

SLAVONIC AND EAST EUROPEAN MEDIEVAL STUDIES GROUP

MEETING - SATURDAY 18 MARCH 2000

MEETING ROOM 4,
THE BRITISH LIBRARY CONFERENCE CENTRE, LONDON

PROGRAMME

11.00 a.m. Pëtr Stepanovich
Institute of Russian History, Russian Academy of Sciences
'Prikhod i prikhodstvo dukhovenstva v Rossii shestnadsatnogo i semnadsatnogo vekov'

12.00 p.m. Jaakko Lehtovirta
Institute of History, University of Turku
'The Appearance of the halo in Muscovite ruler images'

1.00 p.m. LUNCH

2.30 p.m. Chris Thomas / Ralph Cleminson
The British Library / University of Portsmouth
'Cyrillic Early Printed Books in the British Library' (with exhibition)

*- Fjodor Ivanov
+ Patriarchate
+ 3rd Rome
& Imperial titles of halo
Boris Godunov
behind it?*

NB: The British Library is now at 96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB! There will be signs at both the main gate to the British Library and inside the Conference Centre directing you to the room.

Coffee before the meeting – and tea afterwards – are available from the public restaurant at the Library.

LUNCH

A buffet lunch will be available for about £6.00 per person, payable on the day. If you wish to have lunch, please send this slip to Dr Jonathan Shepard by Wednesday 8 March at the latest or contact him at the following e-mail address: nshepard@easynet.co.uk

➔ Please note that we can only cater for those who actually reply



To: Dr Jonathan Shepard, 43 Nelson Street, Oxford OX2 6BE.

e. mailed

I would like to have lunch on Saturday 18 March.

I shall be bringing _____ guest(s) and would also like to book lunch for them

25.2.2000

NAME: _____

TALK ABSTRACTS FROM THE MEETING OF 6 NOVEMBER 1999

The following talks were given:

Dr Simon Franklin
Clare College, Cambridge

'On the Categorization of Written Sources from Early Rus'

Professor Lindsey Hughes
School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London

'"Landmarks in the Russian Visual Arts" (Work in Progress): The Kremlin Cathedral of the Dormition'

This illustrated paper was an extract from my new project, a study of about twenty extant Russian buildings, paintings and statues dating from the 12th to the 20th century which have a peculiar significance for the history of Russian culture. The focus will be on resonances and responses to these 'landmarks', from their creation to the present. My Early Russian list includes the Vladimir Mother of God icon, Rublev's Trinity, St Basil's cathedral and, the subject of this paper, the Kremlin cathedral of the Dormition of the Mother of God (*Uspenskii sobor*). Churches dedicated to the Dormition were credited with miraculous properties: they protected cities from attacks by non-Christians. Additionally, the Kremlin cathedral became associated with the 'founding' of the Muscovite state under Ivan Kalita and Metropolitan Peter (first church consecrated 1327). The present cathedral, dating from 1475-9, was designed by Aristotele Fioraventi with reference to the 13th century Dormition cathedral in Vladimir. Its location, iconography and functions embodied the idea of the symphony of Church and State and divine protection of both. It assumed a special status within the Orthodox world, becoming the repository of relics of universal rather than just local significance. Its icons, for example, the most miraculous of which was the Vladimir Mother of God, alluded to the princes of Moscow as heirs to authority handed down via Vladimir, Kiev, Byzantium and, ultimately, Jerusalem. The cathedral had its own *ustav*, staging a number of unique ceremonies and acting as a source of sanctification for surrounding churches and other locations through the medium of the *krestnyi khod*.

The cathedral's special status seemed threatened when in the 1710s Peter I transferred the capital from Moscow to St Petersburg and the abolition of the patriarchate ended the Church-State 'symphony'. Yet the Dormition cathedral continued to play a special role, notably for coronations. Catherine II, embracing Russian Orthodox antiquity, in 1770-3 restored the three main Kremlin cathedrals. Significantly, she decreed that the frescoes 'be restored with the same art as the ancient [paintings], without any change', reaffirming the ancient roots of Muscovite piety. In 1812 the cathedral again found itself in the traditional role of defending the city. Following its desecration by Napoleon's army, it arose 'like the phoenix' from the ashes and was soon to enjoy a new appreciation under Nicholas I's doctrine of 'Official Nationality', which regarded traditional Orthodox architecture as a reflection of Russian national culture, unique and un-Western. In the next few decades, as railways and thriving markets brought ever more visitors to Moscow, grand princes, peasants and tourists alike were encouraged to have 'contact with the heart of Russia and its vital forces'. The guide books of the late Tsarist era illustrate how the authorities sought to channel a visit to the cathedral towards the cultivation of Orthodox sentiments and good patriotic reverence for tsar and motherland. For example, a 1896 album,

