Introductory Essay: Migration—Travel—Commerce—Cultural Transfer. The Complex Connections Byzantium-Kiev-Novgorod-Varangian Lands, 6–14th Century

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Dealing with Varangian-Rus'/Kievan and Byzantine interactions in Europe's so-called "Middle Ages" involves several macro-regions: the East Roman realm, the Iranian as well as the Mesopotamian and Egyptian realms, and the distant Scandinavian one. Scholarship has been hampered by terminological problems: The East Roman inhabitants—"Rhomaioi", "Rhom", or "Rum"—were misnamed "Byzantines" almost a century after the Empire's demise by the Augsburg humanist Hieronymus Wolf (1516–1580). His reference to the Greek settlement Byzantion rather than to Constantinople, the Roman Empire's continuity, and Orthodox Christianity was meant to reduce East Roman culture to an "in-between" and elevate Western Christianity and the Carolingian reinvention of western Rome as sole successor to "Rome" whether Empire or city or St. Peter's Christianity.¹

The still unified Roman Empire—through armed conquest—had established rule or held sway in the Anatolian-Eastern/ Mediterranean-West Asian region but could not annex the Iranian realm once conquered by Alexander ["the Great"] and "Hellenized" as much as the Macedonians were "Persianized". When, from the 3rd to the 6th century, "Rome", whether empire, federation of provinces, or region of connected urban centers, came apart as circum-Mediterranean and trans-alpine polity, the eastern half continued as a politically unified but territorially expanding or shrinking realm with Constantinople as capital. It was thus not a "Byzantine" *successor* state to a dissolved empire.

To the north of Constantinople and Anatolia, the vast region from the Black to the Baltic Sea was an arena of migration and of settlement of Baltic-, Finno-Ugric, and Slavic-speaking peoples. Highly mobile groups from further

1 I am grateful to Lewis Siegelbaum and Leslie Page Moch for a critical reading of an earlier version of this essay and to Johannes Preiser-Kapeller and Claudia Rapp as well as Jonathan Shepard for intense comments and references to further literature. Greek- and Russian-language research has not been accessible to me.

east, some from as far as the northern border of Imperial China, transmigrated or settled for several generations. These, popular memory and historians' "master narratives" labeled "Asiatic horsemen". They included women and children, often were of poly-ethnic background, but were subsumed by contemporary designations under singularizing labels: "Huns", "Mongols", "Tatars", or in an earlier phase "Scythians". From Scandinavia, the multiple local societies of "Norsemen" and women with high shipbuilding and seafaring skills reached out. The mobile cultural groups did pose massive threats to entire settled populations, to communities, and to individual families in the steppe macro-region, in Byzantium, and in Western Europe. Whether on the move or establishing temporary and, in the case of the "Mongols", century-long rule, from the (East) Roman perspective they were neighbors/ aggressors/ passers-by.²

In this essay, I first outline the southward Scandinavia-Black Sea/ Central Asia connections along river routes; second, turn to the multi-faceted migrations and cultural exchanges between East Rome and the Varangian-Rus' principalities; and finally summarize the transcontinental connectivity of the many Norsemen and -women. In conclusion, I will assess the specific character of these mass, cultural elite, and military labor migrations.

1 The Early "Varangian"—Black Sea Connections

Population development in the macro-region between Baltic and Black seas had involved the slow, land-bound dispersion of cultural groups from Mazuria in the north to the Lower Danube in the south. While 19th-century ethno-centric historians had placed the origin of "proto-Slavic groups" in wetlands and lowlands of the Pripyat-River, Bug, and Dnepr, recent research emphasizes a "Byzantine authors-making-the-Slavs" process: 6th-century chroniclers viewed the Empire's northern neighbors as two groups of enemies labelled "Scлавeиes" and "Antes". Their many cultures expanded westward via the Danubian plains to the East Alpine foothills in mid-6th century, a common Slavic may have been the *lingua franca*.³ In the north at this time, Scandinavian, Finno-Ugric and Baltic peoples began to explore the water routes—sea, lakes, and the

2 Kennedy, *Mongols, Huns and Vikings*.

3 The Kievan monks' "Primary Chronicle" (1113) described the migrations based on Slavic chronicles, native legends, Norse sagas, Arab texts, Byzantine historiography, and treaties between the Kievan Rus' and Byzantium: Primary Chronicle, transl. Cross/Sherbowitz-Wetzor. Cf. also Curta, *The Making of the Slavs*; Curta, "The Making of the Slavs: Ethnogenesis Revisited"; Koder, "Anmerkungen zum Slawen-Namen in byzantinischen Quellen", 333–346.

seemingly endless southward-flowing rivers—to the Caspian and Black seas to settle and trade with merchants from the Iranian and Central Asian region.⁴ Again parallel in time, steppe cultural groups moved westward: Huns (5th century), Avars (6th century), Bulgarians (7th century), Magyars (9th century), and Pechenegs/ Patzniaks (late 9th century). In addition, the (Western) Turkish Khaganate from Central Asia to the Crimea (from mid-6th century), the rule of the Khazars as its successors north of the Caucasus (from mid-7th century) and the Cuman-Kipchak federation—perhaps (partly) Nestorian Christian—from the 11th century played important roles. Then the Mongols (12th–13th century) established their transcontinental realm. These flexible “cultural groups” rather than “peoples” with essentialist identities were both agents of destruction and of state building. They posed threats, first to the eastern Orthodox Christian Roman Empire, from about 800 to Latin Christian Western Europe, and from the late 12th century to the Kievan and other Rus'-landish principalities, as well as to the Iranian and Islamic spheres. The transcontinental *pax mongolica* of the 13th and 14th centuries permitted resumption of trading connections.⁵

From among the many migrations, those of the cultures of proto-Slavic (5th–8th century) and of Scandinavian languages were central to the emergence of the Kievan Principality with whom the Constantinopolitan Empire would interact. Scandinavia's and Jutland's naturally limited agriculturally usable land, given population increases, forced people to emigrate, and long coasts, resulting in seafaring expertise, made this possible. From economic micro-regions and meso-regional realms of rule, men and women migrated eastbound via the Baltic Sea's Gulf of Finland and via the Narva, Neva, and Daugava (or Western Dvina) rivers to lakes Peipus, Ladoga, and Ilmen; westward via the North Sea to the (British) isles settled by Angles and Saxons and to what would be called “Normandy”; and southward onward to Sicily, Constantinople, and the cities of Syria and Palestine (in Christian naming the “Holy Land”).⁶ Later historians named these circum- and transcontinental

4 Franklin/Shepard, *The Emergence of the Rus*, on the northbound migrations of cultural groups from the Caucasian Mountain range (pp. 71–80), on trading places along the Donetsk River where Chinese goods from the Tang-period have been excavated (p. 83) and on migrants from the Baltic island of Åland at the middle Dnepr in the 10th century (p. 125). Cf. also Kappeler, *Russland als Vielvölkerreich*, pp. 9–24; Preiser-Kapeller, *Jenseits von Rom und Karl dem Großen*, pp. 164–165.

5 Pickhan, “Von der Kiever Rus zum Moskauer Reich”, pp. 113–137, esp. p. 114; Golden, *Central Asia in World History*, pp. 77–79, 83–84, 93.

