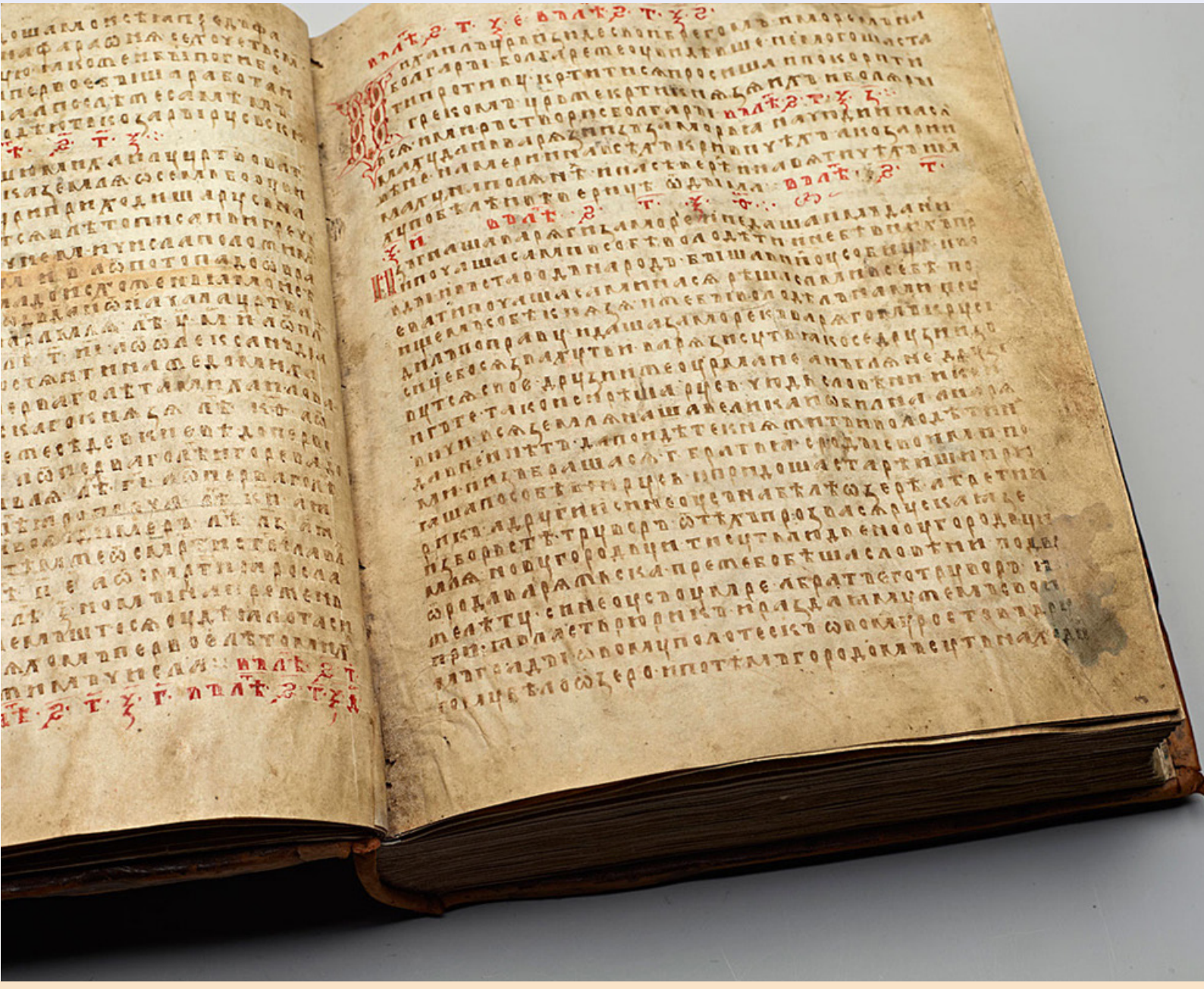
Past and Present in Medieval Chronicles

Edited by Mari Isoaho



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Cover photo: *Laurentian Chronicle*, parchment codex dated to 1377. The page describes the period from 6367 to 6370 AM (859-862 AD) of the *Primary Chronicle*, explaining how the Varyags, known as the Rus', came to rule from beyond the sea.

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Introduction

Mari Isoaho
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No reader can appreciate the beauty of a song unless he looks at all the verses. In the same way, no man can appreciate the beauty of universal order and governance unless he sees it as a whole. No man lives long enough to witness all history with his own eyes; nor can he foresee the future for himself. So the Holy Spirit provides him with the book of Holy Writ, whose length tallies with the course of universal governance, whole and entire. – St Bonaventure, Breviloquium; Prologue

When various European groups embraced their new Christian faith, formerly illiterate barbarians came into contact with a completely new way of looking at time. The Scriptures presented a Divine Plan for humankind, and for Gentiles the cultural transformation meant a significant change in their view of time, as their clock of history now began to tick. Not only biblical history, but also the history of all people became meaningful, and the past in a form of written history had a profound literary example in the Bible itself.

St Bonaventure's statement, quoted above, testifies to an attitude that fundamentally shaped the content and the ideology of medieval chronicles: the idea that universal governance existed over all and that human history was God's creation. When God created the world, the steady flow of time began, a time that was limited and at some point would come to an end. This idea of a clear beginning and end dominated the medieval mental world, and human acts were seen through this prism in the chronicles. The Scriptures described the beginning and anticipated the end; only the time span between the present and the end remained hidden. The secrecy of the end was deeply felt and often reacted to in the prophecies, where popular apocalypses lifted the veil of secrecy by means of revelations.

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The medieval way of looking at time – past, present, and future – is abundantly evident in the historiographical genre of chronicles. The articles in the present volume represent the papers of an international symposium entitled *Past and Present in Medieval Chronicles*, which took place in Helsinki in January of 2013. One of the focal points of the conference was to determine the ways in which the literary etiquette of the medieval chronicle influenced the descriptions of the past and the visions of the future. Research into western and eastern chronicle traditions has largely been conducted in separate camps under the headings of 'medieval' and 'Byzantine' studies. The conference whose papers are published here brought together historians from both Greek and Latin chronicle traditions, including annals and Scandinavian sagas, as well as medieval Russian chronicles. As an historiographical genre, the chronicle is a subject that avoids strict rules and sets boundaries. It incorporates a way of seeing the past, which flourished especially during the Middle Ages, but which had deep roots in antiquity from whence it developed into a great Christian narrative. The chronicles have also survived surprisingly close to our modern era. No doubt their longevity and wide popularity rested on the ready accessibility of their mental world, from which their views of the past, present and future were easily adopted. Even though deeply rooted in medieval mentality, the chronicles themselves were seldom written according to strict rules. Even if they often rested on tradition, they were sometimes surprisingly independent and original.

The word 'chronicle' has a strong medieval echo, since historiographical writings in the Middle Ages are usually seen in something of an epic light, as a means of creating a distant world of beginnings and forefathers. Despite the medieval focus of the conference, chronicles were discussed across a broad time perspective. In our exploration we travelled both geographically and chronologically, beginning in antiquity, then moving east to study Byzantine traditions, thereafter entering into the realm of the Rus' *letopisi* and Scandinavian sagas and finally continuing well into modern times with discussions of later western chronicles. The conference brought together scholars from various disciplines in both eastern and western medieval studies, which is essential to understanding the wider context of how people in the Middle Ages saw their place in history. In a similar way this publication makes a contribution to modern chronicle studies through its broad interdisciplinary approach.

Modern historians make distinctions and use words and categories with strict meanings. This also applies to classifying medieval genres of history writing, such as annals, chronicles, sagas or histories, to mention only the most widespread. Ancient authors or those of the Middle Ages, however, were not so precise in their terminology in describing the past. In general, chronicle writing is considered a

Christian way of writing, where time is viewed as sacred. However, this Christian view was far from the only way of classifying a chronicle, as there were also family chronicles, dynastic chronicles, regional chronicles and many others.

One of the issues brought out in our conference was the flexibility of the medieval chronicle as a genre. The question was raised of what makes an historical account a chronicle. The simplest answer can be found in the roots of the word itself. As a term, 'chronicle' is derived from the Greek work χρονικός (meaning chronological), which in turn is an adjective from the Greek word χρόνος (meaning time). 'Chronicle' was used as a title of a work from at least as early as approximately the first century BCE. However, well into the Middle Ages, Greek writers preferred the adjectival forms, as in Ephraem of Ainus' χρονική ἱστορία ('Chronological History'), or they opted for the noun χρονογραφία ('Chronography'). The term 'chronography' was widely used among historians in antiquity and meant any record of historical events precisely dated through reference to an absolute chronographical system.[1] In antiquity both ιστορικός (*istorikos*) and χρονογράφος (*khronografos*) were used to refer either to a description of a shorter, local event or to a larger, universal compilation. However, from very early on the chronicles were understood as a concise means of presenting history, with large time periods being distilled into manageable overviews.

In Latin no classical writer called his own work a chronicle, although modern scholars later applied the terminology to early works. The term *chronicus* ('chronological') first appears in the first century AD in Pliny the Elder's *Natural History*, both as an adjective (*chroniki libri*) and as a noun (*chronika*). Jerome translates Eusebius of Caesarea (ca 260–340) with the descriptive adjective *chronici canones* (chronological tables). Only with the first Christian chronicles during the fourth century does the word become a standard term.[2]

Very close to the concept of a chronicle are annals, which are primarily a monastic historiographical type of document that describes the past year by year. The Latin form *annales* is found in the second century BCE as a term for historical writing organised according to a sequence of years (*anni*). 'Annalistic writing' means a style of reporting that is closely focused on a particular year, identified numerically at the beginning of each entry; typical of this style is its brevity, its list format and its tendency to report without comment or evaluation.[3]

1 In modern usage, the terms 'chronographic' and 'chronography' are most frequently used in connection with early Greek chronology, referring to pre-Eusebian time, that is, a time before the present standard time measurement. Mosshammer 1979, 85–86.

2 Dunphy 2011 a, 275.

3 With regard to a complete work, the word 'annals' is always used in the plural. In the singular 'annal' refers to a specific year cited within the work. Dunphy 2011b, 45–52.

Another way of defining chronicles is through narrative strategy. Chronology has been one of the features distinguishing the chronicles from histories, a term reserved for more elaborately woven stories and a greater sense of emplotment.[4] Hayden White classified annals as the lowest form of historical writing when it comes to narrative strategy and especially to the notion of emplotment. Medieval annals are usually considered poorly developed as narratives: they are dry pieces of information in chronological order without analysis or a sense of development or historical consciousness, and we modern readers tend to condemn them for their inability to transform sets of events into a horizontal-linear process. As a genre, chronicles, by contrast, are considered further developed in terms of narrativity, yet they also suffer from open-endedness and unfinished stories, which was one reason the chronicle was never acknowledged as representing the genre of history.[5] Chronicles are conceived as monographs, whereas annals are intended to grow organically, year after year, as another annal is added to the list of entries. The other difference is that the main focus of the annalist is on current affairs of the most recent history, whereas the chronicler has a longer perspective – 'from Adam to me'.

It thus gradually becomes clear that the universal idea of wholeness in history has often been mentioned as an important feature of chronicles. However, annals often contain references to the more distant past and may have a combination of styles. The Russian *letopisi* and most of the *Primary Chronicle* of Kiev from the early twelfth century, for example, fall into both categories; they are annals in the sense that every single year is listed, yet chronicles in the sense that there is a clear narrative and a pattern of seeing wholeness in the events. The Russian medieval chronicles are peculiar combinations of the western annalistic tradition and the Byzantine chronicles, which were not arranged by yearly entries, but according to the reigns of emperors.

The third and perhaps the most significant way to answer the question of what is a chronicle derives from the tradition inherited from Eusebius.[6] This tradition sees the function of a chronicle as recording events through time with a universal meaning. Between the Creation and the End, certain happenings have special significance, because of their particular relationship and their position in Sacral Time.[7] The Christian world chronicle, as established by Eusebius, provided a model for universal history, whereby contemporary times were firmly located within the perspective of God's plan for humankind, and its annalistic layout became a pattern for chronicle writing both in the Greek East and the Latin

4 In outlining the narrative techniques of different kind of categories of history writing, Hayden White emphasised that the most characteristic pattern of thinking about the past is that of historical consciousness. Following his classical notions of the narrative in history writing, White pointed out that we tend to have a distinctive and strong need for a perspective on history and a certain kind of demand for closure in an historical story, which at the same time is a demand for moral meaning. White 1987, 24.

5 White 1987, 5–6, 16–22.

6 Guenée 1973, 997–1016. See also Guimon 2012, 69–92.

7 See Chesnut 1986, 66–68.

West. From this great Christian narrative, *interpretatio christiana*, which constructed Christian identity in relation to both Jews and pagans, we begin our series of articles with Maijastina Kahlos. In her interpretation Christians were the heirs of Moses and the prophets and eventually domesticated the Greco-Roman past, taking in what was considered good and useful there as part of the Christian heritage. Kahlos shows how clearly the chronicles of Eusebius and Orosius (ca 375 – ca 418) reflected the current situation of the Roman Empire at the time of their writing, pointing out their input to Christian apologetic writings. She shows how they reinterpreted the Greco-Roman past to explain and legitimize their own present – in Eusebius's case, articulating the Christian triumph in the course of the 'Constantinian turn' and in Orosius's case, to defend the Christian Empire in the early fifth-century crisis, precipitated by the barbarian attacks on Rome. Thus, the past and present of the early Christian writers were shaped in constant interaction between the historian and society, in contention and in debate.

Eusebius for his part functioned as the great example to the line of later Byzantine chroniclers: John Malalas (ca 490–570s), George Sýncellos (d. after 810), Theófanes Confessor (ca 760–817) and George Hamartolus (d. before 867), whose work, continued by Simeon Logothete up to the year 948, was finally translated into Slavic.[8] A Greek version of a Christian theological conception of universal history became prominent in Christianised Rus'. The term 'chronicle' is traditionally used in the English or German languages in referring to the Rus' chronicles that the Rus' bookmen themselves called *letopisi*. The term *letopis'* is a Slavonic adaptation from the Greek word *chronograph* (χρονογράφος) – formed from the words *chronos* (time) and *graphein* (to record), thus signifying 'a record of time'. A deep consciousness of time is thus inherent in the whole genre of *letopisanie*.[9]

Even though the Christian interpretation played a leading role in the Byzantine chronicles, Staffan Wahlgren shows in his article that the authors had numerous choices in usage when they selected the framework for their historical narratives. Wahlgren describes how the changes in narrative technique influenced to a considerable degree the information in the chronicles by Theophanes the Confessor and Symeon the Logothete. Since the chroniclers of the later generations were always dependent on the works of their predecessors, the consequences of the narrative choices were far-reaching, often shaping the collective memory, because much of the information in the older chronicles was lost in the process. Whereas Theophanes, for example, based his writing on an early Byzantine concept, filling

8 Rosenquist 2003, 30, 75–76, 99–100, and Tvorogov 1987, 474. See also Croke 1982, 195, and Croke 1983, 116, both reprinted in Croke 1992.

9 The word *leto*, лѣто, had a flexible usage; it could signify 'time' more broadly or it could be more specific, 'summer'. In medieval Russian chronicles it was mainly used to mean a 'year' and was the opening word for each new annual entry. See, for example, Frantchuk 1986, 53–56.

his history with information about places, events and peoples that were not necessarily even connected with each other, Symeon built his chronicle in a mid-Byzantine way on a narrative thread, selecting his information so that only the persons and historical events enlightening his narrative choice appear in his history. Wahlgren believes that this narrative technique had profound consequences for posterity, as it was from Symeon's format with his carefully selected information about Byzantine life and culture that the Slavonic world came to know the Greek world and Roman history. Symeon's technique with its limited choice of peoples and events made the past look fatalistic and predetermined, and reflected far into the future.

Whenever Gentiles translated writings in Greek or Latin, they had to come to terms with words that not only described time, but also described books about time. In referring to the chronicle as a genre, the Slavonic translation of the *Chronicle of George Hamartolus* used the words временьникъ (*vremennik*) and образьникъ (*obraznik*),[10] where the key words were время (*vremya* – time in English) and образ (*obraz* – likeness or example in English).[11] Thus, the Slavonic word for a 'chronicle' referred not only to a record of time, but also incorporated the idea that history as presented in the chronicles provided examples, figures and patterns of behaviour. Hence, the universal chronicles, the 'books of time', кънигы временьныя, included the most important examples of human behaviour throughout recorded history.[12]

The function of providing examples of human behaviour through historical narratives served as a key aspect in all history writing through antiquity and the Middle Ages in all of Europe. Mari Isoaho's article demonstrates one example of how the literary patterns from important texts were adopted and transformed in practice: she shows how the Christianised Kievan Rus' adopted written history from Byzantine sources in a very original way, firmly connecting the Kievan chronicle tradition of the early eleventh century with the apocalyptic writing of Pseudo-Methodius, thereby placing Kievan rulers in the middle of the Apocalyptic scenario. The identification of the roles of the Rurikid rulers with biblical and apocalyptic figures took place through names with universal symbolic significance. Medieval authors who recorded history year by year not only adopted the significance of time, *χρόνος*, but also accepted the crucial role of Christianity in temporary time. For the newly converted, chronology must have been a discovery of immense significance, for it encompassed the totality of human experience

10 The full name of the *Chronicle of George Hamartolus* in its Slavic translation is Кънигы временьныя и образныя Георгия мниха. See also Vilkul 2007, 84.

11 Shchegoleva 2011, 25–26. Etymologically, the Slavonic word 'time' (время; from the verb вертеть, which means to rotate) has a cyclic implication, neglecting major change in time and instead understanding time as a movement that always turns back to its roots.

12 Shchegoleva 2011, 28–37.

from the Creation to the Last Judgement. Thanks to chronology, time became Christianised and served as a means of Christian self-awareness. The steady march of 'God's Years' in a chronicle was a visible manifestation of God's presence in the world.[13]

Christian chronology was important *per se*, without any further explanations or theories. Chronological order did not in itself give meaning to specific events; rather medieval historians explained events as God's just punishment or reward.[14] God's ways, however, remained inexplicable and hidden to humankind, and the chroniclers very seldom claimed that they knew how God was going to act.[15] Alexandr Bobrov's article examines the dilemma of knowing the future in the medieval Russian chronicles; he argues that for the medieval chroniclers it was self-evident that God would lift the veil of knowledge about the future for both Christians and pagans alike. Bobrov claims that the chronicle examples present strong evidence for a long tradition of *dvoeverie*, that is, a mixture of Christian and pagan beliefs in medieval Russian culture.

The annalistic structure of a chronicle offers some interesting ways to analyse the birth of a text. Timofey V. Guimon analyses the content of four key chronicles from medieval Russia, raising the question of whether there were guidelines of some kind for the chroniclers in terms of the kinds of events they reported. In his analysis Guimon examines the distribution of non-political events and comes to the conclusion that there were no strict rules for annalistic writing. Rather the content of the chronicles shows that the choice rested with each individual writer, some of whom were passionately devoted to political, dynastic and military history, while others faithfully noted down events in princely families, changes in ecclesiastical hierarchs, church constructions, natural phenomena and disasters in the course of keeping the records. It was ultimately the chronicler himself who selected the kinds of information he would leave to later generations. The distinct styles and changes in interests make it easier for later scholars to find periods for each chronicler's recording activity.

The question of an individual writer's choice of events is also pertinent in the article by Claes Gejrot, who shows how dramatically the viewpoint of a monastic chronicle can change when addressed by different writers. Gejrot uses one of the rare Latin chronicles from Sweden, *Diarium Vadstenense*, to illustrate a dramatic change of focus during the 1460s, when the attention of one monastery shifted from an internal narrative to the outside world and began depicting wars and political struggles in Sweden; now a partisan voice was heard, one with a clear personal opinion and the tendency to back up the political career of King Karl Knutsson. Gejrot further demonstrates how its tendentiousness later

13 Tolochko 2011, 219.
14 Wilcox 1985, 174.
15 Partner 1985, 20–21.

became a burden for the chronicle, leading to the censorship of some of its most politically sensitive passages.

While the historical narratives of the chronicles tended to present timeless patterns of human behaviour, Sverre Bagge asks whether medieval writers were aware of the change in history. It has often been stated that the medieval view of the past, present and future was static and that medieval people looked back at history without a perspective, without realising the cultural changes that today seem so obvious. Did medieval men and women not see progress in history, and were the chronicles just an ample repository of examples both good and bad? Bagge examines Snorri Sturluson's *Heimskringla* and comes to the conclusion that for Snorri, history was not static or changeless, but rather some events emerged as markers of permanent change in the dynastic history of Norway, specifically, the unification of Norway under one dynasty, and the Christianisation of the country. Bagge writes that for Sturluson, the contemporary political practice was clearly the result of change over a long period, and he did his best to explain these changes. Nevertheless, Bagge claims that Sturluson and his contemporaries were more interested in what was similar between past and present than in what was different, and in this basic attitude, history served as an example to show good actions as models to imitate and bad ones as warnings to avoid.

With Sari Kivistö's article we move away from medieval chronicles and confront the pressures of the early modern period with more elaborate narrative patterns, as well as certain demands on the content of texts when there is a question of what a historical document should contain. Kivistö deals with the pressure of creating a glorious past, whether for individual noblemen, churches or monasteries. Falsification of written documents and histories is probably as old as writing itself, but in her examination of one of the most productive forgers of the early modern period, Alfonso Ceccarelli (1532–1583), Kivistö focuses on the wrongdoer's apology, written when he was accused of forgery and put on trial. How an imposter defended his actions leads Kivistö to underline the sensitive cultural demands of what is considered good history writing and calls on the modern historian to question what is considered truth.

The article by Anna Kuismin ends our publication by presenting a fascinating example of later forms of the chronicle. She introduces us to a sympathetic Finnish country tailor, Efraim Lindgren, whose handwritten *Memorial Book of the Most Remarkable Events* (*Muisto-Kirja merkillisimmistä tapauksista*) is a fitting example of so-called grassroots literacy, representing non-elite forms of writing in the modern period. Lindgren's chronicle is a hybrid text, its first part copied from an historical

appendix in a popular hymnal, while the latter part is more closely connected with the author's own parish and his private life. This example illustrates how one of the basic ideas of the chronicle, namely assembling all the major incidents 'from Adam to me' in the same volume – a chronicle – flourished for a substantial period of time. Lindgren's choice of information followed the practices of his ancient and medieval predecessors, moving from biblical history to events in his parish and in the small country church in Laitila, Finland.

No doubt the literary genre of the chronicle influenced much of the text's structural characteristics and narrative economy, but the collection of articles in this publication shows how ultimately it is up to each individual writer to choose a personal narrative technique. The writer's choice of narrative technique in turn affects the chronicle description. In these various presentations we learn that aside from the genre, it was, most of all, the writer himself and his personal voice, often coloured by his political or religious convictions, who shaped the vision of the past and strongly influenced the outcome of his work.

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Seizing History: Christianising the Past in Late Antique Historiography

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Late Antiquity from the third to the sixth centuries was the era of the development of the great Christian narrative, an interpretatio Christiana of the history of humankind. This meant reassessing and relocating past histories, ideas and persons on the historical mental map. In this construction of the past, Christian writers built on the models of the preceding tradition, creating competing chronologies and alternative histories. This article analyses the concept of history conveyed by two Christian fourth- and fifth-century historians, Eusebius of Caesarea and Orosius, and discusses the various ways in which these writers created the Christian past. One of the ways was to determine the greater antiquity of Christianity in comparison to the Greco-Roman tradition. This led Eusebius to develop his synchronistic chronology of the human past in his Chronici canones. In his approach, Eusebius developed further the Greek chronographic tradition for Christian apologetic purposes.

Another way was to interpret history as guided by divine providence. For example, for Orosius in his Historiae adversus paganos, the appearance of Christianity in the Roman Empire was part of the divine plan for humankind. The concept of divine providence was also connected with ideas of divine favour and anger. In the world view of ancient Christian writers such as Orosius, divine retribution played an important role in explaining the adversities of humankind. Even though Orosius is usually dismissed in modern scholarship as a crude and unsophisticated historian, his ideas deserve a more nuanced reading. This article argues that both Eusebius and Orosius developed their views of history in contention with other, prevailing views of the past. Both writers aimed to challenge these views – Eusebius with his synchronistic chronology and Orosius with his reappraisal of the entire history of Rome.

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We all know that in the telling and retelling of an event,
or series of events, there will be as many accounts as there are tellers.
An event should be recorded. Then it must be agreed by whoever's task
it is that this version rather than that must be committed to memory.
– Doris Lessing, The Cleft

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Mari Isoaho (ed.)
Past and Present in Medieval Chronicles

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Late Antiquity, the period from the third to the sixth centuries, was the era of the development of the great Christian narrative, an *interpretatio Christiana* of the history of humankind. As is well-known, writing a narrative of the past "means imposing a linear and coherent structure upon the protean mass of past happenings".[1] In the evolving Christian understanding of history, this meant reassessing and relocating past events, ideas and persons on the historical mental map.

The construction of Christian history was one of the most important elements in shaping Christian identity.[2] "Without the shaping provided by the past, the 'present' would float anchorless", as Judith Lieu remarks in her discussion on history, memory and the invention of tradition among the first- and second-century Christians.[3] This article examines how Christian writers of Late Antiquity shaped their past and present. To this end, I analyse the concept of history conveyed by a few Christian ecclesiastical writers in the fourth and fifth centuries, focussing on Eusebius of Caesarea's *Chronici canones* and Orosius's *Historiae adversus paganos*.

In my discussion I argue that both writers developed their views of the past in contention with other, prevalent views of history. With his synchronistic chronology in *Chronici canones* Eusebius challenged the views of his contemporaries on two fronts: both the pagan views of the past and the views of his co-Christians. I show that Eusebius's chronology was connected to the centuries-old competition for the prestige of antiquity. The older the Christian tradition could be shown to be, the better it was expected to be. In addition to proof of antiquity, Eusebius had to convince his co-Christians to repudiate the millennial expectations of his time by establishing a chronology of historical events. In his *Historiae adversus paganos* Orosius confronted the contemporary Roman views with his subversion of the entire history of the Roman Empire. He endeavoured to show that human history was guided by divine providence and filled with signs of divine retribution; the emergence of Christianity at a particular time belonged to this divine plan. Modern scholarship has habitually looked down on Orosius as a simplistic historian by comparison with more sophisticated thinkers such as Augustine of Hippo. In the following pages I demonstrate that Orosius took an active part in the most critical discussions of his time. His ideas about human history are best understood on their own, not merely as the unsuccessful commission of the more prominent intellectual, Augustine.

1 The expression is from Halsall 2007, 165.
2 For history as the most important vector in the Christian understanding of the world and in the Christian systematization of knowledge, see Inglebert 2008, 211.
3 Lieu 2004, 82. Lieu 2004, 62 also points out that a sense of sameness (that is, identity) is maintained by remembering, and at the same time what is remembered is defined by the presumed identity.

Late Antiquity was a creative period, crucial for the development of many different genres of historical writing such as chronicles, *consularia*, epitomes, *breviaria*, chronographs and church histories. I do not distinguish between genres and subgenres here.[4] Instead, my analysis of the Christian construction of the past is thematic and concentrates on issues such as competing chronologies, the prestige of antiquity, the history of humankind as the prehistory of Christianity, as well as the work of divine providence in history and divine retribution.

Apologetic Histories and Competing Chronologies

In this construction of the past Christian writers built on the models of preceding traditions, namely the universal histories by Hellenistic Greek, Jewish and Roman writers, and developed competing chronologies and alternative views of the past. This was the case, for instance, with Eusebius of Caesarea (ca 260–339), who "almost single-handedly"[5] created the genre of church history with his *Ecclesiastical History* and essentially developed the chronicle genre with his *Chronikoi kanones* (*Chronici canones* or *Chronological Canons*), thereby influencing the subsequent tradition of medieval chronicles in the East and the West. Eusebius's *Chronicle* was a two-volume work consisting of *Chronographia* (a collection of reigns and source lists) and *Chronici canones*. The Greek version of Eusebius's *Chronici canones* is now lost, but there are translations into Latin (the continuation by Jerome) and in Armenian, two Syriac epitomes and several Greek witnesses. *Chronographia* survives in Greek excerpts and Armenian translations.[6]

In his *Chronici canones* Eusebius utilised earlier Greek historiography, chronographies (studies of dates and times),[7] as well as the so-called Olympiad chronicles.[8] In addition, he drew on Greek scholars, particularly Porphyry of Tyre, who in his treatises, and foremost in *Against the Christians* written around 300, vehemently criticised Christians and the novelty and barbarity of their religion. Porphyry's attacks on Christianity show how significant the discussions on time and tradition were in Antiquity. It is in reaction to Porphyry's detailed polemic against Christianity that Eusebius eventually

4 For a useful discussion on the Latin chronicle traditions, see Burgess & Kulikowski 2013, especially Chapter 1, "Nomenclature and Genre" and the Addendum, "Toward an Ecumenical Vocabulary," in which the writers launch a scholarly discussion on terminology.
5 According to Burgess 1999, 21 (see also Burgess 2002, 7).
6 Burgess & Kulikowski 2013, 119–126. Burgess 1999, 66, suggests that there were probably three major editions of the *Canones* (in 311, 313/314 and 325), whereas according to Adler 2008, 591, there were two editions.
7 Greek histories used by Eusebius included, e.g. Diodorus Siculus and chronographies by Eratosthenes and Apollodorus. Diodorus Siculus was amply used by other Christian writers as well. For the tradition of Greek chronographies and universal histories, see Mortley 1978, 316–317, 325, Mosshammer 1979, 84–105, Croke 1982, 196, Croke 1983, 119–120, 122, 126, Inglebert 2001, 297–298, Jeffreys 2003, 521 and Feeney 2007, 47–51.
8 Eusebius was also influenced by the genre of the Hellenistic Olympiad chronicles of which two fragments survive, an Oxyrhynchus papyrus (POxy I 12) and an excerpt from Phlegon of Tralles (extant in Photius, Bibliotheca cod. 97). Burgess & Kulikowski 2013, 89–91, 122, with translations of the fragments, 313–316.

set out to collect and systematise chronological tables in his *Chronici canones*.[9] For Eusebius, history and chronology functioned as defensive weapons.

