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When and Where was Ol'ga Baptized?¹

OMELJAN PRITSAK

I

The question of when and where the Rus' queen Ol'ga was baptized has puzzled scholars up to the present day. As recently as 1979 to 1984, four scholars—one French, one British, one Russian, and one American—have attempted to provide a definitive answer. They have not succeeded: indeed, they have arrived at mutually exclusive conclusions.² The root of all this difficulty is that the relevant sources contain ambiguous and contradictory statements.

¹ This paper was presented at the III World Congress for Slavic and East European Studies (Washington, D.C.), at session 12: "The Christianization of Rus'," which was sponsored by the Shevchenko Scientific Society and was held on 3 November 1985.

² Jean-Pierre Arrignon, "Les relations internationales de la Russie Kiévienne au milieu du X^e siècle et le baptême de la princesse Olga," *Occident et Orient au X^e siècle. Actes du IX^e Congrès de la Société des Historiens Médiévistes des l'Enseignement Supérieur Public, Dijon, 2-4 juin 1978*, Publications de l'Université de Dijon, 57 (Paris, 1979), pp. 167-84; the Russian version is: Ž.-P. Arin'on, "Meždunarodnye otnošenija Kievskoj Rusi X v. i kreščenje knjagini Ol'gi," *Vizantijskij vremennik* (Moscow), 41 (1980):113-24; cf. also idem, "Les relations diplomatiques entre Byzance et la Russie de 860 à 1043," *Revue des études slaves* (Paris), 55, no. 1 (1983):129-37.

According to the author, Ol'ga visited Constantinople in 957 on commercial matters and at that time was granted two receptions by the emperor. Arrignon maintains, however, that she was baptized in Kiev at the end of 959.

Dimitri Obolensky, "Russia and Byzantium in the Mid-Tenth Century: The Problem of the Baptism of Princess Olga," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 28, no. 2 (1983):157-71. According to Obolensky, both of Ol'ga's receptions in Constantinople took place in 957, while she was still a pagan. Her political and commercial mission there was a failure, and therefore "the question of the time and place of Ol'ga's baptism remains an open one" (p. 171).

Gennadij Georgievič Litavrin, "Putešestvie russkoj knjagini Ol'gi v Konstantinopol. Problema istočnikov," *Vizantijskij vremennik* 42 (1981):35-48; idem, "O datirovke posol'stva knjagini Ol'gi v Konstantinopol'," *Istorija SSSR*, 1981, no. 5, pp. 173-83. Litavrin, who dates Olga's two audiences to 946 (see fn. 24), was unable to make up his mind about the year and the place of Ol'ga's baptism.

See also the chapter "Diplomatija knjagini Ol'gi," in A. N. Saxarov, *Diplomatija Drevnej Rusi IX-pervaja polovina X v.* (Moscow, 1980), pp. 259-98.

In this country, Professor Ellen Hurwitz of Lafayette College is working on Ol'ga's biography. In her presentation at the Seminar in Ukrainian Studies at Harvard University on 10 May 1984, she tentatively set Constantinople and the year 959 as the place and date, respectively, of Ol'ga's baptism.

Three groups of sources have come down to us. The first group comprises two Byzantine sources, one contemporary with the event and the other later in date but generally considered reliable. The second group consists of the contemporary Lothringian (Lorraine) Chronicle, and the third, of two later Rus' sources.

The most detailed account is that found in the second book of *De cerimoniis aulae Byzantinae*. That second book was written under the auspices of the learned Byzantine emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (944–959). It describes ceremonies held during the two visits of the Rus' queen Ol'ga/Helga/Helen to Constantinople. The first reception, which took place on Wednesday, September 9, is described in full detail. The second, occurring on Sunday, October 18, is dealt with briefly.³

Although the relevant texts of the *De cerimoniis* specified the exact day of the month and even the day of the week, they failed to provide the information most important to us, namely, in what year, or years, Ol'ga's two visits took place.

During the reign of Constantine VII—i.e., between 16 December 944 and 9 November 959—September 9 fell on a Wednesday and October 18 fell on a Sunday only twice: in 946, and again in 957.⁴

Ioannes Skylitzes, a high military officer, wrote his history of the Byzantine emperors (encompassing the years 811 to 1057) most probably in the last quarter of the eleventh century. He is credited by modern scholars as careful and trustworthy in his reference to earlier sources. Skylitzes writes:⁵

§6. Καὶ ἡ τοῦ ποτε κατὰ
Ῥωμαίων ἐκπλεύσαντος
ἄρχοντος τῶν Ῥῶς
γαμετή, Ἥλγα τοῦνομα,
τοῦ ἀνδρὸς αὐτῆς
ἀποθανόντος παρεγένετο
ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει. Καὶ
βαπτισθεῖσα καὶ προαίρεσιν
εἰλικρινοῦς ἐπιδεικνυμένη
πίστεως, ἀξίως τιμηθεῖσα

§6. The wife of the archont of the
Rus' [Igor'] who at some previous
past had sailed against the
Romans (Byzantines), Helga
by name, after her husband
passed away, arrived in
Constantinople. Having been
baptized and having shown
resolve for the true
faith, she was honored

³ Ed. Johannes Jacob Reiske, vol. 1 (Bonn, 1829), pp. 594–98.

⁴ Cf. Litavrin in *Istorija SSSR*, 1981, no. 5, p. 174.

⁵ *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis historiarum*, Editio princeps, ed. Johannes Thurn (Berlin, 1973), p. 240.

τῆς προαιρέσεως ἐπ’
οἴκου ἀνέδραμε.

in a manner worthy of that
resolve and returned home.

Skylitzes often gathered data from various sources and retold it in abridged form. Hence, this excerpt from his account, which consists of two separate sentences, could have combined data from two different records, each of which referred to one specific visit of Ol’ga/Helga to Constantinople.

In presenting his history of individual emperors—in this case, of Constantine VII—Skylitzes organized his material topically, devoting two or more paragraphs to each subject. Each topic he treated, insofar as possible, chronologically. Helga’s visit (§6) is mentioned just after the visits of two Hungarian leaders: Βουλοσουδηῆς/Βουλζούς (Bulcsú; ca. 948) and Γυλάς (Gyula; ca. 952) (§5). The remainder of the two paragraphs following the account deal with barbarian visitors who eventually embraced Christianity.

One can speculate that the first sentence in Skylitzes (§6) refers to a visit by the pagan Ol’ga/Helga shortly after the death of her husband Igor’ (ca. 945), when his naval expedition of 941 would still have been well remembered in Constantinople (that memory would hardly have been vivid sixteen years later, in 957). The second sentence, on the other hand, could have been taken from an account of Ol’ga’s baptism.

