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Saint Andrew's First-Century Prophecy of Division: The Founding of Kiev and the Idea of the Third Rome

ABSTRACT: *Like the city of Rome, the first capital of the Rus', Kiev, has a legendary tale of its founding. Both the first and last official compilations of the Russian Primary Chronicle, the "Laurentian Text" and the "Nikonian Chronicle," claim that the founding of Kiev was prophesied by Saint Andrew in the first century while he was journeying to Rome via modern-day southern and northern Russia, centuries before the city was actually built. This article takes a closer look at the Christian and Romanized founding of Kiev, argues that the respective narratives were likely used to propagate the idea of Russia as the Third Rome, and asserts that the 1169 sack of Kiev by Andrej Jur'evic Bogoljubskij as well as the city's 1240 Mongol occupation set the stage for the division among the modern-day descendants of the Rus'.*

KEYWORDS: *antiquity; medieval history; modern history; Rus'; Kiev; Saint Andrew; Vladimir the Great; Andrej Jur'evic Bogoljubskij; Laurentian Text; Nikonian Chronicle*

Introduction

Today, the city of Kiev on the Dnieper River serves as the capital of Ukraine, but a thousand years ago, it was the first capital of the Rus'. The date of the city's actual founding remains a topic of heated scholarly and public debate: most Ukrainians would probably point to the year 482, and thus, in 1982, the city commemorated the 1,500th anniversary of its initial establishment.[1] A sixteenth-century Russian historiographical compilation, which was later named the *Nikonian Chronicle*, dates Kiev's founding to around 600.[2] Archaeological evidence suggests that the area experienced a period without human occupation in the fifth century but was resettled in the sixth century.[3] Yet, regardless of when Kiev was founded, "medieval" and "early modern" historical narratives feature a rather perplexing episode according to which Saint Andrew prophesied the city's founding during a first-century visit to the region *en route* to Rome.[4] This is odd because, until the late tenth century, the Rus' were anything but Christian. To add to the confusion, these narratives of Kiev's founding also contain parallels to the mythical, pagan founding of Rome. Why, then, would medieval and early modern writers of

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[1] Taras Kuzio, "National Identity and History Writing in Ukraine," *Nationalities Papers* 34, no. 4 (2006): 407-427, here 419.

[2] *The Nikonian Chronicle: From the Beginning to the Year 1132,* trans. Serge A. Zenkovsky and Betty Jean Zenkovsky (Princeton: The Kingston Press Inc., 1984), 7.

[3] Johan Callmer, "The Archaeology of Kiev to the End of the Earliest Urban Phase," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 11, no. 3/4 (1987): 323-364, here 325.

[4] *The Russian Primary Chronicle: Laurentian Text*, trans. Samuel Hazzard Cross and Olgerd P. Sherbowitz-Wetzor (Cambridge, Mass.: The Mediaeval Academy of America, 1953), 53-54 (hereafter cited as *Laurentian Text*); *Nikonian Chronicle*, trans. Zenkovsky, 5. This article's artificial attribution of the fourteenth *Laurentian Text* as "medieval" and of the sixteenth-century *Nikonian Chronicle* as "early modern" is intended solely for the reader's chronological orientation: both contain versions of the Russian Primary Chronicle and are therefore intimately connected.

Russian history insert this prophecy of Saint Andrew? This article critically analyzes the respective medieval and early modern texts, namely, the fourteenth-century *Laurentian Text* of the Russian Primary Chronicle and the sixteenth-century *Nikonian Chronicle*, as they pertain to the prophesying and founding of Kiev. It argues that these rather dubious narratives were intended to propagate the idea of Russia as the Third Rome. Lastly, it ties this information to the sack of Kiev by Andrej Jur'evic Bogoljubskij, the Grand Prince of Vladimir-Suzdal, in 1169 and to the city's Mongol occupation in 1240 to show that these events set the stage for the division among the modern-day descendants of the Rus' and continue to have a geopolitical impact even in the twenty-first century.