Other Christian historical works, treatises, chronographies and *breviaria*, before and after Eusebius, were also mostly apologetic in character. Christian apologists needed to reply to the charges that Christianity was an innovation without foundation in ancient tradition. Attacks on ethnic or religious groups included assaults on their alleged inferiority in age, and therefore, chronologies were an essential element in their defence. The second- and third-century Christian apologists collected comprehensive testimonies and lists of kings and dates in order to prove the chronological priority of Christianity.[10] The third-century chronographies by Julius Africanus and Hippolytus were at least partly compiled in order to demonstrate the greater antiquity of Christianity as compared to the Greek and Roman traditions and consequently its superiority.[11]Apologetic chronography was not a Christian specialty, but had its roots in Jewish as well as Greek writings. As a result of the encounters between the Greeks and other peoples, especially during the Hellenistic period, Greek writers were keen to advocate the priority of Greek culture in comparison to other traditions. For their part, Jewish writers defended their tradition with the help of chronologies in the inter-religious rivalries during the Hellenistic and Roman periods.[12]

It was from this Jewish apologetic tradition that Christian writers largely adapted the chronological tools for their own writing. In Christian apologetic writings and chronographies, Christians were identified as the true descendants and continuators of the Hebrews, Moses and the prophets. Numerous calculations were elaborated to synchronise and systematise the chronology of Old Testament events and thereby to show the anteriority of Moses in comparison to the Greek tradition, to demonstrate that "our Moses is older than your Homer". Moreover, eschatological concerns and millennialist expectations played an important role in Christian chronological speculations. Millennialistic (or millenarianistic or chiliast) ideas presupposed a messianic rule that would last a thousand years. With the help of chronological calculations, it was thought that the date of the Second Coming of Christ and the end of the world could be determined. I will first examine how the notion of an authoritative antiquity

9 Burgess & Kulikowski 2013, 120–121; Burgess 1999, 81; Burgess 1997, 497, stressing Porphyry's fundamental role in sparking Eusebius's interest in chronography. Burgess 1997, 496 interprets *Chronici canones* "in the light of persecution narrowly survived", while for Barnes 1981, 113–120, 126–147, it is a work of confidence, peace and pure scholarship.

10 E.g. Tatian, *Oratio adversus Graecos* 35–41 (ed. Marcovich 1995); Theophilus of Antioch, *Ad Autolycum* 3.17–28 (ed. Grant 1970); see also n14; Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis* 1.21 (101–147) (ed. Mondésert & Caster 1951).

11 Julius Africanus's *Chronographiae*, a five-volume work written in Alexandria around 220, survives extant only in a few fragments and references in later historical works. Hippolytus's *Chronicle*, written in Rome around 235, survives in a Greek version and in Latin translations (known as the *Liber generationis*). Julius Africanus's fragments have been edited in Wallraff et al. 2007 and Hippolytus's, in Bauer & Helm 1955.

12 For the cultural apologetic in the Greek world, see Burgess & Kulikowski 2013, 99–105. For the Jewish apologetic, see Alexandre 1998, 1–40.

influenced the Christian concept of history, and then I will discuss how millenarianistic expectations shaped Christian chronographies.

The Rivalry for a Greater Antiquity

Studies of chronology were vital in the defence of Christianity against its critics and, accordingly, to the construction of the Christian identity in relation to both Jews and 'pagans'.[13] Chronological comparison between the Hebrew and Greek traditions had already been made by Jewish writers, especially in Alexandria, to demonstrate that the Jewish tradition was prior and thus superior to the Greek. As Christians interpreted their religion as being identical to the religion of the primordial Hebrew patriarchs, Christian writers were ready to adapt Jewish chronography to their apologetic uses. For example, the second-century Christian apologist Theophilus of Antioch described the need to defend the antiquity of the Hebrew tradition and – as the result of this takeover – Christian tradition:

> From the compilation of the periods of time and from all that has been said, the antiquity of the prophetic writings and the divine nature of our doctrine are obvious. This doctrine is not recent in origin, nor are our writings, as some think, mythical and false. They are actually more ancient and more trustworthy.[14]

Theophilus collected dates of world history as proof of the greater antiquity of his Christian tradition.[15] Eusebius also remarked on how important it is to study chronology in order to demonstrate the antiquity and superiority of the Christian tradition:

> Now it would be well to examine their chronology, I mean the dates at which Moses and the prophets after him flourished: since this would be one of the most conclusive evidences for the argument before us, that before dealing with the learned men (*logiôn*) among the people we should first decide about their antiquity.[16]

Why was it so important to prove that one's tradition was primeval and even the oldest of all the cultures? In the Greco-Roman world and the Mediterranean world in general, the idea of antiquity implied superiority in all respects. The premise that something is true only if it is ancient was seldom questioned. In the case of a religious tradition, its alleged antiquity affirmed its validity. The most ancient culture was also claimed to be the source of all other cultures; accordingly, Moses and the prophets were argued to have been the original source of Greek wisdom and of Platonic philosophy

13 The terms pagans, heretics and Arians are labels developed in religious disputes and used by rival groups to denigrate their opponents. They should therefore be read with inverted commas throughout this article and understood as convenient shorthands.
14 Theophilus of Antioch, *Ad Autolycum* 3.29 (trans. Grant 1970, 145, with my modification).
15 Theophilus of Antioch, *Ad Autolycum* 3.17–28 (ed. Grant 1970).
16 Eusebius, *Praeparatio evangelica* 10.8.18 (eds. des Places & Schroeder 1991; trans. Gifford 1903).

in particular.[17] Platonic philosophy was integrated into the true heritage of Christianity; it was even argued that Plato had learned his wisdom from the Hebrews in one way or another.[18]

In this process of demonstrating the antiquity of Christianity and collecting material from Jewish, Greek and Roman sources, Christian intellectuals interpreted the preceding history of humankind as the prehistory of Christianity. Thus, the past was used to gain more complete control of the present and the future.[19] The seizing of the past and making claims for it by Christian writers and opinion leaders was and is nothing new, particular or exceptional for Christianity. Take-overs were (and are) carried out by other writers and cultures, too. Different narratives of the past constantly compete for hegemony, and writers compete with one another for the authority to interpret the past.

The take-over by Christian writers of Late Antiquity has been called the Christian domestication of the pagan Greco-Roman past, meaning that what was good and useful in the past was in fact 'ours' or Christian. Christian intellectuals justified the use of Greco-Roman (pagan) literature with the idea of the right use (*usus iustus, chrêsis dikaia*): what was thought to be expedient and compatible with Christian doctrine was to be regarded as 'ours', Christian, and taken over for Christian use; in the words of Augustine of Hippo, "as if from its false owners for our own use" (*tamquam iniustis possessoribus in usum nostrum*).[20] Eusebius, for example, argued that Christians were the true heirs of primeval wisdom, Moses and the prophets, as well as the Platonic tradition, rather than the pagan Greeks, who had simply stolen and distorted these original truths.[21] Eusebius's contemporary Lactantius had a similar vision of the history of humankind: true and original wisdom was derived from the Hebrews and was identical to Christianity.[22] It is in this rivalry over the priority of past wisdom that chronology emerged as an important vehicle, first in the writings of second- and third-century apologists and chronographers, and later in the histories and universal chronicles of fourth- and fifth-century historians.[23]

17 The late antique disputes on the prestige of antiquity are more thoroughly discussed in Pilhofer 1990, Stroumsa 1998, 26, Buell 2005, 63, and Kahlos 2013a, 27–38. For the idea of the dependency between Moses and the Greek culture, especially regarding Platonic philosophy, see Ridings 1994 and Droge 1989.

18 Fuhrer 1997, 90–91; Clark 2004, 569.

19 For the Christian use of the past, see Cameron 1991, 122, 138, Moriarty 1997, 6, and Kahlos 2013a, 27–38.

20 Augustine, *De doctrina christiana* 2.40.60–61 (ed. Simonetti 2000). For the idea of the right use, see Gnilka 1984 and Kahlos 2006, 60–62. On the Christian domestication of the Greco-Roman past, see Hedrick 2000, 86.

21 E.g. Eusebius, *Demonstratio evangelica* 7.1.79; 8.3.10 (ed. Heikel 1913). Eusebius, *Praeparatio evangelica* 2.5 (ed. des Places 1978).

22 Lactantius, *Institutiones divinae* 2.14 (ed. Monat 1987).

23 For the competition over past wisdom, see Kahlos 2013a, 27–38.

Millennialist Expectations and Competing Chronologies

Competing chronologies existed not only in regard to Greco-Roman, Jewish and Christian claims to the past, but also in different Christian chronologies, which vied with each other. Christian chronographers such as Julius Africanus and Hippolytus reconstructed their chronology of history from the creation of the first human, Adam. For instance, Julius Africanus identified the dates when the world was created, Christ was born and Christ would return.[24] As mentioned above, chronology was harnessed to meet millennialist expectations: the date of the Second Coming of Christ and the end of the world, it was believed, could be calculated. According to then current eschatological views, the world was to endure six thousand years from the year of Creation; Christ, it was believed, was born in the year 5500 after the Creation. This eschatology was connected with the interpretations of the week of the Creation as the six millennia. The final day of rest was understood as the last millennium before the end of the world.[25]

Eusebius emerges as an important exception to this interpretation, deliberately challenging the millennialist speculations of his Christian contemporaries and beginning his *Chronici canones* with Abraham and Ninus, the King of Assyria. R.W. Burgess explains Eusebius's negative attitude to millenarianism as a reaction against the highly popular millennial expectations during the Tetrarchic persecution.[26] It also appears that in starting his *Chronicle* with Abraham, Eusebius followed the Greek historical view, which distinguished between things historical and datable and things mythical and not datable: he made Abraham a contemporary of Ninus, who was generally regarded as the first historically known and datable king.[27]

Eusebius reasoned that it was impossible to reconstruct the chronology of the world from the creation of the world. According to the Armenian version of *Chronicon*, he remarked that there could not be complete accuracy with respect to chronology and even appealed to the Scriptural authority: "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father hath put in his own power" (Acts 1:7). This was said, according to Eusebius, to discourage those who made futile calculations, not solely regarding the end of the world but about all times. He continued emphatically that by no means was it possible to know unerringly the chronology of the entire world, not from the Greeks, not from the barbarians, not from other peoples, not even from the Hebrews. Competing views of history and chronology can

24 Julius Africanus, *Chronographiae* F14 (ed. Wallraff et al. 2007). For Africanus's chronological system, see Wallraff et al. 2007, xxiii–xxix.

25 For a concise discussion on the development of millennial expectations in early Christianity, see Lössl 2009, 31–44, and Whitby 2007, 281–283. For the connection between millennial expectations and ideas of historical recurrence, see Trompf 1979, 204–209.

26 Burgess 1997, 492.

27 Inglebert 2001, 301.

also be detected in Eusebius's warning as he advises his readers not to be deceived into thinking that chronology can always be precisely defined and speaks with disdain about boastful chronographers.[28]

Eusebius's scepticism about exact dates both for the beginning and the end of the world was exceptional, and therefore, it has even been suggested that his *Chronici canones* did not survive because its chronology differed from the standard datings of the time. Later chronicles, such as that by Diodorus of Tarsus in the late fourth century and the chronicles by Panodorus and Annianus in the early fifth century, reworked Eusebius's chronology but re-calculated the dates from the Creation of the world.[29]

Eusebius did not create the chronicle genre, but he did make an essential contribution to its development with his *Chronici canones*.[30] His approach became the model for later Byzantine chronicles and through its translation into Latin and its continuation by Jerome was a model for Western medieval chronicles as well. In Christian usage chronicles with their linear structure could be invested with eschatological meaning in which human history had an identifiable beginning and an expected end, whether these could be accurately calculated or not. For Christian readers chronicles could also serve as accounts of divine providence that influenced the history of humankind. The works of divine providence could be seen in Eusebius's *Chronici canones*, in which the reduction of columns of text from nine (nine kingdoms) to two (Hebrews and Romans) and finally to a single column (Romans) could be interpreted as illustrating the change from the polyarchy and polytheism of the past to the monarchy and monotheism of the present.[31] The reduction of columns may also show the narrowing interest in the world outside the Christianised Roman Empire as the realms of the nine columns shrink into the single column of Christian Romans.[32] Similar teleological interpretations of human history were woven into other Christian histories such as Orosius's *Historiae adversus paganos*.

Works of Divine Providence

As mentioned above, in several Christian historical works the history of humankind before the birth of Christ was construed as the prehistory of Christianity. The past was divided into the pre-Christian era and the Christian era, with the birth of Christ as the dividing point. Pre-Christian times were often seen as the preparation for the birth of Christ and the emergence of Christianity, and subsequently, everything

28 Eusebius, *Chronicon* 1.1–2 (ed. Karst 1911; trans. Bedrosian 2008).
29 Burgess 2006, 30; Wallraff et al. 2007, xxxv–xxxvi; Whitby 2007, 283–285. For Adler (2008, 590–591), Eusebius's *Chronicle* was a radical departure from the earlier tradition, while Burgess 1997, 492–495, highlights Eusebius as a scholar and historian unique to his age.
30 For the early development of chronicles in Greco-Roman Antiquity, see Burgess & Kulikowski 2013, 63–98.
31 For the meaning of Eusebius's columns, see Burgess 1999, 81, and Burgess & Kulikowski 2013, 124.
32 Van Nuffelen 2010, 166–167. As van Nuffelen argues, the apparent universalism in chronicles is mainly due to the literary conventions of the genre.

that had happened in the past culminated with Christ's birth. Even the very title of Eusebius's treatise – *Praeparatio evangelica* (*proparaskeue euangelike*) – in which he defends Christianity and argues for its intellectual and cultural superiority – refers to this preparation. In historical works such as Orosius's *Historiae adversus paganos*, a number of events and persons in the past were interpreted as models or *typoi* for the forthcoming history of Christian salvation. Another historian of Late Antiquity who interpreted history with a similar kind of typology was Sulpicius Severus in his *Chronicle*.[33]

Orosius's *Histories against Pagans* (*Historiae adversus paganos*), written in 416–17, was connected to the notorious sack of Rome by the Goths led by Alaric in 410. As is well known, Augustine of Hippo started to write his voluminous *De civitate dei* at least partly in response to the pagan accusations against Christians in the aftermath of the sack of Rome. Pagan Romans saw the defeat of Rome as the result of the rise of Christianity and the subsequent neglect of the old gods. Augustine not only set about writing his own apologetic document to refute the slanders of pagans, but also instigated his client, the Spanish presbyter Orosius, to collect further historical proof to enhance Augustine's argument. As Orosius humbly states in the prologue to his *Historiae*, he is writing at the instigation of his patron Augustine and in reply to the disparagement of pagan Romans.[34] It has been surmised that Orosius's devoted effort was not appreciated by Augustine, who later dissociated himself from Orosius's undertaking.[35] Nor has Orosius's work been given much value by modern scholars. He has always been overshadowed by Augustine's colossal output,[36] and consequently, his work has often been interpreted merely as a theology of history and measured against Augustine's theory of history in *De civitate dei*, instead of being considered a proper history of its own or evaluated in the context of Late Antiquity.[37]

33 For Sulpicius Severus's views of history, see Williams 2011, Trompf 1994 and van Andel 1976, 59–74.

34 Orosius, *Historiae* (1. prol. 1–13) (eds. Arnaud & Lindet 1990). For reactions to the sack of Rome, see de Bruyn 1993, 405–421, and the volume edited by Pollman, Harich & Schwarzbauer 2013.

35 This assumption is, however, based only on a few remarks in Augustine's writings: Augustine, who in his earlier correspondence shows affectionate support for Orosius, mentions his client only once after the completion of *Historiae*, making a casual remark about "a certain Hispanian presbyter" (Augustine, *Retractationes* 2.44 [ed. Mutzenbecher 1984]). In the books of *De civitate dei* composed after Orosius's work, Augustine distances himself from the optimistic view of human temporal history that Orosius advocates. For the relationship and different views of history of Augustine and Orosius, see Goetz 1980, 136–147, Koch-Peters 1984, 40–42, Frend 1989, 24–27, Trompf 2000, 293, Merrills 2005, 38–39, and Formisano 2013, 160–161.

36 The amount of modern research on Augustine's philosophy of history is abundant. For useful recent surveys, see the volumes edited by Vessey, Pollmann & Fitzgerald 1999 and Horn 1997.

37 Recent views of Orosius's enterprise vary considerably. Some scholars (Burgess 2004) see Orosius as "a tendentious hack who tried to shoe-horn world and especially Roman history to a pre-conceived theological interpretation", while others (Zecchini 2003, 320) regard his work as "a masterpiece of Christian Latin historiography". For balanced views of Orosius, see Van Nuffelen 2012, Formisano 2013, Brandt 2009, 121–133 and Merrills 2005, 35–99; e.g. Van Nuffelen 2012, 24, writes that he does not "aim at catapulting him among the stars of late antique literature" but rather at seeing Orosius as "a good example of how history was written in the fourth and fifth centuries"; Merrills 2005, 63, admits that Orosius's *Historiae* "is not a great work of philosophical or cosmographical scholarship" but states that "through his consistent application of geographical imagery, the historian presented a comprehensible view of human development"; Formisano 2013, 153, acknowledges the work as "an important innovation within both pagan and Christian historiography".

Instead of making positive and negative assessments of Orosius's capabilities, a more reasonable way of approaching him is to try to contextualise his work as part of late Roman rhetoric and historiography.

Orosius does what he promises in his prologue: he lists the evidence for his argument by giving a systematic catalogue of human miseries from the Creation until his own time. Orosius starts his survey of the human past emphatically with the Creation as in this way he wants to convince those who "wish it to be believed in their blind opinion that the origin of the world and the creation of humankind were without beginning". Here Orosius differs from Eusebius's approach who, as we saw above, warned his readers not to attempt any accurate calculations based on the Creation.[38] However, Orosius's remark vaguely targets the cyclical views of history often found in Greek and Roman literature. Orosius does not give much emphasis to the period before Ninus, the King of Assyria. The main part of his discussion actually starts with Ninus, and in his survey he follows the basic lines established by Eusebius's *Chronicon* and its continuation by Jerome.[39]

The dispute over the sack of Rome colours the entire work, as Orosius reassesses human history, especially Roman history, to show that the past was filled with wars, miseries and catastrophes even when the old gods were still being worshipped; thus the rise of Christianity did not cause the calamities. For instance, Orosius contrasts the miseries of the present, namely the recent sack of Rome, with the mythical sack of Rome by the Gauls during the early republic. The earlier defeat and six-month siege was far more detrimental to the Romans than the present defeat and sack of three days, even though Orosius's pagan opponents do not "weigh equally the story of a past disaster with a calamity in the present". In Orosius's comparison the present was considered better: "Behold the times in comparison with which the present is weighed; behold the times for which our memory sighs".[40] The sack of Rome by the Gauls in 390 BCE had been a traumatic event for the Romans and was frequently referred to in Roman literature, including in Late Antiquity, by Christian and non-Christian writers alike.[41]

Orosius's *Historiae* is one of the numerous Christian works of Late Antiquity on *de providentia* that interpreted the past as the manifestation of divine will, especially chastisement and punishment sent from the divine sphere. In tracing this divine will in the past, chronicles, universal histories,

38 Arnaud-Lindet 1990, 10 n. 2. Augustine dedicated two chapters to the refutation of the cyclical conceptions in *De civitate dei* 12.10–11 (eds. Dombart & Kalb 1993). For the cyclical conceptions of history, see Trompf 1979, esp. 179–231.

39 Orosius, *Historiae* 1.1.2: *... qui cum opinione caeci mundi originem creaturamque hominum sine initio credi velint ...* For Orosius's chronology, see Merrills 2005, 45–46.

40 Orosius, *Historiae* 2.19, esp. 2.19.12: *En tempora quorum conparatione praesentia ponderantur; en, quibus recordatio suspirat; en, quae incutiunt de electa vel potius de neglecta religione paenitentiam!; esp. 2.19.4: Cui cladi audeat quisquam, si potest, aliquos motus huius temporis conparare, quamvis non aeque pendat praeteriti mali fabulam praesentis iniuria!*

41 For the importance of the Gauls' sack of Rome in the collective memory of the Romans, see Kahlos 2013b, 185. For a comparison of Goths and Gauls, see Goetz 33, 98.

breviaria and other historical works in which the events of the past were clearly and briefly listed were particularly expedient.[42] For his part Orosius set out to demonstrate this providential nature of history, arguing that the appearance of Christianity within the Roman Empire was part of the divine plan. It was by no means a coincidence that Christ was born during the reign of Emperor Augustus when the power of the Romans had reached its peak. Accordingly, Orosius connects the birth of Christ with the peace of Augustus (*pax Augusta*).[43] Earlier, in a similar manner, Eusebius had pointed out that Augustus had prepared a unified empire for the appearance of Christianity in the world, and a second-century bishop, Melito of Sardes, had built a connection between the rise of Augustus's imperial power and the growth of Christianity.[44]

In Orosius's vision, all events were related to one another: Emperor Augustus's triumphs (*triplici triumpho*) and the height of his power (*potestatis nomen*), the closing of the entrances of the temple of Janus (*ipse Iani portas sopitis finitisque omnibus bellis civilibus clausit*) as the sign of a permanent peace (*pacis signum*) after the civil wars, and the great census as the sign of a unified society (*per communionem census unius societatis effecta est*).[45] Orosius states that "by some hidden order of events, he [Augustus] had been predestined for the service of his [Christ's] preparation". Moreover, Orosius draws parallels between Christ and Augustus: Augustus unites humankind (*orbis terrarum*) politically as Christ unites humans in Christianity; Augustus's peace, *pax Augusta*, precedes *pax Christiana*; Augustus arrives as the victor to Rome, and Christ is born; Augustus establishes a monarchy, while Christ establishes monotheism.[46] Similarly, as we saw above, in Eusebius's *Chronici canones*, the reduction of columns from nine to two, and finally to a single column demonstrated the transformation from polyarchic polytheism to monarchic monotheism. Lactantius insisted that, just as the empire was

42 Just to mention a few, *Carmen de providentia Dei*, often attributed to Prosper of Aquitaine *(Vigiliae Christianae* Suppl. 10 [ed. Marcovich]), *De perversis suae aetatis moribus epistola*, sometimes attributed to Claudius Marius Victor (*Patrologia Latina* 61, 969–972), Salvian, *De gubernatione Dei* and John Chrysostom's *De fato et providentia* (*Patrologia Graeca* 50, 749–774). Trompf 1990, 318 n10 speaks of "a veritable industry" devoted to the written defence of Providence in later Antiquity. For ideas of history as God's tool, see Goetz 1980, 49–70.

43 Orosius, *Historiae* 6.22. Orosius gives a favourable view of Augustus, e.g. stressing that the emperor refused the title of *dominus*, the lord, during the same time the genuine *dominus,* Christ, was born (6.22.4); Augustus was pre-eminent in power and mercy (6.1.5). For the connection between the Incarnation and the *pax Augusta*, see Merrills 2005, 41, and Goetz 1980, 82–84.

44 Eusebius, *Praeparatio evangelica* 1.4.4 (eds. Sirinelli & des Places 1974). The fragment of Melito's apology addressed to Emperor Marcus Aurelius is preserved in Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical history* (4.26.7). Fiedrowicz 2000, 43–44, 204; Klein 2000, 212.

45 Orosius, *Historiae* 6.20 (with other signs); 7.2.16 (*census*); also 3.8.5–7; 6.17.10; 6.22; 6.20.5; even nature manifested the power of Augustus and the birth of Christ: a circle resembling a rainbow formed around the disc of the sun: *hora circiter tertia repente liquido ac puro sereno circulus ad speciem caelestis arcus orbem solis ambiit, quasi eum unum ac potissimum in hoc mundo solumque clarissimum in orbe monstraret, cuius tempus venturus esset, qui ipsum solem solus mundumque totum et fecisset et regeret.*

46 Orosius, *Historiae* 6.20.8: *quam hunc occulto quidem gestorum ordine ad obsequium praeparationis eius praedestinatum fuisse*. Orosius, *Historiae* 3.8.8, states that even calumniators had to admit that the peace and tranquillity of the whole world were not the result of the emperor's magnitude but of the power of Christ (*non magnitudine Caesaris, sed potestate filii dei*); in 22.2.5 Augustus's peace corresponds to the peace of Christ. Koch-Peters 1984, 40–42, even reads Augustus as a John the Baptist figure, a forerunner of Christ.

in need of a single leader, humans needed one God. Furthermore, Orosius's contemporary Prudentius depicted Roman monarchy and Christian monotheism as advancing together.[47] Orosius also explains the rise of the Roman Empire as preordained: during the great tranquillity and universal peace settled by the Romans, the Christians were able to spread their religion "as Roman citizens among the Roman citizens".[48]

A History Filled with Signs

In his *Historiae* Orosius interpreted a number of past events and people as signs of the forthcoming salvation history. This typological method was common among Christian theologians of Late Antiquity: the accounts of the Old Testament, the history of the Hebrews, were taken as *typoi* that signified the coming history of Christ and the apostles in the New Testament. In a similar manner Orosius construes the ten plagues of Egypt in the Exodus story as a sign of the ten persecutions of Christians.[49]

The tenth and last plague killed the firstborn sons of the Egyptians. Likewise, in Orosius's scheme, the tenth punishment of the tenth and last persecution was the perdition of the first-made idols that Romans so loved.[50] Here the comparison between the ten plagues and the ten persecutions is constructed with a series of repeated *ibi* – *hic* (there that time – here now) sentences. There [in Egypt] the people of God were never again dragged into slavery – here [in the Roman Empire] the people of God were never again forced into idolatry. There the precious vessels were handed down to the Hebrews – here the most significant temples of the pagans (*praecipua paganorum templa*) were turned (*cesserunt*) into churches for the Christians.[51] The Egyptian gold taken by the Hebrews was a frequently-used metaphor in Christian fourth-century discussions on the Christian use of secular literature as well as on the Christian take-over of shrines of the old gods.[52] Furthermore, Orosius continues his comparison by

47 Lactantius, *Institutiones divinae* 1.3.19 (ed. Monat 1986). Prudentius, *Contra orationem Symmachi* 2.430–442 (ed. Cunningham 1966). For the connection of monarchy and monotheism in early Christian literature, see Fiedrowicz 2000, 204, and Kahlos 2007, 183–184.

48 Orosius, *Historiae* 6.1.6–8: *deinde ut in magno silentio ac pace latissima inoffense et celeriter noui nominis gloria et adnuntiatae salutis velox fama percurreret vel etiam ut discipulis eius per diversas gentes euntibus ultroque per cunctos salutis dona offerentibus obeundi ac disserendi quippe Romanis civibus inter cives Romanos esset tuta libertas*. Even Romulus, the mythical founder of Rome, is made use of to serve the divine plan (6.1.5).

49 Orosius, *Historiae* 7.27.2–3: *Quia 'haec in figura nostri facta sunt' [1 Cor. 10:6]. Uterque populus unius Dei est, una populi utriusque causa. Subdita fuit Israhelitarum synagoga Aegyptiis, subdita est Christianorum ecclesia Romanis; persecuti sunt Aegyptii, persecuti sunt et Romani; decem ibi contradictiones adversum Moysen, decem hic edicta adversus Christum; diversae ibi plagae Aegyptiorum, diversae hic calamitates Romanorum*. The number of ten persecutions became established in subsequent Christian tradition even though other figures also appear in Christian histories: Lactantius, *De mortibus persecutorum* 1.2 gives six persecutions, while Sulpicius Severus, Chronicon, 2.33, gives nine persecutions and reserves the tenth for the impending future. For a discussion, see van Andel 1976, 122–128.

50 Orosius, *Historiae* 7.27.13: *Ibi postremo decima plaga quae et novissima omnium fuit, interfectio filiorum quos primos quique genuerant: hic nihilo minus decima id est novissima poena est omnium perditio idolorum quae primitus facta in primis amabant*.

51 Orosius, *Historiae* 7.27.14: *Ibi numquam postea populus Dei ad servitutem retractus: hic numquam postea populus Dei ad idololatriam coactus est. Ibi Aegyptiorum vasa pretiosa Hebraeis tradita sunt: hic in ecclesias Christianorum praecipua paganorum templa cesserunt.*

52 The metaphor of the booty taken from the Egyptians was connected to the discussion on the right use of Greco-Roman literature and the whole cultural heritage. See n. 16.

making a prediction for the future: the Egyptians pursued the Hebrews and were destroyed by eternal perdition (*aeterna perditio*) in the Red Sea. Thus, at some future time a persecution by pagans is still pending for Christians who are otherwise journeying (*peregrinantes*) in freedom. This will happen in the future before the crossing of the Red Sea, that is, the fire of judgement (*ignis iudicii*), but Orosius does not specify when this last judgement will take place.[53]

Orosius reasons that all ten persecutions of Christians were followed by ten punishments in the same way as the plagues struck the obstinate Pharaoh and Egyptians. Similarly, in the early fourth century Lactantius in *De mortibus persecutorum* outlined the punishments for each persecuting emperor – even for Emperor Aurelian, who did not live long enough to start any persecution.[54] In Orosius's view the history of humankind has been shaped by the divine punishment and chastisement that follow the wrongdoing of humans and especially of their rulers.[55] In the logic of divine retribution, Orosius was not alone: many Christian and non-Christian writers alike attributed misfortunes to the depravity of individuals, collectives and communities.[56] Another fifth-century Christian historian, Sulpicius Severus, introduces human history as a series of divine punishments from Adam and Eve onwards.[57] Moreover, the church historian Philostorgius explained calamities as a sign of divine anger; he even stressed that the claims of pagans result "not from natural causes, as the children of Hellenes suppose", but really are the scourges of divine wrath.[58] The above-mentioned Lactantius explains in *De ira dei* that divine retribution will come sooner or later: "Even if God's patience is great and most useful, he nonetheless punishes the guilty, albeit later. Neither does he permit them to continue their sinning as he has perceived that they are incorrigible."[59] In his *Church History*, Eusebius explained the beginning of Tetrarchic persecution as resulting from the "laxity and sloth" and internal rivalries that Christians had fallen into during the long peace and freedom under the reign of Emperor Gallienus. Hypocrisy and dissimulation rose to great heights of wickedness and, consequently, called forth divine judgement.[60] Thus, ecclesiastical leaders could rebuke their fellow Christians as harshly as they did

53 Orosius, *Historiae* 7.27.15: *Ita et nos quidem libere peregrinantes superventura quandoque persecutio gentilium manet, donec mare Rubrum, hoc est ignem iudicii, ipso domino nostro Iesu Christo duce et iudice transeamus.* For the ten plagues and the ten persecutions, see Goetz 1980, 62–65.

54 Lactantius, *De mortibus persecutorum* 6 (ed. Moreau 1954) reasons that Aurelian had at least planned to persecute Christians and thus deserved the punishment.

55 E.g. Orosius, *Historiae* 6.1.26–27; 7.15.5; 2.1.1.

56 For further discussion, see Trompf 2000, 4–12 (in general), 13–106 (non-Christians), 113–122 (Christian apologists), Stathakopoulos 2007, 106–115, Verdoner 2011, 174–183, and Kahlos 2013b with examples. For the earlier tradition, see Heck 1987.

57 Sulpicius Severus, *Chronicon* 1.2–3; 5; et passim. For the logic of retribution in Sulpicius Severus, see Trompf 1994.