The Lothringian Chronicle was composed by the continuator of Abbot Regino of Prüm, who is generally identified as Adalbert of Trier. Adalbert himself took part in the Rus’ mission of 961–962, before becoming archbishop of Magdeburg. A cycle of information about that Rus’ mission exists, for the years 959, 960, 961, and 962.⁶

The data from the entry under the year 959 are crucial for us here. The relevant text reads:

959. . . Legati Helenae reginae
Rugorum, quae sub Romano
imperatore Constantinopolitano
Constantinopoli baptisata est,

959. . . The envoys of Helen, the
Queen of the Rugi⁷ who was
baptized in Constantinople under
Romanos, Emperor of Constantinople,

⁶ “Adalberts Fortsetzung der Chronik Reginos,” ed. Albert Bauer and Reinhold Rau, in *Quellen zur Geschichte der sächsischen Kaiserzeit* (Darmstadt, 1971), pp. 214–19.

⁷ I discuss the (Ripuar Frankish) form of the Rus’ name *Rug-* in the article “The Origin of the Name Rūs/Rus’,” forthcoming in the *Festschrift Bennigsen* (Paris).

ficte, ut post claruit, ad	having come to the king [Otto I],
regem venientes episcopum et	requested, spuriously, as it turned
presbiteros eidem genti	out later, to ordain a bishop and
ordinari petebant. ⁸	priests for their people (<i>gens</i>).

By the end of the same year, Otto I had responded positively to Ol'ga's request, by ordering that Libutius be consecrated the first missionary-bishop of the Rus'. This occurred in 960 (entry for that year). Libutius, however, was for unknown reasons detained, and then died suddenly, on 15 February 961. Adalbert of the Benedictine St. Maximin Monastery at Trier was selected to become the second missionary-bishop for the Rus' (entry for 961). Adalbert did go to Rus', but after a short stay there was obliged to return home empty-handed (entry for 962).

The last entry in the chronicle of Regino's continuator Adalbert is for the year 967. In 966, after his Rus' adventure, Adalbert became abbot of the Weissenburg Monastery in neighboring Alsace-Lorraine. Then, having been entrusted with the archdiocese of Magdeburg (Otto I intended for Magdeburg to become the base for German missionary activity to the pagan Slavs),⁹ Adalbert left Alsace-Lorraine for the imperial east. His chronicle entry for 959 was written not in that year, but later, after the failure of the Rus' mission: this is clear from the text's *ficte, ut post claruit* 'spuriously, as it turned out later'. The story about the Rus' mission must have been edited no earlier than the second half of 962 (the year of Adalbert's return from Rus'). It is remarkable that in Adalbert's presentation Romanus II, who died on 15 March 963,¹⁰ is referred to as the current Byzantine ruler.¹¹

⁸ Adalbert, "Continuatio Reginonis," in Albert Bauer and Reinhold Rau, *Quellen zur Geschichte der sächsischen Kaiserzeit*, p. 214.

⁹ On Otto I and his missionary activity, see Ernst Dümmler, *Kaiser Otto der Grosse* (Leipzig, 1876; 2nd ed. 1962); R. Holtzmann, *Otto der Grosse* (Berlin, 1936); P. Kehr, *Das Erzbistum Magdeburg und die erste Organisation der christlichen Kirche in Polen* (Berlin, 1920); A. Brackmann, *Magdeburg als Hauptstadt des deutschen Ostens im frühen Mittelalter* (Leipzig, 1937); John J. Gallagher, *Church and State in Germany under Otto the Great, 936–973* (Washington, D.C., 1938); W. Schlesinger, *Kirchengeschichte Sachsens im Mittelalter* (Cologne and Graz, 1962); L. Santifaller, *Zur Geschichte des Otonisch-Salischen Kirchensystems* (Vienna, 1964).

¹⁰ About the chronological data mentioned here and in the next two paragraphs, see V. Grumel, *Traité d'études byzantines*, vol. 1: *La chronologie* (Paris, 1958), p. 358.

¹¹ Not surprisingly, several late Old Rus' texts—the first known to me being the "Russkij xronograf" edited in the year 1512, and another, the "Xronograf of the year 1617" ("the second Russian redaction")—name Ol'ga's host, the Byzantine emperor, as "Romanus": "Pri sem" cari Roman" v" lěto 6463 krestisja Ol'ga."

Since Adalbert himself visited Rus' in 961–962 and surely met with Ol'ga/Helga there, two pieces of his information must be accepted as fact: first, that the Rus' queen was baptized in Constantinople, and second, that Ol'ga's baptismal name was Helen, which was also the name of the then ruling empress, the wife of Constantine VII. But Adalbert's naming of the Byzantine ruler who witnessed Ol'ga's conversion demands explanation. Had Ol'ga been baptized during the sole rule of Romanus II, her baptismal name would have been not Helen, but Theophano, the name of Romanus II's wife. Simple chronology also refutes any such possibility. Romanus II succeeded his father, who died on 9 November 959, and became emperor on 10 November 959. It would have been impossible for Ol'ga/Helga to arrive in Constantinople, be baptized there, return home, and send her envoys to Otto so that they arrived there still in 959.

An explanation for Adalbert's phrasing can be proposed, however. Romanus II was crowned already on 6 April 945, and held the title of *basileus* from that time, during the remaining years of his father's reign. Therefore it is feasible that Constantine VII, occupied with his literary work, delegated Romanus II, his son and co-emperor, to represent him at the ceremony of Ol'ga's baptism by the patriarch. Adalbert's information would then be not only correct, but also based on an insider's knowledge, as a prelate who was a close collaborator of Otto I, the friend of Constantine VII (see pp. 20–21, below).

The Rus' primary chronicle, the *Pověst vremennyx lět'* (= *PVL*), has as the date of Ol'ga's visit to Constantinople the year A.M. 6463 = A.D. 954–955.¹² But this information was not original: it was simply borrowed from *Pamjat' i poxvala knjazju ruskomu Volodimeru*, by Jakov Mnix (the Monk) of Al'ta.

See Andrej Popov, *Obzor xronografov russkoj redakcii*, vol. 1 (Moscow, 1866), p. 176, and vol. 2 (Moscow, 1869), pp. 259, 271.

As a curiosity one can add that the name "Romanus" was also in the "Spaso-Jaroslavskij xronograf" (lost in 1812), part of a miscellany which also included the famous *Igor' Tale*. See G. N. Moiseeva, *Spaso-Jaroslavskij xronograf i Slovo o polku Igoreve*, 2nd ed. (Leningrad, 1984), pp. 40–41.