I. The Textual Tradition

The *Laurentian Text* is the earliest surviving and dated compilation of the so-called Russian Primary Chronicle, a narrative which covers the history of the Rus' up until the early twelfth century. According to its colophon (i.e., a subscription at the end of a manuscript with information about the writer, the date of writing, and so forth), the *Laurentian Text* was "copied between January 14 and March 20, 1377, by the monk Lawrence (Lavrentiy) for Prince Dmitriy Konstantinovich of Suzdal,"[5] a historic Russian town located to the east of Moscow. The English translation of the *Laurentian Text* used in this article was published in 1953; at that time, the original fourteenth-century manuscript of the *Laurentian Text* (Ms. F.п.IV.2) was kept at the State Public Library in Leningrad, which is now the National Library of Russia in St. Petersburg.[6] While the *Laurentian Text* is named for Lawrence, its 1377 copyist, the latter was not its author. The *Laurentian Text* is a version of the Russian Primary Chronicle which is generally attributed to Nestor, a monk of the Crypt Monastery in Kiev at the end of the eleventh and beginning of the twelfth centuries.[7] However, the *Laurentian Text* shows little evidence of Nestor's authorship; in fact, while other manuscripts of the Russian Primary Chronicle, notably the fifteenth-century *Hypatian Codex*, specify Nestor as the author, the *Laurentian Text* does not.[8] Therefore, the author of the original *Laurentian Text* is unknown. What is known, according to the text's English translators, is that this unnamed author was "well educated and personally familiar with the course of political events from the later years of Yaroslav the Wise [Grand Prince of Kiev 1019-1054] through the first decade of the twelfth century."[9] While this unnamed author's original version of the *Laurentian Text* has not survived, its 1116 revision by Sylvester, Prior of St. Michael's monastery in the village of Vydubychi near Kiev, served as the basis for

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[5] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 4.

[6] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 4.

[7] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 6.

[8] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 6.

[9] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 22.

the 1377 copy (and thus of the English translation used here):[10] thus, on the final page of the *Laurentian Text*, Sylvester makes himself known by stating: "In the hope of God's Grace, I, Sylvester, Prior of St. Michael's, wrote this Chronicle in the year 6624 (1116), during the Reign of Prince Vladimir in Kiev […] May whosoever reads this book remember me in his prayers."[11] According to Samuel Hazzard Cross and Olgerd P. Sherbowitz-Wetzor, the translators of the *Laurentian Text*, Sylvester may have been using the text for "his personal use or for the information of his own monastic community."[12] The text reveals a significant bias in favor of Vladimir II Monomakh, Grand Prince of Kiev (1113-1125), as well as the rulers of Vladimir-Suzdal, a historic principality located to the east of Moscow.[13] This is not surprising since Sylvester wrote during the former's reign, and the *Laurentian Text* continues in Sylvester's tradition of writing and editing.[14] The bias in favor of the princes of Vladimir-Suzdal may be attributed to the fact that Lawrence, the 1377 copyist of the *Laurentian Text*, was working for the aforementioned Prince Dmitriy Konstantinovich of Suzdal.

We now turn from the medieval *Laurentian Text* to the early modern *Nikonian Chronicle*, the last official rendition of the Russian Primary Chronicle. The *Nikonian Chronicle* was compiled in the sixteenth century, "utilizing older manuscripts."[15] Work on the text commenced in the office of the Metropolitan of Moscow but was subsequently moved to the court of Ivan IV ("the Terrible"),[16] Grand Prince of Moscow (1533-1547) and later Tsar of all Rus' (1547-1584). According to its English translator, Serge A. Zenkovsky, the materials used to compile the *Nikonian Chronicle* were "ill-preserved and left the writers and editors with issues of missing or damaged pages and paragraphs, previous scribe errors, misspellings of names, and unclear annual entries."[17] There are several manuscripts of the *Nikonian Chronicle*, and most of them reside in the National Library of Russia in St. Petersburg. Determining the authorship of chronicles is complicated as some are named after the person who copied them (like the *Laurentian Text*), or after the place where they were written, or after their most significant owner. The *Nikonian Chronicle* belongs to this latter category as its first discovered manuscript once

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[10] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 4.

[11] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 205. 6624 is the year *ab orbe condita*, i.e., from the foundation of the world.

[12] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 23.

[13] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 17.

[14] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 17-18.

[15] *Nikonian Chronicle*, trans. Zenkovsky, ix. Concerning this translation, see also Donald Ostrowski, "What Makes a Translation Bad? Gripes of an End User," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 15, no. 3/4 (December 1991): 429-446.