TALK ABSTRACTS FROM THE MEETING OF 6 NOVEMBER 1999

published in association with Nicholas II's coronation, states: 'Among all Russian churches the first place is occupied by the cathedral church of the Dormition ... Since its founding, contemporary with the beginning of the gathering of the Russian land, by the prophetic behest of its founder, Saint Peter, mysteriously linked with the history of the Russian priesthood, with the glorious fate of the ruling house, with the life of Moscow and all the Russian land, the Moscow cathedral of the Dormition in the course of six centuries has been the focal point of church and state life ...'. According to a 1904 booklet for factory workers: 'The Moscow Kremlin is the altar of Russia' and the cathedral 'a symbol of unwavering Orthodox belief and the invincibility of the Russian state, sacredly preserving its behests.'

The paper ended by considering how the 1917 Revolution 'opened a fresh page in the cathedral's history' by turning it into a museum. Its history under the emperors was expunged, 'non-essential' cult objects removed. I still have to investigate the role of the Dormition cathedral since the fall of Communism. Liturgies have been celebrated there, but it remains part of the Kremlin museum complex. Further research will be carried out during a study visit to Moscow in April 2000.

(With thanks to SSEES and the British Academy for their kind provision respectively of study leave and a Research Grant in 1999-2000. This paper was dedicated to the memory of Dmitrii Sergeevich Likhachev, who died while I was in St Petersburg in September 1999. I was able to attend a *panikhida* in the Tauride Palaces and to enter a message on behalf of SEEMSG in a book of condolences.)

Professor Francis J. Thomson
University of Antwerp (RUCA)

'Early Russian Intellectual Silence Revisited. The Present State of the Question'.

The question raised by George Florovsky in 1937 (*What is the meaning of Russia's ancient, enduring and centuries long intellectual silence?*) has attracted the attention of several scholars, who have suggested varying reasons: the devastation wrought by the Mongol invasions; the influence of anti-intellectual hesychasm; paralysis when confronted by the perfection of Byzantine civilization; no interest in progress as the fulness of truth was already possessed; neuroscientific activation only of the right hemisphere of the brain. None of such suggestions answers all the questions posed. The real reason is to be sought in the combination of two factors: a) no philosophical works were ever translated, and few dogmatic ones as patristic theology is virtually incomprehensible without a knowledge of neoplatonism; b) an absence of a knowledge of literary Greek as opposed to demotic. There was thus in Early Russia an absence of any stimulus to intellectual activity. It was only after Peter the Great's reforms that acquaintance with Western European culture provided the stimulus which led to the flowering of Russian intellectual activity in all fields. This does not, of course, mean that early Russia had only a low level of culture, merely that one aspect was underdeveloped.

OTHER NEWS

DMITRII SERGEEVICH LIKHACHEV

It is with great sorrow that we announce the death of Dmitrii Likhachev at the age of 92 on 30 September 1999. Besides countless other distinctions and achievements, Dmitrii Sergeevich was an honorary member of SEEMSG. Our Chairman, Lindsey Hughes was able to pay her personal respects and represent the Group at a *panikhida* in the Tauride Palaces in St Petersburg last September and to enter a message in the book of condolences on behalf of SEEMSG.

STEFAN KOZHUKHAROV

We regret to announce the death of Stefan Kozhukharov on 25 January 2000 at the age of 65. Stefan had been head of the Institute of Literature at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences since 1992 and was a distinguished medievalist in the fields of hymnography, paleography and codicology.

TALK BY MOSHE TAUBE

Moshe Taube of the University of Jerusalem gives a paper entitled 'Was there a Jewish conspiracy to proselytize the Principality of Muscovy as a solution to the Y7K problem?' at the Warburg Institute, London on Wednesday 16 February 2000.