The name "Romanus" also appears in the *Mazurinskij letopisec* (see fn. 31 below).

¹² *PVL*, ed. Lixačev, vol. 1 (Moscow and Leningrad, 1950), pp. 44–46.

Jakov ca. 1070 completed a chronology of the saintly rulers of Rus'.¹³ He established the first exact date in the history of the Rus' dynasty: 11 July A.M. 6477 = A.D. 969, the date of Ol'ga's death. Jakov also corroborates the information by Adalbert—a source certainly unknown to him—that the Rus' queen was baptized in Constantinople and that her baptismal name was Olena (Helen). He also made a chronological statement concerning the date of the baptism, although there he used the "round number" 15: he stated that Ol'ga lived as a Christian for "15 years." The editors of the *PVL* took this piece of information literally: counting backwards (subtracting 15 from 6477) they arrived at the year A.M. 6463 = A.D. 955 as the date of Ol'ga's conversion in Constantinople (6477, 6476, 6475, 6474, 6473, 6472, 6471, 6470, 6469, 6468, 6467, 6466, 6465, 6464, 6463). In short, the year A.M. 6463 = A.D. 955 as the date of Ol'ga's journey to Constantinople and conversion there was computed artificially and hence has no validity.

We should keep in mind that apart from the two dates taken from Jakov—one exact (A.M. 6477 = A.D. 969) and one deduced (A.M. 6463 = A.D. 955)—the editors of the *PVL* knew very little about Ol'ga's rule. The usual, artificial triad of years after Igor's treaty (and his presumed death)—that is, the years A.D. 945 through 947 (A.M. 6453–6455)—is marked by Ol'ga's epic revenges and legal reforms, but the remaining sixteen years of her rule, from A.D. 948 to 964 (A.M. 6456–6472) are "empty years" (V lěto 6456, V lěto 6457, V lěto 6458, V lěto 6459, V lěto 6460, etc.), with the single exception of the entry under discussion, for A.D. 955 (A.M. 6463).¹⁴

Just as there were two Olegs in the Rus' chronicle tradition (esp. the *PVL*)—Oleg, the historical king of Rus', and Oleg the Seer, the epic hero¹⁵—so there were also two Ol'gas: Ol'ga/Helen (Olena), the historical queen of Rus', and Ol'ga/Vol'ga the Wise, the cunning and vindictive epic heroine. Hence, we must distinguish the deeds of the two personages, that is, we must separate the historically valid oral traditions from the epic stories and legends.

¹³ The text is given by Evgenij Golubinskij in his *Istorija russkoj cerkvi*, vol. 1:1, 2nd ed. (Moscow, 1901), pp. 238–45; the passages dealing with Ol'ga are on pp. 241–42. Cf. A. A. Zimin, "Pamjat' i poxvala Iakova Mnixa i žitie knjazja Vladimira po drevnejšemu spisku," *Kratkie soobščeniia Instituta slavjanovedenija*, vol. 37 (Moscow, 1963), pp. 66–75, especially p. 70.

¹⁴ *PVL*, ed. Lixačev (see fn. 12), pp. 40–49.

¹⁵ O. Pritsak, *The Origin of Rus'*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, Mass., 1981), pp. 142–53.

The Actions of Ol'ga the Queen

1. After Igor's violent death, his queen reorganizes the state's administrative affairs and system of taxation (s.a. A.M. 6454 and the end of 6455);
2. Ol'ga travels to Constantinople, to be baptized by the patriarch (s.a. A.M. 6463);
3. Ol'ga receives the baptismal name of Helen (< Olena; s.a. A.M. 6463).
4. In conversation with the patriarch, Ol'ga expresses fear of the reaction to her conversion of her pagan son and people ("ljud'e moi pagani i syn" moj, daby mja bog" s"bljul" ot vsjakogo zla"; s.a. A.M. 6463).¹⁶

The Deeds of Helga the Wise

1. Stories about Ol'ga's three (or four, depending on what version of the chronicle is read) revenges for her husband Igor's death, embellished with a set of anecdotes based on the Varangian war stratagems (s.a. A.M. 6453–6454);
2. Story about an unnamed Byzantine emperor as both Ol'ga's baptizer and suitor, and the ways Ol'ga the Wise outwitted him (s.a. A.M. 6463);
3. Story about an unnamed Byzantine emperor sending envoys with gifts to Ol'ga and her humiliation of them in revenge for her alleged mistreatment in Constantinople (s.a. A.M. 6463).

We should add a third set of factors: that of hagiographic elements elaborated in the chronicle's entry for A.M. 6465:

1. Ol'ga's baptismal name, Helen, was adopted after that of the wife of Constantine I, the first Christian Roman emperor (s.a. A.M. 6463).
2. Ol'ga came to Constantinople seeking divine wisdom, and in doing so she surpassed the Old Testament's Queen of Ethiopia (Sheba), who set out to test the wisdom of King Solomon (s.a. A.M. 6463).
3. Ol'ga was a precursor of Volodimer's baptism of Rus' (s.a. A.M. 6495).¹⁷

¹⁶ *PVL*, ed. Lixačev (see fn. 12), p. 44.

¹⁷ "Ašče by lix" zakon" greč'skij, to ne by baba tvoja prijala, Ol'ga, jaže bē mudrějši vsěx čelověk", *PVL*, ed. Lixačev (see fn. 12), p. 75.

In evaluating the data of the Rus' tradition scholars did not pay sufficient attention to one very important piece of information contained in the *PVL*: namely, that Ol'ga's baptismal voyage to Constantinople was directed not to the person of the emperor, but to that of the patriarch. Scholars have wondered why Constantine VII described the ceremonial aspects of the two visits of Ol'ga/Helga without mentioning her conversion or her Christian name Helen. The answer is very simple: Ol'ga arranged her personal religious act not with the emperor, but with the patriarch of Constantinople.

II

As mentioned above, Constantine VII describes Ol'ga's two visits to Constantinople, one of which took place on Wednesday, the 9th of September, and the other on Sunday, the 18th of October. There are several discrepancies in his descriptions of Ol'ga's two receptions. First, there is a difference in the numbers of Ol'ga's entourage on the two occasions:¹⁸

<i>Entourage</i>	<i>September 9th</i>	<i>October 18th</i>
Envoys (ἀποκρισιάριοι)	20	22
Merchants (πραγματευταί)	43	44
Ladies-in-waiting (ἱδιοι)	6	16

Although on both occasions Ol'ga was accompanied by her husband's nephew (apparently named Igor', styled in the treaty of A.D. 944 as: [Igor'] net' Igorev'),¹⁹ only for the first visit is there a mention of envoys of Svjatoslav, her minor son and the official ruler of Rus' (οἱ ἄνθρωποι τοῦ Σφενδοσθλάβου).