6 Musset, “L'aristocratie normande au XI^e siècle”, pp. 71–96; Walker, *The Normans in Britain*. The courts of the Sicilian rulers, esp. of the Norman King Roger II (1103–1154) and the Hohenstaufen Frederick II (1212–1250), were centers of intercultural and inter-religious exchange, cf. Houben, *Roger II. von Sizilien*.

waterborne migrants according to perceived roles: (1) state-building Normans (and, analytically important, Nor-women), (2) Vikings as raiders and/ or long-distance traders, and (3) Varangians as aggressive power-imposing settlers and traders. Many moved in stages, francophone Normans from Normandy, for example, to the “Holy Land”. Thus, like the “Sclavenes”, the men and women from the northern cultures were labeled according to the perceptions and discourses of chroniclers from the societies in which they arrived/ which they aggressed.

The 7th-century Scandinavian-origin traders who would come into contact with East Rome settled in populated regions and, mixing over generations with women and men of Slavic culture, formed the Novgorodian, Kievan, and later Muscovite principalities. They came from distinct regional cultures, among them military-style armed and predominantly male “Swedes” from Uppland and Östergötland and trade-oriented families from the isle of Gotland, and mixed with Baltic and Finno-Ugric settlers. They established settlements where trade goods had to be reloaded onto river boats, Staraja Ladoga at Lake Ladoga and Gorodishche at Lake Ilmen, and connected southward across lakes, rivers, and portages, first, as long-distance-merchants via the Volga and the Caspian Sea to Persian and Arab merchants and, second, along the Dnepr to Slavic settlements and, finally to the Black Sea and Constantinople.⁷

At the Volga route's southern end, the Nordic merchants traded with Arab and Iranian ones traveling the (later so-called) Silk Roads (plural!) from China, Central Asia, India, and elsewhere. Recently Islamized traders, settled Arabs in the frontier regions as well Turkish military manpower and soldiers provided key support for the foundation of the Abbasid Caliphate in 749/750 A.D., which formed a stable frame for exchange. After the transfer of the capital from Damascus to Baghdad (founded in 762), a new and wealthy elite created demand for luxury goods from the north. Merchants of the Choresm oases-region at the southern shore of the Aral Sea and of Tashkent, Bukhara, and Samarkand south of the Caspian Sea distributed northern “exotic” products, in the 8th century via Khazar middlemen or families and in the 10th century via Bulgarian ones. Merchants in Novgorod, Gotland, and Birka (Lake Malaren), in turn, traded southern Arabian, Persian, and Byzantine (Roman or Greek) “exotic” products. This Volga trade route never became a migration pathway.⁸

In contrast, the second route along the Dnepr involved migration and settlement and would become the major axis between the north and Byzantium. From Lake Ladoga, Novgorod and Pskov Varangians migrated southward and,

7 Cunliffe, *Europe between the Oceans*, pp. 12, 263, provides maps of the trans-European migratory space.

8 Preiser-Kapeller, *Jenseits von Rom und Karl dem Großen*, pp. 164–166, 235–237.

according to late 9th-century sources, established rule over the settled East Slavic-speaking families. They founded (or selected) Kiev as capital possibly at the site of a Khazar Jewish community.⁹ The many-cultured settlements along the Dnepr linked to southeastern cultural groups in a process of changing from Old Turkic-Mongolian and Jewish beliefs to Christian and Muslim ones. The arrival of Northerner newcomers-intruders, as is frequently the case when mainly men migrate, involved violence. The cost of the imposition of rule had to be borne by those subjugated and the new order disrupted the residents' societal arrangements. Slavic enslaved men had to build dugout boats facilitating the rulers' mobility; women became sex objects, concubines, or wives, gave birth to, and raised culturally mixed children. Hierarchies between the immigrating and, since the 6th century, settled East Slavic peoples and the arriving Rus' are difficult to evaluate: did the migrants from the north establish themselves as an *overlay* or were they *subversive* to the residents' ways of life? Was the comparatively small number of Nordic people absorbed as is suggested by their acceptance of the Slavic language? Alternatively, did they deeply change the culture of the resident families as suggested by patterns of trade?¹⁰

The Varangians, possibly a name for traders with shared liability, were also called "Rus" (Slavic), "Rūs" (Arabic), and "Rhōs" (Greek) which may refer to one of the regions of origin, *RoBer* or *RoPin* at the Swedish Baltic coast.¹¹ In a linguistically-connotatively-conceptually confusing turn, this name was increasingly used for the new mixed population and, finally, as "Russians" for the East Slavic-speaking *métis*-descendants of both ethno-cultural groups in the pre-Muscovite "land of the Rus", Rus'-landish, *Ruskaia zemlia*. Rus-land or "Russia" refers to the state emerging in the 14th and 15th centuries with Moscow as its center. Better than dichotomous juxtapositions of peoples, concepts of hierarchical *fusion* or *métissage* help understand the development of new societies: processes of exchange, acculturation, merging rather than essentialist folk (or national) identities.

9 On a possible Khazarian pre-history of Kiev, see essays in Golden/Ben-Shammai/Róna-Tas, *The World of the Khazars*.

10 A founding legend invented later has three brothers arrive—add: with their families and dependents—allegedly invited by resident strife-torn cultural groups to reestablish order. The oldest, Rurik, gave name to the "Rurikid" dynasty. Folk tales and master narratives sometimes merge into founding myths legitimizing rule. In many such stories *young* brothers—an age group wanting to separate from parents—depart from hearth and home. Such migrants' ascribed names often became the designation of the new upper strata and, by extension, of "peoples", cf. Jones, *A History of the Vikings*, pp. 244–246. Geary, *The Myth of Nations*.

11 Benediktz, *The Varangians of Byzantium*, pp. 1–7.

In addition, in the 8th and 9th centuries “home’ was itself a movable and uncertain affair for the inhabitants of the river valleys and the depths of the forests alike—part hunter-gathers, part fishermen and part agriculturists”. While spiritual connections to ancestors encouraged immobility around burial grounds, dearth, hunger, and increasing population provided constant stimuli for further mobility. Settlements along the rivers were “places of co-residence of diverse ethnic groups (including Finno-Ugrian and Baltic ones) over a protracted period”.¹² Strife internal to one of the co-resident groups could involve further mobility and mixing. Prince Vladimir of Kiev (r. 980–1015) had lived as a refugee in Sweden, returned with Varangian soldiers, and settled the Turk-language Torki and Berendei as border guards at the southern limits of his realm. The competitors for his succession mobilized mercenary men: Saxons and Hungarians, Slovenes and Varangians, men from the steppes and the Caucasus. They marched across vast distances, were left by the wayside or demobilized somewhere, left families behind or formed new ones. His son Jaroslav (r. 1019–1054) married his children into Norwegian, French, Hungarian, Polish, and German noble families. Historians’ emphasis on the territoriality of rule has obscured such military, commercial and cultural interaction.¹³

2 Spiritual and Material Interactions between East Rome and Kiev

From the perspective of *Rhom* elites culture and competition emerged from Persia, Syria, and Egypt. The often mobile realms of the steppes and woodlands north of the Black Sea were also of interest as threatening, as potential allies, or as neighbors to be informed by diplomatic mission when a new emperor ascended the throne.¹⁴ When more than five centuries after the Roman Empire’s shift to the east but only about two centuries after the Varangians’ arrival at Lake Ladoga a fighting force of some 5,000 of the latter appeared before Constantinople in 860, distant some 2,000 km from Novgorod as the crow flies, contacts intensified.¹⁵ Their aggressive mobility in quest of booty made the

12 Franklin/Shepard, *Emergence of the Rus*, quote pp. 6, 6–27; Jones, *A History of the Vikings*, pp. 241–268; Waßenhoven, *Skandinavien unterwegs in Europa*.

13 Raffensperger, *Reimagining Europe: Kievan Rus’ in the Medieval World*.

14 Dölger, *Regesten*, nrs. 13, 41, 63, 183, 263, 302a, 438a and 458, lists embassies to the Turkish Khaganate in the 6th century and to the Khazars from the 7th to the 9th century. See contributions to Smythe, *Strangers to Themselves*, and Di Cosmo/Maas, *Empires and Exchanges*, pp. 1–15, 70–83.

