

THE GOLDEN AGE OF KYIVAN RUS'

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The medieval polity of Kyivan Rus' fully entered the cultural sphere of Byzantium after the time of its Christianisation in 988. Until the capture of Kyiv by the Mongols in 1240, a distinct literary and artistic culture emerged and developed in the monastic scriptoria that flourished throughout the Kyivan Rus'. The Golden Age of Kyivan Rus' is a MAPA project that aims to present and describe the artistic and literary endeavours that emerged during that period of almost three centuries and shaped the medieval culture of one of the most successful Slavic polities of the European Middle Ages.

BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

The current project stems from two converging ideas. On the one hand, a concern about the lack of attention traditionally given in literary studies to the material aspects involved in the process of textual transmission, and, on the other, a preoccupation for the unilateral appropriation by one modern state, Russia, of the cultural heritage of a medieval polity whose lands stretched over the current territories of three modern states, Belarus, Ukraine and Russia. The first aspect provides the content of the present project, and the second one, its scope.

While discussions about medieval literary canons are not new, a new understanding of the differences between canon and archive (A. Assman 2008, L. B. Mortensen 2017) led me to reflect about what constitutes the literary heritage of Kyivan Rus': was it the few literary works listed in any history of Old Russian literature (L. A. Dmitriev and D.S. Likhachev 1978, 1980, 1981, among others), or the collection of manuscripts produced in all the territory of Kyivan Rus' before the polity was extinguished by the arrival of the Mongols to its capital in 1240? An increasing awareness of the relevance of the

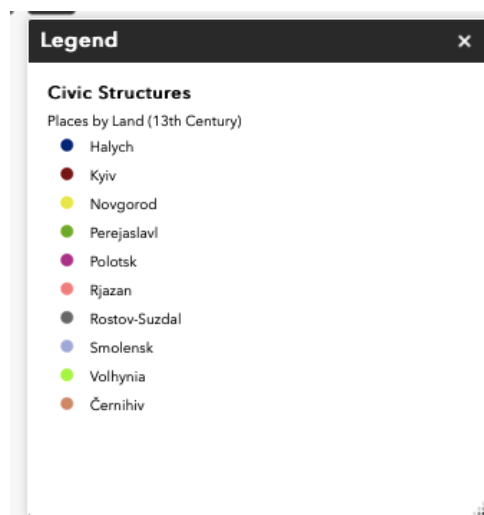
material aspects of codices in the process of textual transmission, in East Slavic in particular (S. Franklin 2002), places manuscript culture in Kyivan Rus' in a wider dialogue alongside evidence recorded in other material supports (birch-bark letters, graffiti, ostraca, coins, everyday utensils). Additionally, it places East Slavic manuscript culture within the context of literary and artistic endeavours whose protagonists were, more often than not, members of the clergy. As such, their full literary and artistic capacities were usually realised in ecclesiastical buildings, either churches or monasteries.

Taking all this into account, the current project emerged with the idea of representing geographically, as accurately as possible, all the artistic endeavours that saw the light in Kyivan Rus' during its Golden Age using the MAPA project to represent the three main sets of evidence of artistic and literary creativity: monasteries, churches and manuscripts.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROJECT

From the very beginning, the idea of mapping cultural achievements faced two main challenges. Firstly, I had to decide how to represent graphically a polity whose external borders as well as internal ones (between lands and ruling houses) changed quickly over the nearly three-hundred-years period under study. This resulted in the need to reassess the term 'principality', as had been traditionally accepted by historians and applied to the case of Kyivan Rus', in favour of the most common one found in the sources of 'land of'. This change of terminology, however, also proved equally challenging to represent with GIS software and, moreover, I realised it was almost irrelevant in my project for two reasons: firstly, because all buildings, including the monastic scriptoria where manuscripts could be pinpointed to, had to be geocoded individually, and not collectively in greater administrative units, either the name of a principality or land. After all, the project is about all the land of Kyivan Rus' and not