Apparently Ol'ga did not have official business with the emperor on her second visit, on October 18, since her official translator (ὁ ἐρμηνεὺς τῆς ἀρχοντίσσης), named on the occasion of the visit on September 9, when the Rus' archontissa is said to have conferred with the Byzantine ruler, was absent on October 18.

Chapter 15 of the second book of *De cerimoniis*, the conclusion of which contains information about the ceremonies conducted during the two receptions for "Ol'ga the Rhōsenē" (δοχή τῆς Ῥελασ

¹⁸ *De cerimoniis*, ed. J. J. Reiske, vol. 1 (see fn. 3); reception on September 9 (pp. 594–98) and on October 18 (p. 598).

¹⁹ See *PVL*, ed. Lixačev (see fn. 12), p. 34.

τῆς Ῥωσένης),²⁰ was either written down or edited by Constantine VII himself.²¹ The chapter, which consists of an introduction and five subchapters, each describing the ceremonies performed to honor the non-Christian visitors, has recently been analyzed by G. G. Litavrin.²²

The royal author wrote his account as a detailed description of the ceremonies, not as a discussion of state matters. The central setting for his descriptions was the Great Palace with its many magnificent halls, in the first instance the Magnaura with its throne of Solomon, artificial singing birds and roaring lions, the Triclinium of Justinian (II), and the Chrysotriclinium. The date of chapter 15 is organized more or less chronologically, by days of the year.

In describing one series of ceremonies, Constantine twice inserts digressions about similar events on the occasion of another reception, namely, that of the Omeiyad Spanish envoys. The result is that his account is mingled with the story of the ceremonies conducted upon the arrival of envoys from Muslim Tarsus in northern Syria.

I suggest that the short description of the second reception of the Rus' queen, on October 18, was appended to the longer description of the events of her first visit on September 9 only because the important part of the second visit took place in the Chrysotriclinium, as did the finale of the ceremonies during the first visit.

The events of September 9 and October 18 did not, however, take place in the same year. Since during the reign of Constantine VII, only two years—946 and 957—matched the textual day, week, and month (Sunday, October 18, and Wednesday, September 9) of his descriptions, the first reception must have taken place in the year 946, and the second in the year 957.

Having conducted a precise analysis of the dates and events as they are presented in *De cerimoniis*, G. G. Litavrin proved that Ol'ga's main visit to Constantinople, on September 9, a Wednesday, must have taken place in the year 946 (during the fourth

²⁰ See the table of contents to Constantine's *De cerimoniis*, ed. J. J. Reiske, vol. 2 (Bonn, 1830), pp. 510–11.

²¹ See Gyula Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, vol. 1, 2nd ed. (Berlin, 1958), pp. 380–81.

²² Litavrin, "Putešestvie. . . Ol'gi," pp. 42–44.

indiction).²³ This means that Ol'ga's second visit to Constantinople, that on October 18, a Sunday, took place in 957.²⁴

Further confirmation of the year 946 as that of Ol'ga's first journey to Constantinople is the statement of Skylitzes that Helga (Ol'ga) of Rus' arrived in Constantinople following the death of her husband (τοῦ ἀνδρὸς αὐτῆς ἀποθανόντος),²⁵ Igor', who was killed in ca. 945. At that time it was politically necessary for the Rus' queen to renew ties with Constantinople. Igor', the first member of the Rus' dynasty to go south and conquer Kiev, had the primary goal of gaining control over the recently established trade route "from the Varangians to the Greeks (Constantinople)." Shortly before his violent death at the hands of his adversaries, Igor' concluded an important trade treaty with the Byzantine emperors. Since in the Middle Ages all treaties were valid only as long as the signatories themselves were alive, on Igor's death the Rus' polity badly needed the renewal of that vital contract.

Ol'ga's request, directed to Otto I, that he send a bishop and clergymen to Rus' is dated to the summer of 959. There is no reason to doubt this chronology. The request must have been made after Ol'ga's conversion, but not long after it. The two acts must have been part of one and the same plan. From this perspective, October 18 (957) as the date of Ol'ga/Helga's conversion best fits the requisite time sequence.

Sailing from Constantinople to Kiev took ca. 35–45 days.²⁶ Ol'ga should have returned home by the end of November 957. During 958 Ol'ga must have discussed with her advisors and with the leading men of Rus' (especially the retinue) the introduction of a church organization in Rus'. The result was that already in the autumn of the same year, Ol'ga dispatched her envoys to

²³ Litavrin, "Putešestvie. . . Ol'gi," pp. 46–48; idem, "O datirovke," pp. 179–83.

²⁴ G. G. Litavrin (see fn. 2) insists that Ol'ga traveled to Constantinople only once, and that both receptions (that of September 9 and that of October 18) took place in the same year, namely, 946.

²⁵ See fn. 5. Cf. also Johannes Zonaras (the first half of the twelfth century), *Epitomae historiarum libri XVIII*, ed. by Mauricius Pinder (Bonn, 1897), p. 485:

καὶ ἡ τοῦ κατὰ Ῥωμαίων ἐκπλεύσαντος Ῥῶς γαμετῇ Ἑλγα, τοῦ ξυνευνέτου αὐτῆς τελευτήσαντος, προσήλθε τῷ βασιλεῖ καὶ βαπτισθεῖσα τιμηθεῖσά τε, ὡς ἐχρῆν ἐπενόστησεν.

On the value of his data, see Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, 1:344–45.

²⁶ See N. N. Voronin, "Sredstva i puti soobščeniia," in B. D. Grekov and M. I. Artamonov, eds., *Istorija kul'tury drevnej Rusi*, vol. 1 (Moscow and Leningrad, 1951), p. 286.

Frankfurt-am-Main; they arrived there in the early summer of 959.

III

All Old Rus' Chronicles and other texts, except for one, give the "canonical" date of A.M. 6463 (A.D. 955) for Ol'ga's baptism. The source of that dating was—as shown above—the approximate computation done by Jakov Mnix (ca. 1070). The exception is a Novgorodian abbreviated chronicle from the second half of the sixteenth century, quoted by F. Giljarov, where the year A.M. 6466 (A.D. 957–958) occurs instead: "V lěto 6466 ide Olga v" Car'grad" i krestisja ot" patriarxa i ot" carja, a car' bo xotjaše za sebe, i narečena byst' vo svjatom" kreščenii Elena."²⁷

If one takes into consideration that in Novgorod—beginning with the thirteenth century—the system of ultra-March dating was in use (see N. G. Berez'kov, *Xronologija russkogo letopisanija* [Moscow, 1963], pp. 27, 37, 39), one can explain A.M. 6466 as the ultra-March version of the March-year A.M. 6465 (A.D. 956–957). Since in Kievan chronicle writing the ultra-March-system was unknown until the 1150s, and only the March-system was in use (Berez'kov, *op. cit.*, pp. 38, 55), the older source must have had the date A.M. 6465.

