserved me as Virgin after birth.”

Other stavrotheotokia report that Mary’s heart is “pierced by a sharp sword,” or “by the sword of grief.”²⁵⁷ The sword that pierces Boris’ heart is thus a vivid liturgical symbol of his own passion. Like Mary, Boris shares in the pain and suffering that Christ knew on the cross; but the sword is not merely a metaphor, as was the case with Mary: it is the final violent act in the prince’s unusual *imitatio*.²⁵⁸

3. Boris the Priest and Gleb the Lamb

²⁵⁶ Mineia. Dekabr’. Т. 1, 4.

²⁵⁷ The hymns modify the prophecy of St Simeon “the God Receiver” (*Simeon Bogopriimets*), who in Luke 2:35 declares to Mary that a “sword shall pierce through your own soul, also.” In Orthodox tradition, Simeon’s words are interpreted as a prophecy of the crucifixion and the agony Mary will endure there.

²⁵⁸ The stavrotheotokion is also the model for Gleb’s prayer in the 1015 passage. The prince prays: “Woe is me, O Lord! It would have been better for me to die with my brother than to live on in this world. If I had only seen, O my brother, your angelic face, I would have died with you. Why now am I left alone? Where are the words you used to say to me, my beloved brother? Now I already do not hear your gentle instruction. And if you have achieved boldness before God, then pray for me, that I may receive the same passion. For it would be better for me to die with you than to live in this deceitful world” (60). This prayer imitates the structure of most stavrotheotokions, which often begin with the anguished cry, “Woe is me!” and then follow with a series of laments and questions from Mary to her crucified son. The following two hymns are typical: 1. Агнца ты егда агница и Девая к заколению ведома узре со слезами слово последоваше, и взываше: где тишишия чадо мое? сшествую тебе сладчайший, не терплю бо не зрети тебе Иисусе мой многомилостиве./ The ewe lamb and Virgin beheld you led like a Lamb to the slaughter, and with tears she followed and cried out: “Where are you going, my child? Shall I accompany you, O sweetest one, for I cannot bear to not see You, O my Jesus, most merciful.” 2. У Креста твоего предстоящи, слово Божий, агница и непорочная Мати твоя рыдающе вопияше: увы мне, Сыне, како умираеши на Кресте? увы мне, свете мой сладкий, где твоя доброты ныне зайде зрак, краснейший паче всех человек?/ Standing before your Cross, O Word of God, the ewe lamb, your blameless Mother, wept and cried out: “Woe is me, O Son, how have you died upon the Cross? Woe is me, O my sweet light, where now is the beauty of your countenance, which is more beautiful than that of all other men?” Mary’s anguish and bewilderment at the passion of Christ are reflected in Gleb’s anguish and bewilderment at the “passion” of Boris: like Mary, he voices feelings of sorrow, abandonment and loss; asks a series of questions; requests to co-suffer; and expresses the wish to accompany the deceased into the next world.

The third, and most complex, liturgical subtext in the tale of Boris and Gleb involves the Eucharist—the sacrament celebrated at Divine Liturgy in which bread and wine are consecrated as the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.²⁵⁹ The chronicle depicts Boris preparing for death in the exact way that an Orthodox priest prepares for the Eucharistic sacrifice at liturgy. And just as the sacrifice offered in the Eucharist is Christ Himself, so the sacrifice that Boris offers in the chronicle is his own life, and the life of his brother, Gleb.

Every celebration of the Divine Liturgy follows a precise and unchanging order. It is preceded by Vespers in the evening and Matins in the morning, and by the Third and Sixth Hours.²⁶⁰ The liturgy proper is comprised of three parts: the Liturgy of Preparation (*Proskomedie*), the Liturgy of the Catechumens, and the Liturgy of the Faithful. For centuries, it was the tradition of the church to admit the uninitiated only to the second part of the liturgy, hence its name. The first and third parts of the service—devoted to the preparation, consecration and consumption of the Eucharist—were accessible to the faithful alone. In later eras, as the institution of the catechumenate disappeared, the unbaptized were allowed to remain for the entire service, and the holiest prayers of the Eucharistic liturgy gradually became “secret;” that is, they were recited by the celebrant

²⁵⁹ “The Eucharist is celebrated in the Eastern Church according to one of four different services: (1) *The Liturgy of St John Chrysostom* (the normal Liturgy on Sundays and weekdays). (2) *The Liturgy of St Basil the Great* (used ten times a year; in structure it closely resembles the Liturgy of St John Chrysostom, but the central Eucharistic Prayer is much longer). (3) *The Liturgy of St James, the Brother of the Lord* (used once a year, on St James Day, 23 October, in Jerusalem, and a few other places). (4) *The Liturgy of the Presanctified* (used on Wednesdays and Fridays in Lent, and on the first three days of Holy Week. There is no consecration in this Liturgy, but communion is given from elements consecrated on the previous Sunday)” (Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 280). In the this chapter, I use the Liturgy of St Basil, which is celebrated on the five Sundays of Great Lent, and on Holy Thursday and Holy Saturday. The reasons for this choice will become clear later in the analysis.

²⁶⁰ In contemporary Russian practice, Vespers and Matins are usually combined (and condensed) into a single service, the All-Night Vigil, which is celebrated the evening before the Divine Liturgy. The Greek Church continues to celebrate the services separately, however.

privately in the altar, behind the iconostasis and in a low voice, unseen and unheard by the congregation in the nave.²⁶¹

The Eucharistic subtext interwoven into the tale of Boris and Gleb is the work of clerics very familiar with these “secret” prayers, and the liturgical ordo in general. In fact, from the time Sviatopolk’s assassins arrive in Al’ta to the moment Gleb is ambushed, the order of the liturgical materials in the chronicle text precisely follows the order in which they are prayed at Matins and the Divine Liturgy. Thus, when Boris arises on the last morning of his life, he begins to pray the Six Psalms (*Eksapsalmy*), the very first prayers of the Matins service. He opens with Psalm 3:1, the first verse of the first of the Six Psalms; the next phrases he chants are from the second of the Six Psalms, Psalm 38:2 and 38:18-19; and the verses following those are from the sixth and final psalm, Psalm 142:1-3. The chronicle then states that Boris, “after finishing the Six Psalms [*eksapsalma*], and seeing that men had been sent to kill him...began to chant the psalter” (59). In the Byzantine Rite, the Psalter is divided into twenty sections called Kathismata, and two of these sections are read at each Matins service. The verses Boris chants are Psalm 22:13 and 22:17, and they are hardly chosen at random. In Orthodox tradition, Psalm 22 is the Christological psalm *par excellence*, depicting the Messiah’s future suffering and even foretelling specific details of the crucifixion. Here again, the chroniclers are foregrounding the *imitatio*: for as Boris prepares to endure his “passion,” he recites psalmic prophecies of Christ’s Passion.

²⁶¹ For more on the secret prayers of the Divine Liturgy, see A. P. Golubtsov, "O prichinakh i vremeni zameny glasnogo chteniia liturgiinykh molitv tainym," *Bogoslovskii vestnik*, v. 3, no. 9 (Sergei Posad: 1905), 69-75.

Following the Kathisma readings, Boris chants the canon, one of the final parts of the Matins service. Then, “having finished Matins,” the prince gazes “upon an icon, on an image of the Lord” and prays:

Господи Иисусе Христе! Иже симь образом явися на земли спасенья ради нашего, изволивъ своею волею пригвоздити руци свои на кресте, и приимъ страсть грехъ ради наших, тако и мене сподоби прияти страсть. Се же не от противныхъ приимаю, но от брата своего...(59).

Lord Jesus Christ! As you appeared in this image on earth for the sake of our salvation, and of your own will stretched out your hands upon the cross, and accepted the passion on account of our sins, so help me to accept my passion. For I receive it not from my enemies, but from my own brother...

Concluding the prayer, Boris lies down on his bed and meekly awaits the end. The assassins enter his tent and pierce the prince with spears.

The narrative is pious, plausible and straightforward. Boris prays the morning worship service, says a final prayer of his own, and suffers a brutal attack. But for those who know the “Liturgy of Preparation”—the first part of the Divine Liturgy performed privately prior to the public service—these events suggest a different reading. Boris’ performance of the liturgical rites does not stop when he concludes Matins. In fact, his next prayer is a variation of the prayer said by the officiating priest as he prepares to enter the altar and perform the *Proskomedia*. The liturgical ordo moves from Matins to the Entrance Prayers for Divine Liturgy, and so does Prince Boris.