[16] *Nikonian Chronicle*, trans. Zenkovsky, xiii.

[17] *Nikonian Chronicle*, trans. Zenkovsky, ix.

belonged to Nikon, Patriarch of Moscow and all Rus' (1652-1658/1666).[18] Whereas the purpose of the *Laurentian Text*, apart from its abovementioned bias, is unclear, the *Nikonian Chronicle* was edited by an ecclesiastical writer, likely the Metropolitan Daniel (before 1492-1547), with the intention of "glorifying the Russian church and providing greater prestige to the Metropolitan See of all Russia."[19] In Zenkovsky's assessment, this Metropolitan Daniel was "a 'professional' indefatigable moralist."[20] Nevertheless, from a historical standpoint, the *Nikonian Chronicle* is one of the more objective compilations.[21] With regard to the focus of this article, namely, Saint Andrew's prophesy and the founding of Kiev, the *Laurentian Text* and the *Nikonian Chronicle* are in full accord, which renders the individual biases in both texts of little consequence.

II. The Prophecy and Founding Narratives

According to both the *Laurentian Text* and *Nikonian Chronicle*, Kiev's establishment was prophesied in the first century by Saint Andrew, the holy apostle and brother of Saint Peter.[22] In the words of the *Laurentian Text*, "Andrew was teaching in Sinope [modern-day northern Turkey], eventually journeyed to the city of Kherson [approximately the area of modern-day Sevastopol], and decided that he wished to go to Rome when he learned that he was near the delta of the Dnieper River."[23] The account continues by stating that,

> [c]onceiving a desire to go to Rome, Andrew thus journeyed to the mouth of the Dnieper. Thence he ascended the river, and by chance he halted beneath the hills upon the shore. Upon arising in the morning, he observed to the disciples who were with him, "See ye these hills? So shall the favor of God shine upon them that on this spot a great city shall arise, and God shall erect many churches therein." He drew near the hills, and having blessed them, he set up a cross. After offering his prayer to God, he descended from the hill on which Kiev was subsequently built and continued his journey up the Dnieper.[24]

After supposedly following the river for over 1,400 kilometers or about 870 miles, "he then reached the Slavs at the point where Novgorod is now situated," where he noted their ways of bathing in an ancient version of a sauna, and how they lashed themselves until near death and then drenched themselves with cold water to be revived.[25] After observing these people for some time and traveling an astounding 2,880 kilometers or about 1,790 miles, "he went thence among the

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[18] *Nikonian Chronicle*, trans. Zenkovsky, xxi.

[19] *Nikonian Chronicle*, trans. Zenkovsky, xxvii-xxviii.

[20] *Nikonian Chronicle*, trans. Zenkovsky, xxx-xxxi.

[21] *Nikonian Chronicle*, trans. Zenkovsky, xxxi.

[22] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 54; *Nikonian Chronicle*, trans. Zenkovsky, 5.

[23] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 53-54. See also *Nikonian Chronicle*, trans. Zenkovsky, 5.

[24] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 54.

[25] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 54.

Varangians and came to Rome, where he recounted what he had learned and observed […] [and] when his hearers learned this fact, they marveled."[26] According to this narrative in the *Laurentian Text*, the first-century Slavs were a rugged but civilized people: after all, they bathed. The mentioning of their committed self-flagellation is remarkable. While this practice is known to have occurred in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, it was not widespread among people of pagan faiths. By pointing out that Saint Andrew was the one witnessing this self-flagellation, the text seems to imply that the Slavs were either already Christians or at least familiar with a practice commonly associated with one of the monotheistic faiths. Secondly, having Saint Andrew consecrate the eventual *locus* of Kiev would have added to a notion of legitimacy in the medieval Orthodox Christian principality of the Kievan Rus'. Thirdly, since the narrative has Saint Andrew journeying to modern-day Ukraine and Russia even before his arrival in the not-yet-Christian city of Rome in Italy, it strengthens the claim of the Rus' to legitimacy and even precedence. Lastly, the notion that the ancient Romans in Italy "marveled" when they heard Saint Andrew's account of the Slavic people undoubtedly would have been a major box to check for an aspiring empire like the medieval Kievan Rus': after all, it underscores that the inhabitants of the First Rome (in Italy) were already impressed with the people of the (future) Third Rome (i.e., the Rus') long before there was a Second Rome (i.e., Constantinople).