NEWSLETTER OF THE EARLY SLAVIC STUDIES ASSOCIATION

A copy of the 6-page October 1999 Newsletter (Vol. 12 No. 2) has been received, giving notices of recent meetings and various memoirs of Dmitrii Likhachev. The newsletter is available on-line at:

<http://clover.slavic.pitt.edu/~essa/index.html>

Copies can also be made available at the forthcoming March meeting, if required.

E-MAIL ADDRESSES

Thank you to all members who have notified us of their e-mail address: a list of known addresses is attached to this newsletter.

The issue of sending out future programmes and newsletters by e-mail was discussed at the AGM in November. It was agreed that we should seek members' views on this issue, and I would therefore be grateful if you could complete and return the form below. Alternatively, you could let me have your views electronically.



To: Dr Jonathan Shepard, 43 Nelson Street, Oxford OX2 6BE (e-mail: nshepard@easynet.co.uk).

Please send me all future programmes and newsletters by e-mail only.

Please send me all future programmes and newsletters by e-mail and by post.

Please send me all future programmes and newsletters by post only.

NAME:

E-MAIL:

SLAVONIC AND EAST EUROPEAN MEDIEVAL STUDIES GROUP

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
SATURDAY 6 NOVEMBER 1999**

CLARE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

1. Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported that she had paid her respects on behalf of SEEMSG to Dmitrii Sergeevich Likhachev, who died while she was in St. Petersburg, at the age of 92.

2. Secretary's Report

Membership

The Secretary reported that of the current 83 SEEMSG members, only 30 had paid their subscription in full to the end of 1999. A further two members had pre-paid for the year 2000, and one member had done likewise for 2001. Of the 30 fully paid-up members for 1999, 27 had paid by bank standing order.

It was proposed that the Secretary should write to all UK-based members (excluding those who already paid by standing order) to ask if they intended their membership to lapse.

It was agreed that life membership should be offered to overseas members, with a one-off payment to be made on joining replacing an annual subscription, given the disproportionately high costs of transferring small amounts of money from abroad. The figure for life membership was left undetermined.

It was noted that the mailing list needs to be updated.

E-mail Addresses

It was agreed the Secretary should:

- set up a list of members' e-mail addresses and ask those members who had not yet given (or updated) their e-mail address to him to do so;
- ask all members to confirm whether they wish to receive all future notices:
 - in electronic form only;
 - in electronic form and on paper; or
 - on paper only.

The Secretary observed that he was now accessible on e-mail. It was noted that a copy of each Agenda and Report would anyway need to be kept on paper for the records and the Secretary confirmed that this would continue to be done.

Finance

The Group was £935.01 in credit as at 21 July 1999, although there was some £100 to be repaid to the Secretary for photocopying and postage for the newsletters send out during 1999. Signing powers on the Group's bank account had been successfully transferred into the name of the current Secretary, although there were some problems in operating the account, as it is with a Scottish bank with few branches in England. It is suggested that the account should be transferred to a UK bank having more branches should these difficulties continue.

3. Structure/Venue of Meetings

After discussion on the venue of meetings it was agreed that more meetings should be held in London if an alternative venue could be found to the School of Slavonic and East European Studies. The British Library was considered a 'highly desirable venue', given its collection of Slavonic books, and it was agreed that this option should be actively explored.

The idea of 'thematic' meetings was also discussed and agreed in principle, although the question of implementing such an idea remains problematic.

4. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of SEEMSG was proposed for Saturday 18 March 2000 in London. Ralph Cleminson agreed to approach Christine Thomas of the British Library as a possible venue and to see if she might agree to speak at that meeting. If London were not possible, an alternative venue might be Lady Margaret Hall in Oxford; the Secretary was to approach Mary MacRobert in this regard. Oxford would, in any case, be a suitable venue for the subsequent meeting.

5. Election of Officers

Ralph Cleminson was proposed by Lindsey Hughes (the outgoing Chairman) and seconded by Simon Franklin to serve as Chairman for 2000-2001. He was duly elected.

Jonathan Shepard agreed to continue as Secretary and Treasurer until the SEEMSG AGM in the autumn of 2000, when he would stand down.

Warmest thanks were offered to the outgoing Chairman, Lindsey Hughes, for her skill, commitment and judgement in steering the Group through a variety of challenges and actively organizing a number of the meetings.