Orthodox clergy perform an elaborate preparatory ritual before the public liturgy begins. According to the rubrics, when a priest “desires to perform the Divine Mystery...he and the Deacon enter the church and bow before the Holy Doors three times.”²⁶² They remain standing in front of the Doors and read a set of introductory

²⁶² “The Divine Liturgy of St Basil the Great,” *Service Books of the Orthodox Church*, v. 2 (South Canaan, PA: St Tikhon’s Seminary Press, 1984), 5.

prayers, which include the Trisagion, the Lord's Prayer, and several prayers to the Theotokos. Next, the celebrants approach the icon of Christ on the iconostasis, cross themselves, kiss the icon, and pray:

Пречистому образу Твоему покланяемся, Благий, просяще прощения прегрешений наших, Христе Боже, волею бо благоволил еси плотию взыти на Крест, да избавиши, яже создал еси, от работы вражия. Тем благодарственно вопием Ти: радости исполнил еси вся, Спасе наш, пришедый спасти мир.²⁶³

We venerate your immaculate Icon, O Good One, asking the forgiveness of our transgressions, O Christ God; for of your own will You were well-pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh, and deliver your creations from the work of the enemy. Wherefore, we cry to You gratefully: You filled all things with joy, O our Savior, when you came to save the world.

Boris imitates this entrance ritual in the chronicle tale. Like the officiating priest, Boris venerates an icon of Christ, refers to that icon in his prayer, and speaks to the image as if to the Savior Himself. The priest declares that Christ ascended the cross in the flesh of his own will, and Boris declares that Christ's hands were nailed to the cross of his own will; the priest says that Christ came to save the world and Boris says that Christ appeared on earth for human salvation; the priest connects the Passion to the forgiveness of sins, and the prince says that he accepted the passion on account of human sin.

The events that follow Boris' prayer are truly remarkable: having performed the prerequisite entrance prayers, Boris offers himself to God in the same fashion that the *prosphora*—the loaf of unleavened bread used for the Eucharist—is prepared for offering by the priest during the “Liturgy of Preparation.” Here again, a detailed description of the liturgical rite is in order. After the Entrance Prayers and Vesting, the celebrants begin the *Proskomedie* service inside the sanctuary. The priest and deacon bow three times before the Table of Oblation, a small table to the north of the altar, and recite the opening

²⁶³ Chin sviashchennyia i Bozhestvennyia liturgii (Moscow: Izd. Moskovskoi Patriarkhii, 2002), 75.

prayers. The priest then takes the prosphora in his left hand and, using a special liturgical knife called the Spear (*Kopie*), he begins to cut the loaf on all sides. At the same time, as the deacon intones various commands, the priest prays verses from Isaiah 53:7-8, the prophecy of the “Suffering Servant.” In the church books, the ritual appears thusly:²⁶⁴

²⁶⁴ Ibid. 76-78.

Таже приемлет священник левою убо рукою просфору, десною же святое копие, и знаменуя им трижды верху печати просфоры, глаголет: В воспоминание Господа и Бога, и Спаса нашего Иисуса Христа.

И абие водружает копие в десную страну печати, и глаголет режя: Яко овча на заколение ведесе.

В левую же: И яко агнец непорочен прямо стригущаго его безгласен, тако не отверзает уст Своих.

В горнюю же страну печати: Во смирении Его суд Его взятся.

В долнюю же страну: Род же Его кто исповесть.

Диакон же, взирая благоговейно на сицевое таинство, глаголет на едином коемждо резании: Господу помолимся, держа и орарь в руке. По сих глаголет: Возми, владыко.

Священник же, вложив святое копие от косвенных десных страны просфоры, взимает Святый Хлеб, глаголя сице: Яко вземлется от земли живот Его.

И положив и взак на святем дискосе, рекшу диакону: Пожри, владыко.

Жрет его крестовидно, сице глаголя: Жрется Агнец Божий, вземляй грех мира, за мирский живот и спасение.

И обращает горе другую страну, имущую крест. Диакон глаголет: Прободи, владыко.

Священник же, прободая и в десную страну копием, глаголет: Един от воин копием ребра Его прободе, и абие изыде кровь и вода. И видевый свидетельствована и истинно есть свидетельство его.

The Priest takes the prosphora in his left hand and the spear in his right, and makes the Sign of the Cross over the seal three times, saying: In remembrance of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ.

The Priest pierces the prosphora with the spear to the right of the seal, and says: He was led as a sheep to the slaughter.

Cutting to the left side, the Priest says: or a spotless lamb before its shearers is dumb, so He opens not His mouth.

Cutting the upper side: In His humiliation His judgment was taken away.

Cutting the lower side: Who shall declare His generation?

The Deacon, looking piously upon this mystery, exclaims at each incision: Let us pray to the Lord. He then takes his stole in hand, and says: Take up, Master.

The Priest, piercing the prosphora on the bottom right side, lifts out the Holy Bread saying: For His life is taken up from the earth.

The Priest places the seal upon the paten, while the Deacon says: Sacrifice, Master.

The Priest cuts it cross-wise, and says: Sacrificed is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, for the life of the world and its salvation.

The Priest turns the bread over, so that the seal is on top. The Deacon says: Pierce, Master.

The Priest pierces the right side of the Holy Bread and says: One of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. He who saw it has borne witness and his witness is true.

What happens to the prosphora in this ritual is also what happens to Boris as he is murdered. The prince meekly accepts death like “a sheep led to the slaughter” and “opens not his mouth” as he endures attack. The prosphora is laid upon the paten and repeatedly cut into with the holy spear, and Boris lies upon his bed and is repeatedly cut into by spears—and the chronicle uses the same word (*kop’i*) that is used for the liturgical knife in the service. The prosphora is cut and pierced in order to form the “Holy Bread,” the Lamb (*Agnets’*) that is sacrificed later on in the Divine Liturgy; and Boris, as we will see shortly, is also cut and pierced as preparation for the “lamb” that is sacrificed later on in the chronicle tale. Ultimately, for those familiar with how the Eucharist is prepared, the death of Boris appears as the next step in a carefully ordered liturgical sequence: the prince has prayed Matins and the Entrance Prayers, and now he “serves” *Proskomedia* by physically undergoing what the prosphora undergoes as it is prepared for the Eucharistic sacrifice.²⁶⁵

That Boris simultaneously undergoes his “passion” *and* performs the liturgical rites—in exactly the order they are prescribed in the church books—is perfectly

²⁶⁵ Matins is the only service that Boris explicitly “serves” in the passage—while the Entrance Prayers and the *Proskomedia* service are somewhat veiled—because it is the only ritual of the three not directly concerned with the Eucharist. In the early church, the prayers and rites surrounding Holy Communion were zealously guarded by the faithful. These rituals constituted the *mysterion*, the “holy mysteries” known only to those initiated into the cult. This attitude is preserved even into the present day in a prayer the Orthodox recite as they approach Communion: “Вечери Твоя тайныя днесъ, Сыне Божий, причастника мя приими; не бо врагом Твоим тайну повем, ни лобзания Ти дам, яко Иуда, но яко разбойник исповедаю Тя: помяни мя, Господи, во Царствии Твоем.”/ “Of your Mystical Supper, O Son of God, accept me this day as a communicant; for I will not speak of your mysteries to your enemies, neither like Judas will I give thee a kiss, but like the thief will I confess thee: Remember me, O Lord, in your kingdom.” The chronicler likely disguises the source of Boris’ later prayers, then, because they derive from the “secret” prayers and rites performed by the clergy—rites that were guarded from unbelievers and unknown even to the baptized laity.

consistent with the mystagogy of the Byzantine Church.²⁶⁶ For the Orthodox, the Passion and the Lord's Supper are inextricably linked: the events are simultaneously commemorated and mystically "made present" in each Divine Liturgy by Christ himself, who is both celebrant and victim, the mystical High Priest who offers the eternal sacrifice *and* the One who is sacrificed. This theology is articulated, among other places, in the "secret" prayer that the priest addresses to Christ during the singing of the Cherubic Hymn:

Никтоже достоин от связавшихся плотскими похотьми и сластьми приходити, или приблизитися, или служити Тебе, Царю Славы: еже бо служити Тебе, велико и страшно и самом Небесным Силам. Но обаче неизреченнаго ради и безмернаго Твоего человеколюбия, непреложно и неизменно был еси Человек, и Архиерей нам был еси: и служебныя сея и безкровныя жертвы священнодействие предал еси нам, яко Владыка всех... Ты бо еси приносяй и приносимый, и приемляй и раздаваемый, Христе Боже наш, и Тебе славу возсылаем...²⁶⁷

No one who is bound with the desires of the flesh is worthy to approach or draw near to serve You, O King of Glory; for to minister to You is great and awesome even to the heavenly powers. Nevertheless through Your unspeakable and boundless love for mankind, You became man, without change or alteration, and as Ruler of All you have become our High Priest, and have committed to us the celebration of this liturgical and bloodless sacrifice... For You are the Offerer and the Offered, the Receiver and the Received, O Christ our God, and to You we ascribe glory...

Like Christ in the liturgy, in the chronicle tale Boris is both priest and victim. But the analogy is not perfect. For though Boris is the one who offers sacrifice—who "serves"

²⁶⁶ As used here, the term "mystagogy" refers to explanations of (or commentaries on) the "holy mysteries" of the Church. Robert Taft has instructively noted that "mystagogy is to liturgy what exegesis is to scripture..." Taft, "The Liturgy of the Great Church," 59.