As for the actual founding of Kiev (presumably in the sixth century or thereabouts), both the *Laurentian Text* and the *Nikonian Chronicle* provide the names of the sibling founders as Kii, Shchok (Shchek in the *Laurentian Text*), Khoriv, and their sister Lybed.[27] Although they mention the sister, the texts focus on the three brothers who they gave their names to the various parts of Kiev: since Kii was the oldest, the city was named after him;[28] meanwhile, the city's hills of Shchekovytsia and Khoryvytsia (later the "castle hill") were named after Shchok and Khoriv, respectively. The account of the three brothers founding Kiev is noteworthy, as it reminds one of the tale of Romulus and Remus, the two brothers who founded Rome. Thus, this piece of the narrative adds to the idea that the Rus' were framing themselves as an empire worthy of Rome's legacy. While a city was named after one of the brothers in both cases, there were only two brothers and a case of fratricide in Rome; Kiev, on the other hand, was founded by three brothers who were acting in accord with one another and without bloodshed. Thus, Kiev—unlike Rome—was founded in accordance with the Sixth Commandment of the Judeo-Christian tradition: "Thou shalt not kill." In essence, the *Laurentian Text* and the *Nikonian Chronicle* portray the early Rus' as similar to the Romans but with

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[26] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 54.

[27] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 54; *Nikonian Chronicle*, trans. Zenkovsky, 6.

[28] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 54; *Nikonian Chronicle*, trans. Zenkovsky, 6.

Christian morals and, thus, actually superior to the "original" Romans. Such a sacralized and Romanized version of the founding of Kiev seems both spectacular and authoritative. However, a critical analysis of the *Laurentian Text* and the *Nikonian Chronicle* in light of modern scholarship quickly reveals that we are dealing with a construct.

III. Analysis

To unravel Kiev's founding story, we note its overtly pro-Christian theme. Although the Rus' were adopting Orthodox Christianity by the time the Russian Primary Chronicle was compiled in the early twelfth century, this was a comparatively recent and still ongoing development. According to linguist Roman Jakobson, "the Christianization of the Slavs expanded gradually from the 8th until the 13th century, now and then provoking local pagan revolts."[29] This image of pagan revolts stands in stark contrast to the *Laurentian Text*'s description of Vladimir I ("the Great") (c. 958-1015), the Grand Prince of Kiev, gathering his subjects and bishops of Kherson around 987/988 to be baptized. According to the *Laurentian Text*, "Vladimir sent heralds throughout the whole city to proclaim that if any inhabitant, rich or poor, did not betake himself to the river, he would risk the Prince's displeasure."[30] The *Nikonian Chronicle* adds that the Metropolitan Michael of Kiev, who served as the carrier of this message, proclaimed to the Rus': "In case any of you do not go to the river to be baptized […] he will be the enemy of Christ God, and of us and there will be no mercy to him from us."[31] Both texts concur that the people responded with "great joy" and were baptized in numbers that could not be counted.[32] Thus, the same texts' suggestion that the Slavs, and by extension the Rus', might already have been Christians in the first century when Saint Andrew visited the region does not hold up: at best, they might have had a pro-Christian disposition.

Jakobson underscores that "the eradication of official state paganism in Kiev and Novgorod is documented in the Primary Russian Chronicle [which was] compiled around 1111."[33] As we have seen, both the *Laurentian Text* and the *Nikonian Chronicle* record the baptism of Grand Prince Vladimir I in Kherson as an event that occurred around 987/988.[34] Following his baptism, Vladimir sent his

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[29] Roman Jakobson, *Selected Writings VII: Contributions to Comparative Mythology: Studies in Linguistics and Philology, 1972-1982*, ed. Stephen Rudy (New York: Mouton, 1985), 3.

[30] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 116-117.

[31] *Nikonian Chronicle*, trans. Zenkovsky, 108.

[32] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 116-117; *Nikonian Chronicle*, trans. Zenkovsky, 108.

[33] Jakobson, *Selected Writings VII,* 3.