This is precisely the date for Ol'ga's baptism at which I arrived above, on the basis of an analysis of the data of Constantine Porphyrogenitus's work: October A.D. 957.

Cesare Baronio (Baronius, d. 1607) has in his *Annales Ecclesiastici* (see the appendix, pp. 22–23) the year A.D. 958 as the date of Ol'ga's baptism. This puzzling year which has never been understood, now has a plausible explanation: Baronio was also using a source with the ultra-March system of dating, where October A.M. 6466 in fact corresponded to October A.D. 958. (Cf. also the appendix, the concluding paragraph, p. 24.)

An indirect corroboration for the year 957 as the date of Ol'ga's second visit to Constantinople and that of her conversion is found in the Hustyn Chronicle. Unfortunately, the text of the original Hustyn Chronicle has not come down to us. What has survived are two (reworked?) redactions from the seventeenth century. One of

²⁷ F. Giljarov, *Predanija russkoj načal'noj letopisi* (Moscow, 1878), p. 260a. Concerning the Novgorodian abbreviated chronicle ("Novgorodskaja V letopis'") see Aleksej A. Šaxmatov, *Obozrenie russkix letopisnyx svodov XIV–XVI vv.* (Moscow and Leningrad, 1938), p. 196.

these, made in 1670, was published; the editor was the heiromonk Myxajlo Losyc'kyj of the Hustyn Monastery, located near Pryluky in the Černihiv polk—hence the text's "learned" name.²⁸ The text retells the story of Ol'ga outwitting the Byzantine emperor, as related in the Kievan Primary Chronicle of the Hypatian type (the emperor is named *Konstantin syn Leonov*). It also contains two extraordinary additions:²⁹

(1) *i kresti ju sam'' patriarxa Polievkt''* 'and she was baptized by the patriarch Polyeuctus in person';

(2) *Zonaras'' glagolet'', jako togda Theofylakt'' bĕ patriarx''* 'Zonaras [Ioannes, the Byzantine chronicler of the first half of the twelfth century] says that at that time Theophylactus was patriarch'.³⁰

²⁸ "Gustinskaja lĕtopis'," in *Polnoe sobranie russkix letopisej* (hereafter *PSRL*), vol. 2, pt. 3 (St. Petersburg, 1843). On the Hustyn Chronicle, see Myxajlo Marčenko, "Hustyns'kyj litopys," in *Radjans'ka encyklopedija istoriji Ukraïny*, vol. 1 (Kiev, 1969), pp. 494–95, and Olena Apanovyč, *Rukopisnaja svetskaja kniga XVIII v. na Ukraïne. Istoričeskie sborniki* (Kiev, 1983), pp. 66–77.

²⁹ See the appendix, pp. 22–24.

³⁰ Zonaras was certainly right (see fn. 25), as was Baronio, since in 955 (the date of Ol'ga's baptism taken by the Hustyn Chronicle from the *PVL*) the name of the patriarch of Constantinople was in fact Theophylactus. It is clear, then, that the Hustyn Chronicle took its information from two sources: the year of Ol'ga's baptism from one source, the *PVL*; and the name of the patriarch who baptized Ol'ga from another, which remains uncertain.

There is also confusion in the Old Rus' chronicles about the name of the Byzantine emperor whom Ol'ga visited. While chronicles of the Hypatian type correctly give the name of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, the Laurentian text of the *PVL* names, anachronistically, John I Tzimisces (969–976): "cr' imjanem' Čĕm'skii." See *PSRL*, vol. 1, 3rd ed., by E. F. Karskij (Leningrad, 1926–28), col. 60. There is a logical explanation: the Laurentian Chronicle replaced the emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus in the story of Ol'ga's visit by John Tzimisces (b. 924), who became emperor in the year of Ol'ga's death (969). The Byzantine ruler, with whom the crafty Ol'ga had dealings, must have been, in the view of the Old Rus' literati, her equal, as was the robust soldier John Tzimisces, the later pacifier of Svjatoslav. The weak Constantine seemed to them unworthy of acceptance as Ol'ga's partner. On the name "Romanus," see fn. 11.

Marcin Kromer (see the appendix, pp. 23–24) repeats the Laurentian data (Tzimisces), and the author of the Hustyn Chronicle—who apparently did not have access to a chronicle of the Laurentian type—found it necessary to add this information at the end of his presentation: "Kromer'' hlaholet'', jako za carstvo Ioanna Zamosky Olha krestysja" (*PSRL*, vol. 2, p. 244).

We do not know where the original author of the Hustyn Chronicle got his information;³¹ one possible source was the fragmented collection of manuscripts held in the Cave Monastery in Kiev. But since the author undertook to polemicize with Zonaras, who puts Ol'ga's baptism *before* the death of Theophylactus, he must have had some basis for his assertion, which disagrees with the dating of the Primary Chronicle.

The editors of the first edition of the Hypatian Chronicle, who in 1843 appended the Hustyn Chronicle to volume 2 of the *Polnoe sobranie russkix letopisej*, found it necessary to add after the Hustyn Chronicle's "Polievkt'" the following comment: "In almost all the Rus' chronicles the year of Ol'ga's baptism is given as A.M. 6463, or A.D. 955; in that case the patriarch Polyeuctus, who was consecrated on 3 April 956. . . , could not have been her baptizer,

³¹ The earliest Polish chroniclers, the so-called Gallus Anonymus (fl. 1112–1116) and Magister Vincentius ("Kadłubek," d. 1223), have no data for the history of Rus' in the tenth century.

Jan Długosz (1415–1480) was the first Polish chronicler to include early Kievan history, in the chapter "Polonorum origines fabulosae" of his annals of the Polish kingdom. There he says: "Olha Constantinopolim, imperante apud Grecos Czemi-sky [<PVL of the Laurentian tradition], a patriarcha Constantinopolitano in fide Christiana edocta, supersticione gentilium relictā, baptisma accepit barbaroque nomine mutato, pro Olha Helena appellatur"; the year is not given (*Annales seu Cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae*, ed. Jan Dąbrowski, vols. 1–2 [Warsaw, 1964], p. 122).