²⁶⁷ *Bozhestvennaia Liturgiia Vasilii Velikago* (Moscow: Izd. Moskovskoi Patriarkhii, 2002), 193-194.

the liturgical rites—he is *not* the sacrifice that is offered.²⁶⁸ The sacrifice that is offered in the passage is Prince Gleb.

Crucially, Boris is never called a “lamb” or a “sacrifice” in the text. He is depicted as the priest who prepares the sacrifice, and his body—pierced by spears—is depicted as the proskhoma being prepared for that sacrifice. But the *Proskomedia* service is not the Eucharist, merely the preparation for it. The bread and wine only become the “broken body” and “spilled blood” of Christ during the Liturgy of the Faithful, when the priest (and the congregation with him) perform the most solemn part of the Divine Liturgy. And it is precisely this part of the service that is used to describe the murder of Gleb. The chronicle records the moment of the prince’s death in the following way:

Поваръ же Глебовъ, именемъ Торчинъ, вынезъ ножъ, зареза Глеба, акы агня непорочно. Принесся на жертву Богови, в воню благоуханья, жертва словесная... (60)

Gleb's cook, Torchin by name, taking up a knife, stabbed Gleb, like a spotless lamb. Thus he was brought to God as a sacrifice, a sweet-smelling fragrance, a rational sacrifice...

²⁶⁸ There are two possible explanations for why Boris dies but is not explicitly counted as a sacrifice. The first is textual. The chronicle story begins with the heading, “On the Murder of Boris” (“Ob ubienii Borisa”). There is no mention of Gleb, and it is conceivable, therefore, that an earlier version of the tale did not recount his murder. And in that case, the Eucharistic epithets inserted after Gleb’s death might have originally followed the death of Boris, thus making him both high priest and mystical sacrifice, like Christ in the liturgy. The second possible explanation is mystagogical. The Liturgy of the Faithful begins with the Great Entrance, the solemn procession in which the Holy Gifts are transferred from the Table of Oblation to the Altar. Since at least the 8th century, the Orthodox have interpreted this procession as the funeral cortege and burial of Christ, an understanding that is preserved in the prayer that the priest says as he places the Holy Gifts on the Altar: “Благообразный Иосиф, с древа снем Пречистое Тело Твое, плащаницею чистою обвив, и благоуханьи во гробе нове покрыв, положи.”/ “The noble Joseph, when he had taken down Your most pure body from the tree, wrapped it in fine linen and anointed it with spices and placed it in a new tomb.” Since the proskhoma is interpreted as Christ’s crucified body being laid in the tomb, it is possible that the chronicler identified Prince Boris’ death and burial with this part of the liturgy. The Great Entrance is also the ritual that directly precedes the “Prayer of the Offering,” so this hypothesis is consistent with the order of the liturgical rites that appear in the chronicle. See Robert Taft, “The Liturgy of the Great Church: An Initial Synthesis of Structure and Interpretation on the Eve of Iconoclasm,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 34-35 (1981), 45-75.

Prince Gleb is here identified with the “spotless lamb” from the *Proskomedia* ritual; the Lamb that is “brought to God as a sacrifice” during the consecration rites. And he is specifically a “rational sacrifice” (*slovesnaia zhertva*)²⁶⁹ offered to God as “a sweet-smelling fragrance” (*v voniu blagoukhaniia*) because these are the epithets used to describe the Eucharist in the Prayer of the Offering (*Molitva Prinoshenie*) that is said at the Liturgy of St Basil:

Господи Боже наш, создавший нас и введый в жизнь сию, показавый нам пути во спасение, даровавший нам Небесных Таин откровение. Ты бо еси положивый нас в службу сию, силою Духа Твоего Святаго. Благоволи убо, Господи, быти нам служителем новаго Твоего Завета, слугам святых Твоих Таинств. Приими нас, приближающихся святому Твоему жертвеннику, по множеству милости Твоя, да будем достойни приносить Тебе **словесную сию и безкровную жертву** о наших согрешениях и о людских невежествах: юже прием во святыи и пренебесный, и мысленный Твой жертвенник, **в воню благоухания**, возниспосли нам благодать Святаго Твоего Духа. Призри на ны, Боже, ивиждь на службу сию нашу, и приими ю, якоже приял еси Авелевы дары, Ноевы жертвы, Авраамова всеплодия, Моисеова и Ааронова священства, Самуилова мирная...²⁷⁰

O Lord our God, who has created us, and has brought us into this life; who has shown us the way to salvation, and has bestowed upon us the revelation of heavenly mysteries: You are the One who has appointed us to this service in the power of your Holy Spirit. Therefore, O Lord, enable us to be ministers of your new Testament and servants of your Holy Mysteries. Through the greatness of Your mercy, accept us as we draw near to your holy altar, so that we may be worthy to offer to You this rational and bloodless sacrifice for our sins and for the errors of your people. Grant that, having accepted this sacrifice upon Your holy, heavenly, and spiritual altar as a sweet-smelling fragrance, You may in return send down upon us the grace of Your Holy Spirit. Look down on us, O God, and behold this our service. Receive it as You received the gifts of Abel, the sacrifices of Noah, the whole burnt offerings of

²⁶⁹ This is the only prayer in all of the Eucharistic liturgies of the Orthodox Church in which the Holy Gifts are called a “rational sacrifice” (*slovesnaia zhertva*).

²⁷⁰ Bozhestvennaia Liturgiia Vasilii Velikago, 197-198.

Abraham, the priestly offices of Moses and Aaron, and the peace-offerings of Samuel...²⁷¹

As this prayer makes clear, Prince Gleb is offered to God in the chronicle text like the Eucharist is offered to God during the Liturgy of the Faithful. And just as the Eucharistic sacrifice consummates the offering prepared at *Proskomedia*, so Gleb's "rational sacrifice" consummates the "rites" of preparation performed by his brother earlier in the passage. Looking at the narrative as a whole, therefore, it becomes apparent that the deep structure of the chronicle story is Eucharistic: Boris is the priest who prepares the sacrifice and Gleb is the lamb that is mystically offered.

4. "Bishop" Vladimir and his Martyred Sons

The Eucharistic subtext of Boris and Gleb's martyrdom is unusual, though not unprecedented.²⁷² Martyrs often imitate the passion of Christ, but they rarely serve

²⁷¹ It is noteworthy that the "Liturgy of Preparation" and the "Prayer of the Offering"—the two parts of the liturgy devoted to preparing the Eucharistic offering—specifically mention Abel, Stephen, and Cosmos and Damian, the three typologies discussed in the first segment of this analysis. In the "Prayer of the Offering," the Lamb offered at liturgy is compared to the gifts and sacrifices once offered to God by Abel. And in the *Proskomedia* service, the priest consecrates small particles of prosphora to specific ranks of saints. The "holy apostle and archdeacon, the Protomartyr Stephen" is the first saint commemorated among the martyrs, and Ss. Cosmos and Damian are the first saints commemorated as "Holy Wonderworkers and Unmercenaries."

²⁷² As early as the second century, in the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*, the final moments of the martyr's life are characterized as a liturgical sacrifice: "They did not nail him down then, but simply bound him; and as he put his hands behind his back, he was bound like a noble ram chosen for an oblation from a great flock, a holocaust prepared and made acceptable to God... 'May I be received this day among them before your face as a rich and acceptable sacrifice, as you, the God of truth who cannot deceive, have prepared, revealed and fulfilled beforehand. Hence I praise you, I bless you and I glorify you above all things, through that eternal and celestial high priest Jesus Christ'" (Moss, *The Other Christs*, 84). Here, as in Gleb's death, the martyr is identified as a sacrifice and then offered as the Eucharist is offered—indeed, the last line of Polycarp's prayer echoes an ancient tripartite Eucharistic prayer (ibid). The editors of the *Primary Chronicle* may have been familiar with this passage. A Church Slavonic translation of the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* survives in a fifteenth century manuscript of the Menologion for February, and I. I. Sreznevskii has dated these translations to no later than the tenth century. Still, even if the story was known to the chroniclers, it was not the primary source of the chronicle text: if only for the fact that the liturgical rites performed in the "Tale of Boris and Gleb" are unique to the Byzantine Rite, and that ritual system did not yet exist in the second century. More likely than not, the respective authors—separated by some 900 years—independently employed the sacrificial imagery and theology they both knew from direct participation in the Eucharist. It is possible, of course, that a later Byzantine vita contains similar Eucharistic motifs, but presently I know of no such work.

liturgical rites or die as Eucharistic sacrifices. The question, then, is why the chronicler would introduce such complexities into the tale. One possible solution is found in the Rite of Consecration for a Church, the service discussed in the preceding chapter in connection with Prince Vladimir's construction of the Church of the Tithes in 996. Vladimir is depicted in the passage as the bishop who establishes Christianity in Rus', consecrating a great church using the prayers that only a bishop prays during the consecration rites.