58 Philostorgius, *Historia ecclesiastica* 12.9; see also 10.9; 10.11; 11.7; 12.8–10 (eds. Bidez & Winkelmann 1981).

59 Lactantius, *De ira dei* 20: *Sed cum maxima et utilissima sit Dei patientia, tamen, quamvis sero, noxios punit, nec patitur longius procedere, cum eos inemendabiles esse perviderit* (ed. Ingremeau 1982). For Lactantius's views on divine anger, see Trompf 2000, 118–122.

60 Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* 8.1.7–8 (ed. Bardy 1958).

others (and usually even more harshly): in the fifth century Salvian of Marseille explained the political and military decay of the Roman Empire as divine punishment for the corruption of contemporary Roman Christians. In Salvian's judgement, Christians deserved punishment for their sins, not only as individuals, but also as a community.[61]

For his part Orosius usually attributed misfortunes to divine retribution for the sins of pagans.[62] Accordingly, he explained the sack of Rome in 410 as divine chastisement and remarked that it was God who raged more than humans in the present destruction. Orosius states that God allowed a bolt of lightning to strike the Forum with its empty images of the old gods in order to show the Romans why he had sent the Goths against Rome.[63] Nevertheless, the calamities that happened during the reigns of Christian emperors needed to be explained too, and Orosius expounds on these as punishment for heresies. For instance, the earthquake during the reign of Emperor Constantius II was allegedly the consequence of the emperor's adoption of Arian doctrine. Constantius, who had refused to allow idolatry to enter the main entrance (*per ianuam*), permitted heresy to come in through the secret door (*per pseudothyrum*).[64] Similarly, the Huns and the Goths came to harass the Empire as punishment for the Arian emperor Valens, who persecuted the Nicene Christians – the only true Christians in Orosius's eyes. Valens ultimately received due punishment in the Roman defeat and his own death at the battle of Adrianople against the Goths in 378.[65] Similarly, Valens' demise is explained by Theodoret of Cyrrhus as divine punishment: the emperor was an enemy of piety and fought against God; consequently, God shifted the balance in favour of the barbarians. For Theodoret, Valens' case is an example of how "God chastises those who abuse his patience".[66] Likewise, in the fifth century in his *Church History*, Sozomenus stated that the dissensions among Christians were followed by disturbances and commotions in the Roman state, with the Huns and Isaurians causing the trouble.[67] In Orosius's vision, divine punishment is the consequence of human failure. Thus, humans cause misery by sinning.[68] Orosius implies that humans cannot blame Christians, the gods or fate for their miseries, since humans themselves, through

61 E.g. Salvian of Marseille, *De gubernatione dei* 6.2; 6.6; 6.11; 8.2 (ed. Lagarrigue 1975). For Salvian, see Lambert 1999, 115–130.
62 Orosius, *Historiae* 7.22: Valerian's persecution was punished by pestilence, the Roman defeat in the war with the Persians, the capture of Valerian by the Persians and civil war. Orosius rejected any attempts at a natural explanation for the pestilence; 7.8: Rome was punished with civil war between Galba, Otho and Vitellius because the Romans had persecuted Christians and killed the apostle Peter; 7.9. The Jews were punished with the destruction of Jerusalem.
63 Orosius, *Historiae* 2.19.14: *in hac clade praesenti plus deum saevisse, homines minus. … ictu fulminum forum cum imaginibus vanis quae superstitione miserabili vel Deum vel hominem mentiuntur, abiectum est.*
64 Orosius, *Historiae* 7.29.3; 7.29.5.
65 Orosius, *Historiae* 7.33.10; 7.33.15–19. For contemporary reactions to the battle of Adrianople, see Lenski 1997.
66 Theodoret, *Historia ecclesiastica* 4.33; 4.34; 4.36 (eds. Parmentier & Hansen 2008). For an analysis of Theodoret's logic of retribution, see Trompf 2000, 215–231.
67 Sozomenus, *Historia ecclesiastica* 8.25.1 (eds. Bidez & Hansen 2008). For a discussion on Sozomenus's concept of history, see Leppin 2003, 238, and Trompf 2000, 218–220.
68 E.g. Orosius, *Historiae* 2.3: *quod autem misere vivimus, intemperantiae nostrae.* All the external deeds, good or evil, are fruits of the internal state of an individual: *cunctaque vel bona vel etiam mala quae foris geruntur internis esse radicata* (2.17). For a discussion, see Lacroix 1965, 100.

human greed in particular, are the cause of misfortunes.[69] Similarly, fifth-century church historians Socrates Scholasticus and Sozomenus saw a double causality at work in history: both divine beings and human beings simultaneously affected history.[70]

Rome, the Fourth Empire

In Orosius's eyes people nonetheless fared better in Christian times and under Christian emperors: even civil wars were handled neatly and swiftly when the Christian emperor Theodosius I achieved almost bloodless victories over his adversaries.[71] Orosius stresses that in the civil war against the usurper Eugenius, Theodosius's victory cost only two men's lives, those of Eugenius and Arbogastes, with the exception, of course, of the 10,000 Goths who fought on Theodosius's side and died in battle and whose demise the historian counts as an advantage rather than a loss.[72]

Additionally, Orosius argues that in fact it was because of the Christians that Rome did not face even more horrible miseries and that God showed mercy on Rome. The famous 'four empire theory' that Orosius introduces in Book 2 of his *Historiae* is connected to the idea of Rome spared. The four empire theory was based on the apocalyptic literature of Second Temple Judaism, that is, the vision in Daniel, although similar synchronisms between kingdoms and ideas of the *translatio imperii* (transfer of rule) were also developed in Hellenistic Greek and Roman literature; it was, for example, calculated that at the same time as Rome was founded, the realm of Assyria fell.[73] In the four empire theory, the empires vary: for his part Orosius lists Babylon, Macedonia, Africa (Carthage) and Rome. As A.H. Merrills states, what is original in Orosius's composition is the depiction of the four empires in explicit geographical terms as representing East, North, South and West respectively.[74] Orosius, a presbyter from Hispania, was also emphatically western in his interpretation, as he modified the earlier interpretations to include western elements.[75] When simultaneously the East fell and the West arose, Orosius finds this very much in line with the synchronisms of the earlier chronographic traditions.[76] Why then, he asks, did Babylon

69 Orosius, *Historiae* 2.8; 7.10. Cf. Augustine, *De civitate dei* 3.14 (eds. Dombart & Kalb 1993).

70 E.g. Socrates, *Historia ecclesiastica* 5, praef. 5 (eds. Hansen, Périchon & Maraval 2006) who wrote that he "cannot believe this invariable interchange is merely fortuitous, but am persuaded that it proceeds from our iniquities; and that these evils are inflicted upon us as merited chastisements" (trans. Leppin 2003, 237). For an analysis, see Leppin 2003, 236–237.

71 Orosius, *Historiae* 7.35, esp. 7.35.6: *Ecce regibus et temporibus Christianis qualiter bella civilia* … transiguntur. Orosius, *Historiae* 7.35.8 reassures the reader that this was no coincidence. Orosius also defends the civil wars of his time in 5.22.10–11.

72 Orosius, *Historiae* 7.35.19: *Eugenius captus atque interfectus est; Arbogastes sua sese manu perculit. Ita et hic duorum sanguine bellum civile restinctum est, absque illis decem milibus Gothorum quos praemissos a Theodosio Arbogastes delesse funditus fertur: quos utique perdidisse lucrum et vinci vincere fuit.*

73 On the chronicles and Daniel's vision: Croke 1983, 121–122; Adler 2008, 587; Merrills 2005, 51–53, 98; Fear 2010, 180–181. For the synchronisms of Greek and Roman historiography, see Feeney 2007, 47–51, and Van Nuffelen 2012, 49.

74 Orosius, *Historiae* 2.1.3–4; 2.2.1–4. Merrills 2005, 53, 98–99; see also Brandt 2009, 124–125, and Goetz 1980, 71–79.

75 This is pointed out by Fear 2010, 183. Orosius introduced Carthage as the third empire and eliminated Persia.

76 Orosius, *Historiae* 2.2.10: *siquidem sub una eademque convenientia temporum illa cecidit, ista surrexit.*

fall and Rome remain? His answer is that Rome was allowed to continue as an empire because its emperor converted to Christianity. Rome was pardoned because of the Christians.[77]

How did the present create the past? In Orosius's vision of history Rome of the present time (his time) was clearly and bluntly linked with explanations of the Roman past. In discussing the fall of Babylon, for instance, Orosius projects the fate of Babylon onto the present and mentions that his contemporaries wonder whether Rome is trembling in its old age or has been weakened by external forces.[78] In Orosius's view Rome was spared only because of the Christians, and thus Rome was not automatically meant to continue as *Roma aeterna* – eternal Rome –, as was manifested in many fourth- and fifth-century writings, especially in panegyrics and imperial propaganda. For Orosius, Rome's continuity was conditional. It depended on the Christians and their morals.[79] In Orosius's view Rome did not automatically continue, but deserved its continuity only because of Christians and their superior morals. With his vision of a less heroic past, Orosius clearly challenges the Roman elite interpretation of Roman history as glorious. This is why he uses most of the folios in his *Histories* to review the Roman republic before Emperor Augustus, using the tools of the Roman pagans themselves, in order to demystify the Roman past altogether.[80]

Orosius disparaged his contemporaries for their groundless and useless longing for the great Roman past. He claims that his pagan adversaries do not inquire into the future (*futura non quaerant*). Moreover, they either forget or do not know (*praeterita autem aut obliuiscantur aut nesciant*) about the past. Still, because they are so ignorant, they keep on denigrating the present (*praesentia … tempora*).[81] The things in the past do not become any better only because they are in the past, he reasons, objecting to the nostalgia of his contemporaries. For example, someone who is disturbed by fleas in bed in the present finds the present nuisance worse than the serious fevers that the person suffered in the past.[82] However, Orosius goes beyond this reasoning, as for him, even though *tempora Christiana* is not a complete peace, the Christian era must be superior to any period in the past. Not only were the past times no better than the present, but moreover they were in all respects worse than the present. This

77 Orosius, *Historiae* 2.3.6–7.
78 Orosius, *Historiae* 2.6.14: *… et nostri incircumspecta anxietate causantur, si potentissimae illae quondam Romanae reipublicae moles nunc magis inbecillitate propriae senectutis quam alienis concussae viribus contremescunt*. For the fall of Babylon, see Orosius, *Historiae* 2.6.12–14 (Babylon fell in the midst of affluence).
79 This is stressed by Van Nuffelen 2012, 20, 50–53, 147–152, 188.
80 Adler 2008, 597; Van Nuffelen 2012, 21, 62, 81.
81 Orosius, *Historiae* 1. prol. 9: *… qui cum futura non quaerant, praeterita autem aut obliviscantur aut nesciant, praesentia tamen tempora veluti malis extra solitum infestatissima ob hoc solum quod creditur Christus et colitur Deus, idola autem minus coluntur, infamant*.
82 Orosius, *Historiae* 4. praef. 4.

leads him systematically to construe events in the past as more miserable than in the present.[83] Even the barbarians (that is, the Goths) who caused the Romans so much trouble abandoned their swords and turned to ploughs, treating the Romans as allies and friends.[84]

Towards the end of his *Historiae* Orosius declares that the Christian times – the present – were exceptional "because of the greater presence of Christ's grace". This optimism was what modern scholars have usually regarded as the cause of Augustine's detachment from Orosius's work: Augustine had a more pessimistic view of human fate on earth even after the triumph of Christianity and was disappointed at his client's simplistic views.[85] Be that as it may, Orosius's optimistic assessment of the *tempora Christiana* in this world became influential in later medieval writing.[86] He invested the human past with meaning and a goal and interpreted temporal events and kingdoms as integral and intelligible parts of a divine plan. In Orosius's view humankind, even through temporal history, advanced towards a better future. In his clearly optimistic stand Orosius is one of the earliest ideologues of progress.[87]

Conclusion

In this article I have shown that the Christian narrative of the history of humankind as an essential part of Christian identity was developed during Late Antiquity. Christian intellectuals wrote their histories in a rivalry with the predominant views of history of their time, challenging Greco-Roman and Jewish ideas of the past and present. However, I am inclined to argue that they also copiously utilised and took over for the 'right use' what they regarded as expedient and valuable in those traditions.

I have demonstrated how two Christian writers, Eusebius and Orosius, challenged other, prevailing views of history. In the early fourth century Eusebius endeavoured to enhance Christian identity by demonstrating the greater antiquity of Christianity in comparison to the Greco-Roman tradition. Furthermore, he had to confront the millennial expectations of his fellow Christians. In his *Chronici canones* Eusebius developed an elaborate synchronistic chronology of the human past as a reaction

83 E.g. Orosius, *Historiae* 1. prol. 14: *Nanctus sum enim praeteritos dies non solum aeque ut hos graves, verum etiam tanto atrocius miseros quanto longius a remedio verae religionis alienos: ut merito hac scrutatione claruerit regnasse mortem avidam sanguinis, dum ignoratur religio quae prohiberet a sanguine; ista inlucescente, illam constupuisse; illam concludi, cum ista iam praevalet; illam penitus nullam futuram, cum haec sola regnabit.*

84 Orosius, *Historiae* 7.41.7: *Quamquam et post hoc quoque continuo barbari exsecrati gladios suos ad aratra conversi sunt residuosque Romanos ut socios modo et amicos fovent.* Similar optimism is voiced by Themistius (*oratio* 16.211d; eds. Schenkl & Downey 1965) who advocated the policy of accommodation in which Goths could become settled in Thrace and "share our offerings, our tables, our military ventures, and public duties". The oration was delivered after the peace treaty made by Theodosius I with Goths in 382. For the context, see Lenski 1997, 143–144 and Garnsey & Humfress 2001, 101.

85 Orosius, *Historiae* 7.43.19: *… Christianis tamen temporibus propter praesentem magis Christi gratiam ab illa incredulitatis confusione discretis.* For a discussion on the differences between Augustine and Orosius, see Trompf 2000, 293–294.

86 For the impact of Orosius's work in the Middle Ages, see Goetz 1980, 148–165; Fear 2010, 184–185, who extends the impact as far as to Marx and Fukuyama. Formisano 2013, 164–167 argues that in Orosius's vision of history "it is as if time has come to a halt and historical change has ceased".

87 Fear 2010, 179 remarks: "History therefore has become a journey or pilgrimage, a[n] image which is familiar to us all, especially in its secular mutation: 'progress'".

to Porphyry's detailed polemic against Christianity. In the manner of earlier Christian apologists and chronographers, Eusebius's chronographic and historical works were at least partly apologetic, defending Christianity against the charges of Christian novelty. However, by starting his chronology with Abraham and Ninus, Eusebius also contested the earlier Christian chronologies that started their calculations from the Creation of the world and the first human, Adam, and that were closely connected with millennialist speculations.

In the early fifth century Orosius was involved in the debates between Christians and pagans about the fate of the Roman Empire in the aftermath of the sack of Rome in 410. His *Historiae adversus paganos* was a response to the charge that Christians were to be blamed for the decline of Rome. The Roman Empire was in misery and ruins because it had been converted to Christianity and the old gods had been neglected. In order to refute these claims Orosius reviewed the entire history of Rome, demonstrating that the alleged glorious past of Romans in fact consisted of war, despair and suffering. Orosius's *Historiae adversus paganos* is a counter-narrative set against traditional Roman historiography. Instead of a magnificent Roman past, he construes a history of humankind in which things happen under the guidance of divine providence. Christ is born and Christianity appears in the Roman Empire during the reign of Emperor Augustus just when Roman power was at its height – all this according to a divine plan.

The past and present of early Christian writers were shaped through contention and in debate. As I have shown, the issues that Eusebius and Orosius had to respond to differed, but they both made ample use of the Greco-Roman tradition that they encountered. Both writers took over and reinterpreted the Greco-Roman past to explain and legitimise their own present: in Eusebius's case to articulate the Christian triumph in the course of the 'Constantinian turn' and in Orosius's case to defend the Christian Empire in the early fifth-century crisis. Eusebius contributed to the development of the chronicle genre, while Orosius advocated the progressive view of history with a meaning and a goal. Both writers with their historiographical tools endeavoured to deconstruct the ancient tradition that regarded what was older as better and brought about a different relationship with human history.

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Past and Present in Mid-Byzantine Chronicles: Change in Narrative Technique and the Transmission of Knowledge

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In this article I will discuss the presentation of the past and, to some extent, the present (or immediate past) in selected Byzantine chronicles of the ninth and tenth centuries, from prosopographical-political, geographical and other perspectives. Particular emphasis will be placed on the Chronicle of Theophanes the Confessor and the Chronicle of Symeon the Logothete. My main contention will be that changes in a narrative's form can, to a considerable degree, explain why the knowledge therein is so different in each text. In other words, how a text is organised decides the kind of information it will contain, and therefore, the value of a text as an historical document is very much dependent upon its form.

This article takes as its starting point a message by our conference host who, in an early email, wrote about 'how deeply medieval literary chronicles were tied to literary etiquette in their presentations of the past'. This is certainly true, although we should perhaps not stress the word literary too much, because it is obvious that *literary* devices are present in all kinds of texts, and it is hardly possible to make any meaningful distinction between *literary* chronicles and other chronicles. At any rate, the importance of literary form for how the past is conceived has all too seldom been stressed in research, which, as far as chronicles in general are concerned, and Byzantine chronicles in particular, has had a very strong focus on the purely philological study and usefulness of the texts as historical sources.[1]

1 For an attempt at treating Byzantine chronicles as literature, see the special issue of *Symbolae Osloenses* (Ljubarskij 1998), in particular J. Ljubarskij's introductory report (p. 5): '*Quellenforschung* and/or Literary Criticism: Narrative Structures in Byzantine Historical Writings.' After this groundbreaking collection of papers, other items have followed, e.g. Burke 2006, Odorico et al. 2006, Markopoulos 2009, and Macrides 2010. There is also a Brill's Companion of Byzantine Chronicles underway, under the editorship of R. Tocci. Of the standard works on the history of Byzantine literature, Kazhdan 2006 is the most useful when it comes to assessing the Middle Byzantine texts as literature and not only as quarries of historical information. Some of the ideas put forward here were presented in Wahlgren 2007 and 2008 (both in Swedish). Of research predating the modern (post-Ljubarskij) interest in the literary form of Byzantine chronicles the papers by Jenkins (1965) and Treadgold (1979) on Symeon the Logothete deserve mention.

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Therefore, my subject will be the transmission of historical knowledge and literary form, and a way of putting this, which is by no means original (in the sense that it has been the concern of scholars working on other texts and epochs), is that the form chosen for the narrative is of decisive importance in the ability of an historical text to function as a carrier of information.[2] A text's literary form decides what information the text will contain and what it can tell us about the past or, for that matter, the present (even though I consider it clear that the kind of stylization which we will discuss here is less common when the events of recent times are narrated). If an old chronicle by virtue of its literary form has restricted information about the past, then a later text dependent on this older one will have the same serious limitations in its depiction of the past. Indeed, literary conventions can have far-reaching consequences for collective memory.

Texts

I will try to give some examples of how this works in practice and how a new literary form restricts the knowledge of the past, and I will focus on two texts, from the ninth and tenth centuries respectively.[3] The first of these is the *Chronicle of Theophanes the Confessor*, and the second is the *Chronicle of Symeon the Logothete*. There is a distinct difference in literary form between these texts, and it is certain that Symeon depends upon Theophanes. Thus, the prerequisites for my demonstration are present: we have an older text (that of Theophanes) and a younger text (that of Symeon), there is a change in narrative technique from the one to the other, and the younger text transmits only certain kinds of information from the older. Therefore, the younger text in turn has only a limited amount of the older text's material to convey to any even younger text that might be dependent upon it. Put very simply: if you have read about, say, Constantine the Great only in Symeon, you will know less about him than if you had read Theophanes.

Here is some basic information about our authors: Theophanes the Confessor was born around 760, probably in Constantinople.[4] He served at the court of Emperor Leo IV (who reigned 775–80). Theophanes married a certain Megalo, the daughter of a friend of the emperor, but after a short period

2 The work of Hayden White springs to mind; see e.g. White 1987 (*The Content of the Form*) and White 2010 (a collection of his theoretical papers). Also relevant are several contributions by Simon Hornblower on narrative and content in Ancient Greek literature (Herodotus and Thucydides in particular).

3 Needless to say, this is a limited approach to a much larger subject. It is not a technical approach, and it does not pretend to be narratological in any stricter sense: this means that no one should expect explicit reference to G. Genette and the tradition originating with him, nor expect the use of the technical terminology of narratology. Other texts could also be investigated. For instance, the use made of Malalas in later chronicles would be worth investigating.

4 On Theophanes and his chronicle, see de Boor 1883 and Mango & Scott 1997 (with modern bibliography).

together, the two decided to separate and each took monastic vows. Theophanes went on to found a monastery, Megas Agros, on the southern shore of the Sea of Marmara. He involved himself to a mild degree in the ecclesiastical controversies of the day, and he refused to join the iconoclasts. For this he was punished and forced into exile, from which he returned shortly before he died, in the year 817. In the Christian church he is considered a saint.

Theophanes was the author of a chronicle that covers the years from Diocletian (285) until Theophanes' own day (ca 813). There are many problems connected with this text: What were Theophanes' sources? What was his contribution in the sense of texts actually composed by him and not taken from others? (Theophanes claimed not to have written anything himself, taking everything from his predecessors; the question is whether we believe him or whether we take his words to be a kind of commonplace of modesty). Finally, there is a discussion about whether the Theophanes text that we have is really the saint's text from the early ninth century or an elaborated version from the tenth century. However, the answers to these questions are probably not important for us here: all varieties of this chronicle are likely to have shared a common, very distinct form, namely a text that is annalistic in structure with a heading for each year, indicating the world year, and in which year various events took place during the reign of certain potentates (especially the emperor and the popes and patriarchs). The text is highly additive, paratactic, with information appended successively and showing little connection.

As our second specimen we have the *Chronicle of Symeon the Logothete*.[5] Symeon is a very obscure figure today. He must have lived in the second half of the tenth century. Some have identified him with a famous Symeon of this age, namely Symeon Metaphrastes, responsible for a collection of the lives of the saints. I myself am not convinced of that identification and, in any case, it does not matter much here. It would help us to date our author a little more precisely, but no more than that.

Symeon's *Chronicle* spans the time from the Creation of the World until the death and burial of Emperor Romanos I Lekapenos in the summer of 948. Accordingly, it is a text whose narrative stretches much further into the past than Theophanes' *Chronicle*, which starts in the year 285 AD. The *Chronicle of Symeon* is just as much a patchwork as the *Chronicle of Theophanes*, perhaps even more so. This means that it has been put together from various older sources. How this was done we can only guess. We do not really know, for instance, whether Symeon took several older texts and put them in, one after the other, with one perhaps covering the period from the Creation of the World through Julius

5 See the introduction to my edition in Wahlgren 2006. There is as yet no translation into a modern language (I am currently preparing an English translation for Translated Texts for Byzantinists with Liverpool University Press).

Caesar, another covering the Roman emperors of the West, one covering the period from the permanent establishment of the emperors in the East until the early ninth century and one covering the remaining time span, that is, roughly the one hundred years up to 948. Another alternative is that Symeon took over much greater chunks of text and only worked in detail with the latest part of the story, presumably roughly the tenth century, of which something like its last thirty years could have been based on his personal reminiscences.

However this may have been done, it is evident that Symeon's *Chronicle* contains information taken from Theophanes' *Chronicle*. This can be seen just by opening the edition and looking through appropriate parts: a sufficient number of paragraphs contain virtually the same text. Yet even such striking similarities do not prove the nature of the dependence. There could have been either a *direct* dependence (Symeon has a copy of Theophanes, which he uses) or an *indirect* dependence (Symeon uses an author who in turn had used Theophanes). We can only say that we do not know.

As for the structure of Symeon's *Chronicle*, it is quite different from that of Theophanes, as mentioned above. Instead of Theophanes' simple accumulation of facts and episodes, Symeon's text is organised into larger chapters.[6] Each Byzantine emperor is given his own chapter. Yet the organisation is the same prior to Byzantine times. For instance, in the portion on the Roman Empire in Antiquity each Roman emperor is also given his own chapter, and a Roman emperor functions in the same role here as a Byzantine emperor. And before that, the members of the Macedonian dynasty reigning in Egypt, the Ptolemies, fill the same function and are positioned the same way in the text, and before them the Persian kings, and before them, the Jews – and so it goes all the way back to Adam, who is presented much in the same way as a Byzantine emperor: Adam is given his own chapter, and the narrative centres on him. I would go as far as to say that Adam is treated as a kind of proto-Byzantine emperor.

Thus, through a literary device a thread is established through history in line with the conception of epochs as in the Book of Daniel, and the need for this thread explains the focus on certain rulers and not on others. This can be illustrated by looking at what happens when we come to the death of Adam as narrated in the *Chronicle*: the next person given the honour of having a chapter devoted to him is Seth. There were, of course, two elder brothers in that family, Cain and Abel, of whom, when Adam died, one was dead, and the other was not. However, the progeny of the surviving brother, Cain,

6 Of course, Symeon the Logothete was not the inventor of the thematic approach and of organising his text into chapters. Of comparable works slightly prior to his, the *Chronicle of George Hamartolus*, which covers the period from the Beginning of Time until the reign of Michael III (843–67), is also organised by chapters, and it seems very similar to Symeon's text from a structural point of view. However, it is almost certain that Symeon did not use the *Chronicle of George Hamartolus*.

does not (because of Cain's sin) represent the thread through history or the line from which we all are ultimately derived. Instead, our ancestor is Seth, the third son of Adam and Eve, who is also the subject of the chapter after Adam. Thus, a real ruler, and the subject of attention in this kind of literature, is essentially a person with a future.[7]

The Problem

Now to our topic: how is a new literary form – in this case, the form of Symeon's *Chronicle* – able to convey information contained in earlier sources in another form?

With Symeon's book, which differs from sources such as Theophanes with its open, paratactic structure (and no historical thread), we arrive at a kind of text in which each chapter is a rounded entity, built around the person of the emperor or an earlier ruler. The text focuses on this person and therefore tends to eschew all information that does not pertain to this individual, as I will demonstrate with some examples.

People

First, let us consider people. If we compare text samples from the chronicles of Theophanes and Symeon for the years 518 to 527, in other words, more or less the reign of Emperor Justin I, and if we simply count the individuals mentioned, we observe the following: the number of individuals mentioned in Theophanes is much greater, 53 different people, whereas the number mentioned in Symeon for the same period is just 10.[8] As for categories of people, Theophanes mentions three emperors, two empresses, 14 other state officials, 16 ecclesiastical personalities of different sorts (popes, patriarchs, ordinary priests, etc.), and a number of others (18 individuals to be precise): foreign rulers, locals and so on.

Symeon, on the other hand, mentions the same three emperors (the then current ruler and his two predecessors), but he does not mention the empresses at all. Only three state officials are mentioned, and just four other individuals. And it is clear why these (seven) persons are named: they were connected with episodes in which the emperor was involved. A close look at the state officials may demonstrate this. Vitalianos, the first to be mentioned, a close personal friend of the emperor, figures in a passage in which the emperor's appointment policy at the beginning of his reign is discussed. The two other

7 According to biblical, and Byzantine, understanding, Cain's branch of the family was lost in the Great Flood.
8 The text samples correspond to pp. 249–65 in Mango/Scott 1997 (Theophanes) and Chapter 103 in Wahlgren 2006 (Symeon the Logothete).

state officials mentioned are the *praipositoi* named Amantios and Theokritos. They are important for their roles in an episode that explains how Emperor Justin attained the throne in the first place: Amantios, acting as a sort of king-maker, tried to promote Theokritos to the imperial throne, creating a commotion that ended with Justin's appointment. In sum it is fairly obvious that these persons are mentioned in order to tell the story of Justin's career, and it can be argued that more or less all the information included about individuals in Symeon's *Chronicle* is connected in some way to an emperor. In Theophanes' *Chronicle*, on the other hand, there does not seem to be a necessary connection to the emperor and his activities to justify including a state official or any other person.

Now, it can be argued that the text sampled from Symeon's *Chronicle* is shorter than that from Theophanes' sample. All the same, it is clear that the very literary technique used by Symeon explains the lack of, as we might call it, irrelevant detail.

Places

Our second category to be used as an example of how the transmission of information is limited by a new literary form is places. Comparing Symeon's *Chronicle* with Theophanes', and also with other older texts, we see that a much smaller number of places is mentioned, and these function as the scene of action in Symeon. The earlier texts often give broad surveys of happenings in various parts of the empire and the world as it was known, from theatres of war to less significant events. Symeon's text does not follow this pattern. In his text there is much more focus on Constantinople, with only a pale vision of the immediate neighbourhood of Thrace and Asia Minor for most of the Byzantine emperors.

Now, this is of course in line with my view of the development of narrative technique, and in line with the view that everything focuses on the emperor. But it also makes one wonder, on the one hand, about the geographical knowledge of a writer in this time (the mid-to-late tenth century), and, on the other hand, about the influence of geographical knowledge on the development of a new narrative technique. Probably the known world became smaller for a Byzantine from Late Antiquity through the Middle Period. Important parts of the empire were lost. Perhaps this is bound to show in literature, even when a text deals with earlier times before these large territories had been lost. It may be argued that the ability to picture a large world in the past is dependent on a certain experience of a large world in the present. Thus, just as the emperor ruling when Symeon was active as an author was depicted sitting in his capital and not travelling, so too the earlier emperors, those of ancient Rome, for instance, are not depicted spatially at all or as being on the move, although in fact they were. In other words, I

think it reasonable to suggest that the political situation in the mid-tenth century has to some extent favoured a narrower literary vision than that prevailing in the earlier, much larger empire.

Palaces

Having discussed persons, or cast, and geographical space, I would finally like to say something about an element in the texts that can represent an immaterial institution or a building: palaces. In texts such as that of Theophanes, palaces abound. These palaces may be in different locations and, not least, can be the abodes of very different rulers: Byzantine emperors, as well as foreign rulers, rulers in Antiquity (whenever the texts treat this topic) and so forth.

It should come as no surprise that in Symeon's *Chronicle*, however, a palace is almost exclusively a palace in Constantinople (mostly the Great Palace, or in some cases other buildings, such as the complex at the Blachernae), whereas distant rulers – whether in a geographical sense or in the distant past – do not seem to live anywhere in particular. Augustus, for instance, or his successors, does not really live anywhere.

Conclusions

To sum up, the aims of this article have been to make the case that a change occurred in narrative technique in the Byzantine chronicles and to discuss the consequences of how the past and, to some degree, the present, or at least the recent past, are depicted. Earlier, I cited our host's remark about 'how deeply medieval literary chronicles were tied to literary etiquette in their presentations of the past'. Going a step further, I have tried to show how the very ability of a text to transmit knowledge is dependent upon its form, and thus this change in narrative technique had consequences for future generations' knowledge of the past.

Theophanes' *Chronicle*, based on an early Byzantine concept, is an example of a text with a very broad vision: there is a lot of information about different people and different places, and many events are recounted that are not necessarily connected to each other in any way.