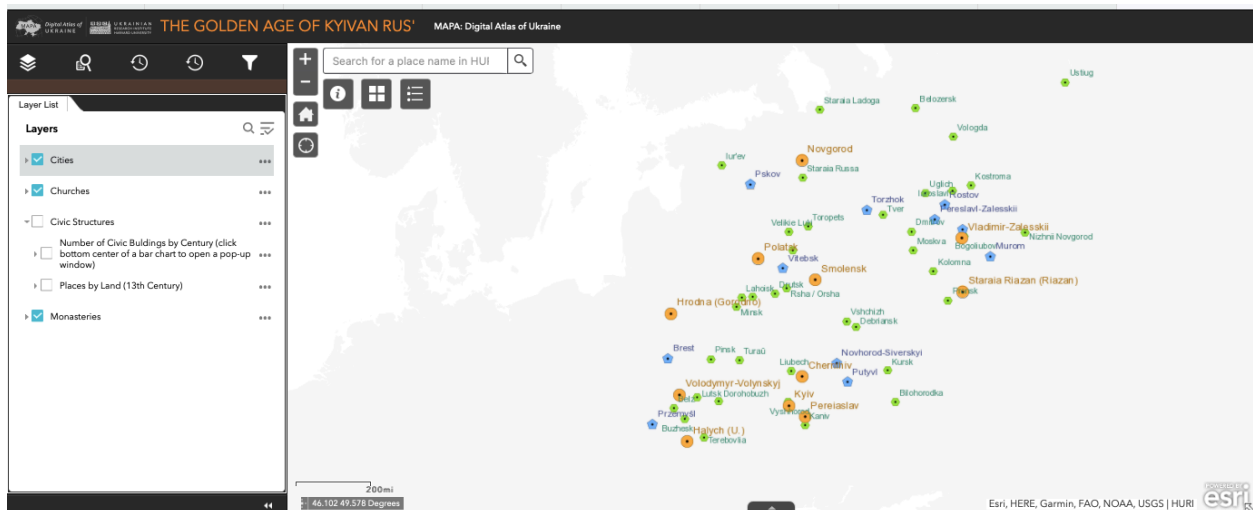
only a part of it. And, secondly, because what most sources mention as inheritance in the 'otchina' received by each prince are lists of cities, larger or smaller, to which other smaller entities (villages, hamlets) are attached subsidiarily in their tax obligations. The continuous internecine wars that characterised to a certain extent the centuries of existence of Kyivan Rus' were wars for the control, conquest or recovery of specific cities, with all its dependent territories, not for entire principalities or lands, whose right of inheritance was usually understood in the horizontal inheritance system in Kyivan Rus' (J. Martin 2007, S. Franklin and J. Shepard 1996, S. Plokhy 2015). Even the instances of criminal law found on birch-bark letters, and later in law corpora, identified criminals giving the city they came from, not their land or province or principality (J. Schaeken 2018). The map identifies, thus, the cities with colours as they belong to one of the possible 'lands of' for most of the time during the three-hundred-years period and/or by the beginning of the 13th century (Civic Structures > Places by Land)



The second challenge was to identify exactly where no longer extant buildings used to be: in GIS without a set of coordinates it is impossible to place anything. If a particular church and monastery is extant, the exact location is known and has been used. If the

building is currently destroyed but the remains have been either preserved or excavated, even if the building is listed as non-extant, the exact location has also been used. If, however, we know of the building because it is mentioned in the sources, but its location is unknown, it has been linked to the closest city or village known, whenever possible.

The map includes 148 toponyms of cities and villages whose foundations have been dated up to the mid-thirteenth century (M.N. Tikhomirov 1956; V. P. Neroznak 1983). There were of course many more places, usually much smaller, that have been documented in that period (A. V. Kuza 1989 and 1996). The aim of the present project, however, is not to draw a complete and exhaustive map of all the dwellings of Kyivan Rus'. Rather, to draw a map of those cities *where artistic activities of any kind have been so far documented* (including all possible churches in smaller places). M. N. Tikhomirov divided the cities into categories: capital cities, most relevant cities, cities with villages (meaning to whom the latter paid taxes), and others. I have followed his classification and it can be found and displayed under Cities > Cities by Relevance:



Once the Kyivan Rus' map was created, it was time to fill in all the variables we wanted to show.

CONTENTS

Since the project is not only geographically contained but also temporarily limited, all contents have been uploaded bearing in mind their recorded foundational date. This is not as straight-forward as it may seem. In the case of cities, for example, the foundational date is the first time their name is mentioned in a chronicle or in other historiographic source. Unfortunately, there are places of whose existence we suspect (sometimes now confirmed by archaeological findings) at a much earlier date than when they are first mentioned in the sources, but this rule has been applied nevertheless in all cases. Similarly, in the case of churches or monasteries, the date provided is according to which they have been classified in the Time Slider widgets, is the the date of consecration or dedication, if we know it, or when they were started to be inhabited; not the date when the building was initially commissioned or the sources say that works started, which is often the date of their first mention in the sources. So the 'first mention' principle applies differently in the case of cities and in the case of buildings.

The information about the buildings and their dating has been collected from P. A. Rappaport 1982 and 1993, V. Traimond 2003 and Brumfield 2004.

In the case of manuscripts, if the manuscript is dated precisely by a colophon or any other means, this date has been used, but less than third of the total number of manuscripts can be so accurately dated. Otherwise, they are dated to the first part or the second part of any given century and, if this is neither possible, to the century as a whole. For the dating of the manuscripts, I have mainly followed S. O. Schmidt 1984.

In the specific case of the establishment of bishoprics, where the material evidence is irrelevant and dates contested, I have followed the dates provided by J.-P. Arrignon (1989).

As in any GIS project, the contents are divided in layers. The layer list on the left of the screen allows the user to select the parameters I thought were relevant in any of the three groups of evidence (monasteries, churches and manuscripts). When clicked, each item displays a pop-up window with the minimum relevant information and a photo of the object (if available) and the websites where further specialised information can be found.