The chronicler was clearly very familiar with these prayers for the founding of a new church, and they may have guided his large-scale conception of the founding of Christianity in Rus'. Indeed, when we consider what a bishop says and does during the consecration rites—what he prays about and what he asks for—it reveals a crucial link between Vladimir's role as bishop and the martyrdom of his sons, Boris and Gleb.²⁷³

The episcopal prayers convey a detailed narrative about the establishment of Christianity in a new land, and the two key figures in the narrative are bishops and martyrs. At the beginning of the service, the bishop says a long prayer that confirms his direct succession from the apostles. He anoints the altar table with holy chrism and then prays:

²⁷³ There is also a fascinating link between the Rite of Consecration for a Church and the Feast of Ss. Boris and Gleb. N. S. Seregina has shown that the pre-Mongol hymnographic corpus for the martyred brothers is three times larger than that of a typical service, and she believes the manuscripts represent not one, but three separate services. She dates the earliest of these services to the reign of Iaroslav the Wise, and suggests it was composed for the translation of Boris and Gleb's relics into a new wooden church built in their honor. The other services, Seregina claims, were connected to two later translation ceremonies, when the relics were again transferred into new churches, first in 1072 and then again in 1115. Further, A.N. Uzhankov observes that on all three of these occasions the consecration of the new church was likely celebrated on the same day as the translation service, which was held on the same date as the feast days for Boris and Gleb (24 July or 2 May). Thus, in eleventh century Kiev there was already an established liturgical connection between Boris and Gleb and the rites for consecrating a church. See N.S. Seregina, *Pesnopeniia russkim sviatym*, 77-98; Uzhankov, "Sviatye strastoterpsy Boris i Gleb," 37-49.

Боже безначальный и вечный, Иже от не сущих в бытие вся приведый, Иже во свете неприступнем живый, и престол имеяй небо, землю же подножие: Иже Моисеови повеление давый и начертания, Веселиилу же дух премудрости вложивый: и удовлив их к совершению скинии свидетельства, в которой служения оправдания бяху образы и предначертания истины: Иже Соломону широту и пространство сердца даровавый и чрез него древний храм возставивый: святым же и всехвальным Твоим апостолам обновивый службу в духе и благодать истинныя скинии: и чрез них святыя Церкви и жертвенники Твоя, Господи сил, во всей земли насадивый, во еже приноситься Тебе мысленным и безкровным жертвам: Иже и сему храму ныне благоволил еси создатися во имя святаго имярек, к славе Твоей и едиnorodнаго Твоего Сына и всесвятаго Твоего Духа...²⁷⁴

O God, without beginning and eternal, Who calls all things from nothingness into being; Who dwells in light unapproachable, and has the heavens for a throne, and the earth for a footstool; Who gave a law and pattern to Moses and inspired Bezaleel with the spirit of wisdom, and Who enabled them to complete the building of the tabernacle of your covenant, wherein ordinances of divine worship were instituted which were the images and types of the truth; Who bestowed on Solomon breadth and greatness of heart, and through him raised the ancient temple; Who renewed your holy and all-laudable Apostles in the service of the Spirit, and the grace of the true tabernacle, and through them, O Lord of Hosts, You planted your Holy Churches and Altars in all the earth, that there might be offered unto You intellectual and bloodless sacrifices; Who also has been pleased to found this Church, in the Name of (Church's Name) to your glory, and to the glory of your only-begotten Son, and of your all-holy Spirit...

The prayer charts out how God, in generation after generation, selects certain figures to build temples and offer sacrifices—a divine economy that continues into the present day with the offering of “intellectual sacrifices” on the altars “planted” throughout the world by the apostles and their successors, the bishops of the Orthodox Church.

These sacrifices are offered, quite literally, on the bones of the martyrs.

According to the church canons, an altar must be consecrated using the relics of a martyr and those relics must remain within it for the Eucharist to be celebrated. This connection between the Eucharistic sacrifice and the sacrifice of the martyrs is emphasized in the

²⁷⁴ M. Zheltov, “Chin osviashcheniia khrama i polozheniia sviatikh moshchei v vizantiiskikh Evkhologiiakh XI veka,” 111-126.

Prayer of the Placing of the Relics (*Molitva polozheniia moshchei*), a prayer the bishop says as he solemnly inserts the martyr's relics into the altar:

Господи Боже наш, Иже и сию славу даровавый о Тебе пострадавшим святым мучеником, еже сеятися по всей земли мощем их, во святыи храмех Твоих, и плоды исцелений прозябати: Сам, Владыко, всех благих податель Сый, молитвами святых, ихже мощей благоизволил еси в сем честнем храме Твоем положению быти: удостой нас неосужденно приносите Тебе в нем безкровную жертву...²⁷⁵

O Lord our God, Who bestowed on the holy Martyrs who suffered for your sake this glory, that their relics should be sown in all the earth, in your holy churches, and should bring forth fruits of healing: Enable us Yourself, O Master, the giver of all good things, through the prayers of the saints whose relics You have graciously permitted to be placed in this Your venerable Altar, to offer to You without condemnation the bloodless sacrifice...

The bishop asks for more than just the intercessions of the martyrs, however. In another prayer, the Prayer of the Translation of Relics (*Molitva pereneseniia moshchei*), he explicitly requests that those consecrating the church may themselves become martyrs:

Господи Боже наш, верный в словесех Твоих и неложный во обещаниих Твоих, даровавый святым Твоим мучеником подвизатися добрым подвигом, и совершити путь благочестия, и веру истиннаго исповедания сохранить: Сам, Владыко всесвятый, умолен буди молением их, и даруй нам недостойным рабам Твоим имети часть и наследие с ними, да быв их подражателями, сподобимся и предлежащих им благ...²⁷⁶

O Lord our God, faithful in your words and truthful in your promises, Who has granted your holy Martyrs to fight the good fight and to fulfill the course of godliness and to keep the faith of true confession: Be entreated, all-holy Lord, of their prayers and grant to us your unworthy servants, to have a part and inheritance with them, that being imitators of them, we also may obtain the good things which await them...

In sum, when a bishop establishes a new church he asks God to make his flock like the martyrs, and he then uses the relics of martyrs to consecrate a new altar for the offering of liturgical sacrifices.

²⁷⁵ Zheltov, "Chin osvishcheniia," 123.

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

What I want to suggest is that these consecration rituals may have provided the overarching narrative structure for the 996 and 1015 chronicle entries. Consider the following:

I. The chronicler depicts Vladimir as the “bishop” who founds the church in Rus’. And since a new church must be consecrated with the relics of a martyr, the chronicler makes sure to show Vladimir returning from Kherson with the relics of St Clement, a first century martyr, and his disciple, Phoebus.

II. A bishop prays that those consecrating a new church will become “imitators” of the martyrs. “Bishop” Vladimir consecrates a new church and his sons, Boris and Gleb, become martyrs and “obtain the good things which await them.”²⁷⁷

III. In the consecration rite, the bishop prays that the martyr’s bones, sealed in the altar, will enable the offering of the Eucharistic sacrifice; and in the chronicle, the martyrical “passion” of Boris enables the offering of Gleb as a Eucharistic sacrifice.

Thus, understood in its native liturgical context, the martyrdom of Boris and Gleb in 1015 appears to “answer” the prayers that a bishop would have prayed at the consecration of the Church of the Tithes.

This hypothesis suggests that a comprehensive and deeply integrated liturgical subtext informs the two passages—a subtext, once recovered, that allows for a new and provocative reading of the story of the Christianization of Rus’. An officiating bishop asks God for martyrs and liturgical sacrifices, and that is exactly what the tale of Boris and Gleb provides: Vladimir “plants” a new altar in Kiev; Boris, by bearing his own passion, prepares the oblation for this altar; and Gleb, “the spotless lamb,” is the “rational sacrifice” that is offered upon it. A Christian community built on the bones of the

²⁷⁷ As the chronicler describes the “good things” Boris’ obtains for enduring martyrdom: “И тако скончася блаженный Борисъ, венець приимъ от Христа Бога съ праведными, причеться съ пророкы и апостолы, с ликы мученичьскими водворяяся, Авраму на лоне почивая, видя неиздреченную радость, въспевая съ ангелы и веселяся с лики святыхъ” (60)/ “And so died the blessed Boris, receiving a crown from Christ God with the righteous. He is numbered among the prophets and apostles, and joins with the choir of martyrs, resting in the bosom of Abraham, beholding ineffable joy, singing with the angels and rejoicing with the choir of the saints.”

martyrs, which offers to God martyrs of its own—this is the myth of the spread of Christianity in the Byzantine consecration rite, and, in the late eleventh century, it became a central part of the myth of Christian origins recorded in the *Primary Chronicle*.