Symeon's *Chronicle*, on the other hand, is basically a mid-Byzantine concept, a much narrower affair. Each chapter is a close-knit unit, and in each there is a thread (consisting of the emperor's activities and those in his capital and his empire) and a strong tendency to disregard all information not connected with this thread.

This new narrative technique of the mid-Byzantine period probably had consequences for posterity. Among other things, I think it may have played a role in the Slavonic reception of Byzantine culture.

Some Slavs had to depend upon texts like Symeon's for knowledge of Greece and Byzantium. There are at least two Slavonic translations of Symeon's *Chronicle*, and those Slavs who depended upon them had a view of Greek and Byzantine matters that was very narrow.[9]

In all this, we have not talked about the future. The future is of course present – in all the chronicles – in the shape of a common understanding of where we are going and how the world will end. However, in texts like Symeon's, which are so focussed on closure and on creating a thread through history, there is also the sense conveyed of another, more immediate future – a tendency to look forward in time, which is not found in Theophanes' text (where events are simply added onto each other). This may be illustrated by the following: Symeon may refer to a prince who is going to become emperor precisely because of that glorious future, which the author knew was in store, whereas he does not mention other princes, or princesses for that matter, who never made it to the throne. Therefore, a seemingly unconnected reference to such a prince may actually contain a message to us (i.e. that this person will become important), which a similar reference in Theophanes would not convey. Thus, if not a view into the distant future, and into that great unseen which is still ahead of us, there is, in the tenth century at least, a way to construct the narrative in such a way that there is a future in the past.

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9 See Wahlgren 2006 and, particularly with reference to the Slavonic translations, Wahlgren 2003/2004.

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The Last Emperor in the *Primary Chronicle of Kiev*

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The Primary Chronicle of Kiev was largely influenced by the popular apocalypse known as the Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius. Embracing an historical view of the Revelation, the later chronicler connected the catastrophes and wars during his lifetime with a larger concept in which the end of the world was attentively awaited. In this scene the nomadic tribe with mastery over the Eurasian steppes at the time, the Polovtsy – better known in the west as Cumans – were seen as the Ishmaelites, a nation whose onslaught was a prelude to events preceding the end of the world. In this article I will discuss the Revelation's crucial theme, namely the Last Emperor, as treated in the Primary Chronicle. I argue that the role of the Last Emperor was invested in two warlords of the Polovtsy wars: first, in Prince Svyatopolk (ruled 1093–1113), whose Christian name, Michael, had vital significance and even pre-ordained his faith as shown in the Chronicle; and second, after Svyatopolk's death in 1113, in his follower, Vladimir Monomakh (ruled 1113–25), who was of Greek descent.

Introduction

The *Primary Chronicle of Kiev* belongs to a group of so-called 'national' chronicles from eastern Europe, which materialised around the twelfth century when Christianity was already firmly established, a new literary culture was on the rise and the development of the early medieval states was well underway.[1] The new literate cultures created visions of the past in which the roots of the "new people", as the baptised former pagans formulated their position in God's flock, were envisaged. In a line of new histories for a new people was the *Primary Chronicle of Kiev*, written at the very beginning of the twelfth century, one of the most original medieval chronicles of the Middle Ages.

1 See Garipzanov, Geary & Urbanczyk 2008.

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Helsinki: Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies. 43–81.

Recently, a discussion has arisen about how we should translate the title of the *Primary Chronicle of Kiev*, whose full title reads Повѣсть временьныхъ лѣтъ чьрноризьца Феодосиева манастыря печерьскаго, отъкуду есть пошьла русьская земля и къто въ неи почалъ пьрвѣе къняжити, и отъкуду Русьская земля стала есть.[2] In general usage, the *Primary Chronicle* is simply called by its three first words in Russian and has customarily been translated into English as the 'Tale of Bygone Years'. This follows the work's translation into modern Russian as *Povest' minuvshikh let* by Dimitry Likhachev,[3] who particularly underlined the aspect of the years that had passed. The recent discussion has emphasised that the word временьныхъ (*vremennykh*) should actually be translated as 'temporal', 'chronological', 'worldly' or even 'temporary'.[4] It has also been suggested that the translation should reflect the chronological order of the years and could be translated as 'The Tale of the Numbered Years'.[5] In each of these translations we are confronted with time and its limits, and it is from this perspective that I am going to examine the *Primary Chronicle* here.

Specifically, in this article I will investigate how the narrative in the *Primary Chronicle* deals with the idea of temporary and numbered years, giving special attention to the beginning and ending of its annalistic portion. I will further examine the chronicler's perception of time by concentrating on certain rulers, who in my view represent central characters in the narrative structure. Particular consideration will be given to the wars of the Christians and the apocalyptic expectations associated with them around the time of the First Crusade in order to place ideas of time and its end in a wider, Christian context and demonstrate how the *Primary Chronicle* reflected these ideas.

I will begin my survey with the *Chronicle*'s first annual entry, which combines Rus' rulers with imperial and Christian leaders and marks the year when Rus' history begins. Secondly, I will give a brief overview of Byzantine apocalyptic imagery and how it was connected with the image of Rus'. Lastly, I attempt to show how the *Primary Chronicle* reflected this Byzantine imagery, wherein Rus' was presented as a threat to Christians, and delivered a self-conscious Kievan response to testify that

2 PVL 0,1–0,4. As my *Primary Chronicle* reference, I use Donald Ostrowski's reconstruction of the alpha text in Ostrowski, Birnbaum & Lunt 2004. It must be said, however, that the existence of чьрноризьца Феодосиева манастыря печерьскаго in the alpha text is highly controversial. See, for example, O. Tolochko 2006, 248–251. In the English translation I am basically following Cross & Sherbowitz-Wetzor 1953. Both Ostrowski and Cross use the numbering that coincides with Karskiy's edition of the *Laurentian Chronicle* in 1926 in the series *Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisey*, where the number before the comma designates the column and the number after the comma indicates the line.

3 Likhachev's first translation of the *Primary Chronicle* was completed in 1950 together with B.A. Romanova in Adrianova-Perets (ed.) 1950. In the second printing Likhachev alone was responsible for the translation; see Adrianova-Perets (ed.) 1996. In his commentary on the *Chronicle* Likhachev justifies the emphasis in the translation as 'years gone by', making it parallel to the Slavonic translation of the *Chronicle of George Hamartolus* and its view of past events. See Likhachev 1996, 379.

4 See the discussion in Franklin & Shephard 1996, xviii; Lunt 1997, 317–326; Ostrowski 2003, LXI–LXIII, and Prokhorov 2006, 6–7.

5 P. Tolochko 2011, 266.

the real threat lay elsewhere. In this imagery the roles of the Polovtsy whom the chronicler referred to as Ishmaelites and that of the Kievan prince were fundamental. Awareness of the limits of time evidently made the chronicler choose a narrative strategy that ultimately had a tremendous impact on the eschatological role of the last rulers dealt with in the *Primary Chronicle*, namely Prince Svyatopolk Izyaslavich and his cousin and successor, Vladimir Monomakh.

The First Annual Entry

The *Primary Chronicle* begins with a description of the postdiluvian world, showing how different nations were spread around the globe. It also describes different pagan nations and their habits, making a clear distinction between those and the laws of the Christians. The introduction ends with the notion of how the two-edged sword of the Rus' conquered the one-edged sabre of the Khazars.[6] After this introduction, annual entries begin in the year 6360 (explained below) from the Creation. The *Primary Chronicle* states that in that year the reign of the Byzantine Emperor Michael began:

> In the year 6360, the 15th indiction, from the beginning of Michael's reign, the land of the Rus' [Русьская земля] began to be so called. We know that it was during this emperor's reign that Rus' came to Tsargrad, because it is stated in the Greek chronicle. Hence, we shall begin at this point and establish the number of years.[7]

The year 6360 corresponds to 852 AD according to the usual Byzantine and Kievan practice, but it is clear that the attack to which the chronicler is referring did not take place during that year, but later, in 860. One of the main reasons for the chronological problems in dating the first annual entries in the *Primary Chronicle* derives from its main source, the *Chronicle of George Hamartolus*; there the description of the events relating to the history of Byzantium was not arranged according to annalistic structure, and thus lacked the annual entries.[8]

6 PVL 16,21–17,24.

7 Въ лѣто 6360, индикта 15, начьнъшю Михаилу цьсарьствовати, нача ся прозывати Русьская земля. О семь бо увѣдахомъ, яко при семь цьсари приходиша Русь на Цьсарьградъ, яко пишеть въ лѣтописании Грьцьскомь. Тѣмь же и отъселе почьнемъ и числа положимъ. PVL 6360 (852), 17,25–18,1.

8 The Byzantine chronicle written by a monk who called himself George 'the Sinner' (Greek: Hamartolos, 'αμαρτωλός), tells the history of the world from the Creation up to the Council of Constantinople in 842–43. In the middle of the 10th century the *Chronicle of George Hamartolus* was continued up until the year 948, and in this continued, expanded version, it was translated in the Slavonic in the 11th century. In this continued, expanded version, the chronicle was translated into Slavonic in the 11th century. On the basis of the large number of Russisms in its language, the majority of scholars believe that the oldest Slavic translation of Hamartolus's chronicle was made in Kiev. See the discussion in Istrin 1920, v–vii; Istrin 1922, 273–305; Istrin 1930, xliii–l; Franklin 1988, 324–330; Ansimova 2009, 9–11, 21–25. The monk George reconstructed his chronicle according to the reigns of the emperors, as sequences of biographies. He not only divided the stream of events into reigns, but also systematically destroyed the principle of annalistic narrative, which was the attitude that had characterised the whole epoch of Byzantine chronographical literature during the time that Alexander Kazhdan has called an Epoch of Encyclopedism (ca. 800–1000 AD); see Kazhdan 2006, 324–325.

After the reference to Emperor Michael and after establishing the numerical starting point for the years, the *Primary Chronicle* links the chronology of the world with the appearance of the Rus' in a short chronological list:

> From Adam to the Flood was 2,242 years; from the Flood to Abraham, 1,082 years; from Abraham to Moses' departure [from Egypt], 430 years; from Moses' departure to the reign of David, 601 years; from David and the beginning of the reign of Solomon to the captivity of Jerusalem, 448 years; from the captivity to the reign of Alexander, 318 years; from Alexander to the birth of Christ, 333 years; from the birth of Christ to Constantine, 318 years; from Constantine to this Michael [до Михаила сего], 542 years.[9]

Again, the computation of the chronological list presented above is derived from very problematic chronological sources.[10] However, the entry is interesting in its message, for it solemnly identifies the Rus' war against Byzantium as the beginning of Rus' written history, beginning its yearly entries with the Byzantine emperor Michael III, who in reality began his rule as a two-year-old in 842 AD, and whose reign ended with his murder in 867. In the *Primary Chronicle* Michael III serves as the historical figure linking the rulers of Rus' to the Christian emperors and, through them, to world history, as it was then known. After this first entry, in the year 6360, the rest of the *Chronicle* is structured both according to rulers and by year. The chronicler faithfully recorded each and every year, but also marked the beginnings of the new reigns of the Kievan princes with clauses written in cinnabar. The first year of the Byzantine Emperor Michael's reign is thus significant in connecting the *Primary Chronicle* with known universal history by counting the time from the Creation to 'this Michael'. After the Emperor Michael, the chronicler lost interest in Byzantine rulers and continued the list with Rus'ian princes right up to the death of the Kievan Prince Svyatopolk:

> And from the first year of this Michael to the first year of Oleg, Rus' prince, 29 years [А отъ пьрваго лѣта Михаила сего до пьрваго лѣта Ольгова, Руськаго кънязя, лѣтъ 29]; from the first year of Oleg, who sat on his throne in Kiev, to the first year of Igor, 31 years; from the first year of Igor to the first year of Svyatoslav, 33 years; from the first year of Svyatoslav to the first year of Yaropolk, 28 years. Yaropolk reigned 8 years, Vladimir reigned 37 years, and Yaroslav reigned 40 years. Therefore, from the death of Svyatoslav to the death of Yaroslav is 85 years, and from the death of Yaroslav to the death of Svyatopolk, 60 years.[11]

9 PVL 6360 (852), 18,1–18,10.
10 On the illogicality of the *Primary Chronicle*'s chronology see Danilevskiy 1995, 101–110. See also Likhachev 1996, 396; Petrukhin 2000, 70. On the different ways of counting the years of Emperor Michael III's reign, see Vasiliev 1946, 152.
11 PVL 6360 (852), 18,11–18,21.

Prince Svyatopolk Izyaslavich, the last Rus' prince mentioned in the list is, in fact, 'the other Michael', for in accordance with Rus'ian practice, princes had two names: an ancestral Slavonic name with dynastic significance and a Christian name, given to a child when he was baptised. The dynastic Slavonic names usually had a military connotation, like Svyatopolk, which means 'holy regiment'. Svyatopolk's Christian name – Michael – formed a perfect match with his ancestral name, for with this name the Archangel Michael himself, the leader of the heavenly host, became Svyatopolk's personal patron saint. Needless to say, names of the ruling princes were very carefully selected. In the Kievan princely dynasty the child who bore an ancestral name also bore the faith of his name-bearer; it was as if the name-bearer was newly incarnated in every child who assumed his name.[12] The same solemn meaning was attached to Christian names. Often the first pagan rulers who were baptised into the Orthodox Christian faith were given the names of ruling Byzantine emperors, who acted as their godfathers at the baptism. Thus, the Bulgarian Khan Boris, who in 864 AD became Christian, was given the name Michael after Emperor Michael III. The same applied to the first Kievan prince to be baptised, Vladimir Svyatoslavich (d. 1015), who was given the name Basil (Vasili) after his military ally and godfather, Basil II (reigned 976–1025).

I contend that the name of Prince Svyatopolk-Michael determined the prince's destiny in the narrative of the *Primary Chronicle*, and not only his destiny, but also the destiny of Rus' itself. Chronological time in Rus' began with the rule of the Byzantine Emperor Michael; below I will argue that the *Primary Chronicle* narrative suggests that time was actually supposed to end with the ruler called Michael, for the name Michael was attached not only to an angel with eschatological significance, but also to the figure of the Last Emperor, familiar to the writer of the *Primary Chronicle* from one of the most influential apocalypses of the Byzantine world, the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius*.

The *Revelation* is a text composed in Syriac towards the end of the seventh century soon after Syria was conquered by the Arabs. After the text was translated into Greek, the *Revelation* gained immense popularity and marked a new era in Byzantine eschatology, strongly influencing the whole genre of apocalyptic writing. From Greek, the work was almost immediately translated into Latin, and eventually into Slavonic. The Slavonic translation was carried out relatively early, possibly right after the Christianisation of Bulgaria, during the reign of Boris (died in 889), but at the latest by the end of

12 See Litvina & Uspenskiy 2006, 44, 59, 605.

the tenth century and from a Greek original representing the first Greek redaction.[13] The fact that the *Primary Chronicle* cites the *Revelation* (as will be discussed later in this article) speaks for its early dissemination in Kievan Rus'.[14]

There were several Byzantine and Slavonic apocalyptic texts in which Michael appeared as the mythical emperor of the End Time, triumphing over either Ishmaelites or the race called 'Blonde Beards'. Michael as the name of the Last Emperor is mentioned in many of the late eleventh-century Bulgarian apocalyptic texts influenced by the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius*, such as the *Vision of Daniel*, the *Interpretation of Daniel* and the *Narration of the Holy Prophet Isaiah*, where especially in the last mentioned, reference was made to the Bulgarian Khan Boris-Michael.[15] The *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius* does not, however, mention the name of the Last Emperor; connecting the name Michael with the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius* was done fairly late, only in the so-called *'Third'* or *'Interpolated Slavonic Redaction'*.[16] V.M. Istrin suggested that the name Michael for the Last Emperor was originally of Greek origin, and it has survived only in the Slavonic version of the text, as the name was especially valued in the folk traditions of Slavonic-speaking areas.[17]

13 See Alexander 1971, 61; Alexander 1978, 1; Alexander 1985, 60–61. The Syriac text has been preserved in the 16th-century Vatican ms known as Codex Syriacus 58 and has been published and translated in Martinez 1985, 122–154; it is also translated in Alexander 1985, Appendix: 36–51. Parts of the texts are translated in Reinik 1999. Four Greek redactions were published by Istrin 1897, 5–74; Lolos 1976 and Lolos 1978. Istrin also published an 11th-century Latin ms, which he called the *Short Latin Redaction* in Istrin 1897, 75–83. Slavonic texts of the *Revelation* fall into three phases according to their translation dates, and all were published by Istrin. The earliest translation was actually done twice from the same original at the end of the 10th century: first, the so-called 'Free Translation' followed by the 'Literate' translation. Istrin published the *First Slavonic Translation*, which represents the *'Free Translation'* from the 13th- and early 14th-c. ms from the Athos Monastery of Hilandar. Later, during the 14th century, another translation from another Greek text of the *Revelation* was made in Slavonic. Istrin published it based on the 15th-century ms from the Athos Monastery of Hilandar and called it the *Second Translation*. See Istrin 1897, 174; Thomson 1985, 143–173; compare Tapkova-Zaimova & Miltenova 2011, 218–219. Whereas the *First* and the *Second Slavonic Translations* of the *Revelation* follow the original text quite carefully and have only slight differences, the *Third* has numerous interpolations from other apocalyptic writings and has no examples in existing Greek variants of the *Revelation*. Istrin 1897, 84–131. Recently, V. V. Mil'kov published this *Third, Interpolated Redaction* of the Slavonic *Revelation*, but without deeper study of the subject. See Mil'kov 2000 and Mil'kov 1999. Tapkova-Zaimova & Miltenova 2011 recently published a thorough study concerning Bulgarian apocalypses, but unfortunately the viewpoint of their massive investigation is narrowly restricted to the Bulgarian context of the text material and completely ignores Kievan Rus' in their discussion. They also published one variant of the *First Slavonic Translation* from the 12th century; see Tapkova-Zaimova & Miltenova 2011, 227–256.

14 PVL references to the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius* differ that much from the known Greek and Slavonic texts, that is has been suggested that the Kievan chronicler quoted the *Revelation* from his head. See Istrin 1897, 144. Recently, however, Donald Ostrowski proposed that the Kievan chronicler had at his usage a text (either Slavonic or Greek) which has not survived. Ostrowski 2014, 215–242.

15 All these texts are published in Tapkova-Zaimova & Miltenova 2011, 141–217. According to Tapkova-Zaimova & Miltenova, the apocalyptic figure of Emperor Michael was explicitly developed in Bulgaria to commemorate the baptised Khan Boris-Michael. See Tapkova-Zaimova & Miltenova 2011, 87–98. The Byzantine group of apocalyptic texts connected to the Prophet Daniel was heavily influenced by the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius*. The original text of the *Vision of Daniel* is not extant, but it has been preserved in the Slavonic translation; see Alexander 1985, 61.

16 Interpolated into the text are excerpts from the *Vision of Daniel* and the *Vision of Andrew the Fool* (Andrew of Salos). It has generally been suggested that there must have been a Greek text as the source of the *Interpolated* or *Third Slavonic Redaction*. See Veselovsky 1875a, 283–331 and Veselovsky 1875b, 48–130; see also Vasiliev 1946a, 237–248, here esp. 247. See also Tapkova-Zaimova & Miltenova 2011, 88. The *Third, Interpolated Slavonic Revelation* was first published by Tikhonravov, who based it on a much later manuscript, but which, from its content, was very close to the 16th- and 17th-century manuscript published by Istrin 1897, 115–131. See Istrin 1897, 175. The text has also been recently published by Mil'kov 1999, 654–688; see the Russian translation with commentary on 689–711. A Russian translation with commentary is also available in Mil'kov 2000, 345–380. See also Dmitriev 1987, 283–285.

17 Istrin 1897, 205–206.

Rus' Attacks on Constantinople and Byzantine Apocalyptic Imagery

In order to understand the mental imagery with which the *Primary Chronicle* worked, it is essential to go back to the history of the Byzantine apocalyptic images, for the whole beginning of the annalistic part of the *Chronicle* placed Rus' in the sphere of written historical records via its confrontation with the Byzantine Empire. The actual events of the first Rus' attack are described in the *Primary Chronicle* entry for the year 6374, which corresponds to our year 866 AD, though we must keep in mind the problematic and incorrect computation for the first entries of the *Chronicle*. The description of the attack itself follows the Slavonic continuation of the *Chronicle of George Hamartolus*,[18] which describes the Rus' attack on Constantinople and gives details that allow the actual event to be dated with certainty to the year 860 AD.[19] The situation was paradoxical: for the Byzantines, it was a time of turmoil, signalling the end of the world and the end of history; for the Rus', however, the moment introduced the beginning of chronological time in Rus', as recorded in the *Primary Chronicle*.

The Rus' attack on Constantinople in 860 spared very few Byzantine sources. During the attack, and very soon thereafter, Patriarch Photius of Constantinople gave two sermons in which he spoke of the unknown nation that, through God's will, had come to punish the Christians. Photius referred to Rus' as a wild and blood-thirsty nation, colourfully describing its cruelties[20] and claiming that the attack was a consequence of the sins of the citizens of Constantinople, who had aroused the wrath of God. For Photius, Rus' was a 'new weapon of His anger'.[21]

Photius also made a strong appeal to another perception, crucial in the eyes of imperial citizens, given their understanding of the history and role of their empire, when he pointed out that the Christians were now the new Chosen People of God and Constantinople was their New Jerusalem.[22] This followed an idea highly characteristic of Byzantine historians from the time of Eusebius, namely to see Byzantium and its emperor as fulfilling a divine plan. Since the seventh century, the association of Christian and Roman universalism had led Byzantine authors to refer to themselves as the 'New Israel'. By so doing, the Byzantines made a strong claim that the messianic prophecies pertaining to the Kingdom of Israel now properly belonged to the Christian empire of the Romans, as the Byzantines themselves referred to citizens of that empire. In particular, the Byzantines applied Daniel's prophecy of the four empires

18 See *Khronika Georgiya Amartola*, in Istrin 1920, 511.
19 See Vasiliev 1946b, passim.
20 Photius, *Homilia* II, 216–232. English translation in Mango 1958, 95–110; see esp. 98–99.
21 Photius, *Homilia* I, 201–215. English translation in Mango 1958, 82–95, here esp. 84. See also Photius, *Homilia* II, English translation in Mango 1958, 100.
22 Photius, *Homilia* I, English translation in Mango 1958, 84.

to themselves so that they became the Last Empire.[23] With the idea of Constantinople as the New Jerusalem, the apocalyptic belief that the Second Coming and the Last Judgement would take place in Jerusalem was replaced by the notion that the scene of events in the final days would be Constantinople, whose faith was intertwined with the last days of the world.[24]

By posing a threat to Constantinople, Rus' became a target of Byzantine popular perceptions, which in turn were attached to the faith of the empire. Part of this image was eschatological fear. In popular eschatology the Apostle Paul's reference in his Second Letter to Thessalonians (2 Thess. 7–8) to a power whose removal would lead to the advent of the Antichrist was identified with the Roman Empire and taken to mean that the world would last as long as that empire; for the Byzantines, this meant that the fate of the world was tied to the fate of Constantinople.[25] This was the main reason why the Rus' attacks on Constantinople were seen in such an eschatological light. Even though the early Christian church relegated the belief in an imminent apocalypse to the role of symbolic theory, the popularity of apocalypses remained strong, and in the end, they played a fundamental role in creating strains of thought that shaped the imagery of things past, present and future.[26]

From the Constantinopolitan point of view, every threat directed to heart of the Christian empire could be interpreted in an apocalyptic light, and consequently, Rus', from the time it began its raids on Constantinople, became a target of apocalyptic imagery. It is of paramount importance to point out that, just as the threatening apocalyptic images affected how the citizens of Constantinople saw the Rus', these images also ultimately affected the self-images of the Rus' themselves. This is the issue dealt with in the *Primary Chronicle*.

Yet the most influential Byzantine apocalypse, the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius*, had no interest in Rus'. Instead, it offered a historiographical review reflecting the division of mankind into the descendants of the sons of Abraham: those of Ishmael and those of Isaac. The *Revelation*, recalling biblical history, relates how, after Gideon's victory, the Ishmaelites were expelled to the desert of Yathrib. It also contained a prophecy predicting a new coming of the Ishmaelites. A major part of the *Revelation* is dedicated to describing their bloody and harsh rule, which will eventually be stopped by the appearance of a Greek ruler destined to be the Last Emperor before the appearance of the Antichrist and the end of the world.

23 Olster 1999, 53–54.
24 See Magdalino 1993, 12.
25 Magdalino 1993, 3–4.
26 Abrahamse 1985, 1–2.

In the narrative setting of the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius* the role of the descendants of Ishmael was central. They were introduced as a tribe who implemented the horrors of four apocalyptic riders against whom the Last Emperor would wage his final battles. According to the *Revelation*, after the Greek emperor triumphs, the last great period of peace will ensue. Peace and happiness will then be destroyed by the nations of Gog and Magog, which will be released from the mountains where Alexander the Macedonian once drove the unclean, and these nations will wage destruction on the world until the Archangel Michael defeats them on the plain of Joppe. Then the Greek emperor will travel to Jerusalem where the Antichrist will be revealed. The emperor will climb Golgotha to lay his crown on the Cross of Christ and hand over his empire to God; thereafter, he will die. The Antichrist will rule the world until Christ's Second Coming, at which time the Antichrist will be cast into hell.[27]

In every respect then, the imperial wars were significant by the very nature of the empire, and this had a profound effect on the perceptions and expectations of its emperor. Byzantine conceptions of the role of the emperor were intertwined with the history of the Christian empire and proclaimed in apocalyptic expectations. This especially applies to the wars during the fifth to the seventh centuries, which culminated in the reign of Emperor Heraclius (610–41).[28] In the 620s and 630s Heraclius introduced explicitly religious overtones into his campaign against Persia and the Arabs, which led to fervent enthusiasm for the cult of the True Cross. Heraclius was later given eschatological significance, which in apocalyptic works led to the formulation of the legend of the Last Emperor.[29] Exactly when the notion of the Last Emperor originated is impossible to date on the basis of the sparse source material,[30] but the most popular and influential medieval legend about the Last Emperor is found in the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius*, a text whose military imagery fell on fertile ground in western Europe, especially during the time of the Crusades.[31]

The apocalyptic image of the violent nations devastating the empire fit splendidly with the classical image of Scythians, as brilliantly demonstrated in one of the most important early sources for the later Byzantine imagery of the Rus', namely the description of the Avar-Slav siege of Constantinople in 626, which was seen both as the fulfilment of the prophecies of Isaiah and Ezekiel, yet at the same time

27 See the original *Syriac Revelation* in Martinez 1985, 122–154, and its English translations in Martinez 1985, 122–154, and Alexander 1985, 36–51. Compare the *First Slavonic Translation* in Istrin 1897, 84–101.

28 See Regan 2001, v–viii.

29 Paul J. Alexander made several studies of the legend of the Last Emperor, including Alexander 1971, 47–68, and Alexander 1978, 1–15, where he showed the enormous impact of this Byzantine apocalyptic theme on western Europe. His major work in Byzantine apocalyptic studies was published posthumously, in Alexander 1985. Other important studies on the topic are Reinik 1999 and Verbeke, Verhelst & Welkenhuysten 1988. Major Russian studies on the subject date from over a century ago in the works of Veselovsky 1875a, 283–331; Veselovsky 1875b, 48–130; and Istrin 1897. See also Whitby 1999, 73; Möhring 1999; Magdalino 1993, 18–19; Kaegi, 2003, 229; El-Cheikh 1999, 12.

30 See Magdalino 1993, 10–11, 19, n 65; Leadbetter 2006, 368, 377–379; Olster 2000, 48–73; Alexander 1985, 62–63, n44.

31 See Gabriele 2007, 61–82.

followed a long tradition of combining the classical nomad image of the Scythian with the Christian interpretation of the fate of the empire.[32] Andrew of Caesarea (563–637) saw the combined Avar and Slav forces as 'Scythian' hordes threatening the empire and corresponding to the unclean nations of Gog and Magog.[33]

In the battle of 626 the Slavs took over the naval attack, which was miraculously stopped by the Mother of God. The imagery of this unsuccessful attempt to conquer Constantinople offered a ready narrative in later Byzantine historiography and was appropriated to describe the Rus' attack on Byzantium in 860, which for its part was further reflected in the *Primary Chronicle*'s description of that attack. The Avar-Slav attack of 626 and the Rus' attack of 860 had remarkable similarities. On both occasions, when the attack was launched, the emperor was away from the capital: in 626 Heraclius was fighting the Persians, and in 860, Emperor Michael was fighting the Arabs, or the 'Hagarenes', as the *Primary Chronicle* has it.[34] The most notable feature in the imagery of the wars of Heraclius and Michael III was the heavenly protection of Constantinople. The Avar-Slav assault of 626 was repelled by a miraculous intervention of the Virgin, which led to the composition of the famous Akathistos hymn; the role of Patriarch Sergius in the historical imagery of the city's survival corresponded to that of Patriarch Photius during the Rus' attack of 860.[35]

The Byzantine conceptions of people from the land called Rus' were related to an eschatological end. This fearful conception was further strengthened by the name Rus' itself, which recalled the Prophecy of Ezekiel (38:1–4) in which Gog and Magog were depicted as rulers of Rhos who would ultimately strike God's Chosen People. The biblical imagery of the destructive rulers of Rhos was forcefully used by one of the classical historians of Byzantium, Leo the Deacon (b. ca 950), who gave a very colourful description of the Rus' forces in his *History*, echoing fearful millennial predictions in depicting Kievan Prince Svyatoslav Igor'evich's raid on the Balkans in 968–71.[36] Leo observed that in the course of his

32 An excellent survey of Late Antiquity and Early Christian perceptions of the 'Scythic' nations threatening the Roman Empire is presented in Mänchen-Helfen 1973. See also McGinn 1979.

33 *Commentarius in Apocalypsin*, 416c. See Mänchen-Helfen 1973, 5. Andrew of Caesarea wrote an influential commentary on the *Book of Revelation*, which was preserved in nearly 100 complete Greek manuscripts, and in Armenian and Slavic manuscripts in translation. See Maas 1907, 473. See also *Analecta Avarica*, Tom. 14, 298–320, esp. 314ff. See Magdalino 1993, 18. In particular, *Analecta Avarica*, Tom. 15, contains materials written in the 9th and 10th centuries, recalling the Avar-Slav attack on 7 August 626 and the miraculous salvation of the city. See Bibikov 2004, 289. See also Nicephorus Constantinopolitanus, *Short History*, 61. There are altogether three extant 7th-century texts relating to the events of the Avar-Slav attack in 626: a sermon attributed to Theodore Syncellos, an excerpt from the *Chronicon Paschale*, vol. I, 716–726, and a poem by Georgios of Pisidia; *Giorgio di Pisidia.* Poemi, 176–224. See Pencheva 2002, 5.