15 Jones, *A History of the Vikings*, pp. 259–260; Androshchuk, *Vikings in the East*; Holmquist/Minaeva, *Scandinavia and the Balkans*; Scheel, *Skandinavien und Byzanz*.

men from the north strange as well as curiosity-arousing objects for Constantinople's chroniclers: dramatic events, in contrast to everyday ways of life, enter historic narratives.

The high level of literacy among East Roman elites—poly-ethnically composed of Greeks, in-migrating Romans, Armenians, Syrians, Slavs, Turks, Bulgarians, Vlachs, Alans, Magyars, and Georgians—and resulting texts provide views of “the Others” whether called Varangians, Rhōs, or Tauroskythians. Such naming involves *bordering* and *fixing* in place. It disguises the continuous composing and re-composing, the transitoriness of cultural groups. The Byzantine chroniclers backgrounded the south-to-north perspective, of interest here, by an overriding east-west narrative structure and, like their Arabian, Scandinavian, and Ruslandic counterparts, never focused on common people and their mobilities. This east-west axis, still current in Euro-centric historiography, dates to the ancient Mediterranean world: Herodotus had described the conflict between the Achaemenid Persian Empire (est. 6th century B.C.E) and the Greek states in this perspective.¹⁶ Later antiquity-worshipping historians elevated his perspective to status of paradigm. Other perspectives, to Egypt in the south and Kiev in the north, received less attention or were deliberately avoided.

When the Rus' army appeared, the Emperor, preoccupied with border wars and on his way eastward with thousands of soldiers, requested negotiations but, prudently, also reversed the direction of his marching men. Unexpected by *Rhomaioi* and Rus' alike the looming clash—a “bumping into each other” in which the agents/ players like billiard balls might bounce into many directions—became the beginning of intensive interactions with the Dnepr as axis: merchants' travels; migration of Church personnel; diplomatic voyages of Kievan rulers and princesses with their retinues to Constantinople; marriage migration of imperial princesses to Kiev in the frame of power policies; forced migrations of enslaved men and women; migration of under-employed Varangian-Rus' to the southern military segment of the labor market.¹⁷ In “master” narratives, warfaring large-distance movements often became a story's core. Such master-induced narratives were subservient to a master's power. Along

16 Herodotus did discuss the Scyths and their ways.

17 Wyrozumski, “La géographie des migrations en Europe centrale et orientale du Moyen Âge au début des temps modernes”, pp. 191–198; Bibikov/Kabuzan/Nazarov, “Ethno-Demographic Changes in the Region of Northern Pontos-Southern Russia-Ukraine”, pp. 271–297; Scheel, *Skandinavien und Byzanz*.

the Dnepr, many migrations were peaceful, intended to find sustainable ways of life. Chroniclers designated the geographic Dnepr-axis functionally as the “route from the Varangians to the Byzantines”, migration and trade became markers for conceptualizing space.¹⁸

2.1 *Christianity: Clerical Personnel and Craftsmen*

Shortly after the first clashing-negotiating contact the brothers and monks Cyril and Method traveled-migrated in 862 or 863 northwestward. To reach out to the (future) faithful they decided in the planning phase of their mission to “the Slavs” with consent of the Patriarch to end the Orthodox liturgy-Greek language oneness by creating a “new vernacular”. Based on southern Slavic they created the “Glagolitic” script with future macro-regional impact as Old Church Slavonic and as basis for the (later developed “Cyrillic”) script of most modern East Slavic languages. Orthodox Kievan Christians could thus celebrate the liturgy in their own language while the Western Carolingian Empire’s Christians had to follow the Rome-centered Latin version.¹⁹ While establishment of Kievan society had involved armed migration of considerable numbers of Varangians, this macro-regional linguistic innovation with popularizing intent was achieved by a mere two intellectual migrants.

Cyril and Method moved about but, rather than being labeled *vagrants*, were respected, received accommodation and sustenance, and founded churches. *Itinerancy* of the powerful and the influential from one center of mission to another, between monasteries, or from castle to castle and palace to palace, has never been categorized together with the job- and alms-seeking mobility of the weak. When, as cultural representative of the emperor, Method reached the distant Moravian and Pannonian state (modern Czech and Slovak territories), he entered spaces over whose inhabitants the Patriarch’s competitors, the bishops of the West Roman Church claimed rule. To safeguard their “rights” to the tithe-paying populations, the Western clerics ordered his arrest. If successful, his mission would have redirected common people’s tithes to eastern Orthodox clerics. The Pope, who around 870 had assigned Method the

18 Franklin/Shepard, *Emergence of the Rus*, pp. 39–80, 183–204. Conflictual relations ended after the Rus’ unsuccessful attack of 1043.

19 The Latin translations of the liturgy from the Greek had only been established in the 3rd and 4th centuries and their “canonization” was to buttress the power of the bishop/ pope in Rome. Only the Reformation of 1517 introduced “vernacular” languages into Western Christianity.

role of bishop for the Pannonian Slavs, later ordered his release; as yet, the schism was not complete.²⁰

Northward along the Dnepr, the “Christianization” project established the East Roman emperors’, Basil I (867–886) in particular, hegemony over the expanding religious institutions and preachers, over time “the Bulgars”, another many-cultured group, adopted Christianity. About a century later, perhaps in 946 or, probably in 955 or 957, Princess Olga of Kiev, the widow of Prince Igor and regent for their son, traveled to Constantinople to be baptized.²¹ Around 988, the Kievan Prince Vladimir assessed his options. He allegedly informed himself about the Latin Christian and Jewish (Khazar) faiths, then followed Olga’s example. Internally this implied that his subjects became Christian-Orthodox; externally he improved his negotiating position vis-à-vis Byzantium; for the emperors “the sphere of influence was enlarged to an extent undreamed of”. The new Kievan Metropolitan was subordinate to the Patriarchate of Constantinople and, up to mid-12th century, always was a *Rhomaïos* (or Byzantine) migrant.²² “The cultural development of Russia was to be under the aegis of Byzantium” for two centuries; East Roman elites conceptualized a pan-European “Commonwealth”, even a universal Empire of Christ.²³

The religious-political developments initiated migrations: the Kievan Church needed personnel, required churches to be built, icons to be painted. After Vladimir I conquered Cherson in 988, captured books, icons, and liturgical objects served as models for Rus’ craftsmen. “Travelling objects”, diplomatic gifts in particular, had also been inspirations for reflection, copying, adapting. Byzantine architects, artisans in the building trades, painters specialized in icons and frescoes, and mosaicists migrated to Kiev and as far as Novgorod.²⁴ Two

20 Dvornik, *Byzantine Missions among the Slavs*, pp. 73–193; Hannick, “Die Byzantinischen Missionen”, pp. 279–359.

21 Acceptance of the Christian faith first by a woman who then induces men in her family—husband or brothers—to follow is a trope in Christian chroniclers’ and narrators’ writings. Among scholars, time and place of Olga’s baptism are still controversial, cf. Kresten, “*Staatsempfänge*” im Kaiserpalast, and Tinnefeld, “Zum Stand der Olga-Diskussion”.

22 In general: Poppe, “The Original Status of the Old-Russian Church”.

23 Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, quotes pp. 304–305; Obolensky, *The Byzantine Commonwealth*; Fowden, *Empire to Commonwealth*.