Conclusion

In the chronicle entry for 6552 (1044), the bones of two pagan princes are unearthed, baptized, and laid to rest in the Church of the Holy Theotokos (67). The scene is an apt metaphor for the role of liturgy in the *Primary Chronicle*. Like the clerics baptizing those bones, the chroniclers used the rites and sacraments of the Orthodox Church to Christianize the distant past. The result was a version of history at once sacred and profane. The emperor flirts with Ol'ga before her baptism; Vladimir accepts Orthodoxy to secure an imperial marriage; Gleb is stabbed by his cook. The chroniclers did not “purify” the past of its intrigues. Neither did they reinvent it with details and narratives solely of their own imagining. Rather, they gathered together disparate traditions—oral and written, native and foreign, pagan and clerical—and edited them into a coherent myth about the rise of Christianity in Rus’.

The chapters of this dissertation have shown that liturgy was not merely a component part of this myth: it was the overarching narrative matrix that informed and guided the chroniclers as they wrote, compiled and edited the story of the Conversion. Importantly, this liturgical matrix does not depend on hypothetical claims about the chronicle’s creators, earlier redactions, or the date of its compilation. The *Primary Chronicle* may be the work of one chronicler or a dozen. There may have been three earlier layers of Kievan chronicles or none at all. It does not matter: for the liturgical services at the Monastery of the Caves did not change, and they surrounded editor after editor, compiler after compiler, in exactly the same way—whether the year was 1039, 1118 or 1377.

Byzantine liturgy was the omnipresent narrative context of the chroniclers' monastic world, and so it naturally became the main narrative subtext of their story of Christian Rus'. It would be a mistake, however, to think of the chronicle's liturgical subtext as the product of some sort of pre-reflective mentality that shaped the text in ways the chroniclers did not perceive or intend. On the contrary, the evidence in the preceding chapters suggests that the chroniclers developed a consistent and sophisticated large-scale strategy for using liturgical materials.

The strategy consisted of two parts: liturgical typology and the sacraments of initiation. We begin with the former. As noted previously, each of the major characters in the chronicle's myth of Christian origins is equated with figures from three distinct periods of sacred history—the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the Byzantine liturgical myth. Princess Ol'ga is a type of the Queen of Sheba; Mary, the Mother of God; John the Baptist; and the empress Helen. Prince Vladimir is a type of the Jewish kings, David and Solomon; the apostle Paul; and the emperor Constantine. Prince Boris is a type of Abel; Jesus Christ; Stephen the Protomartyr; and Ss. Cosmos and Damian.

The chroniclers created layer upon layer of typological associations. Examining these layers more closely, we notice that each period of sacred history follows the same narrative pattern and shares the same types. Every age has its holy mothers and wise queens (Queen of Sheba/ Mary/ Helen/ Ol'ga), divinely chosen kings (David and Solomon/ Jesus Christ/ Constantine/Vladimir) and martyrs (Abel/ Stephen/ Cosmos and Damian/ Boris and Gleb). For the chroniclers, it seems, typology was more than a means of comparison: it was the hermeneutic that "revealed" the unchanging pattern of salvation

in the history of God's chosen peoples.²⁷⁸ The chroniclers envisioned salvation as a typological scheme that repeated, like a record on a loop, in every period of sacred history. The *Primary Chronicle* shows this scheme playing out in the history of the Rus' just as it had played out in the history of the Jews, the first-century Christians, and the Byzantines.

The second part of the chroniclers' liturgical strategy involved the sacraments of initiation: Baptism, Chrismation and Eucharist. In the Byzantine tradition, these sacraments constitute an integral and indivisible whole: together, and only together, they form the complete ritual for personal initiation into the church. As one Orthodox theologian has written,

Baptism, Chrismation and Eucharist "belong together," form one liturgical sequence and 'ordo,' because each sacrament within it is fulfilled in the other in such a way that it is impossible fully to understand the meaning of one in separation and isolation from the other two. If Chrismation... fulfills Baptism, Eucharist is the fulfillment of Chrismation.²⁷⁹

This threefold "liturgical sequence" is visible in the structure of the chronicle. From 955 to 1015, the order of liturgical materials in the chronicle text mirrors the order of the sacraments. The passages comprised of citations from Baptism and Chrismation (Ol'ga's conversion; the Conversion of Rus') are followed and "fulfilled" by the passage comprised of citations from the Eucharistic liturgy (the martyrdom of Boris' and Gleb). Knowing little of the historical circumstances of the Conversion, the chroniclers modeled

²⁷⁸ As noted in the footnotes of the opening chapter, typology is a theory of history that "reads" the narrative pattern of the New Testament into historical epochs both before and after Christ. See footnote 53 of the Introduction.

²⁷⁹ Alexander Schmemman, *Of Water and the Spirit: A Liturgical Study of Baptism* (Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2000), 116.

their story on the Byzantine rituals actually used to convert the Rus’—whenever, wherever and however that might have happened.

But instead of having a bishop perform these rites, as required by canon law, the chronicle depicts two members of the Rurik dynasty performing them. In 988 and 996 Prince Vladimir prays the initiation prayers, and in 1015 Prince Boris prepares the Eucharistic sacrifice. The implication, of course, is that the Rurikids are not merely this-worldly rulers, but a sacerdotal dynasty. They are at once the founders and rulers of Rus’, and the liturgical celebrants who “save” the land for all eternity by personally performing the complete three-part ritual of Christian initiation.²⁸⁰

This subtext—an Orthodox initiation created from the rites of initiation themselves—is perhaps the most fundamental liturgical subtext in the *Primary Chronicle*. Yet it in no way diminishes or contradicts any of the others already discussed in the study. In fact, one of the chroniclers’ main accomplishments is the dense, rich variety of liturgical meanings that simultaneously unfold in the text. Liturgy was the semiotic background of the age, and the chroniclers skillfully operated within it, effecting several simultaneous levels of meaning, which could only be grasped by those intimately familiar with the Byzantine rite.

In this dissertation, I have tried to recover some of these long-forgotten meanings, and offer a sense of how the *Primary Chronicle* might have been understood in its native liturgical environment. I have demonstrated that liturgy played a crucial role in the chronicle’s formation—and that it must therefore occupy a central place in our scholarly conception of medieval Rus’. Writing at the time was predominantly a clerical

²⁸⁰ That Prince Vladimir also “consecrates” the Church of the Tithes only serves to complete the picture. All four rituals required for the installation of Orthodoxy in a foreign land are thereby “served” by members of the house of Rurik.

enterprise; clerics spent their lives serving the liturgical rites; and thus the number of pre-modern works influenced by the liturgy is very great, indeed. So long as the leading writers and thinkers of the age were clerics—a period lasting roughly eight or nine centuries, from the baptism of Rus' to the Age of Enlightenment—liturgy remained the main narrative force in East Slavic culture. Its affect on historiography, hagiography, homiletics and other pre-modern written forms can hardly be overstated.

That scholars have neglected this fundamental fact indicates more than a lacuna in the scholarship on medieval literature—it suggests that scholars have incorrectly imagined the pre-modern East Slavic past altogether. For by denying liturgy its rightful place, scholars have conceived of a civilization that was more textual and bibliocentric than it was ritualistic and liturgical. If this dissertation has done nothing more than cast doubt on that proposition, then it has served a worthy purpose.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aken'tev, K.K. "Slovo o zakone i blagodati' Ilariona Kievskogo. Drevneishaia versiia po spisku GIM Sin. 591." *Vizantinorossika*. V. 3. St Petersburg: *S. Peterburgskoe Obshchestvo vizantino-slavianskikh issledovani*, 2005. 116-152.

———. "Mozaiki Kievskoi sv. Sofii i "Slovo" Metropolita Ilariona v vizantiiskom liturgicheskom kontekste." *Vizantinorossika*. V. 1. St Petersburg: *S. Peterburgskoe Obshchestvo vizantino-slavianskikh issledovani*. 75-94.

Alekseev, A. A. *Bibliia v bogosluzhenii: Vizantiisko-slavianskii leksionarii*. Saint Petersburg: Nestor-Isotriia, 2008.

Alfeyev, Hilarion. "Orthodox Worship as a School of Theology." Lecture delivered at Kiev Theological Academy, Sept. 20, 2002. Tr. William Bush. Website: <http://orthodoxeurope.org/page/12/1.aspx>. Accessed on 2/20/2013.

Almazov, A. I. *Istoriia chinoposledovaniia Kreshcheniia i Miropomazaniia*. Kazan, 1884.

Ardianova-Peretts, V.P. and I.P. Eremin. "Zhitiiia v russkoi literature XI-nachala XIII veka." *Istoriia russkoi literatury*. V. 1. Moscow: Izd. AN SSSR, 1941-1956. 315-346.

Arranz, Miguel. "Chin oglasheniia i kreshcheniia v Drevnei Rusi." *Simvol* 19, 1988. 69-101.