Like Długosz, Maciej Strykowski (1547, d. after 1582), the Polish historian most popular among Ukrainian literati of the seventeenth century, presents an account of Ol'ga's baptism on the basis of the PVL of the Laurentian type. He names the emperor as "Jan Zemiski," and gives the baptism's date as A.M. 6463 = A.D. 955 (*Kronika Polska, Litewska, Żmódzka i wszystkiej Rusi*, 2nd ed., by Mikołaj Malinowski, vol. 1 [Warsaw, 1846], p. 120).

Interestingly enough, Zaxarija Kopystens'kyj (d. 1627), who has been proposed as the author of the Hustyn Chronicle by several scholars (especially A. Jeršov), gives in his *Palinodija* (ca. 1620–1622) completely different data concerning the "fourth" baptism, i.e., that of Ol'ga: "Potom" okolo roku 935, za carja Konstantyna Osmoho y za patriarxy Theofylakta, jak" Hreckij ystoryk" Ioann" Zonaras" v" tretem" tomî pyšet", a druhij zas', beručy to z" Roskyx" litopyscov"—za carja Ioanna Cemysky a za patriarxy Vasylija Skamandrena, okolo roku 970 povîdajut" y pyšut", yž" caryca Olha. . . priixala do Konstantynopolja do carja Ioanna Cemysky, ktoruju patriarxa z" mnohymy bojarŷ okrestyl", Helenoju nazval" [on the margin of one source is noted: Zonaras", lyst" 116]. Here the year "935," which occurs in both the edition by P. A. Gil'tebrant published in the *Russkaja istoričeskaja biblioteka*, vol. 4 (St. Petersburg, 1878), col. 972, and the "Pomorian MS" presently held in the library of the University of Michigan (p. 405), is apparently a clerical error in which a 3 was substituted for the first 5 in 955 (cf. the appendix, p. 23). The year "970" relates to John Tzimisces, who ruled 969–976.

as it is said in G.M. and A. [acronyms for the then known manuscripts of the Hustyn Chronicle].”³²

³² *PSRL*, vol. 2, 1st ed. (St. Petersburg, 1843), p. 244. Only two other texts known to me mention Patriarch Polyeuctus in connection with Ol'ga's baptism. These are the Kievan *Sinopsis* (the first extant edition: Kiev, 1674), and the *Mazurinskij letopisec* (last quarter of the seventeenth century):

Sinopsis

A.M. 6463 - A.D. 955 . . . Velýkaja
knjahýnja
Kievskaja, y vsejà Róssii
Ólha, z velýkym” ymínem” v” stróy
naročýtom” korablmy pójde k” Cary-
hrádu y pryšédšy s” Rúskymy boljárý y
dvórjány pred lycé Késara Hrěčeskaho,
po Strijkóvskoho svýdytel'stvu, Ioanna
Zemýsky, yly Cymýsxija, a po Lítapisániju
prepodobnaho Néstora Pečěrskaho
[a chronicle of the Hypatian type], Kon-
stantýna Leónova sýna. . .
Tohda Patriárx Caryhrádskej Poliévkty,
a po svýdytel'stvu Lítópýsca Zonárý,
Theofilákt”. . . dano jej ymjá Eléna. . .
(*Sinopsis*. Kiev 1681. Facsimile mit einer
Einleitung von Hans Rothe [Köln, 1983],
p. 178 (19b)–179 (20a).

Mazurinskij letopisec

A.M. 6463. . . Togo že godu velikaja
knjaginja
i vsea Rusii Ol'ga s velikim imeniem
vstroj naročitom karable i poide k
Carjugradu, i prišed s ruskimi bojary i
dvorjany v Car'grad. Pri grečeskix
carex [sic] pri Romane
krestisja vo imja otca i syna
i svjatago duxa
ot patriarxa Poluexta,
i narečennaja byst' Elena . . .
(*Letopiscy poslednej četverti XVII v.*
PSRL, vol. 31 [Moscow, 1968], p. 39).

The beginning of both texts with the phrases *vsejà Róssii*/ *vseá Rusii* and the designation of the ruling elite as *bo(l)jary* i *dvorjany* indicate that both made use of “Nestor,” which was apparently a “xronograf” of the sixteenth (or even the final half of the seventeenth) century.

The *Mazurinskij letopisec* (i.e., from the collection of F. Mazurin) is a very peculiar “northern” compilation dating from the last quarter of the seventeenth century that made use of earlier Novgorodian sources. On the one hand, it contains—especially in its opening passages—many fictitious and obviously invented stories. But on the other hand, it also includes items “which deserve our attention,” as noted by Mixail N. Tixomirov with regard to some data concerning the thirteenth century (*Kratkie zametki o letopisnyx proizvedenijax v rukopisnyx sobranijax Moskvu* [Moscow, 1967], p. 52).

One may speculate that the common source of the *Sinopsis* and the *Mazurinskij letopisec* named more than one emperor (*Mazurinskij letopisec*: “pri grečeskix carex”). In fact, we know that between the spring of 948 and 9 November 959, there were *two* emperors in Constantinople: Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, and his son and co-ruler Romanus II (see p. 9, above, and Grumel, *La chronologie*, p. 358). If that hypothetical source was also a source of the Hustyn Chronicle, then its compiler chose to name a different emperor, that is, Constantine. This explains why the emperor who was contemporaneous with the patriarch Polyeuctus is named as “Constantine” in two instances (the Hustyn Chronicle and the *Sinopsis*), and as “Romanus” in another (the *Mazurinskij letopisec*). The compiler of the Hustyn Chronicle must have purposely opted for “Constantine,” since Baronio, whom he explicitly quoted, had “Romanus” (<Reginonis Continuator).

In light of the arguments presented in the present study, however, just the reverse is the case: The only patriarch who could have baptized Ol'ga in Constantinople on 18 October 957 was Polyeuctus, who occupied that see from 3 April 956 to 5 February 970.³³

We know that the date for Ol'ga's conversion as given in the *PVL* was taken from the pamphlet by Jakov Mnix known as *Pamjat' i poxvala Vladimiru*. Jakov had investigated remnants of the Kiev oral tradition about Ol'ga and Volodimer ca. 1070. Jakov Mnix provided no exact date for Ol'ga's conversion, however. As shown above, the year A.M. 6463 /A.D. 955 was arrived at by the chronicler by subtracting fifteen years from the exact date of Ol'ga's death established by Jakov Mnix; the calculation was due to Mnix's remark that Ol'ga lived as a Christian for 15 years; apparently Jakov used here the "round" number of 15 instead of the correct "odd" one of 13.