24 Prinzing, “Zum Austausch diplomatischer Geschenke zwischen Byzanz und seinen Nachbarn in Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa”, 139–171. Angermann/Friedland, *Novgorod. Markt und Kontor der Hanse*; Seibt/Bosdorf/Grütter, *Transit Brügge—Novgorod*; Gormin/Yarosh, *Novgorod. Art Treasures and Architectural Monuments 11th–18th Centuries*, pp. 5–23, discuss “overseas merchants”, Byzantine and Serbian painters and travelers, Armenian motifs. Novgorod was linked by trade with the Baltic, with Kiev and Constantinople, with Smolensk in western Russia, the littoral of the White Sea, and the Transsylvanian regions, as well as with the Arabian states. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire*.

specialized labor market segments emerged: spiritual jobs for clergymen, who probably came with families since priests could marry, and jobs for producers of material utensils and symbols of the new religion. While architects-artists-artisans came by themselves or in small groups, ranking clerical personnel travelled with retinues of servants and staff. Within a year after Vladimir's baptism, in-migrating architects following Byzantine designs built the Desjatinnaja or "Tithe" Church in Kiev. In the larger cities, this first cross-in-square masonry edifice became the model for replacing the customary wooden churches. From the early 11th century, masonry building culminated in the erection, from 1037 onwards, of the "new Kiev" of Prince Jaroslav complete with a "Golden Gate" copied from a triumphal arch in Constantinople.

The successful architects, painters, and mosaicists did not attract large numbers of *Rhomaioi* specialists. Rather they trained local craftsmen who translated the Byzantine architectural-artistic language. In some cases, they had to learn basic new production methods. Experienced as carpenters building wooden churches, they had to learn to make bricks and edifices out of them. Such training of residents avoided job-competition with migrants and, since the construction enterprises for stone-churches remained local, so did profits. Did close contacts emerge between in-migrating "Greek" men and the residents, especially women? The sources recorded neither the lives of immigrant workers nor those of the artistic masters.

The *métissage* of imported and local languages of form, color, and symbols appears in the impressive early-12th-century churches of the Novgorodian St. Anthony and St. George monasteries: a Russianizing of Byzantine architectural vocabulary. Frescoes in the churches of Novgorod the Mirožskij Monastery (c.1156) of Pskov indicate to which degree visual techniques and iconographic patterns were either transmitted by migrating painters or adapted from pattern books. Illuminated manuscripts—of which the Ostromir Gospel (1057) and the *izbornik* (theological compendium) of Svjatoslav (1073) are the best examples—also testify to cultural adaptation. The variation of Byzantine conventions by the 12th century assumed distinct local expression in "schools" of style. The products of so-called "minor" arts of decorative sculpture and carving (jewelry, metal objects, ritual utensils, liturgical vessels) also combined Byzantine models, local codes of coloring, and Slavic folklore. Hand-drawn pattern books were exchanged between regions and passed on to subsequent generations. Russian literary writing, too, adapted Byzantine Greek-language texts and in-migrating metropolitans influenced the Old Russian literature. It remained narrowly religious in scope, authors attempted to adhere to Byzantine traditions. In-migrating priests and producers of religious art, however, also kept some of their exclusiveness and prevented residents' access to these

labor markets: It took some two hundred years before the explanatory texts in icons of saints, mosaics, or frescoes changed from Greek to Slavic lettering and language. Thus *Rhomaioi* “white collar workers”, priests, teachers, translators, remained in demand for long though Rus’ “blue collar workers” had learned the imported language of symbol and form and had mastered the techniques.²⁵

This trans-lation—building cultural bridges—required, on the one hand, remaining as close to the original as possible and, on the other, as close to the new audience as necessary for easy understanding. The constructed difference between “metropolitan” Byzantine and “primitive” Russian art and the hierarchies of imperial-peripheral, central-marginal, capital city-provincial require reassessment. The concept of “first peoples” and “*arts premiers*”, rather than mere “local expression”, incorporates traditional cultural expression of resident peoples with less complex structures of societal organization but complex codes of meaning and expression. Only through a share-and-change premise may metropolitan-imported and resident-established cultures be studied at par.²⁶ The resident “consumers of religious art” or “the faithful interpreting new symbolism” were not to be deterred by overly foreign, even alien, elements of form and expression. This has methodological and theoretical consequences for scholarship: contacts involve many levels of societies and codes of expression.

2.2 *Commerce: Merchant Mobility and Transport Workers*

Varangian-Rus’ princes had repeatedly expressed their interest in the wealth of Constantinople through military attacks.²⁷ However, as laid down in *De administratio imperio* (948–952) by Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos, for the emperors diplomacy, far more cost-effective than warfare, was the preferred countermove: they turned the sequence of aggressions into a sequence of treaties. Treaties of 907 (perhaps an informal agreement) and 911 regulated trade relations: travels of merchants (in this case not merchant *families*) with permission of a temporary, limited period of stay at the destination. The treaty of 944 or

25 Kazhdan et al., *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* 3, pp. 1820–1822 (s.v. “Rus, Art and Architecture”, and “Rus, Literature of”); Podskalsky, *Christentum und theologische Literatur*; Franklin, *Writing, Society and Culture in Early Rus*.

26 Musin, “Archeology of Urban Sites”.

27 Sequence of attacks: 907; the 941 surprise landing on the Bithynian coast laid waste the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus but was halted by the Byzantine fleet’s use of “Greek fire”; a fleet commanded by Prince Igor appeared on the Danube in 943; Byzantine campaign against Prince Svyatoslav with whom the Bulgars allied themselves in 971; strained relations in 1043 and surprise attack by a Rus’ fleet: the “problem” was solved by a marriage alliance, cf. Jones, *A History of the Vikings*, pp. 259–265.

945 confirmed these regulations but contained clauses more favorable to the Byzantines.²⁸ For example, the price for slaves—young men and women captured in warfare—was reduced by half. Did the most important suppliers, the Cumans, who ruled the steppes since the end of the 11th century, make up for their loss by delivering more enslaved human beings?

The merchants from Kiev, Černigov, Perejaslavl' and other cities, whose right of residence was limited to Constantinople's suburbs outside the wall, could enter the city only unarmed and in groups of no more than fifty—indicating the presence of considerable numbers. According to the treaty of 944/945, they were to be supplied with free provisions for up to one month and with support for their return voyage, presumably in fall either by boat upstream or perhaps by caravan. Protocols of protection for commerce and trade were common in the Europe of this time since the territorially fixed dynastic states' economies required the capabilities of mobile merchants for exchange relations. The Mediterranean equivalent to such protocols was hostels, which provided accommodation for merchants, pack animals and wares—*pandocheion*, *funduq-fundicum-fondaco*, *khân*. In Constantinople one 12th-century building for about one hundred men seems to have been reserved for western merchants, other regulations assigned Syrian merchants to specific quarters.²⁹ The East Roman government's third treaty, 944/45, with Rus', in addition to princes and "boiars", was signed on the merchants' side, by fewer men with Scandinavian names. Does this indicate acculturation, Slavicization, or changed internal Kievan power relations?

Once the Kievan princes, from conviction or utilitarian considerations, accepted Christianity and with the increasing usage of the Slavic language, trading connections in the transit region between Lake Ladoga and the Mediterranean changed. Constantinopolitan merchants began to offer material item with religious meaning: cult objects like icons, liturgical silver utensils, luxury products for court, metropolitan, and upper strata, glass, amphora with wine and oil, and tesserae (colored pieces of ceramics and terracotta) for mosaics. Merchants from the Kievan economy—from mid-9th to mid-12th century the macro-region's most powerful principality—exported bees wax, honey, timber, furs, and as intermediaries Cuman-captured slaves and Baltic amber. Warfare, in one case of a Kievan army of 20,000 with about 400 boats to rob rather than trade, such mobile merchants could sit out. With the aggressors repulsed

28 Ferluga, "Der byzantinische Handel nach Norden im 9. und 10. Jahrhundert", pp. 616–642, and Hellmann, "Die Handelsverträge des 10. Jahrhunderts zwischen Kiev und Byzanz", pp. 643–666.