Auerbach, Erich. "Figura." *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature*. New York: Meridian Books, 1959. 11-71.

Balovnev, D. A. "Skazanie 'O pervonachal'nom rasprostraneniia khristianstva na Rusi': Opyt kriticheskogo analiza." *Tserkov' v istorii Rossii* 4, 2000. 5-46.

Bell, Catherine. *Ritual Dimensions and Perspectives*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Bozhestvennaia Liturgiia Vasilii Velikago. Moscow: Izd. Moskovskoi Patriarkhii, 2002.

Bradshaw, Paul F. *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.

——— and Maxwell E. Johnson. *The Origins of Feasts, Fasts, and Seasons in Early Christianity*. Collegeville, Minn: Liturgical Press, 2011.

Burgess, R. W. and Michael Kulikowski. "The History and Origins of the Latin Chronicle Tradition." *The Medieval Chronicle*, Vol. VI. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006. 153-179.

Cherepnin, L. V. "'Povest' vremennykh let', ee redaktsii i predshestvovavshie ei letopisnye svody." *Istoricheskyye zapiski*. V. 25. Moscow, 1948. 293-333.

Cherniansky, M. *Tsar and People: Studies in Russian Myths*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961.

Chin sviashchennia i Bozhestvennia liturgii. Moscow: Izd. Moskovskoi Patriarkhii, 2002.

Croke, Brian. "The Originality of Eusebius' *Chronicle*." *American Journal of Philology* 103, 1982. 195-200.

———. "The Origins of the Christian World Chronicle." *History and Historians in Late Antiquity*. Sydney: Pergamon Press, 1983. 116-131.

Cross, F. L. "Introduction." *St Cyril of Jerusalem's Lectures*. New York: St Vladimir's Press, 1977. I- XIX.

Danilevskii, I. N. *Povest' vremennykh let: Germenevticheckie osnovy izucheniia letopisnykh tekstov*. Moscow: Aspekt Press, 2004.

de Decker, Daniel and Ginette Dupuis-Masay. "L' 'episcopat' de l'empereur Constantin." *Byzantion*, v. 50 (1980). 118-157.

Denysenko, Nicholas. *The Blessing of Waters and Epiphany: The Eastern Liturgical Tradition*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Co., 2012.

Dmitrievskii, A. A. "Review of I. Mansvetov." *Bogoslovskoi bibliograficheskii listok* 11-12, 1885. 425-445.

Emmerson, Richard K. "Figura and the Medieval Typological Imagination." *Typology and English Medieval Literature*. New York: AMS Press, 1992. 7-34.

Eremin, I. P. *Literatura drevnei Rusi*. Moscow: Nauka, 1966.

Featherstone, M. "Olga's Visit to Constantinople," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 14, 1990. 294-312.

Fedotov, G. *Sviatye drevnei Rusi (X-XVII st.)*. Paris: YMCA Press, 1931.

———. "Kanonizatsiia sviatogo Vladimira." *Vladimirskii sbornik. V pamiat' 950-letia Kreshcheniia Rusi. 988-1938*. Belgrade: tip. "Merkur," 1938. 188-196.

- Florenskii, Pavel. "Khramovoe deistvo kak sintez iskusstv'." *Sochineniia v 4-kh tt.* V. 3. Moscow: Mysl', 1999. 370-383.
- Franklin, Simon. "Some Apocryphal Sources of Kievan Russian Historiography." *Oxford Slavonic Papers. New Series, XV.* Oxford, 1982. 1-27.
- . "The Reception of Byzantine Culture by the Slavs." *The 17th International Congress of Byzantine Studies. Major Papers.* New Rochelle, New York: A.D. Caratzas, 1986. 383-397.
- . "The Primary Chronicle." *Reference Guide to Russian Literature.* London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1998. 666-668.
- Fredriksen, Paula. *From Jesus to Christ: The Origins of the New Testament Images of Jesus.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988.
- Gaddis, Michael. *There Is No Crime for Those Who Have Christ: Religious Violence in the Christian Roman Empire.* Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2005.
- Gippius, A.A. "Dva nachala Nachal'noi letopisi: K istorii kompozitsii Povesti vremennykh let." *Verenitsa liter. K 60-letiiu V. M. Zhivova.* Moscow: 2006, 56-96.
- . "K probleme redaktsii Povesti vremennykh let." *Slavianovedenie*, No. 5. Moscow: 2007. 20-44.
- . "Kreshchenie Rusi v Povesti vremennykh let: k stratifikatsii teksta." *Drevniaia Rus'.* *Voprosy medievistiki.* V. 3. Moscow: 2008, 20-23.
- Gogeshvili, A. A. *Akrostikh v "Slove o polku Igoreve" i drugikh pamiatnikakh russkoi pis'mennosti XI-XIII vekov.* Moscow: A.A. Gogeshvili, 1991.
- Golubinskii, E. E. *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi.* V. 1. Moscow: Univ. tipografiia, 1901.
- Golubtsov, A. P. "O prichinakh i vremeni zameny glasnogo chteniia liturgiinykh molitv tainym." *Bogoslovskii vestnik.* V. 3. No. 9. Sergei Posad: 1905. 69-75.
- Herman, David. *Story Logic: Problems and Possibilities of Narrative.* Lincoln, Neb: University of Nebraska Press, 2002.
- . *Basic Elements of Narrative.* Chichester, U.K: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.
- Il'in, N. N. *Letopisnaia stat'ia 6523 goda i ee istochnik (opyt analiza).* Moscow: Izdatel'stvo akademii nauk SSSR, 1957.

- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. Ed. James Orr. Wilmington, Del.: APA, 1915,
- Ivanov, S. A. "Nesol'ko zamechanii o vizantiiskom kontekste borisoglebsogo kul'ta." *Boriso-Glebskii sbornik, Collectanea Borisoglebica*, V. 1. Paris: Ukrainian National Committee for Byzantine Studies, 2009. 353-364.
- Jakobson, R. O. "Russkie otgoloski drevnecheshskikh pamiatnikov o Liudmile." *Kul'turnoe nasledie Drevnei Rusi (Istoki. Stanovlenie. Traditsii)*. Moscow: 1976. 46-50.
- Karger, M. K. "K istorii kievskogo zodchestva XI v. khram-mavzolei Borisa i Gleba v Vyshgorode." *Sovetskaia arkheologiya* XVI, 1952. 77-99.
- Keller, Felix. "Das Kontakion aus der ersten Sluzba für Boris und Gleb." *Schweizerische Beiträge zum VII. Internationalen Slavistenkongress in Warschau, August 1973*. Eds. Peter Brang, Harald Jaksche and Hildegard Schroeder. Slavica Helvetica. Lucerne: C.J. Bucher, 1973. 65-73.
- Kliuchevskii, V. O. *Drevnerusskie zhitiia sviatykh kak istoricheskii istochnik*. Moscow: Nauka, 1988.
- Kloss, M. "Zhitie Fedora variaga i ego syna." *Pis'mennye pamiatniki istorii drevnei Rusi. Letopisi. Povesti. Khozhdeniia. Poucheniia. Zhitiia. Poslaniia. Annoterovannyi katalog-spravochnik*. St Petersburg : Blits, 2003.
- Krys'ko, V. B. "O grecheskikh istochnikakh i rekonstruktsii pervonachal'nogo teksta drevnerusskikh stikhir na Borisov den'." *Miscellanea Slavica: Sbornik statei k 70-letiiu Borisa Andreevicha*. Moscow: Indirk, 2008. 92-109.
- Kuz'min, A.G. *Nachal'nye etapy drevnerusskogo letopisaniia*. Moscow: Iz. MGU, 1977.
- Lenhoff, Gail. *The Martyred Princes Boris and Gleb: A Socio-Cultural Study of the Cult and the Texts*. UCLA Slavic Studies 19. Columbus, OH: Slavica Publishers, 1989.
- Likhachev, D. S. "'Ustnie letopisi' v sostave Povesti vremennykh let." *Istoricheskie zapiski* 17, 1945. 201-224.
- . *Russkie letopisi i ikh kul'tyrno-istoricheskoe znachenie*. Moscow: Izd. AN CCCR, 1947.
- . *Velikoe nasledie: klassicheskoye proizvedeniia literatury drevnei Rusi*. Saint Petersburg: Izd. "Logos," 1997. 43-133.
- . "Istoriko-literaturnyi ocherk." *Povest vremennykh let*, 3rd ed. Ed. V. P. Adrianova-Peretts. Saint Petersburg: Nauka, 2007.