34 PVL 6374 (866), 21,11–21,12.

35 See Bissera V. Pentcheva's study on the development of the different aspects of the cult of Virgin as the protector of the imperial capital in Pentcheva 2002, 2–41.

36 In 986 Leo the Deacon accompanied Emperor Basil II in his disastrous expedition to Bulgaria and barely escaped with his life when, on their way back, the Byzantine army was defeated by Rus' forces. See Talbot & Sullivan 2005, 9–15. See also Kazhdan 2006, 273–288.

life many unusual events had occurred and remarked that 'Some think that the Second Coming of the Saviour is near, at the very gates'[37]; he made further reference to 'Ezekiel, who alludes to them [the Rus', whom Leo also called Tauroscythians], when he said: 'Behold, I will bring upon you Gog and Magog, the ruler of Rhos.'[38]

The Byzantine images of the nations of Gog and Magog, which God was to send from the north according to the Book of Ezekiel, were readily connected with the old stereotype of nomadic, blood-thirsty Scythians derived from the classical description by Herodotus. I argue that the author of the *Primary Chronicle* was well aware of the Byzantine perceptions of the Rus'[39] and therefore made an effort to show how earlier Byzantine notions of the Rus' and their participation in the last events of the world had been erroneously constructed by presenting an alternative world view, which derived from the notion of rivalry between the descendants of Abraham. In this rivalry the Rus' represented the descendants of Isaac, the youngest son of Abraham, Rus' being the youngest nation of converted pagans, while the Polovtsy represented the wild and warlike descendants of Ishmael and were seen as the apocalyptic nation according to the typology of one of the most influential apocalypses of the medieval world.

Ishmaelites in the *Primary Chronicle*: The Rus' Response to Byzantine Apocalyptic Imagery

In the Bible Ishmael and his mother, Hagar, were cast into the desert when Isaac's legitimacy was announced by God. Ishmael's troubled relationship with his relatives was foretold when God announced to Hagar that she would bear a son who was to be called Ishmael. 'He shall be a wild donkey of a man, his hand against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he shall dwell over against all his kinsmen.' (Genesis 16:12.) The dichotomy between Isaac and Ishmael is absent from the Qur'an, which credits Ishmael and his father, Abraham, with building the Kaaba in Mecca as a pilgrimage destination for monotheism.[40]

In a widespread conception, European Christians saw themselves as the spiritual followers of Isaac, the younger son of Abraham, whose mother, Sarah, was Abraham's lawful wife. This view was forcefully stressed by one of the most eloquent rhetoricians of Kievan Rus', the Metropolitan Ilarion of Kiev, in

37 Leo the Deacon, *History*, IV, 16.
38 Leo the Deacon, *History*, IX, 6. English translation by Talbot & Sullivan 2007, 194.
39 *Sub anno* 6415 (907) the *Primary Chronicle* explains that the Greeks called a great host sent against Constantinople by Kievan Prince Oleg as people of 'Great Scythia' (Великая Скуфь). PVL 6415 (907), 29,25.
40 Qur'an, 2:122–127.

his *Sermon on Law and Grace* (*Slovo o zakone i blagodati*), which he delivered sometime around the year 1050.[41] Metropolitan Ilarion discussed the story of Ishmael and Isaac as a reference to an old law of the Jews and the new grace of the Christians. He lingered over the allegory of Hagar and Sarah in speaking of 'Law' and 'Grace', but for Ilarion, the sons of Abraham offered an important analogy to Jews and Christians and had nothing to do with Muslims or Arabs.[42]

The terms 'Ishmaelites', 'Hagarenes' and 'Saracens' were valued by Muslims as indicative of their origin and of their adherence to the earliest monotheism, yet the terms were also adopted by Christian polemicists in order to demonstrate that the Muslims were illegitimate children of Abraham and false monotheists.[43] After the rapid Arab expansion, a large part of the Byzantine *oikoumene* – namely Alexandria, Jerusalem, Edessa and Antioch – was cut off from the Byzantine Empire, yet it continued to nurture its Orthodox heritage in circumstances where the religious opinions of Christians and Muslims clashed. In these circumstances eschatological interpretations of history arose, and the image of the Ishmaelites was given new features, as they were regarded as forerunners of the Antichrist.[44] The question of Muslims as 'Ishmaelites' or 'Hagarenes' became especially heated during the Crusades.[45] Below I seek to demonstrate how the *Primary Chronicle* uses the term in a way that is characteristic of the early eleventh century.

Isidorus of Seville (ca 560–636), the great visionary of the Visi-Gothic past, explained in his highly influential *Etymologiae* the names of the men who were founders of the peoples: 'Ishmael, son of Abraham, from whom come the Ishmaelites, whose name now has been corrupted to Saracens ("Saraceni"), as if from Sarah, and Agarenes ("Agareni") from Hagar.'[46] He also gave a fuller explanation of the term:

41 Ilarion's famous image of 'the shadow and the truth', a metaphor for the Old and New Testaments, as well as for Judaism and Christianity can be traced through the church fathers, such as Origen, Cyril of Alexandria, John Chrysostom, Eusebius and Jerome. See Franklin 1991, xliii.

42 Ilarion, *Slovo o zakone i blagodati*. See the English translation in Franklin 1991, 5–6. See also Hurwitz 1980, 325. As early as the 6th century in his Kontakion, 'On the Nativity of the Virgin Mary', the hymnographer Romanos Melodos described Sarah as prefiguring the Virgin Mary; see *Kontakia of Romanos*.

43 Sahas 1972, 70–71.

44 In 743 John of Damascus (ca 655–750) wrote his *Fount of Knowledge*, which included a chapter *De Haeresibus*, in which John discussed the heresy of the Ishmaelites. During the same year 743 Peter, the bishop of Maiuma, publicly condemned Islam, calling Muhammad a 'false prophet' and the 'forerunner of the Antichrist'. Sahas 1972, 52–69.

45 See Mil'kov 2000, Senderovich 2000, 492, and Chekin 2000, 706.

46 Isidorus, *Etymologies* 9:2:6. Cf. *Chronica maiora*, § 13: 'Abraham annorum c. genuit Isaac, ex Sara libera. Nam primum ex ancilla Agar genuerat Ismael, a quo Ismaelitarum gens qui postea Agareni, ad ultimum Saraceni sunt dicti.' John V. Tolan assumes that Isidore had taken this identification from Jerome, who in his *Commentarii in Ezechielem* writes about 'madianaeos, ismaelitas et agarenos – qui nunc saraceni appellantur', Hier. in Ezech. 48,30. CCSL 75:25. See Tolan 2002, 10, 287.

> Saracens are so called either because they claim to be descended from Sarah or because (as the pagans say) they are of Syrian origin, like the Surigenes. They live in a vast desert. They are also called the Ishmaelites, as Genesis teaches, because they are from Ishmael. Or [they are called] Cedar after the name of Ishmael's son. They are also called Hagarens from Hagar. They are, as we said, erroneously called Saracens, because they falsely pride themselves on being descendants of Sarah.[47]

Isidorus's explanation of the words Hagarens and Saracens has a strong similarity to the explanation in the *Primary Chronicle* in the entry for the year 6604 (1096 AD), where the ethnological origin of the Polovtsy as the godless sons of Ishmael is explained:

> The godless sons of Ishmael, who had been sent as punishment to the Christians, killed some of our brothers with their weapons. For they came from the desert of Yathrib, from the land lying between north and east. Four branches (коленъ 4) came forth: Torkmens, Pechenegs, Torks, and Polovtsy. Of them Methodius tells that eight branches fled when Gideon massacred them; eight fled to the desert, and four he massacred. Others say that they are the sons of Ammon, but this is not true, for the Caspians are the sons of Moab, while the Bulgars are the sons of Ammon. But the Saracens descended from Ishmael became known as the sons of Sarah and called themselves Saracens, that is to say, 'We are descendants of Sarah.'[48]

In this way the *Primary Chronicle of Kiev* proves to be a full-fledged heir to a long medieval tradition of mapping humankind and finding a place for each nation in the postdiluvian world. Defining the relationship of the Rus' to the Ishmaelites became essential. In the following sections I will demonstrate how the *Chronicle* undertook that task.

Another important feature of the imagery of the northern nations was semi-mythical, arising from the *Alexander Romance*, which included descriptions of filthy, unclean people imprisoned behind mountains locked with iron gates by Alexander the Great.[49] This mythical image of the unclean nation merged with eschatological imagery, oiled by Christian conceptions of Christ's Second Coming and the end of the world, as ideas of a barbaric people whom God would send to punish the Christians at the end of time were combined in the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius*.[50]

47 Isidorus, *Etymologies*, 9:2:57. English translation in Tolan 2002, 287.
48 PVL 6604 (1096), 234,1–234,13.
49 See Tapkova-Zaimova & Miltenova 2011, 103.
50 See the original *Syriac Revelation* in Martinez 1985, 122–154, and its English translations in Martinez 1985, 122–154, and especially Alexander 1985, 48–50. Compare the *First Slavonic Translation* in Istrin 1897, 96–100.

The *Primary Chronicle* made specific reference to both Ishmaelites and the unclean nations in the entry for the year 6604 (1096), a year when the Polovtsy onslaught devastated the outskirts of Kiev and attacked the Caves Monastery itself. With this reference the chronicler sought to explain the origins of the Polovtsy, as well as their historical and apocalyptic significance by naming four steppe nations representing the tribes of Ishmaelites: the Torkmen, the Pechenegs, the Turks and the Polovtsy, all of whom had a history of confronting Kievan Rus'. Then the chronicler reveals that his imagery of the steppe neighbours of Kievan Rus' was derived from the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius*. The *Chronicle* states that those four tribes were all that was left of the Ishmaelites after Gideon had slain four other tribes, as was told by Methodius.[51] The chronicler then strongly implied that biblical history continued in the soil of Kiev as the apocalyptic fulfilment of history.

The passage further explains the relationship between the Ishmaelites and the unclean people, stating that the unclean had descended from the Ishmaelites.[52] Even though the *Primary Chronicle* indicates a common origin for both groups in Ishmael, in a somewhat obscure manner it also makes clear that the unclean do not represent the Ishmaelite tribes *per se*. What united both tribes was their common mission as an instrument of God, as the *Chronicle* goes on to explain that the Ishmaelites and the unclean people will take up arms against the Christians in the last days of the world,[53] thereby following the original idea in the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius*. The unclean people appear in the Chronicle in a story that the chronicler had heard from the Novgorodian Giuryata, who had travelled north in the lands of the Samoyeds and learned that human voices had been heard in the mountains. These were interpreted as voices of the people who had been shut inside the mountain by Alexander the Great according to the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius*.[54]

Thus, although the distinction between these two barbaric and filthy apocalyptic peoples has been made, the *Primary Chronicle* shows a tendency to combine the image of the Ishmaelites and the unclean people.[55] Repulsive norms were also essential to the image of the Ishmaelites in the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius*.[56] In its prediction that in the last days the Ishmaelites and the nations shut within the mountains will be set free, the *Primary Chronicle* clearly suggested that the end was near: the war against the Ishmaelites had already begun, and the filthy people were on the move, their voices already heard.

51 PVL 6604 (1096), 234,3–234,9.
52 PVL 6604 (1096), 234,19–234,22.
53 PVL 6604 (1096), 236,12–236,15.
54 PVL 6604 (1096), 234,23–236,15.
55 PVL 16,12–16,20.
56 See the original *Syriac Revelation* in Martinez 1985, 122–154; its English translations in Martinez 1985, 122–154, and especially in Alexander 1985, 46 and the *First Slavonic Translation* in Istrin 1897, 95.

The Wrath of God

As the heirs of Abraham and his son Isaac with whom God made His covenant, the Rus' had to earn His protection by righteous behaviour. When His people did not behave righteously, God chastised and punished them. In the *Primary Chronicle* we find the idea of God's punishment and the notion of apocalyptic expectancy tied together. Along with adopting the images of Ishmaelites from the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius* whenever Rus' wars against the Polovtsy are mentioned, the *Primary Chronicle* simultaneously stressed the chastisement of God and called on people to repent. The sermonising attitude connected with the lost wars against the Polovtsy appears forcefully made for the first time in the *Chronicle*'s entry corresponding to our year 1068, when 'a great host of strangers, numerous Polovtsy'[57] fought against the joint forces of the Rus' princes Izyaslav, Svyatoslav and Vsevolod. The sermon has often been treated as a separate essay entitled Instruction on the *Punishment of God* (*Pouchenie o kaznyakh bozhiikh*) or *Oration on the Punishment of God* (*Slovo o kaznyakh bozhiikh*),[58] and it opens forcefully:

> God in his wrath causes foreigners to attack a nation, and then, when its inhabitants are thus crushed by the invaders, they remember God. Internecine strife is incited by the craft of the devil. For God wishes men not evil but good, while the devil takes his delight in cruel murder and bloodshed, and therefore incites quarrels, envy, domestic strife and slander. When any nation has sinned, God punishes them by death or famine or pagan incursion, by drought or a plague of caterpillars or by other chastisements.[59]

The idea that the wrath of God affected history was typical of medieval man. The consequences of man's fall forced God to act in the human sphere, as God was compelled to discipline man for his own good with various punishments. After Adam's fall human nature was dominated by its less noble traits: fickleness, obstinacy, heedlessness, lust, pride, cruelty, greed and pugnaciousness. Men knew the opposites of these traits, but in their stubbornness refused to embrace their better natures. God in his mercy thus had to intervene, like a father chastising his children, to restore man to his former state of grace. In the Latin west St Augustine (354–430) and especially Orosius (b. ca 375, d. before 418) with

57 PVL 6576 (1068), 167,14–167,15.
58 PVL 6576 (1068), 167,14–170,20. This sermon in the *Primary Chronicle* has often been connected with Igumen Feodosiy of the Caves Monastery; yet in fact what we have here in the *Primary Chronicle* is preaching following general Christian rhetoric on this topic. It is surprisingly similar to Patriarch Photius's sermon of 860, which he delivered in Constantinople during the first Rus' attack. A similar text, called *Slovo o vedre i o kasznyakh Bozhiakh* is also known in 12th-century Bulgarian literature. See Nikischenkova 2010; Mil'kov 2000, 19; Cross 1954, 265; Mansikka 1922.
59 PVL 1068, 167,21–168,2.

his book *Seven Books against the Pagans* influenced historical thought as well as medieval perceptions of history and how God worked therein.[60]

In eastern Christianity the most often cited authority on this question was Gregory the Theologian (of Nazianzus, ca 325–389), a church father of the fourth century, who in his Oration 16, *On his Father's Silence, Because of the Plague of Hail*, spoke of the wrath of God visited upon humans through natural catastrophes, floods, earthquakes, diseases, fires and the like.[61] Gregory stressed that human sins were the cause of this wrath and that by submitting oneself to God with tears, repentance and most of all by showing love to the poor and unfortunate, man would soften God's heart and thereby avoid punishment. An important aspect of this great church father's instructions was that individual sinners could cause an entire nation to suffer, while individual repentance could prevent the wrath of God from being visited upon a nation.[62]

V. V. Mil'kov states that the idea of the punishment of God (*teoriya kazney bozhiikh*) in the *Primary Chronicle* was derived from the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius*.[63] Clearly, that is the case, since the apocalyptic imagery insisted on this theme in speaking of the Ishmaelites:

> And thus they [Greeks] too will be exterminated in Gaba'ot by Ishmael, the wild ass of the desert, who was sent in the wrath of ire against men and against animals and against cattle and against trees and against plants. And it is a punishment in which there is no love. And these four leaders will be sent before them against the entire earth, Ruin and Destroyer and Desolation and Despoiler for every existing city. Also it was not because God loves the sons of Ishmael that he granted them entry into the kingdom of the Christians, but because of the iniquity and sin perpetrated by the Christians.[64]

However, the first sermon on the topic of God's wrath in the *Primary Chronicle*, added *sub anno* 1068, did not speak of the Polovtsy as Ishmaelites, but simply as pagans. The shift in terminology when speaking of the Polovtsy changed from pagans to Ishmaelites only with an entry in the year 6601 AM (1093 AD). This was the year when Prince Svyatopolk Michael ascended the Kievan throne, and the *Primary Chronicle* described the Polovtsy as the 'scheming sons of Ishmael' (лукавии сыновье Измаилови).[65] In that entry the *Chronicle*'s idea of God's punishment was further developed and the role of pagan nations was discussed as God's punishing weapon of choice:

60 Figgis 1921, 39; Raymond 1936, 10–12.
61 Gregory Nazianzen, 247–254.
62 Ilarion 2000, Section 2, Chapter 2.
63 Mil'kov 2000, 19, 53.
64 *Syriac Revelation*. English translation in Alexander 1985, 44; compare *The First Slavonic Translation* in Istrin 1897, 93.
65 PVL 6601 (1093), 223,3.

> God set the pagans on us, not because he held them dear, but to chastise us that we might abstain from evil deeds. He thus punishes us by the incursions of the pagans, for they are God's cudgels [батогъ Божии] that we may repent and turn from our wicked ways.[66]

The *Primary Chronicle* placed the misfortunes taking place in Rus' in a global context, which would shake the whole world and lead to the End Time:

> Let no one marvel at these misfortunes: 'For condign chastisement ensues wherever many sins are committed.' For this reason the world shall ultimately be betrayed [Сего ради въселеная предасть ся], for this reason the wrath has been spread abroad, for this reason the land has fallen prey to torment....'[67]

This reference to the End Time is understandable, given the closeness of the round date of the year 6600. Not only the close of millennia, but also the centennials stirred apocalyptic restlessness during the Middle Ages.[68] Although it is often stated that millennialism or chiliasm (from Latin and Greek words respectively for 'a thousand') played a minor role in Byzantium, this view, after a century of pushing the matter aside as a myth of millennialism, was again given scholarly scrutiny by Richard Landes in 2000.[69] In 2003 Paul Magdalino convincingly demonstrated how expectations of the coming end were intensified in Byzantium towards the end of the tenth century. [70] Aleksej Gippius demonstrated that the same thing took place in Rus'.[71]

The Byzantine chronological *computus* rested on *anno mundi* (AM, 'in the year of the world'). In this system, the world was believed to have been created 5,508 years before a year which in the western calendar was established as the year of the birth of Christ (a dating suggested by the Anglo-Saxon historian, the Venerable Bede). Thus, in the Byzantine calendar the year 1000 AD was the year 6508 *anno mundi*. Yet neither in Byzantium nor in Rus' was 5508 AM considered to be the date of Incarnation. Throughout the Middle Ages Byzantium clung to the chronology computed in the second and third centuries in Antioch, which placed the birth of Christ 5,500 years after the Creation. This computation was also presented in the *Primary Chronicle* in the Speech of the Philosopher, where a

66 PVL 6601 (1093), 222,8–222,13.
67 PVL 6601 (1093), 223,5–223,9.
68 See Gippius 2003, 162.
69 Landes *2000*, 429–439. For a more thorough treatment of the scholarly tradition in investigating millennialism in eastern Christianity, see Gippius 2003, 157–158.
70 Magdalino 2003, 233–270.
71 Gippius 2003, 154–171.

Greek philosopher explained to Prince Vladimir the main points of Christian history.[72] This meant that round jubilee years of centennial dates 6500 AM prompted millennial expectations, and it highlights the importance of the round dates.

As Gippius states, the habit of celebrating and sanctifying round dates already existed in Hebrew legislation of the Old Law, where it was stated that every fiftieth year should be celebrated (Leviticus 25:10). The interest in round dates was further intensified by the idea of the sabbatical millennium, developed by the early Christians. With this eschatological teaching the history of mankind was compared to the biblical week of Creation and divided into seven periods of a thousand years each based on Psalm 90: '*1000 years is a day in the sight of the Lord*'. Hence, the thousand-year kingdom promised in Revelation (20:1) corresponding to the Sabbath of Genesis 1 was supposed to begin in the year 6000.[73]

By this reckoning, the significant dates were the year 6000, corresponding to the end of the day on which God had completed his creation of the world, and the year 7000, corresponding to the day on which God rested from his labours. However, the seventh day of Creation, when God rested, was open-ended and not defined by morning and evening like the previous six. In the course of the millennium from 492 to 1492, the appointment with doomsday was thus frequently rescheduled. Magdalino satisfactorily shows that, of all these intermediate dates, those in the middle of the seventh Byzantine millennium, corresponding to the first Christian millennium, were by far the most important, but after that date every round decennial again fuelled eschatological expectations.[74]

In his article published in 2003 Aleksej Gippius made an in-depth survey of the response to millennialism in Rus', and his results are intriguing. He convincingly pointed out that the Rus' church also observed the decennial jubilees of the church, a matter that was made official in the Catholic Church in 1300, but never officially adopted in eastern Christianity. According to data taken from medieval Russian chronicles, Gippius further demonstrated that at the dawn of every new century, there was increased activity in church building and relic transformations in Rus'.[75]

The year 6600 therefore is of crucial importance for understanding the whole setting of the *Primary Chronicle*. The entries at the turn of decennium for the years 6799 (1091) and 6600 (1092) were full of omens and sightings of celestial bodies; there were solar eclipses, huge serpents falling from the

72 PVL 102,9–102,10.
73 See Gippius 2003, 156, 158.
74 Magdalino 2003, 233–270.
75 Gippius 2003, 154–171.

sky, witches, haunted devils, Polovtsian armies and deadly diseases.[76] These cosmic events played an important part in apocalyptic prophesies of the Scriptures. The beginning of the rule of Prince Svyatopolk-Michael is a continuation of these fearful signs of the End Time, and it is in relation to this that the shift of terminology used for the Polovtsy acquires a convincing explanation. It is a question of a narrative choice by the chronicler, who is writing about happenings of the End Time. By using the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius* as a typological source for the characters of history, the chronicler changed also the rhetoric of war.

With punishment as its central theme, the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius* vividly describes the sufferings of the Christians and the cruelties of the Ishmaelites; God allows the Ishmaelites to torture the Christians in various ways, even blaspheming their faith by saying, 'The Christians have no saviour'.[77]

The typology of blasphemous Ishmaelites is especially clear in the *Primary Chronicle* in the entry describing the attack of the Polovtsy on the Caves Monastery in 1093. This must have been a shocking event, leaving strong personal memories of suffering among the brothers of the monastery, perhaps even with the chronicler himself. The attack depicting a scene of blaspheming Ishmaelites has clear narrative similarities to the *Revelation*:

> But God suffered their [Polovtsy] iniquities because their sins, and their transgressions were not completed. Thus they said, 'Where is their God? Let Him come and deliver them,' and they made other blasphemous remarks about the holy icons, which they mocked, because they did not know that God punishes his servants by attacks and wars so that they may appear as gold which has been tried in the furnace. The Christians, by virtue of their many sufferings and oppressions, shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but these pagans and blasphemers, who in this world enjoy happiness and increase, shall suffer torment at the hand of the devil, since they are destined for everlasting fire.[78]

In preaching that God punishes his flock in this world so that they might escape eternal punishment in the next, the *Chronicle* followed the sermons of many other Christian thinkers. At the same time this idea of punishment required acute suffering[79] and ultimately changed the whole rhetoric of war in the *Primary Chronicle*. In describing the sufferings of the Christians at the hands of the Polovtsy, the chronicler repeated the means of humiliation in the passage from Pseudo-Methodius's apocalypse

76 PVL 6799 (1091), 214,14–6600 (1092), 215,26.
77 English translation of the *Syriac Revelation* by Reinik 1999, 149–152. Compare Alexander 1985, 48, who has obvious mistakes in his translation in this particular passage. Compare the translation in Martinez 1985, 148–149. See also *The First Slavonic Translation* in Istrin 1897, 97.
78 PVL (1096), 233,4–233,15.
79 Patriach Photius used exactly the same rhetorical devices in 860, when he delivered his two sermons during the first Rus' attack on Constantinople. See Photius, *Homilies* III and IV.

mentioned above. The image of the tortured citizens of Torzhesk is realistic and heartbreaking; the chronicler depicts them dragged into captivity suffering from cold, hunger and thirst, their tongues parched, their feet bare and dirty.[80]

Even if the *Chronicle*'s description of the cruelties inflicted by the Polovtsy may seem less monstrous compared with other contemporary texts in which the image of the Saracens was blackened during the time of the First Crusade,[81] the change in war rhetoric within the *Primary Chronicle* itself is nevertheless obvious. Earlier wars had produced no such dramatic descriptions of people's sufferings, but suddenly, in the very year that Svyatopolk-Michael became the ruler of Kiev (1093), the tone completely changes. The chronicler himself explained the reasons for the sudden change, for he had a clear vision of how historical events were seen, announcing that the torments taking place in Rus' were part of something bigger:

> It was thus the prophet said, 'I will change your feasts into mourning and your songs into lamentations.' For God caused great mourning in our land; our villages and our towns were laid waste, and we fled before our foes. As the prophet said, 'You shall be slain before your enemies; they that hate you shall oppress you, and you shall flee when none pursues you. I will break the arrogance of your pride, and your strength shall be spent in vain. The sword of the stranger will kill you, your land shall be desolate, and your courts laid waste. For you are worthless and contrary, and I will also walk contrary to you in anger, said the Lord God of Israel.' For the malignant sons of Ishmael were burning villages and granges, and many churches were consumed by fire.[82]

These horrors of war serve as an introduction to the impressive high point of the *Chronicle*'s narrative, for eventually God relinquished his anger with the Rus', according to the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius*, which first described the horrors that the Ishmaelites caused the Christians, but ended with the 'sudden awakening'[83] of the Last Emperor and his triumph. Thus, the heavy losses of the Rus' at the beginning of Svyatopolk-Michael's rule fit the imagery of the *Revelation* perfectly. The one great deviation from that imagery is that it was not the ruler himself, Svyatopolk-Michael, but his cousin, Vladimir Monomakh, who forcefully stepped in as the hero of the triumphant battle of 1103, when 'God on high inspired an awful fear in the Polovtsy, so that terror and trembling beset them at the sight of the Rus' forces, and they wavered.'[84]

80 PVL 6601 (1093), 223,9–225,15.
81 As claimed by Mikhailova 2013, 50–79.
82 PVL 6601 (1093), 222,18–223,5.
83 *The First Slavonic Translation* in Istrin 1897, 97.
84 PVL 6611 (1103), 278,21–278,26.

The *Revelation* specifically stated that

> ...the King of Greece [i.e. the Last Emperor] will seize the places in the desert and will destroy with the sword the remnant left of them in the Promised Land. And the fear of all those around them will fall upon them. They and their wives and their sons and their leaders and all their camps and their entire land in the desert of their fathers will be given into the hands of the kings of the Greeks, and will be given up to desolation and destruction and captivity and murder.[85]

With the enemy destroyed, the *Chronicle* continued with the Pseudo-Methodius theme, telling how the leaders of the Ishmaelites were killed, and specifically depicting how, on the instructions of Prince Vladimir, one of them – a chief called Beldyuz – was beaten to death in punishment for not having kept his vows of peace and for spilling Christian blood.[86] Just as the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius* had prophesied that the camps of the enemies would be emptied, so the *Primary Chronicle* rejoiced in the Rus' victory in 1103:

> Thereafter, all the kinsmen gathered together, and Vladimir exclaimed, 'This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it. For the Lord has freed us from our foes, and put down our enemies, and crushed the serpents' heads. He has given them as food to the men of Rus'.' They [the Rus'] thus seized sheep and cattle, horses and camels, tents with booty and slaves, and they captured Pechenegs and Torks together with their tents. They then returned to Rus' carrying great spoils, with glory and a great victory won.[87]

Given the narrative strategy of the *Primary Chronicle*, it is clear that historical events demanded the presence of the Last Emperor on the scene, a perfect match with the images from the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius*. And given the timing of the Emperor's rise to the Kievan throne, what could be more fitting than to accentuate the apocalyptic essence of the numbered years, which the *Chronicle* so devotedly had recorded beginning with the reign of the Byzantine Emperor Michael. Prince Svyatopolk-Michael together with his cunning cousin of shrewd military expertise were marked with the recognisable features of the Last Emperor, the one who would defeat the Ishmaelites. In the next and last section of this article, I will demonstrate how this identification worked.

85 *Syriac Revelation*, English translation in Alexander 1983, 48–49. Compare the *First Slavonic Translation* in Istrin 1897, 97–98.
86 PVL 6611 (1103), 279,3–279,19.
87 PVL 6611 (1103), 279,19–279,28.

Apocalyptic Michael

By applying Pseudo-Methodius's imagery to the Polovtsy as the villains of the End Time, the *Primary Chronicle* fundamentally changed the role of the Kievan prince, turning him into an eschatological figure. This connection gained strength from the cult of the Archangel Michael. Michael had a messianic role as the Prince of Light who fought the Prince of Darkness; as the commander-in-chief of the host of angels, he naturally assumed the task of Protector of God's Chosen People.[88] Michael's attribute was light, and the scriptural definition of his angelic nature was fire and wind (Ps. 104:4).

The tenth and eleventh centuries witnessed an extraordinary increase in interest in the Archangel, especially in the years 950–1050, thanks to the Christianisation of warfare and the discovery of the writings of Pseudo-Dionysius in western Europe in the ninth century, which acknowledged the hierarchy of spirits and recognised the function of archangels as messengers. Also in this period the apocalyptic role of the Archangel increased in importance because of the imagery of Michael's role in the Last Judgement and in the previous wars of the empire. The connection between the Cross and the Archangel Michael is especially interesting.[89] The *Primary Chronicle* is almost obsessed with the sign of the Cross, which is the ultimate Christian emblem of triumph over the forces of darkness, as demonstrated in its stories of demons.[90]

In the settings of medieval worship, where miracle-working relics were central, the cult of angels was problematic, because angels, not being physical in their essence, could not produce relics. However, as a bodiless and imageless object of veneration the Archangel Michael had his own means of demonstrating his essence and being: he frequently appeared in the countryside, often on mountain tops, manifesting himself in fiery pillars.[91] The high hills of Kiev were the perfect place for the angel of the Chosen People to appear.

This angelic manifestation – a fiery pillar – was seen in the Caves Monastery of Kiev on 11 February 6618 (1110 AD). The monastery was exactly the kind of place in which the Archangel manifested elsewhere in Europe during that time – on sacred mountains where churches were carved within the

88 Especially in Qumran text 1 QM 17.6–8a. See Hannah 1999, 54, 64–65.

89 See Callahan 2003, 182–183, 191–193.

90 The *Primary Chronicle* frequently discusses demons and the Antichrist, who are described as dwelling in an abyss until the final days of the world. The chronicle harnesses the Cross in the battle against these forces, as presented in the lively story of demons harassing Brother Isaac in PVL 6582 (1074), 196,25–197,3. See also PVL 6579 (1071), 177,9–177,18; PVL 6579 (1071), 179,20–180,6. The *Primary Chronicle* makes strong claims for the right dogma of venerating the Cross, frequently discussing its power. PVL 6496 (988), 114,14–144,18; PVL 6576 (1068), 172,13–173,1; PVL 6586 (1078), 203,29–204,6; PVL 6599 (1091), 214,4–214,10. The power of the Cross is particularly emphasised in the inter-princely pacts, which were sealed by kissing the Cross. See PVL 6576 (1068), 172,12–173,3; PVL 6605 (1097), 257,6–257,10.