29 Constable, *Housing the Stranger in the Mediterranean World*, pp. 12, 64–65, 147–157.

trade continued. Byzantine merchants sailed to Crimean ports but did not travel northward up the Dnepr. Chronicles list the multiplicity of cultural groups in these ports and surrounding regions. In the 13th century, the ports would enter an “Italian” period, the connection via the Silk Roads to (then Mongol controlled) Central Asia, Iran, and China continued.³⁰

Constantinople’s location and the networks of Byzantine, Arab, Syrian, western, and Kievan merchants around the year 1000 made it the most important exchange node of this segment of global—as yet tri-continental—commerce. The literati’s depictions of the Varangian-Rus’ changed from “alien” and “dangerous” to Christian practices and information about the populations and their customs. Ensconced in Christian discourse, they remained silent about merchants of different, Jewish faith. Along the Volga, gravestones prove their presence. A Jewish community existed in Constantinople and in Khazaria the top strata had converted to Judaism in the (late) 8th century. This poly-ethnic, Turk-speaking, multi-religious polity ruled the region north of the Black and Caspian seas in the 9th and 10th centuries and thus controlled the routes connecting the western part of the Silk Roads with the Kievan and Byzantine worlds. Arab traders travelled these routes as well as northern fur traders whose marketing of furs became a core element of the Kievan, Novgorodian, and Muscovite economies: Scandinavian as well as Siberian macro-regions of supply connected with regions of demand from Constantinople to Rome and Paris.³¹

Commerce over long distances involved merchants “on the Greek run” and, perhaps, small traders. Along the Dnepr route, their numbers remained limited, though from about 900 to the 1450s perhaps larger than the number of clerics and related artisans. However, transport of goods, manning and maneuvering of the ships, and personal service for merchants required considerable staffs who became part of the cultural exchanges. At anchor points and hostels the support workers, men and women, “managed” encounters in this contact zone. Though stationary in place, they mentally and physically interacted with strangers and strange customs. Whether any of the merchants settled and acculturated at either end of the annual trajectory or along the routes at a stop-over point, we do not know.

30 Albrecht, *Quellen zur Geschichte der byzantinischen Krim*; Karagianni, “Networks of medieval city-ports on the Black Sea”.

31 Preiser-Kapeller, “Das ‘jüdische’ Khanat”. On northbound Arab travelers and on Arab geographers’ knowledge see *Ibn Fadlān*, transl. Lunde/Stone. For the fur trade, see Martin, *Treasure of the Land of Darkness*.

In addition to the south-north/ north-south connections between *Rhomaioi* and Rus' eastward routes extended into the steppes and as far as China. The Crimean ports became the nodes of exchange. To the west, the Danube and land routes connected Constantinople to northern Italy, the "Frankish" realm and its successor *regnae*. An association of merchants of Jewish faith connected "Frankland" and the Chinese Empire through trans-hemispheric overland routes and the Mediterranean-Indian-Southeast Asian seas. In his famous *Book of Roads and Kingdoms* (885) the Arab postmaster Ibn Khordadbeh described the "al-Radhaniyya" merchants. Multilingual—Greek, Arabic and Persian, "Frankish" and "Andalusian", as well as Slavic—they exported from the west and elsewhere eunuchs, slave boys and girls, and swords; from the north furs; from textile manufacturing centers brocades; and from the east silks, spices, and aromatics, incense in particular. Constantinople was one of their nodes.³²

2.3 *Forced Migrations: Slaves*

In the East Roman Empire, slaves were born of slave mothers of many cultures or became enslaved through self-sale or kidnapping. Enslaving of military and civilian other-cultured captives was part of warfaring armies, of pirates, and of the trans-European and -Mediterranean trade. Captives came from Slavic lands, from the steppes, from or via the Franks' lands, and Arabia. Given East Rome's almost constant state-of-war and both Arab and Carolingian wars of expansion, supply was unlimited.³³ From the Carolingian realm in the 8th/9th century to the Cuman realm of the 12th/13th century and from Muslim Iberia to Syria, warfare and raiding were closely entwined. Byzantine raiders captured slaves from Aegean and Mediterranean islands and the shores of the Adriatic. Among European powers warfare had to pay for itself and thus soldiers were paid in slaves or from the proceeds of their sale. When Emperor Justinian II (r. 685–695, 705–711) captured Cherson in the early 8th century, he ordered all inhabitants to be killed but the soldiers refused—they needed to sell them for their wages. Whole populations of captured cities were sold or transported into imperial slavery. Annual payments of tribute might involve consignments of gold, slaves, and horses. Around 960, after victories in Crete, Cilicia, and Aleppo, Constantinople was said to be full of slaves.³⁴

32 Preiser-Kapeller, *Jenseits von Rom und Karl dem Großen*, pp. 170–172. Cf. also Drauschke, *Zwischen Handel und Geschen*; Ciociltan, *The Mongols and the Black Sea Trade*.

33 The reverse, sale of captured Byzantine soldiers into slavery outside the Empire, is beyond the scope of this essay as is the return migration and cultural impact of enslaved East Romans when ransomed.

34 Rotman, *Byzantine Slavery and the Mediterranean World*.

The major transit ways were Dnepr, Don River to Sea of Azov, or Don-Volga route via Itil and the Caspian Sea for captives of Russian Slavic and steppe group cultures; men and women from Western Slav and Saxon groups came via Raffelstetten, for instance, in Bavaria either along the Danube or across the Alps and Venice; Bulgars came from the steppes and Balkans; again others came via Frankland and its Mediterranean ports. Slaves included Christians, who according to the Latin Church were not to be sold to Muslim buyers: The sellers therefore used Jewish merchants as intermediaries. Again, others, of Islamic faith, came from the Arab world. Depending on their skills and the interests of owners, slaves in East Rome worked as unskilled laborers, skilled artisans, scribes, or in the domestic sphere. They could become foremen or shop managers. Imperial slaves provided the labor for public works and mining. Enslaved artisans from cities with a reputation for high quality production might be transported to imperial workshops or be sold to private entrepreneurs and continue in their skills as gold embroiderers, coppersmiths, armed guards, notaries (*notarios*), overseers. Thus, in terms of cultural origin, skills, and position slaves formed an essential and sizeable part of the Byzantine cultural fabric.³⁵

2.4 *Marriage Migration among the Nobility*

Few in number but influential in terms of cultural exchange women's marriage migrations were part of the European nobility's strategies to forge alliances or strengthen existing ones, to acquire territories or establish friendly relations with competing-cooperating families. This trans-European mobility included the Kievan and, later, the Muscovite courts as well as Byzantium's ruling families. Women might also act as cultural mediators on their own as indicated by Princess Olga. Empress Irene (r. 775–802) and Charlemagne entertained a marriage project for a daughter and a son. Prince Vladimir, when supporting Emperor Basil II during an internal uprising, received the promise to wed the emperor's sister, "purple born" Anna.³⁶ Her voyage—like those of other noble brides—involved large retinues. Male and female retainers and servants would

35 Rotman, *Byzantine Slavery and the Mediterranean World*, esp. pp. 57–130; McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy*, pp. 729–777. For particular trades see Gordon, *The Breaking of a Thousand Swords*; Skirda, *La traite des slaves*.