[34] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 113; *Nikonian Chronicle*, trans. Zenkovsky, 102.

oldest son, Vysheslav, to Novgorod in 988 as that city's newly converted ruler.[35] It is clear from the *Laurentian Text* and the *Nikonian Chronicle* that paganism had been the norm until then. For example, the *Laurentian Text* mentions various dealings with "ignorant pagan tribes" who were used to bolster Prince Oleg of Novgorod's attack on the Byzantine Greeks between 904 and 907.[36] Even when recording events as late as 983, the *Laurentian Text* explicitly states: "for at this time, the Russes were ignorant pagans."[37] So, if the Rus' remained pagan until the late tenth century, what are the origins of the Christian prophesying and Romanized founding of Kiev? According to the translators' footnote in the *Laurentian Text*, "the legend of St. Andrew in Rus' developed in Kiev during the eleventh century and is referred to ca. 1075 in a letter of the [Byzantine] Emperor Michael VII Dukas [r. 1071-1078] to Prince Vsevold I Yaroslavich of Kiev."[38] Zenkovsky, the translator of the *Nikonian Chronicle*, reminds us that the early Christian historian Eusebius of Caesarea (265-339) wrote an account of Saint Andrew's mission in Scythia (modern-day southern Russia) and that Byzantine authors, as well as the author of the Russian Primary Chronicle, then built upon this account with information that was "by no means authentic."[39] By showing contempt or shame for the fact that Prince Oleg of Novgorod, and by extension the Rurikids, had still been pagans in the tenth century, the *Laurentian Text* suggests that the Rus' remained conflicted with regard to their identities well into the fourteenth century: repeating the story of the three brothers who had founded Kiev, a parallel to the pagan founding of Rome; referring to other tribes and themselves as "ignorant pagans;" and ultimately recording their conversion and baptism. In the tenth century, it was not unprecedented for formerly pagan cities to declare their legitimacy as Christian entities: both Cologne and Trier were claiming to own the staff of Saint Peter and used it during processions.[40] Yet, to state that Saint Andrew had traveled to an uninhabited area of Scythia in the first century, set up a cross, and prophesied the founding of Kiev is comparatively bold. Why would medieval and early modern writers of Russian history insert this into their narratives?

It appears that the Rus' viewed themselves as the heirs of the Orthodox Christian Roman Empire. After the conquest of Constantinople by the Ottoman Turks in 1453, the territorial remnants of the Roman Empire soon disintegrated.[41]

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[35] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 119; *Nikonian Chronicle*, trans. Zenkovsky, 107.

[36] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 64.

[37] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 96.

[38] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 224.

[39] *Nikonian Chronicle*, trans. Zenkovsky, 6.

[40] Cynthia Hahn, "What Do Reliquaries Do for Relics?," *Numen* 57, no. 3/4 (2010): 284-316, here 285-287.

[41] Marshall Poe, "Moscow, the Third Rome: The Origins and Transformations of a 'Pivotal Moment'," *Jahrbucher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 49, no. 3 (2001): 412-429, here 415.

From the early sixteenth century on, the Rus' asserted themselves as the Third Rome. Although they were geographically removed from the Roman/Latin or Byzantine/Greek heritage of the Roman Empire, there is evidence to suggest that they had been portraying themselves as suitable heirs to the Roman Empire's legacy well before this period. As we have seen, the Rus' converted to Eastern Orthodox Christianity around 987/988 via the baptism of Grand Prince Vladimir I of Kiev and thus, in the words of Religious Studies scholar Brian Bennett, "brought themselves into the orbit of Byzantine civilization;"[42] after all, in the context of this conversion and baptism, Vladimir married Anna Porphyrogenita, the daughter of the Byzantine (and thus "Roman") Emperor Romanos II. And it did not take long for the Rus' to start their respective grandiose proclamations. Historian Marshall Poe reminds us that, as early as the eleventh century, the Metropolitan Ilarion of Kiev referred to Grand Prince Vladimir I of Kiev as the "new Constantine."[43] Both the *Laurentian Text* and the *Nikonian Chronicle* compare Vladimir I to the Byzantine Emperor Constantine in the context of their narrative concerning the former's passing from a grave illness in 1015. According to the *Laurentian Text*, Vladimir was "the new Constantine of mighty Rome who baptized himself and his subjects; for the Prince of Rus' imitated the acts of Constantine himself," and according to the *Nikonian Chronicle*, Vladimir was "like the new Constantine of Great Rome because he [Constantine], himself, became baptized, and baptized his people, and so did Prince Vladimir."[44]