91 Monte Gargano in Italy is a place par excellence for the cult of Michael in western Europe, and its cave church was imitated by other cultic places, where rough-hewn churches placed on mountain tops became symbols of the Archangel's presence. Peers 2001, 170–171.

rocks. Psellus (1018–1081) gives an interesting description of a miracle which took place in Asia Minor similar to the fiery pillar of the Caves Monastery: in both places a fiery pillar was seen at the Church of the Mother of God.[92] The *Primary Chronicle* remarks that the fiery pillar at the Caves Monastery was that of an angel who foretold that the Rus' forces would later march under the leadership of this angel to confront the Polovtsy:

> During the same year, there was a portent in the Cave Monastery on February 11: a fiery pillar appeared, which reached from earth to heaven, its lightning illuminated the whole land, and thunder was heard in the sky at the first hour of the night. The whole world saw this. The pillar stood over the stone refectory, so that its cross could not be seen, and after remaining there awhile, entered into the church, and halted over the tomb of Feodosiy. Then it rose, as if facing to the east, and forthwith became invisible.
>
> This was not an actual pillar of fire, but an angelic manifestation: for an angel appears thus, either as a pillar of fire or as a flame. As David has said, 'He makes His angels winds and his servants a flaming fire', and they are sent forth by the will of God, according to the desire of the Lord and Creator of all things. For an angel appears wherever there are blessed abodes and houses of prayer, and they exhibit such portion of their aspect as it is possible for men to look upon. Indeed, it is impossible for men to behold angelic form, for even the mighty Moses could not view the angelic being: for a pillar of cloud led them by day and a pillar of fire by night, but it was not a pillar that led them, but an angel went ahead of them during the day and night. This apparition indicated an event which was destined to take place, and its presage was later realised. For in the following year, was not an angel the guide of our princes against our foreign foes (иноплеменьникы супостаты)? Even as it is written: 'An angel shall go before you', and again, 'Your angel be with you? [sic]'[93]

Right after this, the *Primary Chronicle* ends in the Laurentian manuscript, followed by the colophon of Igumen Sylvester:

> In the hope of God's grace, I, Sylvester, Igumen of St. Michael's, wrote this chronicle in the year 6624 [1116 AD], the ninth of the indiction, during the reign of Prince Vladimir in Kiev, while I was presiding over St Michael's monastery. May whosoever reads this book remember me in his prayers.[94]

92 Michael Psellus, *Oration on the Miracles of the Archangel Michael*, 238.179–239.192. The English translation in Peers 2001, 172–173.
93 PVL 6618 (1110), 284,5–285,7. See also Likhachev 1996, 541.
94 *Lavrent'evskaya letopis'*, 274. When Monk Lavrentiy wrote his parchment manuscript, he used a chronicle written up to the year 1305 as his source. But this source had many *lacunae*, and it also lacked the ending of the *Primary Chronicle*. It has therefore been suggested that Monk Sylvester's colophon must have been written on a separate leaf for it to have survived. See Likhachev 1996, 541; O. Tolochko 2008, 130–139.

The *Primary Chronicle*, as it appears in the Laurentian manuscript, thus ends abruptly with the story of a miracle.[95] When compared to the Hypatian manuscript (and manuscripts related to it) of the *Chronicle*, it is obvious that the Laurentian manuscript ending is a torso and lacks its final pages. What complicates the matter is that in the Hypatian branch of manuscripts, the *Primary Chronicle* does not have a clear break, but continues by following the reigns of the Kievan rulers of the twelfth century. On stylistic evidence it has been argued that the *Primary Chronicle* in the Hypatian manuscript ends with the entry for the year 1117 AD.[96] The argument clearly contradicts the fact that Igumen Sylvester wrote his copy of the chronicle in 1116. Hypotheses about the later redactions of the *Primary Chronicle* are very complicated, since no surviving manuscripts represent a 'pure' text with the original ending of the *Primary Chronicle* or a 'pure' version of Sylvester.[97]

Nevertheless, in order to understand the narrative setting of the *Primary Chronicle*, I argue that it is essential to examine the *Chronicle*'s ending in the Hypatian manuscript. Even though we cannot evaluate its source value in comparison to the no longer extant 'original' ending, the Hypatian manuscript is the only text to preserve the last events of the *Primary Chronicle*. Therefore, I will continue with the miraculous sign that took place in the Caves Monastery on 11 February 1110 and its explanation, for which the chronicler followed the *Chronicle of George Hamartolus*,[98] quoted at length in the next annual entry. The continuation of the *Primary Chronicle* in the Hypatian manuscript states that without God's favour, the Christian Rus' princes were powerless, but because of their prayers and their appeal to the Mother of God, God's heart was softened and he sent his angel to the Rus' princes.[99] Making an analogy between the pagan Hellenistic troops of Alexander the Macedonian who conquered Jerusalem and the pagan Polovtsy who fought against Kiev in his own time, the chronicler explained that sometimes "because of our sins" God permits these attacks to take place. He then continues with discussion on the role of angels, explaining that each nation, including even a pagan one, has its own angel. However,

95 PVL 6616 (1110), 284,56–285,7.

96 Shakhmatov noted that the colourful style of the chronicle's ending belongs to the writer who penned the angelogical explanations and that this style was last represented in the entry for the year 6625 (1117 AD), which referred to the death of the Byzantine Emperor Aleksey the following year, on 15 August 1118. Shakhmatov 1916; published also in Shakhmatov 2003, 257–977. About the ending of the *Primary Chronicle,* see also Franchuk 1986, 3; Likhachev 1996, 121–129: Likhacheva 1987, 236; Tolochko 2010, 820; Gippius 2010, 1228.

97 According to Shakhmatov's theory, also the Laurentian manuscript has features belonging to the latest, 'third' redaction of the *Primary Chronicle*, written in 1118 AD. On the hypothesis of Aleksey Shakhmatov, see Shakhmatov 1898, 116–130and Shakhmatov 1914, 31–53, both published also in Shakhmatov 2003, 144, 413–427.

98 See the Fourth Book, chapter 61, of the *Chronicle of George the Monk*, *Knigi vremennye i obraznye Georgiya Monakha*, in Matveenko & Shchegoleva 2011, 203–208. The *Chronicle of George Hamartolus* in turn had been influenced by the work of a 4th-century bishop, Epiphanios of Salamis, called 'Anchoratus' (The Anchor of the Faith or the Firmly Anchored Man), consisting of his writings against Arianism, the teachings of Origen and other heresies. See Likhachev 1996, 541.

99 *Ipat'evskaya letopis'*, 6618 (1110), 191.

Christian nations have a significant advantage, as each Christian has his own angel-protector, and here we come to the significance of the angelic protector of our Prince Svyatopolk-Michael:

> But let be it known that the Christians do not have just one angel, but many, as there are many who are baptised, and let us emphasise that every Orthodox prince has his angel, but these cannot resist God's will, but they do pray assiduously on behalf of the Christians. And thus it happened: because of the prayers of the Holy Mother of God and the Holy Angels, God became merciful, and He sent the angels to help the princes of Rus' against the pagans.[100]

As we can see, the *Chronicle* emphasises the role of a personal guardian angel for each Orthodox prince. For the Rus', this meant a guardian angel for its ruling Prince Svyatopolk – none other than the Archangel Michael himself.

Earlier in this article it was mentioned that in the later Slavonic version of the *Revelation* the Last Emperor was called by the name Michael. Just when the name was attached to the figure of the Last Emperor is impossible to know. It is possible that this had already happened during the time of Boris-Michael of Bulgaria in the late ninth century, but the *Primary Chronicle* gives a clear indication that if not already adopted, the image was certainly in use when the Chronicle was written in Kiev in the early twelfth century. Prince Svyatopolk's guardian angel played a key role in the Rus' victory over the Polovtsy, and thus Svyatopolk-Michael's name was implied as being a likely source of the apocalyptic imagery in the *Chronicle*.

The *Interpolated Slavonic Redaction* of the *Revelation* depicts the victory of the Emperor Michael against the Ishmaelites thus:

> But he [Michael] will rise up as if awakened from sleep, take up his sword and say: 'Bring me a swift horse.' He will go against them [the Ishmaelites] with great fury and raise his sword against them. God's angel, who at first was with them, will be with Michael against them. And their [the Ishmaelites'] hearts will turn weak like water, and their bodies will melt like wax, and they will lose their manliness. And they will perish from fear, not being able to look at the strength of God. And then the Emperor [царь] Michael will conquer the countless numbers of Ishmaelites, and some of them will be scattered like cattle.[101]

Essentially, this is what takes place among the Polovtsy in the *Primary Chronicle*'s continuation as represented in the Hypatian manuscripts in the description of the war of 1111: the combatants become

100 *Ipat'evskaya letopis'*, 6618 (1110), 190–191.
101 *Interpolated Slavonic Redaction* in Istrin 1897, 123–124. Also in Mil'kov 2000, 357.

frightened of the terrifying sight of the Archangel Michael, who slaughters the Polovtsy right before the eyes of the Rus' troops.

In a witty dialogue with his cousin Svyatopolk, Vladimir Monomakh is depicted in the *Primary Chronicle* entries for 1103 and 1111 as the warrior of God and initiator of the Polovtsy wars.[102] The preparations for the 1111 campaign were immense, and many princes joined in. First, the Rus' troops took the city of Sharukan, and the priests are depicted as singing liturgical melodies at the command of Vladimir Monomakh as his men storm the city. The noble Rus' warriors gaze heavenward with tears in their eyes as they march through the gates of the conquered city. Then, somewhere near the River Don on the 24th of March, the Rus' confront the Polovtsy. The *Chronicle* informs us how 'God on high directed His fearsome eyes at the strangers (на иноплеменников), and they began to fall in front of the Christians.'[103]

After a few days the two armies met again, and God was again on the side of the Rus'. The *Chronicle* depicts the battle of the 27th of March as follows: 'And before the troops of Vladimir the Polovtsy fell, killed by an invisible angel; the occasion was testified to by many, as heads flew to the ground smitten by the unseen.'[104] The captured Polovtsy prisoners lamented that they had no chance of victory when the Rus' had such a terrifying image flying before their troops, carrying shiny and frightening weapons. The chronicler then comes to the conclusion that the angel seen in the Caves Monastery a few months earlier had been the same angel who gave Vladimir Monomakh the idea of going to war. [105] At the end of this entry the chronicler states:

> As Ioann Zlatoust [Chrysostomos] said, it is appropriate to praise angels, for they pray to the Creator to be forever merciful and favourable towards the people. Let me tell you: the angels are our saviours when we fight the forces against us, and their commander is the Archangel Michael.[106]

With this miraculous victory the narrative reaches its high point, which represents the whole purpose of the *Primary Chronicle*, namely to depict the rise of the Rus' from barbarian oblivion to their place as the new Chosen People of God:

102 PVL 6611 (1103), 277,1–277,18 and Ipat'evskaya letopis', 6619 (1111), 191.
103 *Ipat'evskaya letopis'*, 6619 (1111), 192. The exact geographical location of the River Degey is uncertain. See the commentary in Likhachev 1996, 543.
104 *Ipat'evskaya letopis'*, 6619 (1111), 193.
105 *Ipat'evskaya letopis'*, 6619 (1111), 193.
106 *Ipat'evskaya letopis'*, 6619 (1111), 193.

> Likewise now, with the help of God, and with the help of the prayers of the Mother of God and the holy angels, the Rus' princes came back followed by great renown, which spread to all people, even to the most remote places, to Greeks, Ugry [the Hungarians], Lyakhi [the Poles], and Czechs, even to distant Rome itself, in praise of God; now and always, and forever and ever, Amen.[107]

It was clearly important to the chronicler to prove first of all to the Greeks and other nations that Rus' was fighting with God on its side. When God finally relented towards the Rus' princes, he allowed the guardian angel of its ruling prince to assist in the victory over the pagans. Given that Michael was the arch-strategist, the protector of God's Chosen People, Kiev was made into a New Jerusalem and the Rus', God's Chosen People. Therefore, the happenings of the Final Days did not necessarily need the 'Old' Jerusalem. In this regard Rus' was fighting its Crusade on Kievan soil.

I. N. Danilevskiy was certainly right to stress that a chronicle is ultimately a way of narrating a typology between sacred texts and real events.[108] This notion has had surprisingly little impact on studies of the *Primary Chronicle*, and recent discussions about the Archangel Michael's role have failed to make a thorough typology between the narrative in the *Primary Chronicle* and that in the Sacred Writings.[109] A. V. Laushkin, in his criticism of Danilevskiy, stated that there is little similarity between the Polovtsy of the *Primary Chronicle* and the Ishmaelites of the Bible.[110] I argue that Laushkin is missing the point: for our Kievan chronicler the biblical books were not the only sacred texts. Even though high theology never embraced popular apocalypses like the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius*, it is clear that for our chronicler the *Revelation* was a sacred text. Not only does the narrative of the *Primary Chronicle* use the imagery of the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius*, but also in its pages the apocalyptic expectations and millennial fears of contemporary Kievans are fully expressed. This is further evident in the entry describing the death of Prince Svyatopolk.

Prince Svyatopolk-Michael died in the year 6621 (1113 AD), an event that was predicted by terrifying celestial signs involving the sun. After the prince's death, Kiev erupted into chaos and anarchy; violent riots broke out, and Svyatopolk's leading officials were attacked, as were the Jews of Kiev.[111] In Soviet historiography the riots were interpreted as a reaction by the lower class to the strained economic

107 *Ipat'evskaya letopis'*, 6619 (1111), 196.
108 Danilevskiy 1993, 78–92, especially 79.
109 Kotyshev 2012, 47–51. Also Vladimir Petrukhin gave a cautious evaluation of the role of Svyatopolk-Michael, stating prudently that the reference to the Byzantine Emperor Michael at the beginning of the Rus' annals might have been important, as Michael was the emperor of the End Times in the apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius. Petrukhin 2000, 72, 98–99.
110 Laushkin 2013, 76–86. See also Ranchin & Laushkin 2002, 125–137.
111 *Ipat'evskaya letopis'*, 6621 (1113), 197–198.

situation; when Vladimir Monomakh finally stepped in to calm the riotous masses, he was seen as a strong ruler who protected the lower working class from the greedy feudal upper class.[112] However, I would like to point out that in a context in which signs predicting the end of the world were regularly sought, the attack against the Jews has to be placed in a larger framework. One cannot overlook the fact that around the time of the First Crusade the atmosphere vis-à-vis the Jewish populace was strained everywhere in Europe, especially in Germany, where the Crusaders turned against the Jews before their departure for the Holy Land in 1096.[113] As Matthew Gabriele has recently shown, the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius* was a major spiritual stimulus that fuelled the pogroms by these crusaders. Gabriele points out that the attack on the Jews in towns of the Rhineland in May 1096 was inspired by the militant and warlike images of the *Revelation* and that Count Emicho, who led the German crusaders, presented himself as the Last Emperor who was going to liberate Jerusalem from the infidels.[114]

In the sermons and teachings of the Kievan clergy the Jews were often dealt with by emphasising their false teachings.[115] Medieval anti-Semitism arose from Christian views of Jews, who, in light of sacred history, were the perpetrators of wrongdoing against Christ. The attitude evolved into more deep-seated antagonism, with Jews labelled subhuman evil sorcerers, an image that gained more and more ground from the eleventh century on. The increasingly popular view of Jews as unbelieving Christ-killers and usurers made them more dependent than ever on the protection of secular authorities. In return for a large share of profit, kings and princes were willing to protect the Jews.[116] What took place in Kiev in the year 1113 could reflect the fact that with Svyatopolk's death the Jews lost their protector. However, in the light of *Primary Chronicle*'s typology one could assume that our chronicler was not isolated in his interest in the End Time. Therefore, I argue that the *Chronicle* most likely reflected the general apocalyptic tensions felt throughout Europe during the time of the First Crusades. After all, the faith of Jerusalem was important to our chronicler, and this faith continued to be important in the later twelfth-century Kievan chronicle.[117]

112 This was supposedly reflected in the law code Prostrannaya Russkaya Pravda. Grekov 1953, 496–498; Tikhomirov 1955. See also Likhachev 1996, 544–545.
113 Langmuir 1990, 301–304.
114 Gabriele 2007, 61–82.
115 Already ustav of Yaroslav Vladimirovich had strictly forbidden any relations between Christians and Jews, and the same was done in the Teaching of Feodosiy, who taught that Jews who lived in Kiev must be considered as enemies of God. Metropolitan Ioann II of Kiev, in his canonical answer No 22, warned his flock against selling their sons and daughters to Jewish slave-traders, whom he considered 'lawless' (bezzakonnik). *Kanonicheskie otvety Kievskogo Mitropolita Ioanna II*, 1–18.
116 Langmuir 1990, 301–303.
117 PVL 165,25; Ipat'evskaya letopis' 6695 (1187), 441; 6698 (1190), 449.

Why then was Prince Svyatopolk's death such a frightening experience for the people of Kiev? According to the *Revelation*, when the Last Emperor dies, the Antichrist would be revealed and the end of the world was nigh. Pseudo-Methodius had specifically stated that the Antichrist was a descendant of Dan,[118] thereby implying that he would be born in the Jewish community. In that context it was little wonder that the Kievans were restless.

Ultimately, Prince Svyatopolk remains a distant figure in the *Primary Chronicle*, for it is his cousin Vladimir Monomakh who steals the show as the narrative's hero: it was he who stepped in to slay the pagans, with the narrative theme showing an interesting similarity to the last battles of the 'Greek king' against the Ishmaelites. The joyous tone of the *Primary Chronicle* after the victories over the Polovtsy resembles that of the *Revelation*, when the Ishmaelites had been defeated and a great period of prosperity began. The Ishmaelites, who earlier had subjugated the Christians, were in turn subjugated after the emperor's victory. But even though Svyatopolk-Michael was a prince of Kiev, the hero of these wars was clearly his cousin and the chief commander of the Rus' troops, Vladimir Monomakh. The last two princes in the *Primary Chronicle*, Svyatopolk-Michael and Vladimir Monomakh, make up a ruling pair, in which the apocalyptic significance of the Last Emperor is reflected in the image of both.

The shift of power from Svyatopolk to Monomakh seems to be central to the problematic presentation of the two Kievan princes; certainly it has been central to scholars trying to reconstruct the process of creating the *Primary Chronicle*. The 'classical' theory of Alexey Shakhmatov rested on the hypothesis that after the death of Svyatopolk, when Vladimir Monomakh had taken the throne of Kiev, the new ruler commissioned a heavily edited version of the *Chronicle*, and its emphasis was changed to allow a valiant, orthodox, pious and ideal ruler – Vladimir Monomakh – to step forth. Shakhmatov, in explaining why no traces of the earlier chronicle, which supposedly was more favourable to Svyatopolk, have survived, suggested that all copies of the earlier volume were destroyed.[119] But it is of utmost importance to point out that Shakhmatov's theory is still mere hypothesis, with no textual basis.[120]

In this article I have argued that the image of the Last Emperor was essential to the compiler of the *Primary Chronicle*. In interpreting the famous revelation, the chronicler saw the prophecy taking place on Rus' soil. I further argue that the juxtaposition of Svyatopolk and Vladimir Monomakh was not an issue for our chronicler. Both rulers had St Michael as their patron saint. For Svyatopolk, Michael was a namesake and a personal guardian angel, in whose honour the ruler built a lavishly decorated

118 See Istrin 1897, 209.
119 Shakhmatov 1916; reprinted in 2003, 537–538.
120 See also Tolochko, P. 2008, 130–139.

golden-domed church in Kiev. For Vladimir Monomakh, Michael was a patron of his family's monastery in Vydubich – a monastery in which the Igumen Silvester wrote his copy of the *Primary Chronicle* in the year 1116. In the end both rulers imparted crucial features to the Last Emperor, Svyatopolk with his name – Michael – as I have demonstrated in this article. For Vladimir Monomakh it was his Greek heritage which made him equally fit for the typology. When Prince Svyatopolk-Michael died and the world did not come to an end, his cousin assumed the role of the Last Emperor by virtue of his origin, for Vladimir Monomakh's birth was specifically foretold in the *Primary Chronicle*: 'Vsevolod had a son, Volodimir, by the daughter of a *Greek* emperor' [отъ цьсариць Грькынѣ] [italics added].[121]

The *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius* specifically underlined the Greek origin of the empire, deriving its royal bloodline from the first world-ruler, Alexander the Great. His Greek bloodline came into the Byzantine Empire through his mother, who was a daughter of an Ethiopian king, Cush, and who after Alexander's death was given as a wife to the Greek king Byzas, a founder of the city of Byzantium.[122] This lineage was of great significance in the *Revelation*, which depended heavily on Psalm 68:31, where in the Syriac Bible, Peshitta, it is stated that at the end of time Cush shall hasten to stretch out her hands to God.[123] In the *Revelation* this moment took place when the last Greek king, a descendant of Cush, placed his crown on the Cross at Golgotha with his own hands. In the powerful imagery of the *Revelation* the Last Emperor – who is actually identified as a Greek king throughout the *Revelation* – hands over his kingdom to God, thereby fulfilling the prophecy of David.

Both the Syriac original of the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius* and its Greek translations call the Last Emperor a 'Greek king'. The kingdom of Rome is mentioned a few times, but always with the clarification that it was a kingdom of the Greeks.[124] In the *Slavonic Revelation*, both in the tenth-century and the fourteenth-century translations, the title for a Greek king was Greek emperor, a царь.[125] The *Third Interpolated Slavonic Redaction* of Pseudo-Methodius's *Revelation* called the emperor 'Tsar Michael', but no longer emphasised his Greek heritage.[126] In this dual representation of the Last Emperor in the *Primary Chronicle*, Svyatopolk is connected with the figure through his name, and Vladimir

121 PVL 6561 (1053) 160,29–160,31.
122 See the original *Syriac Revelation*, English translation in Alexander 1986, 41–42. Compare *The First Slavonic Translation*, 90–91. The 11th-century *Short Latin Redaction* of the *Revelation* talks about the war of the Ishmaelites against *regnum romanorum*, and its emperor is called *imperator Graecorum*, *rex Romanorum et Graecorum or rex Romanorum*. See the *Short Latin Redaction* in Istrin 1897, 82.
123 See Alexander 1985, 19.
124 It was only in the later variants of the *Visions of Daniel* that the title of Greek king was replaced by a term more familiar in Byzantine official terminology, such as the Greek or Roman emperor. See Alexander 1978, 3–4.
125 *The First Slavonic Translation*, in Istrin 1897, 91–92, 97–99. The *Second Slavonic Translation*, in Istrin 1897, 107, 112.
126 See *The Interpolated Slavonic Revelation* in Istrin 1897, 123–129.

Monomakh, through his Greek origins. Both Svyatopolk and Vladimir Monomakh thus had attributes associated with the Last Emperor.

I suggest that what we see in the *Primary Chronicle*'s relatively pale role of the Last Emperor Svyatopolk – in contrast to his heroic warrior cousin Vladimir Monomakh – is a consequence of accommodation and resignation due to the failure of the expected end to arrive. Those in Kiev who felt the closeness of the End Time must have been on their guard when Svyatopolk-Michael died. In fact, as the *Chronicle* itself testifies, the long delay in placing a new ruler on the Kievan throne after Svyatopolk's death makes one question whether there were not many who believed that the normal everyday routines were over and Christ's Second Coming was near. But the world did not come to an end, and eventually a new ruler ascended the Kievan throne. What happened to the image of the Last Emperor, an image that was so splendidly constructed in the chronicle to fit Rus' history and the idea of the numbered temporary years to fit the typology of the sacred writings? The image survived, as it is in the nature of strong mental images to survive, given that images in general are built on easily recognizable and stereotypical constraints of human minds that fight everyday facts. Two great medievalists, Aron Gurevich and Jacques Le Goff, wrote about the power of mental images. Gurevich spoke about collective memory, which in this apocalyptic concept I have referred to as a mental image, and about the importance of equating the bearers of the same name.[127] Le Goff for his part spoke about the concept of translation and the importance of analogy, remarking that 'the only things and people who really existed were those which recalled something or someone who had already existed.'[128] This is what the power of Svaytopolk-Michael's image rested on. The image was so splendidly constructed that, when the Greekness of Vladimir Monomakh offered a way to secure and nurture the typology of the Last Emperor, the entire worldview of the chronicle was saved.

Conclusion

The concept of the Rus' as the Chosen People, singled out by Providence, turned the battle against the pagan Polovtsy into a Christian mission. The fact that a Rus' Christian mission was directed against pagans, not Muslims, has led many scholars to confuse the role of the Polovtsy in the Rus' wars. Mark Batunsky, for example, argued that Russia's intellectual elite received a fully developed theory of Islam from Byzantium, distorting the historical reality in subjugating the Polovtsy to represent the Byzantine war against Islam. Batunsky further claimed that the manner in which the Rus' writers treated the

127 Gurevich 1990, 50.
128 Le Goff 1988, 171.

confrontation with the 'Hagarians' was more pragmatic than either the Latin West or the Byzantine East. [129] I find this argument ill-grounded, for it seems obvious that the Kievan chronicler was a full-fledged heir to a long Christian tradition. The fact that the Rus' were fighting the Polovtsy and that the Crusaders in the Holy Land were facing the Muslim Arabs was insignificant: in both cases, Christians faced non-Christians, and most important, they faced people who fit the eschatological image of the Ishmaelites.

Recently, Tsvetelin Stepanov raised the question of the impact of Pseudo-Methodius's apocalypse on the *Primary Chronicle*, claiming that the *Chronicle* does not contain any allusions to the image of the Last Emperor, which in his mind would have been ideologically impossible in Kievan Rus', where there was no claim of having imperial rule under a tsar.[130] I believe Simon Franklin was absolutely right when he argued that, for Kievan Rus', a Byzantine emperor was a figure distant from the Byzantine sources – a figure who had a central place in Byzantine universalism, but no place in Rus'.[131] I argue that the *Primary Chronicle* presents a view in which a Byzantine emperor was completely replaced by a Rus'ian *knyaz*', with Kievan soil substituted for Jerusalem's.

Most important, Stepanov failed to make convincing arguments for the role of the Polovtsy as the archenemy of Rus', confusing and entangling them with the role of Islam in the image of the Ishmaelites.[132] In the *Primary Chronicle* the sons of Ishmael were pagans, a fact that was very important for its narrative choice. The original apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius never claimed any religious beliefs for the Ishmaelites, only maintaining that they were not Christians, which became apparent as they mocked the Christians while humiliating them.[133] This detail also figured in the *Primary Chronicle*, in a 1096 description of the Polovtsy attack on the Caves Monastery, when the Polovtsy laughed at the terrified monks and asked: 'Where is their God?'[134] The paganism of the Polovtsy was crucial when it came to the *Chronicle*'s idea of God's punishment, for the *Chronicle* specifically stated that God allowed pagans to be the instrument of his anger. On the other hand, the paganism of the Polovtsy was fundamentally marked by eschatological typology, which has too often been sidelined by historians.[135]

In closing, I am calling for an understanding of the ideological imagery of the *Primary Chronicle*, a text born in a culture in which the novelty and importance of written documents shaped completely

129 Batunsky 1986, 4, 8, 22–27.
130 Stepanov 2011a, 148–163, especially 153. Published also in Stepanov 2011b, 335–353.
131 Franklin 1983; published also in Franklin 2002.
132 Stepanov 2011a and Stepanov 2011b, passim.
133 See n78.
134 PVL 6604 (1096), 233,6.
135 See, for example, Mikhailova 2013, 50–79, and Ostrowski 2011, 229–253.

new ways of thinking as well as the identity of men. The rapprochement between the oral and written traditions began to play a decisive role in the organisation of experience and established the relation of human actions to the formal, written models by which random historical events could be ordered. The writing down of events gave rise to unprecedented parallels between literature and life and advanced a fundamental process of categorisation.[136] It is therefore essential to read the *Primary Chronicle of Kiev* as a product of categorisation, made in the spirit of universal chronicles, but in a very original and independent manner, wherein the passing years play a decisive role.

In this respect, as a model of categorisation the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius* played a significant role in shaping the content of the *Primary Chronicle*. By making the narrative choice to cast the Polovtsy in the image of the Ishmaelites, our chronicler also had to find other equivalents to fit his eschatological imagery. Prince Svyatopolk of Kiev was thereby positioned to fit the image of the Last Emperor. In particular, the participation of the Archangel Michael turned the campaigns of Prince Svyatopolk and his cousin Vladimir into the final battles of the world. The archangel with a key role in popular apocalypses was the heavenly protector of Prince Svyatopolk of Kiev, and his name became central to the formation of Svyatopolk's identity and political career.[137] Together with the fact that the world did not end when Prince Svyatopolk died in 1113, these events caused the Rus' to claim yet another 'last' emperor, as Vladimir Monomakh with his claim to Greek lineage fit the role of the Last Emperor very well.

With this imagery the *Primary Chronicle* forcefully demonstrated how the earlier Byzantine images associated with Rus' as the nation of Gog and Magog were incorrect and suggested an alternative interpretation of the world order. In that alternative the *Primary Chronicle* delivered a coherent narrative with a universal message that showed how the Polovtsy were the true instruments of God's wrath. In that plan of salvation, the Rus' rulers had a specific mission, carried out under the leadership of its last ruler and his heavenly protector, the Archangel Michael.

136 See Stock 1983, 3–4.

137 *Nomen est omen* was an immensely important narrative clue that greatly enriched the medieval imagination. It also inspired the image of Alexander Nevskiy (1220–1263), whose image in his Life was seen as a parallel to that of his namesake, Alexander the Great, 'who never lost a battle'. See Isoaho 2006, 22–27. See also my previous articles in Mäki-Petäys 1999, 163–180; Mäki-Petäys 2002, 81–95, and Isoaho 2005, 284–301.

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The Future in the Past: Predictions in the Old Rus' Chronicles

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The article deals with predictions of the future in the Old Rus' chronicles. From the point of view of the chroniclers, Christian saints and other godly persons had the divine gift of knowing future events. By contrast, predictions by their enemies were always wrong because God resisted their prophecies. Only an enemy who converted to Orthodoxy could have the gift of prophecy. Yet surprisingly, according to the chroniclers, pagan priests and princes were able to predict the future. Medieval chroniclers repeatedly addressed this issue of foretelling, and they questioned why non-Christians had such a gift. The chroniclers attributed this fact to God's will, to the desire to tempt people and to demonic possession. Pagans could not only be aware of impending death, but alsp could try to avoid it. Chroniclers understood the future as already existing; nevertheless, knowledge of it could help avoid unwonted accidents. Images of pagans with magic gifts, including the ability to predict the future, might demonstrate the chroniclers' religious dualism.