There is one more reliable Old Rus' source corroborating that Ol'ga received baptism in Constantinople. One of the first Kievan metropolitans, Ilarion the Rusin, in his sermon "Slovo o zakoně . . . i o blagodati" delivered at the Cathedral of St. Sophia in Kiev ca. 1050, stated the following: "On" že s" materiju svoeju Elenoju krest" ot" Ierusalima prinesša, i po vsemu miru svoemu razslavša, věru utverdišja: ty že s" baboju tvojeju Ol'goju prinesše krest" ot" Novago Ierusalima, ot" Konstjantina grada, i sego, na zemli svoej postaviv", utverdista Věru",³⁴ i.e., "He [Constantine I, emperor A.D. 306–337], together with his mother Helen [St. Helena, b. ca. A.D. 248, d. ca. A.D. 328], had fetched the [Holy] Cross from Jerusalem, and sent it [the Cross] throughout his entire *Pax*, [and in doing so] they strengthened the Faith: in the same way you, with your grandmother Ol'ga, brought the [Holy] Cross from the New Jerusalem, from Constantinople, and, having it, [the Cross] put in your land you both strengthened the Faith."

The parallelism in the passage—Constantine and Volodimer versus Helen and Ol'ga—makes it clear that the true activists were the two ladies, Constantine's mother Helen and Volodimer's grandmother Ol'ga. In fact, Helen was credited already in early Church history (first mention in Ambrose's panegyric on Theodosius the

³³ See Grumel, *La Chronologie*, p. 436.

³⁴ *Des Metropolitens Ilarion Lobrede auf Vladimir den Heiligen und Glaubensbekenntnis*, ed. Ludolf Müller (Wiesbaden, 1962), pp. 118–19.

Great in A.D. 395) with the discovery of Christ's cross during her travels to Jerusalem.³⁵ Since Helen (and *not* Constantine) went to Jerusalem, it was also Ol'ga (and *not* Volodimer) who is credited in the passage with having travelled to Constantinople in order to bring the Christian faith to Rus'.

IV

Ol'ga's embassy to Otto I in 959, shortly after her visit to Constantinople, has been regarded as a parallel to that made by the Bulgarian ruler Boris one hundred years earlier. Before making his final arrangements with the Church of Constantinople, Boris, too, had tested the possibilities of Rome. Although at first glance the similarities between the two instances may be striking, an analysis and comparison of the international situation in the Christian church in the 860s with that in the 950–960s points to differences. The Bulgars of Asparuch who entered Moesia, a Roman province, were recognized in a treaty of 681 as *federati* of the empire. Popes Agapitus II (946–955) and John XII (955–964) were no match for Nicholas I (858–867) or John VIII (872–882), and the pious Patriarch Polyeuctus had none of the personality of the rigorous theoretician Photius, patriarch in 858–867 and 877–886. Besides, Ol'ga sent her embassy not to the pope in Rome, but to King Otto I in Frankfurt. Also, by the middle of the tenth century, Byzantium was no longer interested in religious proselytism, especially beyond the frontiers of the *Imperium Romanum*; there was also no schism between Rome and Constantinople after the official reunion in 920.³⁶

Constantine VII was a great admirer of Otto I, whom he called "the Great" in his *De administrando imperio*.³⁷ He betrothed his son (and co-regent) Romanus II to Bertha/Eudocia, a Frankish princess closely related to Otto I;³⁸ Constantine became fond of his

³⁵ See H. Thurston and D. Attwater, eds., *Butler's Lives of the Saints*, vol. 3 (London, 1956), pp. 346–48.

³⁶ Concerning the Peace of the Church proclaimed in June 920, see Henri Grégoire, in *The Byzantine Empire*, pt. 1 (= *The Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. 4), ed. J. M. Hussey (Cambridge, 1966), pp. 137–38.

³⁷ *De administrando imperio*, ed. Gyula Moravcsik, Eng. trans. R. J. H. Jenkins (Budapest, 1949), p. 142.

³⁸ Bertha (the daughter of Hugh of Arles, King of Italy, 926–947) was the sister-in-law of Adelheide of Burgundy (b. 931, d. 999), daughter of King Rudolf II of Burgundy (912–937); in 951 Adelheide became by a second marriage the wife of Otto I. See Chris Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy: Central Power and Local Society*,

daughter-in-law and mourned her premature death in 949. Liutprand of Cremona, the Western ambassador who conducted diplomatic missions to Constantinople in 949 and 968, refers to Constantine VII in very warm terms.³⁹

Otto I, during the greater part of his rule as king, and especially in the 950s and 960s, after his decisive victory over the Hungarians, displayed intense missionary activity and contributed to the establishment of church organizations in Eastern Europe, particularly among the Danes ("Varangians") and the Slavs. Clearly, Otto was the authority Ol'ga needed. It is reasonable to suggest that it was Emperor Constantine VII (or Romanus II, since he is named in Adalbert's chronicle) who—after Patriarch Polyeuctus baptized Ol'ga—advised her to request missionaries and a church organization from his friend Otto I, at that time the only active proponent of missionary activity in Eastern Europe.

The Rus' queen Ol'ga was baptized in October 957 in Constantinople by Patriarch Polyeuctus. This was a personal, private conversion. When Ol'ga later wanted to baptize her entire realm, she turned to the professional missionaries of Otto I, following the advice of the Byzantine emperor Constantine VII.

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400–1000 (Totowa, N.J., 1981), p. 226, and pp. 177–83.

³⁹ "Liutprands von Cremona Werke," ed. A. Bauer and R. Rau, in *Quellen zur Geschichte der sächsischen Kaiserzeit* (see fn. 6), pp. 252, 254, 330.

APPENDIX

The Sources of the Hustyn Chronicle's Account of Ol'ga's Baptism

The Hustyn Chronicle (HC) mentions Ol'ga's baptism twice: first, chronologically within its main text (A); and second, in its discourse about the five Rus' baptisms, the fifth and last being that of Volodimer in 988, with Ol'ga's baptism referred to as the fourth (B). The discourse is sandwiched between the years 986 and 987. Here are the relevant texts:

A.	B.
V'' lito 6463 (955). Pojde Olha vo Hreky k'' Caryhradu, ydiže so čestiju prijata bŷst' y ljubeznŷ ot'' carja Konstantyna, sŷna Leonova. . .	Četvertoe že krestysja Rus' ot'' Hrekov'' za Olhy knjahynŷ. . .
Y kresty ju sam'' patriarxa Polievkt'' y nareče ej ymja Elena. . .	Sija Olha xody vo Caryhrad'' navykaty
Zonaras'' hlaholet'', jako tohda Theofylakt bŷ patriarx''. . .	vŷry ko patriarxu Polievktu, po smerty Theofylakta patriarxy, pry cary Hrečeskom'' Konstantynŷ sedmom'', v'' lito 955, jako naš'' Ruskij litopysca hlaholet'', a vedluh'' Baroniuša lito 958; ydiže patriarx'' naučy ju vŷrŷ y kresty ju, y nareče ymja ej Elena. . .
Kromer'' hlaholet'', jako za carstvo Ioanna Zamosky Olha krestysja. ¹	Zonar'' hlaholet'', jako tohda Theofylakt'' bŷ patriarxa. ²