In the case of both monasteries and churches, the year provided is the year of its consecration or opening of the monastery or church for cult or living. This might not coincide with the ruling time of the prince who commissioned the building, and therefore the name of the founder might not coincide with the date provided as foundational, because works can often extend beyond the lifetime of the person who commissioned the work, who might have died before seeing it completed. Nevertheless, I wanted to stress the point of who wanted to build a sacred space with a specific dedication, and therefore the commissioner's name has been recorded. At the same time, a church or a monastery being constructed has no social function or artistic development within it until it is finished and opened to the public, and thus the disparity between both.

Monasteries

So far, the parameters for the display and classification of monasteries are whether they were or not a princely foundation and whether they were inhabited by monks or nuns. The monastic scriptoria are also linked to the manuscripts database, as places where the latter were copied in or from where they travelled to serve as master copy elsewhere. This information is not offered about all manuscripts since it is usually only obtainable by scribal colophons, and only about a third of the total number of manuscripts have colophons, often without all necessary information.

Churches

Within the group of churches, searches can be made first on whether they were princely foundations or not. Then, additional searches are possible according to the name of the prince who commissioned them (if they were princely foundations).

Another option is to search for churches according to their dedication, since this information indicates which saints and cults were more popular and spread in a certain territory as well as at a certain time. This information is also relevant in understanding which texts were more popular (copied more often) across the monastic network.

When the church is a building belonging to a monastery with no different dedication, it is not listed. However, if the church in the monastery has a different, special dedication that is different from the name of the monastery, it is listed separately.

Many more churches were built than the ones recorded here. In many cases, there are only archaeological remains to attest their previous existence but the sources are silent about them. In this case, since the name of the commissioner or the dedication is unknown and often their foundation date is only approximate by archaeological dating; in absence of a clear reference in the sources, the church is not listed. P. A. Rappoport lists all possible remains, including churches and non ecclesiastical buildings, in his surveys listed herein in the bibliography.

Manuscripts

The manuscript database includes a basic codicological description and a minimum description of the contents. Each manuscript is linked to one or several websites where further information is available. Whenever possible, data from manuscript catalogues has been grouped also under headings denoting literary genres, such as hagiography, as well as individual names, such as the scribe, if it can be obtained, or the place of composition, if at all available in a colophon or if it could be inferred by linguistic analysis. Manuscripts are linked to one or several places. If no place is sufficiently

endorsed by all possible evidence, it is linked to the capital of the land where its provenance is most likely justified.

Explanation of the layers in MAPA

1. Extant: all places are geocoded using geographic coordinates. Those places whose names appear in the sources but for which coordinates, exact or approximate, cannot be determined are not in MAPA. Extant places are those still inhabited today, even if physically transferred to a nearby location. Nonextant refers to places no longer inhabited, but whose ruins or remains have been found and are geolocalized.
2. HURI place names: the names have been transliterated according to the rules applied by the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute. These names appear in the first interface, MAPA. All other names are provided in a pop-up menu accessed by clicking on the name of the city/village.
3. PVL name/transliteration: H. Lunt prepared a translation of the *Povest' Vremennykh Let*, which has been subsequently edited by Michael Flier and will be published soon. The list of place names for the PVL, prepared by Michelle Viise, is used in this edition. However, the MAPA place names include several that do not appear in the PVL. Those that do not appear in the PVL have been transliterated according to HURI conventions.
4. ModernNameEng: the English-language version of the place name established by the national government of the country where the city or town is located. Wherever there are multiple English-language variants, HURI conventions for the name are followed.
5. ModernNameUkr: The current name in Ukrainian of the place.
6. ModernNameRus: The current name in Russian of the place.
7. Coordinates (LatNorth and LongEast): the coordinates that allow us to place a city/village/monastery/church with precision in MAPA. When the coordinates are not precise or exact due to confusing data (usually because the place is no longer extant), the coordinates field appears as 'no', meaning, 'not-exact, approximate coordinates', obtained by secondary evidence in written sources.
8. Foundation: The foundation year is taken from the first mention of the place in the sources, usually chronicles. Regardless of when we might have indirect or archaeological evidence of earlier habitation, the first mention the sources is used.
9. ChronicleFirstMention: the chronicle or other reliable literary source where the city/village is mentioned for the first time under the year given for its founding.

10. Land of: a geographic, rather than a geopolitical, marker. Political changes caused by dynastic conflicts did not alter the branch of the ruling dynasty upon which cities and villages were considered to be administratively dependent (included in the "land of").
11. Total number of monasteries/churches/civil buildings: according to archaeological evidence and mentions in the sources, the number of monasteries, churches and civil buildings (fortifications, palaces, gates) have been counted for each city. They are displayed in chronological layers to show the development of cities.
12. Bishoprics/FoundationYearBishopric: All the cities that were at some point bishoprics, even in a dual status with another city, are indicated. The foundation year is given according to the dates offered by Arrignon, J.-P. (1989).

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