In its entry for the year 1071, the *Primary Chronicle of Kiev* states that a magician appeared in Novgorod. He pretended to be a god, deceiving many people and claiming that he knew beforehand everything that would happen. Prince Gleb hid an axe under his coat, came to the magician and asked: 'Do you know what is going to happen tomorrow and this evening?' The magician replied that he knew everything. Then Gleb said: 'Do you know what will happen to you today?' The magician replied that he would perform great miracles. Then Prince Gleb took the axe and killed him. The chronicler concluded that the magician's soul had surrendered to the Devil.[1] This chronicle episode is fundamentally important for an understanding of the problem of predicting the future.

1 PVL 6579 (1071) in Likhachev 1950, 120–121.

Mari Isoaho (ed.)
Past and Present in Medieval Chronicles
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Studies across Disciplines in the Humanities and Social Sciences 17.
Helsinki: Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies. 82–91.

The ability to look beyond available knowledge based on the observation of natural processes, to divine one's fate and to foretell coming events was considered one of the main functions of magicians everywhere, particularly in Medieval Europe.[2] Those who knew the future could manage forthcoming events. The religious dispute between Christians and pagans was mainly centred on the possibility of predicting the future.

There are different kinds of prognostic texts in the Old Rus' chronicles. They include direct predictions, such as warnings to the princes, and indirect predictions, which require interpretation; these include prophetic dreams and visions, signs and omens, and allegorical magic texts. The texts on predicting the future are represented by forecasts, prophecies and fortune telling. Forecasts are based on an analysis of a situation; prophecies are based on a mystical, extrasensory experience, while fortune telling is based on folk omens, traditional lore, astrology, heavenly signs and divinations. Both Christians and pagans (magicians, 'prophetic' persons in general, including princes) could know and predict the future.

The Bible quotations, allusions and scriptural references were important in predictions of the future made by Christians. At the very beginning of the *Primary Chronicle* we read about Apostle Andrew's coming to Rus'. While travelling on the river Dniepr, Andrew told his disciples that God's favour would shine down and a great city would arise on the hills above the shore, where God would erect many churches. Andrew climbed the hills and blessed them. After he had set up a cross and offered his prayer to God, he descended to the place where Kiev was later built, then continued his journey up the Dniepr.[3] The story of the prophecy of the Apostle Andrew became the model for subsequent chronicle texts about the Christian anticipation of the future.

In the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* in the entry for the year 1276, there is a description of how Prince Vladimir Vladimirovich decided to found a new town. He took the Bible and opened it at random and found the prophecy of Isaiah: 'And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations' (Isaiah 61:4). Prince Vladimir understood this prophecy as a sign of God's mercy and sent a skilful man named Alexa to find a suitable place to build the town. When Alexa found a place on the bank of the river Losna, he returned to tell the prince. The prince liked the site, cleared it and founded the town, which he named Kamenets. This land had been empty for eighty years, and the Lord in His mercy had now restored it.[4]

2 Rider 2012, 13–17; 25–34.
3 PVL in Likhachev 1950, 12.
4 *Ipat'evskaya letopis'* 6784 (1276), 557–578.

Just as the Apostle Andrew had predicted the appearance of Kiev, Prince Vladimir used the Bible to foresee the foundation of his town.

We should also mention here two stories about the monks of the Kievan Caves Monastery, both from the *Primary Chronicle of Kiev*. The entry for the year 1074 tells that the monk Jeremiah had a God-given gift to predict the future. If any monk was planning to leave the monastery, Jeremiah would know in advance and would reveal the monk's intentions. Whether he predicted something good or bad, it came to pass, just as he foretold.[5] In the *Primary Chronicle* account for the year 1091, a woman named Maria asks Abbot Theodosius: 'Who knows where I'll be buried?' Theodosius replies: 'Verily, where I will lie, there you will be buried.' The abbot died first, and when Maria passed away eighteen years later, the 'prophecy' of Theodosius came true: the two were buried in the same church.[6] A similar story is told in the *Hypatian Chronicle* in the entry for the year 1156, when Novgorod Bishop Niphont had a prophetic dream while in Kiev. In his vision the same holy abbot Theodosius from the Kievan Caves Monastery appeared to him and said: 'Good of you to come, brother and son Niphont! Now we will be inseparable.' This prediction of Theodosius was also fulfilled, as Niphont soon became sick and died, and was buried in the Caves Monastery.[7]

Knowledge of the time of death and the place of burial is typical of many Christian saints. For example, the fifteenth-century holy monk Michael Klopsky from Novgorod the Great was one who possessed such prophetic knowledge. As told in his *Vita*, Michael knew the circumstances of his own death and also forewarned Prince Dmitry Shemyaka that the prince would be murdered at the hands of his brethren, saying to the prince three times: 'Prince, the ground cries out'.[8] This was a reference to the biblical story of Abel's death at the hands of his brother Cain: 'The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground' (Genesis 4:10). Prince Dmitry Shemyaka was indeed poisoned by his cousin and died in 1453. Saint Michael Klopsky's mystical knowledge of the prince's approaching death is reminiscent of predictions of fate in the Russian chronicles. The knowledge of the saints and other devout people concerning future events was not surprising to the chroniclers. The apostles and saints knew about future events as if they already existed, and therefore their predictions always came true. According to Dmitry Likhachev, the chroniclers wrote about past events as being 'in the front' and wrote about events taking place later – in the present, in the future or in the end times – as being 'in

5 PVL 6582 (1074), in Likhachev 1950, 126.
6 PVL 6599 (1091), in Likhachev 1950, 139–140.
7 *Ipat'evskaya letopis'* 6664 (1156), 332.
8 Dmitriev 1958, 96.

the back'.[9] So they used a kind of 'inverse perspective' and believed that knowledge of the future meant that the fate of every individual was known and had been predetermined from the Creation.

An unfulfilled prophecy is a punishment for pride or arrogance. We can see an example in the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* in the entry for the year 1217. The chronicler described how the Hungarian military commander Philney ("Philya Once Haughty") came to Rus' with many Hungarians, intending 'to seize the land, to drain the sea'. Philney made two allegorical predictions: 'One stone breaks many pots' and 'A sharp sword and a gallant horse will capture a lot of Rus'!' But God did not tolerate this, and Philya was later killed by Prince Daniel Romanovich.[10] According to the chronicler, an impious prophecy that is not pleasing to God has no chance of being fulfilled. Another example of an unfulfilled prophecy is described in the same *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* for the year 1229. The Hungarian king Bela IV declared: 'The town of Galich cannot stand against me. No one will save them from my hand!' Yet he was soon defeated.[11] Thus, in the chronicles the enemy is generally presented as arrogant and does not really know the future. An exception to this tendency is found in the early fifteenth-century story called the 'Testament of Magnush', which appears in a number of Old Rus' chronicles in the year 1352.[12] Here the Swedish king Magnus Eriksson urged his descendants not to violate the eternal peace treaty with future attacks on Rus'. He described his own misery at this prospect and predicted that God would punish his people for violating their oath to the Cross. Such a prediction in the mouth of the enemy is explained by the fact that, according to the 'Testament', Magnus became a monk in an Orthodox monastery before his death. John H. Lind believes that, even if the 'Testament' was not initially intended as a hagiographical text, it at least assumed this function.[13] The prophecy of King Magnus is thus based on the knowledge of the future inherent in him as an Orthodox monk, whereas predictions by enemy figures were always wrong. While this seems natural in the case of Magnus, it is surprising that in the chronicles the Christians are not the only ones able to predict the future.

The prediction of the future made by pagans and representatives of other religions is a problem that needs clarification. The chroniclers addressed this issue repeatedly, raising the question of why non-Christians had the gift of knowing the future. They came up with three hypotheses: first, God allows non-Christians to know the future; second, this gift to non-believers is a way of tempting and testing the fortress of faith; and third, such individuals are obsessed by the Devil.

9 Likhachev 1979, 254–255.
10 *Ipat'evskaya letopis' 6725 (1217)*, 492–494, 533–534.
11 *Ipat'evskaya letopis' 6737 (1229)*, 507–508.
12 *Rukopisanie Magnusha*, in Nakadzawa 2003.
13 Lind 2001, 212.

Sometimes non-Christians predicted the future against their will, without knowing what they were saying. Such a prediction was made by the Khazar Elders in the *Primary Chronicle*. When the people of Old Rus' paid tribute to the Khazars – 'one sword per hearth' – their elders predicted: 'This tribute is evil. We have won it with a single-edged weapon called a sabre, but the weapon of these men is sharp on both edges and is called a sword. These men shall impose tribute upon us and upon other lands.' And later their prediction came to pass, for 'they spoke not of their own will, but by God's commandment.'[14] This explanation finds justification in the Bible itself, which provides examples of pagan prophecy, so it would have been impossible for Christians to deny such power to pagans. Also in the apocrypha, such as *The Tale of Afroditian*, we find the same attitude to predictions: through God's will, the birth of Christ was foretold by the ancient gods.[15]

Another problem for the chroniclers was that the pagan princes and magicians could predict death. The entry for the year 907 in the *Primary Chronicle* relates a tale about the siege of Constantinople by Prince Oleg the Seer. The Greeks brought him food and wine, but he did not accept these gifts for he knew that they had been poisoned. The Greeks were frightened and said: 'This is not Oleg, but Saint Dmitry sent upon us from God.'[16] Researchers are still unable to explain why the Greeks decided that Prince Oleg was Saint Dmitry (i.e. Demetrius of Thessalonica).[17] Several explanations have been proposed. First, it has been suggested that Saint Dmitry was simply an addition made by the chronicler because the cult of Saint Dmitry was popular in the Rurikid dynasty in the eleventh century.[18] Other scholars have stressed the warrior features of Saint Dmitry, who in one of his posthumous miracles helped to protect the city of Thessalonica from enemy attack and is often depicted in a way reminiscent of Saint George the Warrior.[19] This could have led to the identification of Oleg with Saint Dmitry, as Oleg had come to Constantinople as a warrior.

However, scholars have still not paid attention to one important detail in Saint Dmitry's biography, which can better explain the identification with Oleg. The *Life of Saint Dmitry* relates that while Dmitry was imprisoned, a snake crawled under his feet and was ready to strike. Saint Dmitry made the sign of the Cross over the snake and spat, killing it.[20] A later entry in the *Primary Chronicle* shows the significance of the snake episode for understanding the image of Prince Oleg the Seer. According to the chronicle entry for the year 912, a pagan magician predicted Oleg's death: 'Prince, your beloved horse,

14 PVL in Likhachev 1950, 16.
15 Bobrov 2004, 250–252.
16 PVL 6415 (907) in Likhachev 1950, 24.
17 Likhachev 1950, 265.
18 Litvina, Uspenskiy 2006, 184.
19 Chekova 1994, 76–77.
20 *Zhitie Dmitriya Solunskogo* in Tvorogov 1999, 178.

the one you ride, will cause your death.' Oleg decided never to mount that horse again or even to look at it, and he sent the horse away. Many years later, Oleg asked where his old horse was and learned that it was dead. Oleg mocked the magicians, exclaiming: 'They did not speak the truth. Everything was a lie. The horse is dead, and I am still alive.' Then he asked to see the horse's remains and was taken to the place where the bare bones lay. When he stepped on the horse's skull, a snake slithered from the skull and bit him. Oleg fell sick and died, and thus the prophecy was fulfilled.[21]

The motif of being threatened with death by a snake unites Oleg with Saint Dmitry. The chronicler placed the identification of the two in the mouths of Greeks, as he already knew the legend of Oleg's death by snake bite. By rejecting the poisoned food and wine, Oleg managed to escape death, as Saint Dmitry had done earlier. Many years later it was the snake bite that turned out to be fatal to the prince of Rus'. Oleg, who was called 'The Seer' for his wisdom and knowledge of the future, managed to avoid the poison in the food and wine, but the poison of the snake still killed him. The chronicler concluded the story of Oleg's death by saying: 'No wonder that the ritual magic comes true.' He gave a number of examples of ancient magicians and sorcerers and came to the conclusion that many pagans, including those who lived before the coming of Christ, worked miracles and predicted the future not by their own will, but by God's command.[22]

Princess Olga also possessed the gift of prophecy, while her enemies did not. In an entry for the year 945 the *Primary Chronicle* describes how Princess Olga wreaked her revenge upon the ambassadors of the Drevlyane tribe for the death of her husband, Prince Igor. When the prince of the Drevlyane, Mal, sent his matchmakers to the widowed princess, Olga presented the ambassadors with three peculiar 'riddles' to solve that were both prophetic and strategic. First, she ordered her men to carry the Drevlyane in a boat over land, then prepare a steam bath for them and last arrange a feast for them.[23] It turned out that the matchmakers did not foresee their future, as each of these rituals involved death. They did not realise that the boat, the bath and the feast were not wedding rituals, but funeral and burial rites.

According to the fifteenth-century version of the *Pereyaslavl Suzdal Chronicle*, Prince Mal was warned in a dream about the tragic outcome of his ambassadorship, but he did not understand the prediction. He dreamt that he came to Olga and she gave him 'precious purple clothes decorated with pearls, and a black blanket with green ornaments, and a tarred boat, in which they had to be carried'.[24] Dmitry Likhachev compared Prince Mal's dream with the dream of Prince Svyatoslav in the *Tale of*

21 PVL 6420 (912) in Likhachev 1950, 29–30.
22 PVL 6420 (912) in Likhachev 1950, 30–31.
23 PVL 6453 (945) in Likhachev 1950, 40–42.
24 *Letopisets Pereslavlya Suzdal'skogo* 6453 (945) in PSRL 1985, 15.

Igor's Campaign. Likhachev believed that both magic dreams had common folk and ethnological roots.[25] Svyatoslav dreamt about a sledge that was carried to the 'blue sea'.[26] This dream was a mystic sign of Prince Igor´s defeat and of the rout of his troops near the sea. Boats and sledges were used in Old Rus' pagan funeral rites to carry the dead body. In the tale of Olga's revenge, the ambassadors of Prince Mal were carried in a boat and dropped into a deep pit, which became their grave. The ambassadors had thought that they were being honoured, but in fact they were being buried. Princess Olga's second revenge was based on the magic actions carried out in the bathhouse. In the tradition of Old Rus' a bathhouse was a home temple where fortune telling, wedding rituals and funeral customs were performed. A bathhouse ceremony called *mov'* was known from earliest times; there is evidence of the ritual from medieval sources. Widespread in the northern part of the Old Rus' and carried out in steam bathhouses with the use of special plants, *mov'* was a pagan ritual that enabled participants to contact the world of the spirits and the dead.[27] Olga deceived the matchmakers by superimposing a mock wedding ceremony on a funeral ritual. The Drevlyane were warned of their deaths by Princess Olga's 'riddles' and Prince Mal's prophetic dream, but they did not understand the meaning of the predictions.

In the *Primary Chronicle of Kiev* and the *Tale of Igor's Campaign* there is another prince with magic abilities. In the year 1044 the chronicle mentions that Prince Vseslav of Polotsk, also known as Vseslav the Sorcerer, was born through magic (*ot volkhvovaniya*).[28] In the *Tale of Igor's Campaign* and in Russian epic songs, Vseslav is depicted as a werewolf.[29] A number of supernatural events and predictions are connected with this prince in the Russian chronicles. In the year 1063 the currents of the river Volkhov in Novgorod changed direction for five days, which was considered an evil sign by the chronicler, as four years later Vseslav burned down the city.[30] The beginning of the war instigated by Prince Vseslav in the year 1065 was accompanied by a sign in the west, a giant star with bloody rays. This phenomenon was seen as an ominous portent of the many internecine wars and invasions that followed its appearance.[31]

A particular question in the chronicles is the possibility of avoiding undesirable future events. Oleg the Seer was a wise prince and did his best to evade the death predicted for him, but nothing could help. Yet sometimes people could hope to influence their fate, for example, by avoiding events that were considered bad omens, such as encountering a pig (the modern equivalent is a black cat). In the

25 Likhachev 1985, 288–292.
26 *Tale of Igor's Campaign* in Mann 2005, 43. This is a reconstruction of a problematic passage.
27 Bobrov 2009, 68–75, 79.
28 PVL 6552 (1044) in Likhachev 1950, 104
29 *Tale of Igor's Campaign* in Mann 2005, 57–59. See Jakobson & Szeftel 1948, 301–368.
30 PVL 6571 (1067), in Likhachev 1950, 109.
31 PVL 6573 (1065), in Likhachev 1950, 110.

year 1068 in the *Primary Chronicle*, the author condemns the popular habits of his contemporaries, asking: 'Do we not live in a pagan way if we believe that some meetings are bad omens? If someone meets a monk, he turns back, the same as we do if we meet a wild boar or a pig. Isn't this pagan?'[32] The chroniclers didn't tell stories in which such avoidance helped fend off any kind of predicted outcome. That is important to note, especially as the very idea that people could evade their fates undermines the general belief of the chroniclers that the future has already been written.

The chronicles frequently mention predictions of the future by common people. The most detailed discussion of pagan predictions can be found in the entry for the year 1071 in the *Primary Chronicle*.[33] The chronicler tells that a magician in Kiev predicted that in five years the Dniepr River would flow backwards and countries would start to move. The Greek Land would take the place of the Rus' Land, and the Rus' Land would be on the site of Byzantine Greece, while other lands would also move. The common people listened to him, but the religious laughed, saying: 'The Devil plays with you and leads you to death.'[34] The Christian prediction came true when one night the magician disappeared. Another story tells of two magicians from Yaroslavl who came to the Rostov region during a famine and claimed that they knew who was hiding the food reserves. They were arrested on the order of the prince and, after a lengthy religious dispute, were executed.[35] In a third tale the chronicler tells about a Novgorodian who came to the land of the Chud' to ask a magician for a divination. First, the magician was speechless, but suddenly a devil began to shake him. The magician stood up and explained that his gods were unable to come inside the house because of a cross that the guest wore around his neck. When the Novgorodian took off his cross and placed it outside the house, the magician began to conjure again. Then, according to the chronicler, the demons told the Novgorodian everything he wanted to know.[36] Both here and in other entries (such as for the years 1102, 1113 and elsewhere) the chronicler discusses why demons tempt and seduce people by giving them different visions while they sleep or daydream. These visions, as well as heavenly signs, can lead 'some to evil, and others to good,'[37] concluded the chronicler. Seeing these signs, the pious pray to God in order to improve the future.

The most significant aspect of the predictions in the chronicles of Old Rus' is that the future was believed to exist already, yet one could also try to avoid or improve it. Christian saints and holy people could foresee the future if they were carrying out God´s will. Proud and arrogant enemies typically

32 PVL 6576 (1068), in Likhachev 1950, 114.
33 PVL 6579 (1071), in Likhachev 1950, 116–121.
34 PVL 6579 (1071), in Likhachev 1950, 116–117.
35 PVL 6579 (1071), in Likhachev 1950, 117–119.
36 PVL 6579 (1071), in Likhachev 1950, 119.
37 PVL 6610 (1102), in Likhachev 1950, 183.

predicted the future incorrectly. At the same time, pagans and representatives of other religions could also predict the future. This is probably a trait of religious dualism (syncretism, double belief, *dvoeverie*) inherent in all world religions. Such a mix of elements of different confessions in Old Rus' has been understood as the 'paganisation' of Christianity or the 'Christianisation' of paganism. This process was based on the conjunction and duplication of Orthodox and folk beliefs.

The concept of *dvoeverie* has been strongly criticised by Eve Levin[38] and later by Stella Rock, who considered it 'a historiographical construct that developed in the nineteenth century.'[39] For both scholars the phenomenon of *dvoeverie* does not mean a mixing of faiths, but rather conscious and deliberate adherence to paganism and Christianity simultaneously by the same person. These scholars' objections to the traditional concept of *dvoeverie* are serious, but what can we say about the Novgorodian who came to the magician for a divination wearing a cross around his neck? If it is not *dvoeverie*, what is it? We can also take into account the pagan rites in the steam baths, which duplicate the Christian sacraments of baptism, chrismation, holy orders and matrimony,[40] as well as pagan predictions of the future in the Old Rus' chronicles. Although the chroniclers explained pagan knowledge of the future entirely in Christian terms, they admitted that not only the Christians, but also the magicians of Old Rus' had genuine prophetic power, could know the future and were able to predict it correctly, to see 'the future in the past'.

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38 Levin 1993, 31–52.
39 Rock 2007, 118.
40 Bobrov 2009, 59–79.

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What Events Were Reported by the Old Rus' Chroniclers?

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The article is dedicated to a detailed study of a selected series of events reported by Rus' chroniclers from the eleventh to the early fourteenth centuries.[1]* *Items of information contained in the Primary Chronicle, as well as in the Laurentian, Hypatian (to 1200) and First Novgorodian (to 1352) Chronicles are catalogued, classified and analysed as a means of reflecting on guidelines that the chroniclers might have followed. Firstly, remarks on different kinds of events are counted in each chronicle and the percentages compared; this gives a general impression of the interests of the Old Rus' chroniclers. Secondly, the distribution of four kinds of remarks (events in princely families, changes of ecclesiastical hierarchs, the building of churches, natural phenomena and disasters) is studied in connection with the history of the texts. In general, the analysis corroborates Mark Aleshkovsky's point that recording these 'non-political' events is typical of the annalists who describe the present or recent past (those who wrote on the distant past dealt mostly with political events). But in some cases the situation seems more complicated: the repertoire of events reported in a chronicle could depend on the personal attitudes of annalists or their patrons, as well on the activity of a later compiler or reviser.*

The text of any of the extant Rus' chronicles is heterogeneous.[2] It reflects the work of many individuals. Some of them described events of the distant past; others recorded contemporary events; some created compilations, some revised or annotated already existing texts and so on. These individuals probably had in mind certain guidelines concerning the events worth mentioning in their chronicle. The purpose of this article is to try to discover these guidelines.

1 * This article is part of a collaborative research project with Dr Zoia Yu. Metlitskaya (Moscow), 'Medieval annalistic writing: A comparative study (England, Ireland, Rus')', supported by the Russian Foundation for the Humanities (RGNF № 12-01-00328).

2 The Russian (and Old Rus') word *letopis'* (летопись, 'year-writing') is usually translated into English as 'chronicle' (especially in proper names of particular texts, like the *Primary Chronicle of Kiev* or the *Laurentian Chronicle*), although a more accurate translation might be 'annals' (see Guimon 2012a, 69–92). In this article I will use both terms: 'chronicle' when speaking of these texts in general or of some particular texts, and 'annals' when stressing their annalistic structure.

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Helsinki: Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies. 92–117.

Several decades ago Mark Aleshkovsky put forth the idea that there are two kinds of chronicles (or rather two kinds of layers underlying the extant chronicles): those describing the past and those describing the present.[3] The first had a tendency to become coherent narratives with a certain central topic (or several such topics), a kind of plot (Aleshkovsky called this 'monothematism'). Events that had no relation to this plot are seldom reported. Other features of such layers are the lack of precise dates, references to later events and relative chronology. By contrast, the second kind of layer consists of annals written more or less contemporaneously with the events described. Such annals are full of precise dates. They are discrete, that is, they consist of entries on various types of events (such as changes of lay rulers and bishops, natural phenomena, the building of churches, etc.), which have no obvious connection with each other. These two kinds of layers are often mixed in the extant compilations, and it is a scholar's task to separate them and thus to define, if possible, the nature of any particular fragment of a chronicle. Aleshkovsky attempted such a study for the *Primary Chronicle of Kiev*, but he pointed out that such a division is valid for later chronicle writing as well.

What Aleshkovsky did not do, and what seems especially important for realising this programme, is a systematic study of the kinds of events chosen by the chroniclers to report. Attempts at such a study have been undertaken on the material of the *First Novgorodian Chronicle* for the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[4] This text is a clear representative of Aleshkovsky's second type, namely a chronicle kept year by year. As we will see below, it contrasts in some respects with the other Old Rus' chronicles, which, I assume, also deserve study from this point of view.[5] I must also mention that there are studies dedicated to particular kinds of annalistic notes (for example, on the building of churches or the births in a royal family) and their distribution in the annalistic text.[6]

This article will deal with four annalistic texts, which, taken together, represent most of what has survived of the early Rus' chronicle writing.

3 Aleshkovsky 1976, 134–138.
4 Kvirkveliya 1986; Guimon 2003; 2012a, 145–150.
5 In a recent article (Guimon 2012c) I analysed the kinds of events reported by the *Laurentian Chronicle*, 1156–1263. The main results will be summarised below.
6 See the bibliography in Guimon 2012a, 142–143.

1) The *Primary Chronicle of Kiev* (*Povest' vremennykh let*, usually translated into English as the *Tale of Bygone Years*)[7] was compiled in the 1110s. It survives as the first part of the *Laurentian*, the *Hypatian* and some other chronicles, extant in manuscripts from the late fourteenth century on. The *Primary Chronicle* is traditionally regarded as the first extant example of Old Rus' historiography, even though it is almost certain that the text was not written all in one sitting, but rather was based on several earlier chronicles from the eleventh century (or even the late tenth century). Whatever these texts might be, they are not extant as such and can only be reconstructed from the *Primary Chronicle* itself and some later Novgorodian compilations.[8] Thus, for purposes of this study it is safer to analyse the *Primary Chronicle* as represented in the earliest manuscript witness: the *Laurentian Chronicle*.[9] The *Primary Chronicle* has a non-annalistic introduction and an annalistic text for the years 852–1110. Only the latter text will be studied in this article.

2) The *Hypatian Chronicle*[10] for the years between 1111 and 1200, that is, after the *Primary Chronicle* ends[11] and before the *Galycian-Volynian Chronicle* (the text of the *Hypatian Chronicle* for the thirteenth century, which was originally non-annalistic) begins. The section of the *Hypatian Chronicle* for the twelfth century is also known as the *Kievan Chronicle*, as it was compiled in Kiev ca 1200[12] and largely reflects the annalistic writing in Kiev, although material from other cities (Chernigov, Vladimir and elsewhere) was also included. The *Hypatian Chronicle* survives in several manuscripts of which the oldest is the Hypatian manuscript from ca 1418.

3) The *Laurentian Chronicle*[13] survives in only one manuscript, written in 1377 by the monk Lavrentiy and two other scribes. The text consists of the *Primary Chronicle* and its continuation for the years 1111–1305 (with two big lacunae – between 1262 and 1283, and between 1287 and 1294). The annals for the years 1110s–1150s are more or less the same as in the *Hypatian Chronicle* and reflect a

7 *Povest' vremennykh let (PVL)*. See Ostrowski D., Birnbaum D. J. & Lunt H. G. (eds.) 2004. Electronic version in <hudce7.harvard.edu/~ostrowski/pvl/> (visited in 25 February 2015). English translation in Cross & Sherbowitz-Wetzor 1953. See the discussion on naming the chronicle in the article by Mari Isoaho in this publication.

8 On this series of problems, see Timberlake 2001; Gippius 2012. I will return to this discussion at the end of this article.

9 There are many significant differences between the manuscripts representing the *Primary Chronicle*, some of which probably reflect the process of its revision in the early 12th century (see Gippius 2007; 2008). For example, there are several annalistic notes on the events of the second half of the 11th and early 12th centuries, which appear only in the *Hypatian* group of manuscripts (see a list of such notes in Gippius 2007, 36). They were added in the 1110s, but do not belong to the main body of the *Primary Chronicle*; thus, I will not take them into account below.

10 *Ipat'evskaya letopis'*. For a diplomatic edition see Shakhmatov 1908.

11 In 1110 the common text of the *Laurentian* and the *Hypatian Chronicles* stops. The text for the years 1110 (the rest of the annal) to 1117 of the *Hypatian Chronicle* is widely regarded as belonging to the *Primary Chronicle*, but for purposes of this article, it will be easier to analyse these annals together with the following text of the *Hypatian Chronicle*.

12 Olexiy Tolochko (2006) suggested that its final compilation dates after 1212.

13 *Lavrent'evskaya letopis'*. For a diplomatic edition see Karsky 1926–1928; an online facsimile is available at <http://expositions.nlr.ru/LaurentianCodex/> (accessed 15 February 2013).

shorter version of the annalistic writing of southern Rus'. From 1156 on in the *Laurentian Chronicle* the entries were clearly written in the north-east of Rus', in Rostov and/or Vladimir, although the *Laurentian* and the *Hypatian Chronicles* do not become completely independent of one another until almost the end of the twelfth century. The latest section of the *Laurentian Chronicle* (for the years 1287–1305) shows a special interest in another north-eastern city, Tver.[14]

4) The *First Novgorodian Chronicle* is represented by the Synodal manuscript[15] (written ca 1234, continued ca 1330, with additions in various hands for the years 1330–1352) and by the codices of the so-called *Younger Version* of the *First Novgorodian Chronicle* (two mid-fifteenth-century manuscripts and several later ones). The Synodal manuscript lacks its first sixteen quires (and starts abruptly in 1016); the initial part of the *Younger Version* probably reflects a late eleventh-century Kievan chronicle, earlier than the *Primary Chronicle*. In the annals for the eleventh century the relationships amongst the Synodal manuscript, the *Younger Version* and the *Primary Chronicle* are quite complicated. The text of the two versions of the *First Novgorodian Chronicle* for 1074–1330 is basically the same. In this article I will deal with the text of the Synodal manuscript, but I will also take into account the text for the years 1273–1298, which is lacking in the manuscript (owing to a missing quire), but which is known from the *Younger Version*. Both versions of the *First Novgorodian Chronicle* go back to the archiepiscopal annals of Novgorod, which were kept year by year, its authors changing with the changes of archbishops, as A.A. Gippius showed on linguistic grounds.[16]

This study will include two scholarly procedures. Firstly, I will count the annotations on different kinds of events in the above-mentioned chronicles and compare the results. This should give some general idea of the chroniclers' range of interests. Secondly, I will attempt to analyse the distribution of these types of annotations in the annalistic texts in connection with the history of the texts themselves.

With the first procedure, an important question must first be answered: what are the units that are to be counted? The text of Rus' chronicles is annalistic, consisting of annual entries (or annals) and, sometimes, of 'blank annals'. In most cases the annual entries can easily be divided into smaller parts, each dedicated to a separate event (these items can be called 'annalistic notes' or, if they are extended, 'annalistic narrations'). Very often these units are separated from one another by wordings such as 'In

14 The small fragment between the two lacunae also shows Tver connections.
15 *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis'*. See Tikhomirov 1964 (a facsimile); Nasonov 1950 (a diplomatic edition); and Michell & Forbes 1914 (an English translation).
16 Gippius 2006. See the brief survey of the textual history of the *First Novgorodian Chronicle* in Guimon 2011.

this same year' (*В то же лето*), 'In this same winter' (*Тои же зимы*), etc. It is not a strict rule that with each such wording a new unit of annalistic text begins: one can read after 'In this same year' a clear continuation of what was narrated before; on the other hand, a completely new topic can start without any introductory wording whatsoever. Thus, dividing an annual entry into such elementary units is a delicate operation, and in some cases can be done in one of several ways. Nevertheless, most of the time the division can be accomplished quite easily. After all, for purposes of this article the strictness of the calculations is not crucial: a much more important task will be to map certain kinds of annalistic notes, and this does not depend on the procedure of dividing annals into units.