This was apparently not a singular incident: Poe mentions that the Grand Prince Ivan Kalita of Moscow (1288-1341) was considered a "Constantine" in the fourteenth century;[45] however, since the *Laurentian Text* ends its recorded history in 1116, it does not contain this reference, and the *Nikonian Chronicle* does not call Ivan Kalita a "Constantine," whether during his lifetime or upon his death, in the same way both texts celebrate Vladimir I. Yet, there are Rus' princes who bear the name "Constantine," for example, the Grand Prince Konstantin Mikhailovich of Tver (1302-1345).[46] The logical conclusion that could be made here is that the Rus' were merely emulating the Romans by comparing their great leaders to those of Constantinople. This would seem probable, as historian Justyna Kroczak has pointed out that, by the eleventh century, Kiev had become the religious and intellectual center of the Rus' who had the ambition of "being equal to, yet

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[42] Brian P. Bennett, "Divining History: Providential Interpretation in the "Primary Chronicle" of Kievan Rus'" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1999), 3.

[43] Poe, "Moscow," 414.

[44] *Laurentian Text*, trans. Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor, 124; *Nikonian Chronicle*, trans. Zenkovsky, 121.

[45] Poe, "Moscow," 414.

[46] *The Nikonian Chronicle: From the Year 1241 to 1381 (Volume Three),* trans. Serge A. Zenkovsky and Betty Jean Zenkovsky (Princeton: The Kingston Press Inc., 1986), 127.

independent of Constantinople."[47] Considering their relatively new Orthodox Christian faith, such comparisons would seem particularly agreeable. However, the fact that both the *Laurentian Text* and the *Nikonian Chronicle* insist on calling Vladimir I the "new Constantine;" the fact that Rus' princes of subsequent generations would bear the name "Konstantin;" and the fact that the Rus' would later proclaim themselves the Third Rome suggest that these comparisons have to be taken more seriously. Nineteenth-century Russian historians looked to and developed an imperial ideology based on the works of Filofei (Philotheus) of Pskov (1465–1542) who wrote "an epistle in 1523/24 that reads '[…] all Christian empires have come to an end and are gathered together in the singular empire of our sovereign […] and this is the Russian empire: because two Romes have fallen, and a third stands, and a fourth there shall not be'."[48] Although Poe argues that this idea was not popular among Russian elites in the sixteenth century and that comparisons to Roman emperors were "rhetorical flattery," the textual references to Vladimir I as the "new Constantine" and the onomastic evidence of Rus' princes bearing the name "Konstantin," taken together with Filofei of Pskov's pronouncement which established modern Russian imperial ideology,[49] point to a coherent trajectory.

Yet, in this modern imperial ideology Moscow, and not Kiev, features as the Third Rome. Filofei of Pskov, who was writing in modern-day western Russia (almost Estonia), viewed the Grand Prince Vasilii III of Moscow (1479-1533) as the single "tsar" of the Christians and protector of the "holy universal apostolic church" in Moscow.[50] If the Rus' were trying to portray themselves as the heirs of the Romans, why did Moscow "replace" Kiev? Would Kiev, based on the prophecy of Saint Andrew and its alleged founding by three brothers who remind us, albeit vaguely, of Romulus and Remus, not have been the better fit? The answer lies in Kiev's twelfth- and thirteenth-century history.

While Kiev's legendary founding would appear to predestine it as the capital of the Third Rome, it was sacked in 1169—a traumatic moment in its history. In the twelfth century, Andrej Jur'evic Bogoljubskij (c. 1111-1174), the Grand Prince of Vladimir-Suzdal, broke from the Kievan tradition of ruling over the Rus'.[51] Historian Jaroslaw Pelenski explains that, Bogoljubskij set out to establish the "Metropolitanate of Vladimir" for which he sought the permission of Lukas

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[47] Justyna Kroczak, "The Role of the Bible in the Formation of Philosophical Thought in Kievan Rus' (as Exemplified by Ilarion of Kiev, Kliment Smolatič, and Kirill of Turov)," *Studia Ceranea 6* (2016): 61-74, here 63.