36 Designation for sons and daughters of the Byzantine imperial couples referred to birth in the Porphyra, a room paneled with Egyptian purple porphyry. To work imported stone artisans in the building trades like jewelers working precious stones from afar had to acquire the skills. They might be trained, in the case of porphyry, by in-migrating Egyptian craftsmen or undertake an apprenticeship migration to Egypt. Cf. for instance Pseudo-Kodinos, ed. and transl. Macrides/Munitiz/Angelov, p. 27.

stay in the employment of the bride (rarely: groom) and might form an enclave at the receiving court. The marriage of “Holy (West) Roman” Emperor Otto II with Theophanu, niece of the Byzantine Emperor, in 972, provoked anti-foreigner sentiments among some top-level German-speakers.³⁷

When maritime trade routes shifted—but were not interrupted—with the presence of Arab-Muslim fleets from the 7th century; when the Latin Churches “crusading” warfare resulted in tensions and cooperations from the 11th century; and when Byzantium faced the power of the Norman Kingdom of Sicily (est. 1130), marriage migration increasingly included the western Mediterranean World. Emperor Manuel I (r. 1143–1180)—whose mother was the daughter of the royal Hungarian Arpad and Swabian couple—married the sister-in-law of German Hohenstaufen King Conrad III, Bertha of Sulzbach. The rationale, an alliance for a crusade and to fight the Norman King, Roger II, of Sicily, came to naught. Roger II seized Corfu as well as Corinth and Thebes in 1147. In these wealthiest cities of the Greek segment of Byzantium and core locations of the empire’s silk industries, originating centuries earlier from trading connections to China, artisans produced for courts—brides and grooms. The Norman King “kidnapped” silk weavers who, after forced economic migration, developed Palermo’s recently established silk industry. The ancestors of Roger and his warriors, like the Varangians along the Dnepr, had come from Scandinavia but lived in Normandy.³⁸

Another kind of involuntary elite mobility was migration of hostages as part of early medieval family politics and diplomacy. “Hostages”, like delegates, were cultural mediators rather than pawns. When Peter, Tsar of Bulgaria (929–69), in a post-war diplomatic exchange married the Emperor’s granddaughter Maria Eirene Lakapene, sons born from this union had to live at the court in Constantinople. Such men and women, when returning “home” after cultural immersion, could become particularly valued mediators between court cultures. Ambassadors, too, could represent one side and easily take a role on the other side; they were intermediaries valued for their skills rather than “loyalists” of one of the contracting parties. Bi- or many-cultured capabilities were valued, several papal delegates to Byzantium later became popes themselves. Mobility was high, travels manifold in the Roman-Byzantine realm and the Mediterranean World.³⁹

37 Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia*. For a systematic survey of Byzantine diplomatic marriages in the 6th–12th century see Panagopoulou, *Οι διπλωματικοί γάμοι στο Βυζάντιο*, and for the especially prominent case of Theophanu see Panagopoulou, *Θεοφανώ. Η Βυζαντινή αυτοκρατορία*.

38 Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, pp. 381–394.

39 Kosto, *Hostages in the Middle Ages*.

3 Trans-European Routes to East Rome's Military Labor Market

Migration of soldiers was, from ancient times, part of migrations to wage work but, until recently, has not often been studied as such. Surplus men from rural regions had to out-migrate and, in times of endless wars between dynasties over territorial possessions or within dynastic families over succession, jobs were plentiful. Germanic groups for instance had served as Roman soldiers since the time of the Principate and continued to do so during the Late Roman and Byzantine period. Other men had been recruited within the Empire, since the 7th century reorganized into military "themes".⁴⁰

By the 10th century, the civil government—in strong competition with the military aristocracy—had converted conscripted men into a self-sustaining peasant-soldiery at the borders. As settled border guard, they could no longer be recruited into mobile fighting units and the armies consisted of recruited men from the *foederati*, mercenaries. Many came with wives and children, formed families with women from the train, or found partners from among local women. Already in the 9th century, the military following of one rebel against the emperor, "Thomas, the Slav", consisted—in addition to Byzantines—of "Hagarenes, Egyptians, Indians, Persians, Assyrians, Armenians, Chaldeans, Iberians, Zechs, and Kabirs", as well as "Slavs, Huns, Vandals, Getes, Manichees, Lazses, and Alans". 10th-century mercenaries included Frankish and other West European men, Armenians, Bulgarians, Turks, or came from conquered populations like Pecheneg men with their families.⁴¹ From the 10th century, the commercial treaties with Kievan rulers provided options for southbound military migrants. The Varangian-Rus' gained the right to participate in campaigns as soldiers and sailors, probably as whole units. Sending off unruly young men eager to fight to foreign armies was a strategy of rulers to rid their realm of internally disruptive elements: involuntary "export" or self-decided migration to prove manly fighting spirit.⁴² In the campaign against Muslim Arabs on Crete in 911 some 700 men were Varangian-Rus' and their seafaring expertise induced sailors from port cities in Dalmatia to join East Roman fleets. During the 987–989 revolt of leading members of the landed military elite, Basil II (r. 976–1025) called for help on the Kievan Prince who sent some 6,000

40 Kühn, *Die Byzantinische Armee im 10. und 11. Jahrhundert*; Haldon, *Warfare, State and Society in the Byzantine World*.

41 Scharf, *Foederati*; Preiser-Kapeller, "Central Peripheries".

42 Examples include a Japanese Shogun's dispatch of an army against Korea in 1592 or the service of surplus sons of the gentry in Britain's colonial armies and administrations.

men.⁴³ This unit, originally from Sweden, had helped Vladimir to regain his throne, and, the goal achieved, the men needed a task as well as wages.⁴⁴ After quelling the revolt, the Scandinavian men remained in the Emperor's service as, some authors argued, Varangian Družina or Palace Guard; others dispute the organized character before the late 11th century.

These Norsemen's migrations assumed a transcontinental dimension when the soldier-migrants spread word of job opportunities to their home communities and the diaspora. Men came (1) transcontinentally via Russia's south-flowing rivers; (2) seaborne via settlements along the coasts of the North Sea and (3) via Sicily, Byzantium, and what Roman and Eastern Christianity called the "Holy Land". (4) Some crossed the western part of the continent and came via the Provence (France) or via the "southern" Italy- or Rome-route. From the 11th century, Anglo-Saxons and Danes came from England and were sometimes called "refugees" from the restructuring of society after the Norman conquest of 1066. In this case, notables with families also came—according to contemporary counting in several hundred ships. Later, members of the Varangian Guard recited their good wishes in front of the emperor in the palace of Constantinople in English ("enklinisti").⁴⁵ Often generically called "Normans" by historians,⁴⁶ the soldiers came from a wide diaspora and were named "Frankoi" or "Keltoi" by contemporaries.⁴⁷ Mention of Constantinople in Icelandic sagas demonstrates that the northwest-trans-European-and-Mediterranean connections entered popular memory.⁴⁸

Whether Byzantine's popular memory about these or other soldiers was a positive one remains an open question. The "Norman" mercenaries quelled a revolt around 1040 and poly-ethnic units, whether strategically stationed or

43 Whether these troops came with "train", i.e. with women and children and service personnel, is not clear from the sources.

44 Benediktz, *Varangians of Byzantium*, pp. 32–53. An example for high mobility was the later Norwegian King Harold (1047–66) who had had to flee to Kiev, lived in Constantinople 1034–1043, fought in Sicily, then returned to Norway (ibid. pp. 54–102, for other travelers, pp. 193–222).