The HC includes either in the text or along its margins six sources; two of these, the *PVL* of the Laurentian type and Zonaras, have already been discussed. The others are the following:

Bar. 958 = *Annales Ecclesiastici* (1588–1607) by Cardinal Cesare Baronio (Ruthenian: Baroniuš), b. 1538, d. 1607. The work contains a passage concerning Ol'ga's baptism under the year 958, as rightly quoted by the HC. Information was taken from two sets of sources, one Byzantine and the other German. The passage reads:

¹ p. 244; contains the following marginal notes: Bar. 958./ Mar. Bŷl. kn. 1, 54./ Krom. kn. 3, 43 y 46, v'' lito 950./ Gvagn. o Moskvŷ 22, v'' lito 942./ Zon. tom. 3./ Krom. kn. 3, 46.

² p. 253; contains the following marginal notes: Mart. Bŷl. 54./Zonar'' tom'' 3./Bar. 958.' Zonar'' tom'' 3.

A.D. 958. . [Byzantine sources] "Et ea, quae fuerat uxor ducis Rhos, qui [Igor'] contra Romanos classem adduxerat, Elga nomine, mortuo ipso viro, Constantinopolim se contulit, et baptisata cum sinceræ Fidei cultum se suscipere instituisse ostendisset, et pro sui propositi dignitate ornata domum rediit."

[German sources] "Die ista est mentio apud Reginonem anno sequenti, quem nominat Helenam his verbis: legati Reginae Rugorum, sive Russorum [sic], quae sub Romano Imperat. Constantinopoli baptisata est, fecte (ut postea claruit) ad Regem Ottonem venientes Episcopos, et presbyteros eidem genti petebant" (vol. 16 [Luca, 1744], p. 101).

Baronio deals with Ol'ga's embassy to Otto I again under the year 959. There he bases his information on the annals compiled by the continuator of Regino, i.e., Adalbert, in particular on the items for the years 959–62: the case of Libutius, and Adalbert's unsuccessful mission to Rus' (ibid., p. 104).

Adalbert's name, as "Rugorum ordinatus Episcopus," reappears in Baronio's work in connection with his advancement in the year 971 (ibid., p. 210).

Mart. Bil., kn. 1, 54 = Marcin [and Joachim] Bielski (b. ca. 1495, d. 1575), *Kronika Polska. Nowo przez syna iego wydana* (Cracow, 1597). The relevant passage (p. 54) reads: "Ta Olha ieżdżiła do Konstantynopola wiary chrześcijańskiej wyznać y tam sie okrzyła a imie iey dano Helena. Gdy iechała z Carzygroda błogosławił iey Patryarcha. . . ."

There is no mention of any date nor of the names of the patriarch or emperor.

In Bielski's earlier work, *Kronika tho iesth Historya Świata* (Cracow, 1564), however, on fol. 427 b (Book 9: "O Ksiestwie Moskiewskim"), one finds the following relevant passage: "Olha. . . okrzyła sie Greckim obyczaiem iechawszy do Grecyey tha napierwsza krześcijańska pania była v Ruśi: było temu lat od stworzenia świata, 6463. za Cesarza Jana Konstantynopolskiego" (date and emperor's name after the *PVL* of the Laurentian type).

Krom. kn. 3, 43 y 46, v" lito 950 = Marcin Kromer (d. 1589), *De origine et rebus gestis Polonorum libri XXX* (Basilea, 1584), Liber tertius, pp. 45–46.

The number '3' (in '43') was an error, substituting for '5'. Here is the text:

Aliquanto post Russi, imperantibus apud Graecos Basilio et Constantino fratribus, Ioannis Zemisce filii [sic] post nongentesimum octogesimum [sic] annum a Christo nato, hoc est, 6497 ab orbe condito, ut ipsorum annales habent publice ad eandem religionem accesserunt cum Volodimirus dux eorum. . . . Tametsi Olga siue Helena Volodimiri huius auia aliquanto ante, post Igori mariti sui mortem profecta Constantinopolim Zemisce imperante Christiana facta erat. Lambertus Saffnaburgensis [Lampert of Hersfeld, d. ca. 1080] qui ante quingentos fere annos Chronicon rerum Germanicarum annotavit, scribit, anno Christi nati 960, Rusciae gentis legationem ad regem Ottonem primum venisse. . . . (< Adalbert). Marginal

notations: "Russi. Ioannes Zemiscus imp. Constantinop. 980 ann. [an error; actually 988–989] 6497 mundi annus secundum Russos. Russi Graecorum sectam amplectuntur. Olga. / Lamb. Saffnaburgensis, error. 960.

The year "950" in the HC is certainly an error for Kromer's "960."

Gvagn. o Moskvî 22, v" lito 942 = Alexander Guagnini (Polish Gwagnin, b. 1534, d. 1614), *Sarmatiae Europaeae descriptio*, pt. 5: "Moschoviae descriptio." Here I quote the first edition [Cracow], 1578), which was not used by the author of the HC: "Rutheni omnes postquam semel fidem Christianam Graecorum ritu Anno restitutae per Christum salutis 942. susceperunt, sub Olha Ducisa and Wolodimiro filio eius [sic]. . ." (fol. 17r).

Guagnini's date of 942 as the year of Ol'ga's baptism is due to an error in his conversion of dates from the A.M. era (in which the year began in March) and/or from the indiction to the Christian era (with the year beginning in January). The same type of error (of 12–13 years) often occurs in the work of medieval Western chroniclers writing about Eastern Europe. For instance, Jan Długosz in his history of Poland gave the year A.D. 1212 for the Kalky battle based on a Rus' source apparently citing the date A.M. 6463 (= A.D. 1224/25). Similarly, A.D. 942 in Guagnini resulted from an erroneous conversion of A.M. 6463.

None of the sources quoted by the HC, including the *PVL* and Zonaras, had any information that it was the patriarch Polyeuctus who baptized Ol'ga.

See also the erroneous dating in M. Kromer's work (cited above), where A.M. 6497 is wrongly explained as A.D. 980, instead of the correct A.D. 988–989. Here, as often in the *Annales* of J. Długosz, the error is eight years.

An addition: the exact date of Volodimer's baptism was A.M. 6496 (A.D. 988; see *PVL*); the number A.M. 6497 is due to the (Novgorodian?) ultra-March re-dating.