[48] Poe, "Moscow," 416.

[49] Poe, "Moscow," 413.

[50] Poe, "Moscow," 415-416.

[51] Jaroslaw Pelenski, "The Sack of Kiev of 1169: Its Significance for the Succession to Kievan Rus'," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 11, no. 3/4 (1987): 303-316, here 311.

Chrysoberges, the Orthodox Christian patriarch of Constantinople.[52] According to Pelenski, the patriarch firmly rejected Bogoljubskij's plan, and this decisive political defeat caused Bogoljubskij in 1169 to attack and sack Kiev, the traditional religious and political center of the Rus'. Bogoljubskij then proceeded to found the city of Vladimir-on-the-Kljaz'ma as his new capital for the Rus'.[53] The 1169 sack of Kiev in favor of creating a new capital would certainly explain why Kiev did not advance to become the sixteenth-century capital of the Third Rome—that is, if Bogoljubskij and his descendants had maintained their power and established a lasting dynasty. However, in 1171 Gleb Yuryevich, the ruler whom Bogoljubskij had installed in Kiev, died, and a coalition formed to oppose the city's subordination by Bogoljubskij.[54] The latter soon formed his own coalition with twenty princes, amassed a huge army (estimated at the likely hyper-inflated number of 50,000 men), and marched south to retake Kiev.[55] Yet, Bogoljubskij was soundly defeated and was forced, once again, to come up with a plan to impose his rule over the city.[56] In 1175, Bogoljubskij was murdered by his own servants. This triggered a war of succession among his brothers and nephews, resulting in his dynasty's failure.[57] While Bogoljubskij had not succeeded in his plans against Kiev, the damage was done, and the Rus' had been divided. Kiev might have recovered from this blow, had it not been for the events of the thirteenth century.

The 1169 sack of Kiev and Bogoljubskij's decision to break away from Kievan dynastic traditions may have started the division that we see among the descendants of the Rus' today. Yet, despite efforts and actions to the contrary, Kiev remained their center of power for the time being. It was not until the Mongol occupation of the city in 1240 that the Rus' became isolated from Europe and shifted their center of power to the northeast.[58] From 1237 (the first year of the Mongol invasions) until 1480 (the official end of the "Tartar Yoke"), Rus' political authority resided with the Russian Orthodox Church in the territories of the Grand Principality of Muscovy.[59] This period not only saw the shift of the center of power away from Saint Andrew's prophesied city of Kiev, but also the disappearance of

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[52] Pelenski, "Sack of Kiev," 313.

[53] Pelenski, "Sack of Kiev," 312-313.

[54] Pelenski, "Sack of Kiev," 313-314.

[55] Pelenski, "Sack of Kiev," 314.

[56] Pelenski, "Sack of Kiev," 314.

[57] Tatiana Vilkul, "People and Boyars in the Old Russian Chronicles of the 11th-13th Centuries: Narrative Modelling of Social Identities," in *Imagined Communities: Constructing Collective Identities in Medieval Europe*, ed. Andrzej Pleszczyński, Joanna Aleksandra Sobiesiak, Michał Tomaszek, and Przemysław Tyszka (Boston: Brill, 2018), 179–203, here 187.

[58] Christian Raffensperger, *Reimagining Europe: Kievan Rus' in the Medieval World* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012), 186.

[59] Sergei Magaril, "The Mythology of the 'Third Rome' in Russian Educated Society," *Russian Politics & Law* 50, no. 5 (2012): 7-34, here 9.

the term "Rus'" to denote a political entity in Europe.[60] To better understand this situation, one must note that the Kievan Rus' were not a unified "state" but, rather, a conglomerate of tribes who swore loyalty to their local territories and chiefs.[61] Therefore, any one of these tribes could claim to be the carrier of the Kievan Rus' legacy after a shift in political centers. Fast forward to the post-Soviet-era states in Eastern Europe, we see that the modern descendants of the Rus'—the Ukrainians, the Russians, and the Belarussians—all believed they needed to claim this legacy to establish their national identities.[62] Thus, the year 1240, when the Mongols conquered Kiev and the center of power shifted to Moscow, appears to be the point in history that drives the modern division of the descendants of the Rus'.