- Litavrin, G.G. “Puteshestvie russkoi kniagini Ol'gi v Konstantinopol, Problema istochnikov.” *Vizantiiskii Vremennik* 42, 1981. 35-48.
- Lukashevich, A. A. “Vechnaia Pamiat’.” *Pravoslavnaia Entsiklopediia* 7. Moscow: Izd. Moskovskogo Patriarkhata, 2004.
- Lukin, P. V. “Skazanie o variagakh-muchenikakh v nachal’nom letopisanii i Prologe: tekstologicheskii aspekt.” *Drevniaia rus’. Voprosy medievistiki*, V. 38, No. 4. Moscow, 2009. 73-96.
- Lur’e, Ia. S. “Genealogicheskaia skhema letopisei XI-XVI vv., vkluchennykh v ‘Slovar’ knizhnikov i khnizhnosti Drevnei Rusi’.” *TODRL* XL. Leningrad, 1985. 190-205.
- MacCormack, S. “Christ and Empire, Time and Ceremonial.” *Byzantion* 52, 1982. 285-309.
- Mack, Burton L. *Who Wrote the New Testament? The Making of the Christian Myth*. San Francisco: Harper, 1995.
- , Elizabeth A. Castelli, and Hal Taussig. *Reimagining Christian Origins: A Colloquium Honoring Burton L. Mack*. Valley Forge, Pa: Trinity Press International, 1996.
- Makarii, Metropolitan of Moscow. “Pamiat’ i pokhvala kniazuiu russkomu Vladimiru.” *Khristianskoe chtenie*. No. 2, 1849. 317-329.
- Mango, Cyril. *Byzantium: The Empire of New Rome*. New York: Scribner, 1980.
- Mansvetov, I. *Tserkovnyi ustav (Tipik), ego obrazovanie i sud’ba v Grecheskoi i Russkoi Tserkvi*. Moscow: Tipografiia E. Lissiera, 1885.
- Markov, A.V. “Kak zvali pervykh sviatykh muchenikov na Rusi.” *Sbornik khar’kovskogo istoriko-filologicheskogo obshchestva*. V. 18. Khar’kov, 1909.
- Mateos, Juan. *Le Typicon de la Grande Église*. Roma: Pont. Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1962.
- Metz, Jean-Baptiste. “Kleine Apologie des Erzählens.” *Concilium* 9, 1973. 334-342.
- Mikheev, S. M. “Sviatopolk’ sede v Kieve po ottsi’”: *Usobitsa 1015-1019 godov v drevnerusskikh i skandinavskikh istochnikakh*. Moscow: Institut slavianovedeniia RAN, 2009.
- . *Kto pisal “Povest’ vremennykh let”?* Moscow: Indirk, 2011.

Miliutenko, N. I. "K voprosu o nekotorykh istochnikakh Rechi Filosofa." *TODRL*. V. 55. St Petersburg: 2004. 9-17.

———. *Sviatoi ravnoapostol'nyi kniaz' Vladimir i kreschenie Rusi*. St Petersburg: Izd. Olega Abyshko, 2008.

Mineia. Dekabr'. Moscow: Izd. Moskovskoi Patriarkhii, 2002.

Mineia. Iiun'. Moscow: Izd. Russkoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi, 2002.

Mineia. Mai. Moscow: Izd. Russkoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi, 2002.

Mineia Obshchaia. Moscow: Izd. Sovet Russkoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi, 2002.

Mineia sluzhebnaia na mai. Rossiiskaia natsional'naia biblioteka (hereafter RNB), fond 728 (Sobr. Sofiiskoi biblioteki), № 202, Service Menaion for May ("Putiatina mineia"), XI c.

Mineia prazdnichnaia, sluzhebnaia na mai. RNB, Q.I.25, Service Menaion for May. XII-beginning of XIII c.

Mineia sluzhebnaia na mai, notirovannaia. Gosudarstvennyi istoricheskii muzei (hereafter GIM), Sinodal'noe sobr. № 166. Service Menaion for May (with musical notation). XII c.

Mineia sluzhebnaia na sentiabr'. Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv drevnikh aktov (hereafter RGADA). Fond 381 (Biblioteki Moskovskoi Sinodal'noi tipografii). № 84. Service Menaion for September. Dated 1095-1096 (folia 9-176v), XIII c. (folia 1-8v).

Momina, M. A. "Problema pravki slavianskikh bogosluzhebnykh gimnograficheskikh knig na Rusi v XI stoletii." *TODRL* V. XLV, 1992. 200-219.

Moss, Candida R. *The Other Christs: Imitating Jesus in Ancient Christian Ideologies of Martyrdom*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Muir, Edward. *Ritual in Early Modern Europe*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Müller, Ludolf. "Zur Rekonstruktion des 'Nachal'nyi svod' der altrussischen Chronik aufgrund des 'Skazanie über die Ermordung der Heiligen Boris und Gleb.'" *Festschrift für Max Vasmer zum 70. Geburtstag am 26. Februar 1956*. Eds. M. Woltner and H. Braüer. Berlin-Weisbaden, 1956. 341-348.

———. "Die Erzählung der 'Nestorchronik' über die Taufe Olgas im Jahre 954/55." *Zeitschrift für Slawistik* 33, 1988. 785-96.

———. “O vremeni kanonizatsii sviatykh Borisa i Gleba.” *Russia Mediaevalis* 8, 1995. 5-20.

———. “Rasskaz ‘Povesti vremennykh let’ o kreshchenii Vladimira.” *Poniat’ Rossiiu: istoriko-kul’turnye issledovaniia*. Moscow: Progress-traditsiia, 2000.

Nasonov, A. N. *Istoriia russkogo letopisaniia XI- nachala XVIII veka: ocherki i issledovaniia*. Moscow: Nauka, 1969.

Nazarenko, A.V. “Kogda zhe kniaginia Ol’ga ezдила v Konstantinopol’?” *Vizantiskii Vremennik* 50, 1990. 66-83.

———. *Drevniaia rus’ na mezhdunarodnykh putiakh. Mezhdistsiplinarnye ocherki kul’turnykh, torgovykh, politicheskikh sviazei IX-XII vekov*. Moscow: Iazyki russkoi kul’tury, 2001.

Nikol’skii, N.K. “K voprosu ob istochnikakh letopisnogo skazaniia o sv. Vladimire.” *Khristianskoe chtenie*. No. 7, 1902. 89-106.

Novgorodskaia pervaiia letopis’. Ed. A. S. Nasonov. Moscow: AN SSSR, 1950.

Obolensky, Dimitri. “Russia and Byzantium in the Mid-Tenth Century: The Problem of the Baptism of Princess Olga.” *GOTR* 28, 1983. 157-71.

———. “Ol’ga’s Conversion: The Evidence Reconsidered.” *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 12-13, 1990. 145-58.

———. “The Baptism of Princess Ol’ga of Kiev: The Problem of the Sources.” *Byzantina Sorbonensia*, 1984. 159-76.

Odahl, Charles M. *Constantine and the Christian Empire*. London: Routledge, 2004.

Osokina, E.A. “Metodologicheskie problemy sootnosheniia gimnograficheskikh i agiograficheskikh proizvedenii.” *Gimnologia* 1, 2000. 178-187

Ostrogorsky, G. “Vizantiia i Kievskaia kniaginia Ol’ga.” *To Honor Roman Jakobson*. V. 2. The Hague: Mouton, 1967. 1458-73.

Pentkovskii, A. M. *Tipikon Patriarkha Aleksii Studita v Vizantii i na Rusi*. Moscow: Izd. Moskovskoi Patriarkhii, 2001.

Perrin, Norman and Dennis C. Duling. *The New Testament: An Introduction*. New York: Harcourt Brace Javonovich, 1982.

Platonov, S.F. “Letopisnyi rasskaz o kreshchenii Ol’gi.” *Istoricheskii Vestnik* 1, 1919. 285-287.

- Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisei (PSRL). Tom 1: Lavrent'evskaia letopis'. V. 1: Povest' vremennykh let.* Leningrad: Izd. AN SSSR, 1926.
- Polnyi tserkovno-slavianskii slovar'*, Ed. G. D'iachenko. Moscow: Izd. Moskovskogo Patriarkhii, 1993.
- Poppe, A. "The Political Background of the Baptism of Rus'." *The Rise of Christian Russia*. London: Varorium Reprints, 1982.
- . "Once Again Concerning the Baptism of Olga, Archontissa of Rus'." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 46, 1992. 271-277.
- . "Chronologia utworow Nestora hagiografa." *Slavia Orientalis* V. 14. No. 3. 1965. 301-305.
- . "O zarozhdenii kul'ta sviatykh Borisa i Gleba i o posviashchennykh im proizvedeniakh." *Russia Mediaevalis* 8, 1995. 21-68.
- Povest' vremennykh let*, 3rd ed. Ed. V. P. Adrianova-Peretts. Saint Petersburg: Nauka, 2007.
- Pozdeeva, I. V. "Liturgicheskii tekst kak istoricheskii istochnik." *Voprosy istorii* 6, 2000. 112-120.
- Priselkov, M. D. *Ocherki po tserkovno-politicheskoi istorii Kievskoi Rusi X-XII vv.* St Petersburg: Tip. M. M. Stasiulevicha, 1913.
- . *Istoriia russkogo letopisaniia*. St Petersburg: Izd. "Dmitrii Bulanin," 1996.
- Ranchin, A. M. "Pochitanie sviatykh Borisa i Gleba: k voprosu ob obraztsakh." *Tezisy dokladov uchastnikov VII mezhdunarodnoi konferentsii "Kompleksnyi podkhod v izuchenii drevnei Rusi.* Moscow: RAN, 2013. 113-114.
- Reisman, E. "The Cult of Boris and Gleb: Remnant of a Varangian Tradition?" *The Russian Review* 27. No. 2. 141-157.
- Rozhnetskii, S. "Kak nazyvalsia pervyi russkii sviatoi muchenik?" *Izvestiia otdeleniia russkogo iazyka i slovesnosti*. V. 19. No. 4, 1915. 94-98.
- Schmemman, Alexander. *Of Water and the Spirit: A Liturgical Study of Baptism*. Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2000.
- Senderovich, S. "Sv. Vladimir: k mifopoezisu." *TODRL*. V. 49. St Petersburg: 1996, 300-313.