45 Vasiliev, "The Opening Stages of the Anglo-Saxon Immigration to Byzantium", 247–258; Ciggaar, "L'émigration anglaise à Byzance après 1066", 301–342; Shepard, "The English and Byzantium: A Study of Their Role in the Byzantine Army in the Later Eleventh Century", 53–92; Pappas, "English Refugees in the Byzantine Armed Forces": For the use of "English" language cf. Pseudo-Kodinos, ed. and transl. Macrides/Munitiz/Angelov, pp. 154–155, and Scheel, *Skandinavien und Byzanz*, p. 883 (B118).

46 Men from the north might also be designated as "Russians", cf. Kühn, *Byzantinische Armee*, p. 213 and *passim*.

47 A voluminous older literature, often concerned with men's "heroic deeds", has exploited this topic. Dawkins, "The Later History of the Varangian Guard", 39–46.

48 Scheel, *Skandinavien und Byzanz*, with a systematic survey of Scandinavian sources.

marching across vast spaces, had to feed themselves, their horses and pack animals, and possibly their families. For human food and animal fodder they or specific foraging units had to “extract surplus wealth” from villages along the routes. These families may not have agreed with the assumption that they were parting with “surplus”.⁴⁹ By the 11th century, military service had been replaced by war tax levies. Imperial soldiery in general and Norman elite troops in particular contributed to a complex “us” and “them” imagery in which neither “us” nor “them” was of one culture.

4 Changing Relations: Steppe Peoples, Crusaders, the Rise of Moscow, the Coming of the Turks

From mid-11th century onwards ethno-cultural groups of the steppes moved into the lands of the Rus’ and, while East Rome’s territory contracted before the advancing Seljuq Turk-speaking groups, the Russian principalities in the 13th century came under Mongol rule. This pressure from the east combined with the attractions of the west changed Russian rulers’ politics and diplomacy from the north-south to an east-west orientation. From the perspective of the Byzantine Empire socio-political distance to the Russian principalities also increased since the steppe groups’ advance into the east-west corridor north of the Black Sea increased risk and cost of traversing the region. In the 10th and 11th century the imperial authorities negotiated and cooperated with mobile and aggressive “nomads” like the Pechenegs, Uzes, and Cumans, in order to keep the Magyars as well as the Bulgars at a distance. “Imperial” policies betrayed weakness: To settle the Pechenegs, Byzantium had to buy off the leaders with presents and with imperial titles. In the 12th century, the Kiev rulers kept the riverways to the Black Sea and Byzantium open by using Turkic steppe-nomad groups like the Berendei as border securing personnel. The 12th-century Komnenes rulers revitalized recruitment of native-born troops and employed many Frankish, Turkish and other warriors.⁵⁰

In the Mediterranean southwest, the Normans from Sicily curtailed the reach of Byzantium’s trading and imperial fleets. The worst threat, however, came from the Latin Christians. As crusaders—under the lead of Constantinople’s main and powerful competitor Venice, in the process of expanding from city-state to regional empire—they attacked and sacked the city in 1204. From this destruction and mass flight—the number of inhabitants shrank

49 Haldon, *Warfare, State and Society*, pp. 4, 284–292.

50 Curta, *The Other Europe in the Middle Ages*.

from about maybe 400,000 to 35,000—Constantinople would never recover and the epithet “Latin” became the Byzantine equivalent of “Tatar” in Muscovy or “Hun” in Frankish lands.⁵¹

In consequence of the combined external threats, the burden of the cost of defense especially after the reconquest of Constantinople in 1261 became almost unbearable for the population. The empire’s soldiery, like the marauding-migrating-adventuring crusader masses, consisted of “foreigners”, men alone, with families or partners, with large trains providing services. In addition to the—sometimes separately listed—Varangian and Russian men, Pecheneg and Cuman men as well as Turk-speaking men from among the threatening eastern neighbors came, and, from the equally threatening West crusading vagrants of Italian, French, German, and English languages. Furthermore: from the Balkans Hungarian and Bulgarian men, from the Caucasian Mountains Abkhaz and Alan men, and from the southeast Arab men. Some of those serving—and their cultural groups or segments of them—acculturated.⁵²

Immediately after wresting rule from the western crusader powers and the reestablishment of the Byzantine state, the emperor in 1262 forged diplomatic and commercial ties with the eastern Golden Horde, thus benefitting from the *pax mongolica* options for east-west trade. The Jochid rulers were overlords of the north-eastern principalities including Moscow. Viewed in this context, the move of the Metropolitan from Kiev to Moscow may have reflected a Byzantine strategy rather than a disengagement with the Patriarch in Constantinople.⁵³

During the 14th-century step-by-step recovery of the several Russian principalities from the rule of the “Tatars” led to an ascent of Muscovy. Its ruler’s massive building program attracted new migrant artists, architects, and craftsmen who imported the most recent trends in Constantinopolitan painting as far as monasteries and secular urban residences in northeastern Russia. Once again, the sources recorded but few names—with the exception of “Theophanes, the Greek” who, having gained renown by painting churches in Constantinople and Galata, by decorating stone churches in Chalcedon (Bithynia) and Kaffa (Crimea), arrived in Novgorod and Nižnij Novgorod in the 1370s, moved to Moscow in 1395, and seems to have stayed there till 1405. Like his 11th- and 12th-century predecessors, he worked with indigenous craftsmen and he co-authored a book of models for the training of Russian artists fusing

51 Cf. Mitsiou, “Feinde, Freunde, Konkurrenten”.

52 Vásáry, *Cumans and Tatars*, pp. 114–121, mislabeled acculturation as “Hellenization”. A Byzantine army of 1259, according to one source, for instance consisted of 1,500 Hungarian and 300 German mercenaries, a cavalry of 2,000 Cumans, 1,500 Turks, 600 Serbians, an unspecified number of Bulgarians, and Greek archers.

53 Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia*.

Byzantine (court) and Russian (folk) styles. He influenced the icon painting of Andrej Rublev (c.1360–1430), who in a dialogue between internal and external forms of visual expression “combined delicate and highly refined Palaiologan artistic techniques and sophisticated theological concepts with the strong linear traditions seen in Novgorodian painting”.⁵⁴ At the same time and depending on the security of the route, Russian pilgrims still traveled in considerable numbers to Constantinople. Some settled, others continued, if means permitted, to Jerusalem, describing themselves as *xenos*, wanderer or outsider, to the distant but relevant shrines.⁵⁵

Post-crusader Constantinople, once as first “new” Rome the destination of migrant nobles from (old) Rome in Italy, became an emigration region more than a millennium later when the Ottomans conquered the city in 1453.⁵⁶ While parts of the elite stayed and cooperated with the new rulers, Orthodox faithful and priests with their families as well as secular families and individuals, provided they had the means, departed the newly Islamic realm. The majority of these elite migrants headed to Italian cities and powerful Venice.⁵⁷ Often referred to as scholars, the migrants included impoverished members of Constantinople’s upper strata, who earned their living as teachers of Greek in wealthy Roman families. For those selecting the old south-north axis, now to Moscow,⁵⁸ Novgorod, and Kiev, Islamic “push” was supplemented by Muscovite “pull” since, at the beginning of the 14th century, Metropolitan Peter (1308–1326) had transferred his residence to Moscow and had set in motion an internal migration of clerical personnel. By the century’s end, Grand Prince Vasily (Basil) I of Moscow (r. 1389–1425) had rejected the supremacy of the Byzantine emperors though not of the Patriarch. In a further step, Prince Ivan III (r. 1462–1505), having secured power in the interior and adjacent principalities,⁵⁹ married the niece of the last Emperor of Byzantium, Sofia (Zoë) Palaiologos, to

54 Kazhdan et al., *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* 3, p. 2064 (s.v. “Theophanes ‘the Greek’”).

55 Majeska, *Russian Travelers to Constantinople*.

56 During the political and religious power struggles, Emperor John VIII Palaiologos, at the Council of Ferrara-Florence, 1438/39, accepted the preeminence of the Roman Pope in vain hope of support against the approaching “Turks”. After this “sell-out” the Metropolitan in Moscow could no longer defend the authority of Constantinople’s Patriarch, cf. Preiser-Kapeller, “Das Patriarchat von Konstantinopel und die russischen Kirchen”.