Today there are four prevailing narratives that tell the history of the Rus' legacy, namely, the Russophile, the Soviet, the Ukrainophile, and the Eastern Slavic "schools," respectively.[63] While all provide explanations with regard to the origins of the Rus' and statements as to who may rightfully claim their legacy, the two schools that are the most significant ones here are the Russophile and Ukrainophile perspectives. The predominant school is the nineteenth-century Russophile perspective, which posits that, after Kiev's fall to the Mongols in 1240, the legacy of the Rus' "moved to Vladimir-Suzdal, from there to Muscovy (Moscow), and in the eighteenth century to the Russian empire."[64] In addition, the Russophile school argues that Ukrainians only appeared in the mid-seventeenth century with the purpose to unite themselves with Russia. This framework fuels Russian imperialism, and it is used by many Western historians to explain the history of Russia.[65] Meanwhile and not surprisingly, the state of Ukraine favors a Ukrainophile perspective which claims that "Kyiv Rus' was the first Ukrainian kingdom, making Kiev the elder brother of Moscow," and it is on this basis that 1991-1992 handbooks on Ukrainian history "begin their historical surveys in Kyiv Rus' or even earlier in pre-Slavic cultures and states."[66] Although this Ukrainophile view might seem more credible from a historical standpoint, it has been denounced as nationalistic by both Russia and the West.[67] In truth, there is no way to determine a correct or more credible side in this debate as it is ultimately an argument about expressing national identity, which is a social construct. What is clear, though, is that Saint Andrew's prophesied city of Kiev is still a *locus* of contention and division today just as it was in the twelfth century.

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[60] Raffensperger, *Reimagining Europe,* 186.

[61] Kuzio, "National Identity," 409.

[62] Kuzio, "National Identity," 407.

[63] Kuzio, "National Identity," 409.

[64] Kuzio, "National Identity," 409.

[65] Kuzio, "National Identity," 409.

[66] Kuzio, "National Identity," 412.

[67] Kuzio, "National Identity," 411.

Conclusion

So far, we have seen the rather confusing prophesy in the *Laurentian Text* and in the *Nikonian Chronicle* that portrays Kiev as both an Orthodox Christian and a Rome-like city. The evidence also indicates that, following the conversion of the Rus' in the late tenth century, Roman titles such as "new Constantine" were bestowed upon great leaders of the Rus', particularly Vladimir I, and that later princes bore the name "Konstantin." After the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople in 1453, Russia was proclaimed as the Third Rome, and Moscow, a city with a (at that time) much less storied past than Kiev, came to be seen as the capital of the Third Rome. The idea for this transfer may have started after Bogoljubskij's subordination of Kiev in 1169, but it was more explicitly propagated in the modern era via the Russophile perspective which points to Kiev's occupation by the Mongols in 1240 as the endpoint for its claims to the Kievan Rus' legacy. However, relatively recent events in the twenty-first century suggest that Kiev is still the crucial city in claiming this legacy. In 2014, Vladimir Putin, the President of Russia, mobilized his military against Ukraine, seized the Crimean Peninsula for its warm water port, and promoted armed uprisings in the counties of Luhansk and Donetsk.[68] The narrative pushed by Putin is a continuation of the Russophile idea that Ukraine wishes to reunite with Russia. The Russian invasion of Ukrainian territory was a result of Ukraine's talks about joining the European Union.[69] Some might suggest that Putin is simply trying to reclaim the territories of the former Soviet Union and "right the wrongs that the West [has] committed against Russia."[70] Yet, the significance of Kiev, the capital of modern-day Ukraine, extends far beyond the twenty-first century, which suggests that these modern maneuvers may be attempts to complete what Bogoljubskij had started, while also claiming the legacy of the Rus' by subordinating Saint Andrew's legendary and prophesied city.

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[68] Tor Bukkvoll, "Why Putin Went to War: Ideology, Interests and Decision-Making in the Russian Use of Force in Crime and Donbas," *Contemporary Politics: Russia, the West, and the Ukraine Crisis* 22, no. 3 (2016): 267-282, here 267.

[69] Bukkvoll, "Why Putin Went to War," 268-269.

[70] Bukkvoll, "Why Putin Went to War," 268.