———. “Metod Shakhmatova, rannee letopisanie i problema nachala russkoi istoriografii.” *Iz istorii russkoi kul'tury*. V. 1. Moscow: Drevniaia Rus', 2000. 461-499.

Seregina, N. S. *Pesnopeniia russkim sviatym: po materialam rukopisnoi pevcheskoi knigi XI-XIV vv. “Stikhirar’ mesiachnyi*. Saint Petersburg: Rossiiskii institut istorii iskusstv, 1994.

Seston, W. “Constantine as a ‘Bishop’.” *The Journal of Roman Studies* 37. Cambridge: 1947, 127-131.

Shaikin, A. A. *Povest' vremennykh let: istoriia i poetika*. Moscow: Russkaia panaroma, 2011.

Shakhmatov, A. A. *Korsunskaiia legenda o kreshchenii Vladimira*. St Petersburg: Tip. Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk, 1906.

———. “Kak nazyvalsia pervyi russkii sviatoi muchenik?” St Petersburg: Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk. V. 1. No. 9. 1907. 261-264.

———. *Razyskaniia o drevneishikh russkikh letopisnykh svodakh*. St. Petersburg: Tipografiia M.A. Aleksandrova, 1908.

———. *Povest' vremennykh let*. St Petersburg: Iz. Imp. Arkh. Kom., 1916. I-LXXX.

———. “Povest' vremennykh let i ee istochniki.” *TODRL* V. 4. Leningrad, 1940.

Skaballanovich, M. N. *Khristianskie prazniki: vsestoronee osviashchenie kazhdogo iz velikikh prazdnikov so vsiem ego bogoslužheniem*. Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1976.

———. *Tolkovyi Tipikon. Ob”iasnitel’noe izlozhenie Tipikona s istoricheskim vvedeniem*. T. 1-3. Moscow: Palomnik, 1995.

———. “Znachenie prazdnika Vozdvizheniia Kresta Gospodnia.” *Vozdvizhenie Chestnogo i Zhivotvoriashchego Kresta Gospodnia*. Kiev: Izd. Prolog, 2004.

Sluzhebnik. “Chin Kreshcheniia.” RNB, fond 728 (Sobr. Sofiiskoi biblioteki). № 526.

Sluzhebnik XIII veka. RNB, fond 728 (Sobr. Sofiiskoi biblioteki). № 518. XIII c.

Smith, Jonathan Z. *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.

Sokolov, B. “Epicheskie skazaniia o zhenit’be kniazia Vladimira (Germano-russkie otnosheniia v oblasti eposa).” *Uchenye zapiski Saratovskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta imeni N.G. Chernyshevskogo*. V. 1. No. 3, 1923. 69-122.

Sreznevskii, I. I. "Drevnie izobrazheniia sviatykh kniazei Borisa i Gleba." *Khristianskie drevnosti i arkheologiya* IX, 1882.

Stikhirar' mineinyi, notirovannyi, stikhiri s 12 dek. po 31 avg. RNB, fond 728 (Sobr. Sofiiskoi biblioteki). № 384. Sticherarion (with musical notation).

Taft, Robert. "The Liturgy of the Great Church: An Initial Synthesis of Structure and Interpretation on the Eve of Iconoclasm." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 34-35, 1981. 45-75.

———. "Historicism Revisited." *Beyond East and West*. Washington DC: Pastoral Press, 1984. 15-31.

———. "Mount Athos: A Late Chapter in the Byzantine Rite." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 42, 1988. 179-194.

———. "The Tale of Two Cities: The Byzantine Holy Week Triduum as a Paradigm of Liturgical History." *Time and Community*. Ed. J. Neil Alexander. Washington D.C.: Pastoral Press, 1990. 21-41.

———. *The Byzantine Rite: A Short History*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992.

———. *Through Their Own Eyes: Liturgy as the Byzantines Saw It*. Berkely: InterOrthodox Press, 2006.

Talley, Thomas J. *The Origins of the Liturgical Year*. New York: Pueblo Publishing Co., 1990.

Temchin, S. Iu. "'Se nest' ubiistvo, no syrorezanie': agiograficheskii obraz vifleemskikh mladentsev kak kontseptual'naia osnova Borisoglebskogo kul'ta." *Imenoslov. Istoriiia iazyka. Istoriiia kul'tury*. Ed. F. B. Uspenskii. Moscow: Universitet Dmitriia Pozharskogo, 2012. 216-230.

Tertullian. *Apologeticus*. Tr. Alexander Souter and John Eyton Bickersteth Mayor. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1917.

"The Divine Liturgy of St Basil the Great." *Service Books of the Orthodox Church*, V. 2. South Canaan, PA: St Tikhon's Seminary Press, 1984.

The Povest' vremennykh let': An Interlinear Collation and Paradosis. Eds. Donald Ostrowski, Horace Lunt, and David J. Birnbaum. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003.

Theissen, Gerd. *The New Testamen: History, Literature, Religion*. London: T & T Clark, 2003.

Triod' tsvetnaia, notirovannaia. GIM, fond 80370 (Sobranie Voskresenskogo Novo-Ierusalimskogo Voskresenskogo monastyria). № 27. Festal Triodion (with musical notation). XII c.

Tsukerman, Konstantin. "Nabliudeniia nad slozheniem drevneishikh istochnikov letopisi." *Boriso-Glebskii sbornik, Collectanea Borisoglebica*, V. 1. Paris: Ukrainian National Committee for Byzantine Studies, 2009. 183-199.

Turilov, A. A. "'Chelovek bozhii imenem' (Ob imeni starshego variaga muchenika)." *Vostochnaia Evropa v drevnosti i srednekov'e: iazychestvo, khristianstvo, tserkov'*. Chteniia pamiati chlena-korrespondenta AN SSSR V.T. Pashuto. Moscow, 1995. 20-22.

Tvorogov, O. V. *Drevnerusskie Khronografy*. Leningrad: Nauka, 1975.

———. "Povest' vremennikh let." *Slovar' knizhnikov i khnizhnosti drevnei Rusi XI-pervaia polovina XIV v.* Leningrad: Nauka, 1987. 337-343.

Uzhankov, A. N. "Sviatye strastoterpsy Boris i Gleb: k istorii kanonizatsii i napisaniia zhitii." *Drevniaia Rus': Voprosy medievistiki*, No. 2. Moscow: ISRAAN, 2000. 37-49.

Velimirovic, Milos. "The Influence of the Byzantine Chant on the Music of the Slavic Countries." *Proceedings of the XIIIth International Congress of Byzantine Studies*. Eds. J. M. Hussey, D. Obelensky and S. Runciman. London: Oxford University Press, 1967. 119-147.

Vodoff, Vladimir. *Autour du mythe de la Sainte Russie. Christianisme, pouvoir et société chez les Slaves orientaux (X^e-XVII^e siècles)*. Paris: Institut d'études slaves, 2003.

Vvedenskii, A. M. "Zhitie variagov-muchenikov (funktsionirovanie legendy v letopisi i v prologe)." *Drevniaia rus' . Voprosy medievistiki*. V. 38ю No. 4. Moscow: 2009. 63-72.

Ware, Timothy. *The Orthodox Church*. New York: Penguin Books, 1993.

White, Monica. *Military Saints in Byzantium and Rus, 900-1200*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Zheltoy, M. "Chin osviashcheniia khrama i polozheniia sviatikh moshchei v vizantiiskikh Evkhologiiakh XI veka." *Relikvii v isskustve i kul'ture vostochnokhristianskogo mira*. Moscow, 2000. 111-126.

Zhittia sviatykh muchenikov Borisa i Gleba i sluzhby im. Ed. D. I. Abramovich. Pamiatniki drevne-russkoi literatury 2. Petrograd: Tipografiia Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk, 1916.

Zhivov, V. M. *Sviatost': Kratkii slovar' agiograficheskikh terminov*. Moscow: "Gnozis," 1994.