57 Harris, *Greek Emigres in the West*.

58 The label “Third Rom” seems to have been a widespread misconception. Ostrowski, “Moscow the Third Rom’ as Historical Ghost”, pp. 170–179.

59 Conquest of Novgorod (1471/1478), Tver (1485), and Lithuania (1492/1501) involved forced migrations: expulsion of Novgorod’s Hanseatic (German-language) merchants and deportation of the resident upper classes to Central Russia. In general, Crummey, *The Formation of Muscovy*; Ostrowski, *Muscovy and the Mongols*.

secure his claim as successor of the East Roman emperor and his standing among Europe's monarchs. He assumed the title of "Tsar" in 1478.⁶⁰ Changed power relation brought new private north-south connections: Russian nobles sent funds to restore Christian churches in Constantinople including the Hagia Sophia, in bad repair since the Latin-Frankish soldiers' and clerics' pillaging. For the refugees-emigrants, acceptance of Tsar's and Metropolitan's new roles increased options for office-holding in Muscovy.

With Byzantium gone, the tsars began a west-east and south-east process of incorporating foreign experts to limit the power of the Boyar families distinguished neither by training nor by capabilities. From the south, where Constantinople no longer played a role, craftsmen, artists, and architects came from many Mediterranean, especially Italian, societies. They rebuilt the Moscow citadel, transforming it into the Kremlin as fortified palace.⁶¹ From the west, mostly from German-language regions, experts came and filled military and administrative positions or, as merchants, expanded the early 14th- and 15th-century commercial contacts between Kiev and Nuremberg to other exchange nodes, intensified trade with the fur-producing Siberian spaces as well as southward.⁶² In the Ottoman realm, sultans introduced different—yet in some cases similar—processes of migration and transcultural state-building: Non-ethnic elites and ranking Greek as well as Christian *devşirme* administrators prevented ethno-Turkish overlordship just as German-background administrators reduced Russian nobles' power. Both states transported populations to wherever needed to further economic development.⁶³ Rather than "western" merchants as in the case of Muscovy, the Ottoman rulers called Sephardic Jewish families expelled from the Iberian Catholic societies for their human capital and commercial networks. Constantinople, now Istanbul, continued to attract migrants, but different ones.⁶⁴

60 In Byzantium the Hellenized term "Kaisar" (Caesar)—tsar—was used for designated successors, the emperors were called "Basileus" or "Augustus", cf. Guiland, "Le César".

61 Among the migrants from Italy were Pietro Antoni Solari, Antonio Gislardi, Marco Ruffo, Aristotile Fioravanti—several of them recruited by the Venetian ambassador upon request of Ivan III. Ruffo's name was Russianized as Mark Frjasin ("Mark Foreigner" or, perhaps, "the Frank"). The migrants introduced Italian Renaissance styles, partly Byzantine, in fact, through westward fleeing priests, intellectuals, architects, craftsmen and others, cf. Hurst, *Italians and the New Byzantium*.

62 Kappeler, *Rußlands erste Nationalitäten*; Alef, "Das Erlöschen des Abzugsrechts der Moskauer Bojaren", 7–74.

63 Sunderland, "Catherine's Dilemma: Resettlement and Power in Russia 1500s–1914", and Kessler, "Measuring Migration in Russia: a Perspective of Empire, 1500–1900".

64 Faruqi, *Travel and Artisans in the Ottoman Empire*.

5 Conclusion: Migration and Agency

Those arriving in Byzantium departed from, transited through, and arrived in specific local and micro-regional expressions or manifestations of complex societies characterized by economic structure, level of urbanization, demographic characteristics, social hierarchies, legal and political structures and processes, systems of education and training, ethno-cultural composition, religion or religions, previous migratory experiences and patterns. Contrary to everyday language usage, neither did generic *Rhomaioi* or Byzantines nor “the Russians” or “the Normans” migrate. No one, whether princess, merchant, or commoner, departed from one unitary Byzantine state or arrived in one monolithic Russia. Architects came from cities, Constantinople in particular and migrated to cities where investments in churches, monasteries, secular building permitted successful sale of their capabilities: Kiev at first, Novgorod and Moscow later. Migration history needs to be explicit about the sociology and human geography of migrant decision-making.

Each and every process of migration—as individual, in families, in groups—required agency: a decision to migrate or not to migrate within the context of discourses and practices of mobility in local, regional, and statewide contexts; evaluation of obstacles and options along the route; acquisition of funds for the trip (and a calculation of the loss of income while on the road or river rather than at a workplace); knowledge of routes; anchor points (earlier migrants) at the destination. In the case of migration under constraints, the powerful—like princesses moving in marriage migrations concocted between political dynasties—could carry their material cultural baggage and bring retainers with them. In forced migrations like those of enslaved men and women whether sold by Steppe or Frankish traders, the commodified “objects” had to find ways to survive, make life acceptable, perhaps even worthwhile. Those deprived of their liberty were socialized (young) adults, not passivized workers or culturally empty vessels. At their involuntary destination they, too, provided cultural input. Self-willed and forced men and women depart from a specific location with a local socialization and move to a specific destination characterized by local-regional societal structures and, ideally, with kin, acquaintances, or fellow craftsmen as connecting persons. Migration is trans-local in the frame of (trans-) regional economic and social options in the larger frame of trans-state or inter-national legal-political structures. Analytically, migration is *trans-cultural* rather than *transnational* within or between local societies or larger states, *transstate*.⁶⁵

65 Hoerder, “Nützliche Subjekte”, 7–34; Harzig/Hoerder/Gabaccia, *What is Migration History?*; Hoerder, “From Migrants to Ethnics”, pp. 211–262. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

Migration and cultural transfer are inextricably entwined. Analysis of migration is analysis of trans-lation with an over-coming or conquest of distance and with trans-position of ways of expression. Migrants and residents cooperated while transforming Christian teachings, rites, frescoes, and church architecture into a symbolism accessible to both sides. Thus, migration research is also the study of arts and economics. The production and materiality of artifacts are as processual as migrants' lives. Since migrants cannot leave any personal accounts or other sources, material evidence become paramount to the understanding of trajectories: patterns of weaving, use of building materials, creation of icons, frescoes and other objects. Analysis of cultural *métissage*, as in the Constantinople-Kiev connection, connects humans' spatial mobility and cultural-material exchange relations. While art historians may be content with analyzing art-ifacts and philologists with texts, such "signs" provide no more than the starting point for the study of cultures-on-the-move: Who migrated, who accomplished the exchange (and fusion) over space? Arab-Islamic coins or Abbasid silver-*dirhams* in graves of Scandinavian nobles like Jewish gravestones at trading points along the river routes provide important if circumstantial evidence about migrants. The frescoes in Novgorodian churches indicate that in-migrant and local artists communicated as well as the types of fusion they achieved. Byzantine jewelry and liturgical vessels, traded to Kiev, inspired local craftsmen to produce "imitations" which, in their way, were genuine local expressions. "In Byzantine style" is a statement about distant, highly refined art producers or art-isans; about the status of the jewelry's or tool's owners; about processes of exchange rather than mere migration.

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