But let us start with the calculations. However inaccurate they may be, they give, I assume, some general idea of the content of the Rus' chronicles.

	Primary Chronicle, 852–1110	*Hypatian Chronicle*, 1111–1200	*Laurentian Chronicle*, 1111–1305	*First Novgorodian Chronicle* (Synodal MS), 1016–1352
Political and military events	193 (59.4%)	312 (62.7%)	326 (57.8%)	401 (50.9%)
Events in princely families	29 (8.9%)	76 (15.3%)	68 (12%)	21 (2.7%)
Changes of ecclesiastical hierarchs	12 (3.7%)	40 (8%)	55 (9.7%)	74 (9.4%)
Building of churches	20 (6.2%)	24 (4.8%)	44 (7.8%)	85 (10.8%)
Natural phenomena and disasters	27 (8.3%)	32 (6.4%)	46 (8.1%)	94 (11.9%)
Construction of fortifications, bridges and other civil structures	5 (1.5%)	5 (1%)	8 (1.4%)	17 (2.2%)
Changes of city magistrates (*posadniks* and *tysyatskys*)	–	–	–	60 (7.6%)
Other	39 (12%)	9 (1.8%)	18 (3.2%)	36 (4.6%)
Total	325	498	565	788

Fig. 1. Kinds of events recorded in the main early Rus' chronicles.

We see from this chart that 50 to 60 per cent of the notes and narrations in each chronicle are dedicated to political and military events. It is difficult to divide this group of notes into subgroups, but in general it can be said that the subgroups include changes of princes, conflicts between them, revolts and conspiracies, wars (internal, with nomads, etc.), meetings of princes and peace agreements, relationships between Rus' princes and Tatar rulers (after the 1230s) and the like. I included in this group all notes on deaths of male representatives of princely families. It is a questionable decision, for sometimes very young boys died, an event that may be closer to the next group ('events in princely families'). But in many cases it is impossible to decide whose death is mentioned: that of an under-age boy or a political figure. As a result, all male deaths are counted here as political events. The notes and

narrations on political and military events form the main 'plot' of the chronicles, and in some sections, as we will see, they are the only content.

The next group is labelled 'events in princely families'. These include births of sons and daughters, deaths of female members of the ruling dynasty, weddings and *postrigi* (cutting hair – a kind of initiation for princely boys). Notes in this group are very rare in the *First Novgorodian Chronicle*, because of the unstable position of princes and their frequent changes in Novgorod. Such notes are more numerous in the *Primary* and the *Laurentian Chronicles* and, especially, in the *Hypatian Chronicle* in the twelfth century.

Notes on changes of ecclesiastical rulers (metropolitans, archbishops, bishops and abbots) have approximately equal weight (8–10%) in all the chronicles except the *Primary Chronicle*, where they are less numerous. It must be said that from the early twelfth century the *First Novgorodian Chronicle* systematically reports the changes of the (arch)bishops[17] of Novgorod,[18] and from 1185 the *Laurentian Chronicle* does the same for the bishops of Rostov.[19] Notes on any other ecclesiastical hierarchs are not given systematically in any of the chronicles. Even the annals of Kiev (the *Primary* and *Hypatian Chronicles*) do not systematically follow the changes of the metropolitans of Kiev, although sometimes they report changes of bishops in other cities or changes of abbots.

Notes on the building of churches (I also include here the painting and renovation of churches, as well as the founding of monasteries) make up from 4.8 to 10.8 per cent of all the notes in the chronicles. The *First Novgorodian Chronicle* reports the building of churches more often than the other texts; we will see below that this difference is much more impressive if we examine the twelfth century alone: 20.1 per cent of the notes in this part of the *Novgorodian Chronicle* are concerned with the construction of churches. The situation is somewhat the same with natural phenomena and disasters (eclipses, comets, earthquakes, fires, floods, pestilence, locusts, bad harvests and the like). Their weight is similar in all the chronicles, but again the *First Novgorodian Chronicle* is at the forefront (with 11.9%), and the *Hypatian Chronicle* has the least (with 6.4%).

Notes on civic buildings are very rare in all the chronicles. Most of these notes report the construction of fortresses or bridges, but one (s.v. 1089 in the *Primary Chronicle*) is dedicated to the building activity of the Metropolitan Efrem in Pereyaslavl: Efrem built two churches, a stone bathhouse (the first ever in Rus', as the annalist emphasises), city walls of stone and other buildings.

17 It is not known exactly when the bishops of Novgorod became archbishops. The first archbishop was probably Niphont (1130–1156), but he and some of his successors are still called 'bishops' in some of the sources.
18 Guimon 2003, 338.
19 Guimon 2012c, 45.

Changes of city magistrates (*posadnicks* and *tysyatskys*) were reported only by the Novgorodian chroniclers. Posts with the same names existed in other cities as well, but only in Novgorod was their importance comparable to that of princes and archbishops. Changes in their posts often reflected changes in the alignment of forces in Novgorodian politics. From 1117 the *Novgorodian First Chronicle* regularly reports changes of *posadniks* (and does it so systematically that from the annalistic notes we can make almost a complete list of Novgorodian *posadniks* with the dates of their succession). From 1219 changes of *tysyatskys* begin to be reported as well, but less systematically.[20] In most cases the chroniclers report changes of these magistrates as separate events, but often it is not easy to separate these annotations from narrations of political events, as changes of *posadniks* and *tysyatskys* were an integral part of the political struggles of the epoch.

The group labelled 'other' includes notes on assorted events: the visits and movements of princes, metropolitans and so on, as well as martyrdoms, translations of relics, illnesses of princes and the like. Six times the chroniclers report (as separate annotations) deaths of people who were neither members of the princely dynasty nor church hierarchs, nor were they Novgorodian city magistrates (not even former ones). All these cases deserve special attention. Yan [Vyshatich] (1106, the *Primary Chronicle*) is said to have been the annalist's informant. Petr Ilyich (1147, the *Hypatian Chronicle*) is said to be the 'man' of Svyatoslav's father and to have died at the age of 90, exactly like Yan in 1106. German Voyata (1188, the *First Novgorodian Chronicle*) was a parish priest and, at the same time, a chronicler (s.v. 1144, where he made an autobiographical entry: 'In that same year I was ordained priest by Saint Archbishop Niphont'). The deaths of three representatives of a Novgorodian aristocratic family of Malyshevichi (in the years 1217, 1243 and 1247) were mentioned by the Novgorodian annals, perhaps owing to their importance for Novgorodian politics (see Guimon 2006, 302–304). Some notes are of canonical importance: s.v. 1108 in the *Primary Chronicle*, which reports that a liturgical commemoration of Theodosius of Kiev (Feodosii Pecherskii) was introduced in all dioceses of Rus'; compare the annotation for 1145 in the *First Novgorodian Chronicle* where it says, 'In that same year two priests drowned, and the bishop did not allow a requiem service for them'; see also the year 1227 in the same chronicle, where there are reports of the burning of four sorcerers (*volkhvs*), who were blamed for witchcraft (and the annalist comments that only God knows if this was truth). It is impossible to list here all of the remarks labelled 'other', but it is worth pointing out that I also included in this group some narrations in the *Primary Chronicle* concerned with Christian enlightenment of the Slavs and the Rus', as well as some rhetorical passages

20 See Guimon 2006, 295–302.

that could be regarded as separate items in the annalistic text. The percentage of such narrations and notes in the *Primary Chronicle* (12%) is much larger than in later chronicles (1.8–4.6%). The content of the *Primary Chronicle* is rather less standard, because its compilers had to deal with the *beginnings* of the state and the church, with a remote legendary past, and not only with 'routine' events of their time. By contrast, the low percentage of 'untypical' notes in the later chronicles shows a certain level of their uniformity.

To discuss this level of uniformity another procedure may be helpful. Let us make the same calculations, not for all the texts of the chronicles mentioned, but for the text of the *Hypatian*, the *Laurentian* and the *First Novgorodian Chronicles* for the period for which all the three are comparable: the years 1111 to 1200.

	Hypatian Chronicle, 1111–1200	*Laurentian Chronicle*, 1111–1200	*First Novgorodian Chronicle* (Synodal MS), 1111–1200
Political and military events	312 (62.7%)	173 (60.1%)	136 (40.2%)
Events in princely families	76 (15.3%)	31 (10.8%)	13 (3.8%)
Changes of ecclesiastical hierarchs	40 (8%)	32 (11.1%)	29 (8.6%)
Building of churches	24 (4.8%)	21 (7.3%)	68 (20.1%)
Natural phenomena and disasters	32 (6.4%)	20 (6.9%)	42 (12.4%)
Construction of fortifications	5 (1%)	7 (2%)	6 (1.8%)
Changes of city magistrates (*posadniks* and *tysyatskys*)	–	–	28 (8.3%)
Other	9 (1.8%)	4 (1.4%)	16 (4.7%)
Total	498	288	338

Fig. 2. Kinds of events recorded in each of three chronicles for the period 1111–1200.

This chart shows very similar figures for the *Hypatian* and the *Laurentian Chronicles* (but we must remember that they are not fully independent of one another; they share a great deal of common material, especially for the first half and the middle of the twelfth century). By contrast, the *First Novgorodian Chronicle* in Figure 2 differs from the other two chronicles more than in Figure 1. Here the percentage of political and military events is smaller (in Fig. 1 none of the chronicles showed a percentage less than 50%), and the building of churches is much higher (20.1% instead of 10.8%). The main explanation for this difference is that in the twelfth century, the annals in Novgorod were kept systematically, and in almost every case the annalists were contemporaries with the events they described, as will be discussed further below. On the other hand, the construction of churches in Novgorod played an important role in the rivalry between local aristocratic clans, and was thus politically significant. In

all other respects the percentages in all three chronicles are similar, again demonstrating a certain uniformity of guidelines among the annalists who worked in various cities of Rus'.

My next task will be to try and analyse the distribution of the various types of notes in the annalistic texts. The diagrams below reflect the distribution of annalistic notes on four kinds of events: family events (births, deaths of women, weddings, *postrigi*), changes of ecclesiastical hierarchs, the building of churches, and natural phenomena and disasters. The main kinds of events, namely political and military, are excluded from the diagrams simply because such events are reported in almost each annual entry in every chronicle. Nor do I include the notes on civic building and 'other' events, for such remarks are rare and would not alter the results very much. Nor do I include changes of city magistrates, because they are characteristic of only one of the texts analysed. Thus, the idea is to map four kinds of notes – those which appear in all the texts studied, but which at the same time are distributed unevenly. This unevenness will be the main issue in the rest of the article.

Let us start with an analysis of the *First Novgorodian Chronicle*. It makes sense to study its text only for the years 1115 to 1330, the reasons being that firstly, the text of the Synodal manuscript before 1115 is extremely brief, and secondly, it is partly dependent on the *Primary Chronicle* (or rather on an earlier Kievan chronicle, the so-called *Initial Compilation*).[21] After 1330 the continuous text in the Synodal manuscript stops, although there are several additions on flyleaves, which cover only some of the years. As mentioned above, the Synodal manuscript also has a hiatus between 1272 and 1299, which in the diagram below will be filled in with information from the *Younger Version* of the *First Novgorodian Chronicle*.

The first diagram reflects the annals for the years 1115–1238, that is, before the Mongol invasion of Rus'; the second covers the annals for the years 1239–1330.

21 See Guimon 2012b, 615–641.

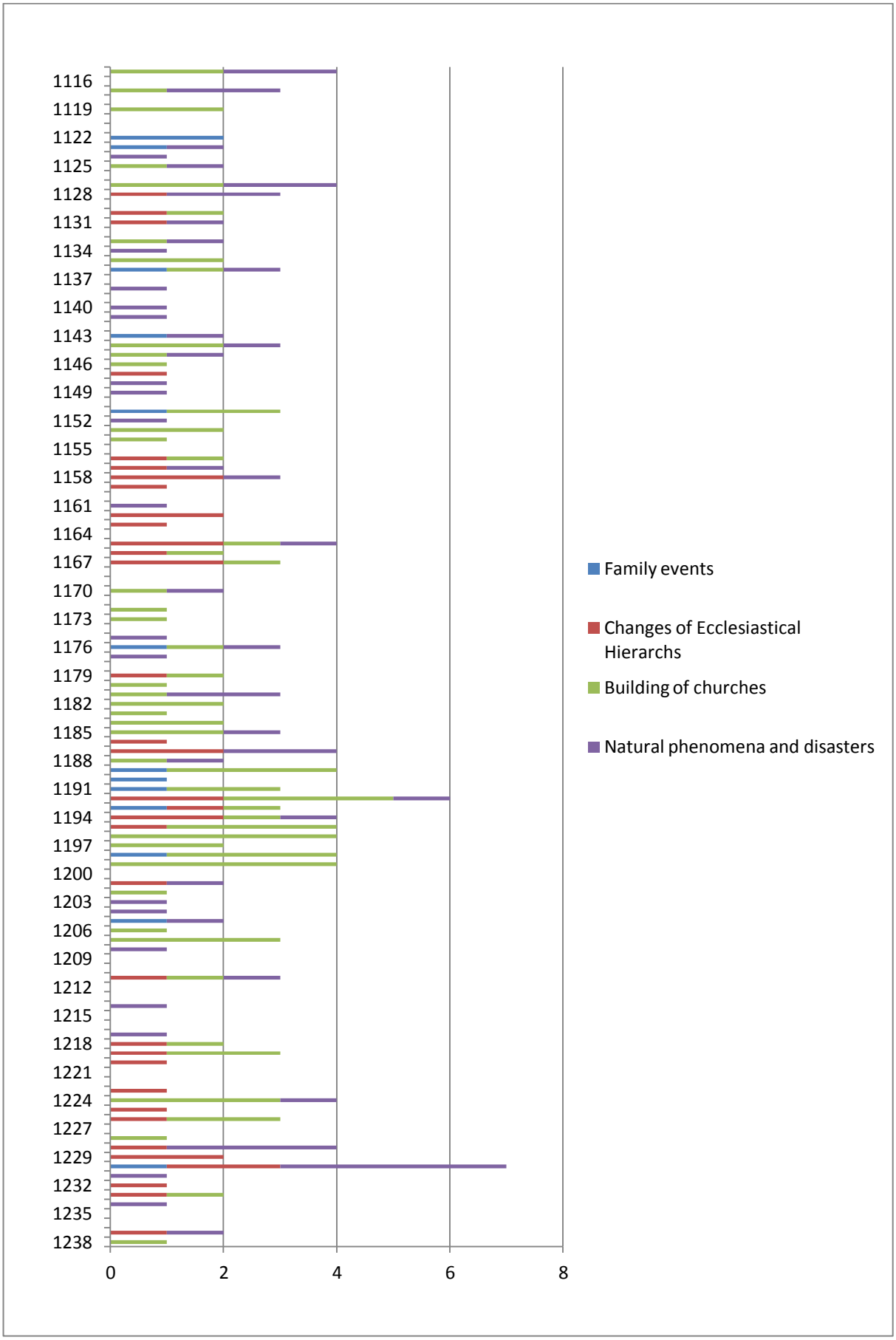

Fig. 3. Distribution of notes in the *First Novgorodian Chronicle*, 1115–1238.

This diagram shows no long breaks in reporting the kinds of 'non-political' events selected here (excluding family events, which are relatively rare in the Novgorodian annals, as already pointed out). This corresponds well to what we know of the annalistic writing in Novgorod in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. Archiepiscopal annalists updated the annals year by year, and, although their work at different moments could be more or less regular, the annalists were always contemporaries with the events they described. Thus, if they had the idea that they should report certain kinds of events, they could easily do so. Some details here may be interesting (for instance, before 1133 the annalists reported construction only of stone churches, yet from that year on they took note of wooden churches as well).[22] In general, however, we see here a clear example of a chronicle kept year by year and with interest shown in all these kinds of events.

22 Guimon 2003, 340.

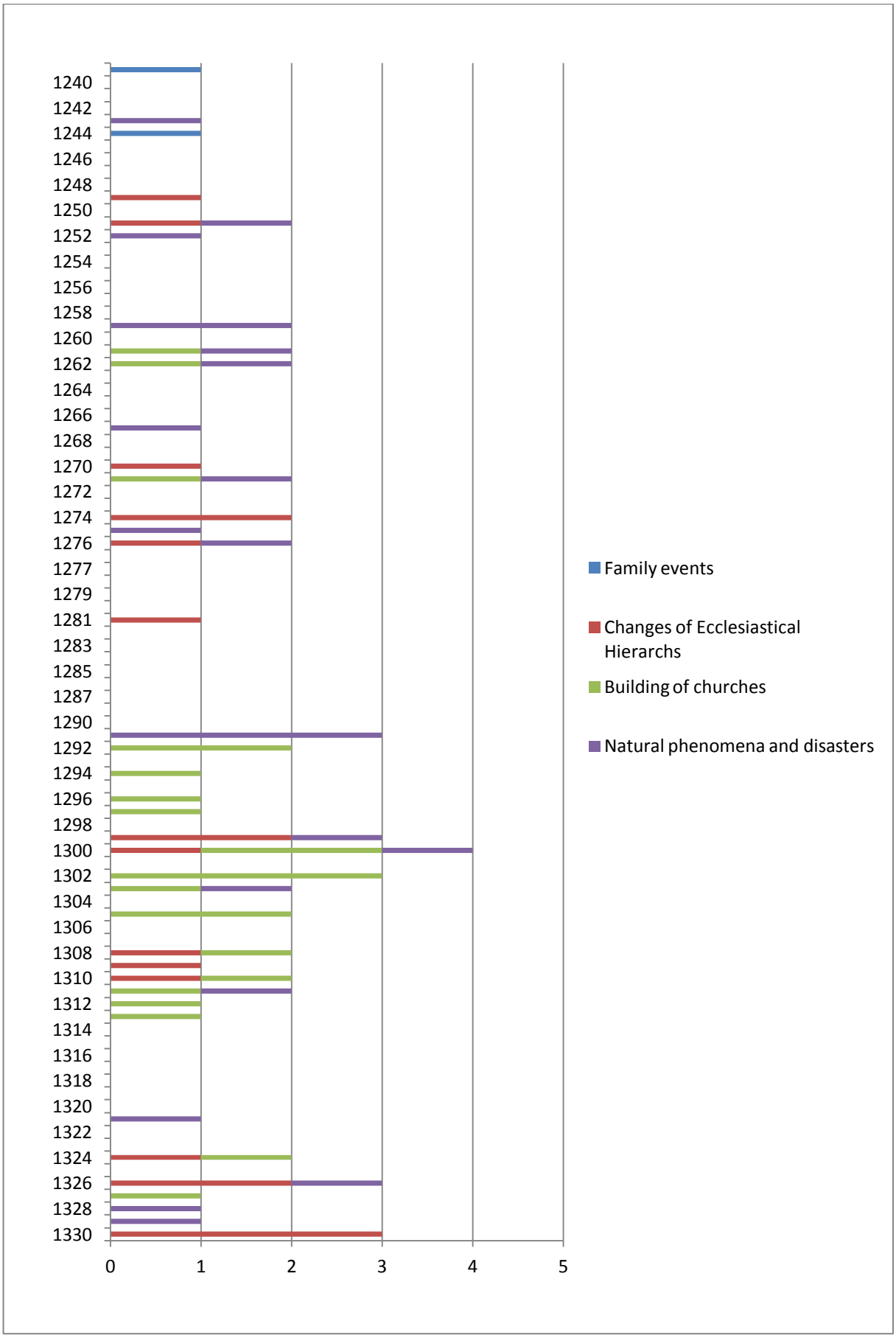

Fig. 4. Distribution of notes in the *First Novgorodian Chronicle*, 1240–1330.

Even though Novgorod itself was not invaded by the Mongols, the character of annalistic writing changed, as can be seen in the diagram above. Firstly, there was an obvious crisis in church construction

in Novgorod, which is reflected in the absence of remarks on church buildings between 1238 and 1261; from 1262, annotations about the buildings again appear, but up to the 1290s, such entries are far more seldom than before 1238. Secondly, we see long gaps in the reporting on any of these kinds of events, specifically in the years 1245–1248, 1253–1258, 1263–1266, 1277–1280, 1282–1290, 1314–1320. These breaks do not correspond to changes from one identifiable annalist to another.[23] One cannot conclude that these breaks always reflect long lapses in keeping the annals, because sometimes in these intervals there are precise dates for other kinds of events, which were probably recorded contemporaneously. It is impossible now to interpret these breaks in any simple way, but it seems clear that, after the Mongol invasion, the annalistic writing in Novgorod became less systematic, both in the periodicity of making new records and in the regularity of reporting 'non-political' events.

At first glance the picture of the twelfth century portrayed by the *Hypatian Chronicle* seems to be different.

23 Gippius 2006.

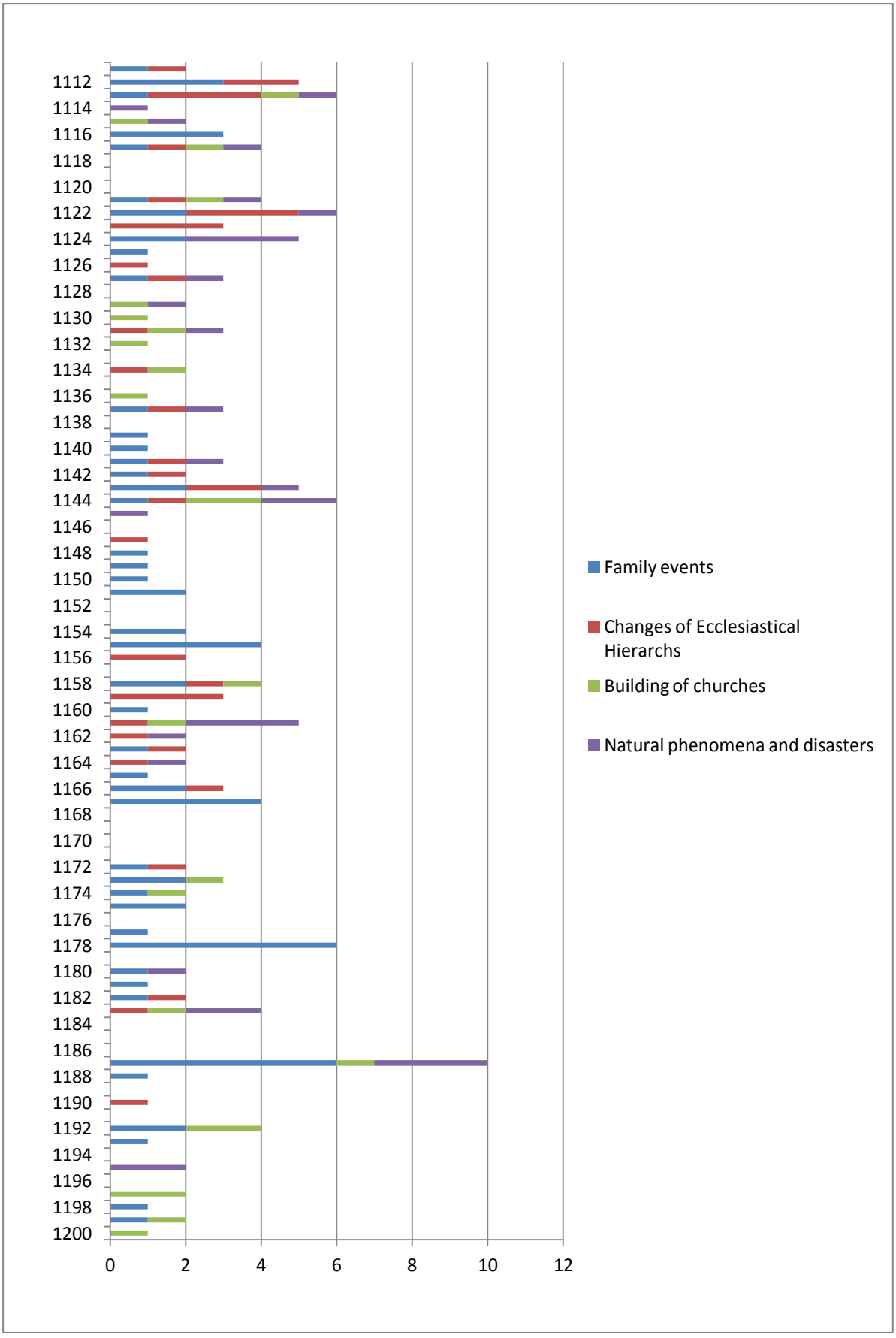

Fig. 5. Distribution of notes in the *Hypatian Chronicle*, 1110–1200.

However, on closer scrutiny it becomes apparent that in some groups of annals, the only 'non-political' events recorded are occurrences in princely families. To draw a diagram without the notes of this kind is, of course, an arbitrary operation, but it seems legitimate, firstly, because princely 'family' events

are the closest to 'political and military' ones (especially in the twelfth century, when the genealogical relations between the Rurikids became complicated and matrimonial links more significant), and, secondly, in some cases in the *Hypatian Chronicle* it is difficult to separate 'family' events from the surrounding narrations on political and military matters.[24]

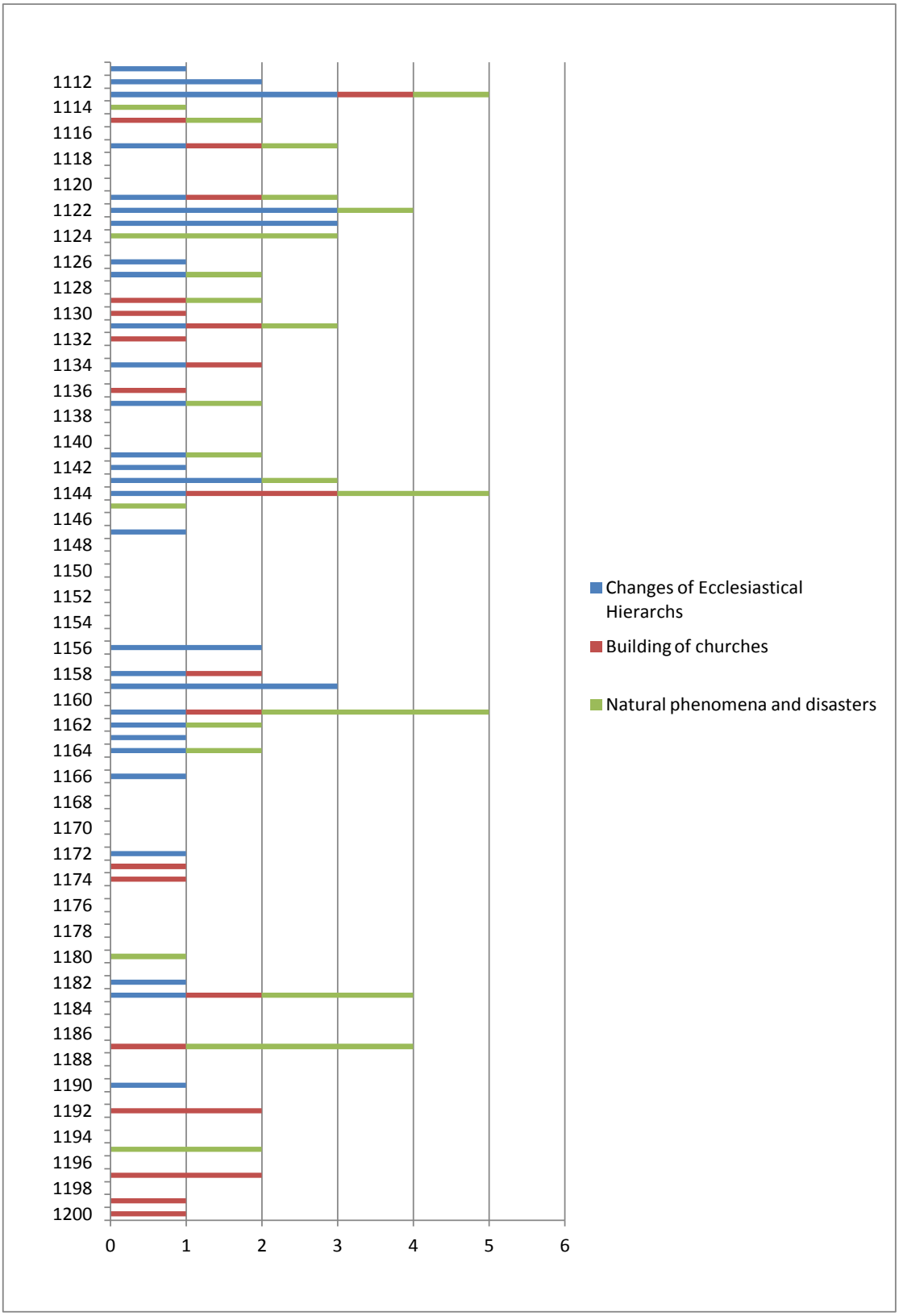

Fig. 6. Distribution of notes in the *Hypatian Chronicle*, 1110–1200 (without family events).

24 Much more difficult than in the case of the other chronicles studied here.

Here we already see some gaps in reporting 'non-political' events. The longest gap comprises the text of the *Hypatian Chronicle* for 1148–1155. These annals are perhaps the most extended in all the early Rus' chronicle writing. They include very detailed narrations on political events as well as some remarks on family events, but surprisingly, no information on changes of ecclesiastical rulers, the building of churches or natural events. There are several precise dates in these annals, although these are not very numerous. One can suppose that in this case we are dealing with a narration written retrospectively rather than year by year, and thus there is a plot, namely the political struggles of that time. On the other hand, some of the precise dates as well as some of the 'family' notes in this gap interval may go back to another source used by the Kievan compiler of ca 1200, namely the annals of Svyatoslav Olgovich.[25]

The textual history of the *Kievan Chronicle* is far from clear and needs further investigation.[26] Thus, I will not try to explain here the smaller intervals without 'non-political' events (annals for 1118–1120, 1138–1140, 1167–1171, 1175–1179, etc.). But in general, we see a certain inconsistency: in some areas the annals are full of 'non-political notes', while in others they lack any such notes with the exception of the 'family' ones. This practice corresponds to the general idea that scholars have about the *Kievan Chronicle*: it was a compilation made from several sources with many fragments written or thoroughly revised by the compiler himself.[27]

The *Laurentian Chronicle* gives a similar picture. It make sense to reflect its text in a diagram only from the year 1156, because from that time forth, the *Laurentian Chronicle* became more or less independent of the *Hypatian Chronicle*[28] and began to report on events in the north-east of Rus'. The following diagram represents the 'non-political notes' of the *Laurentian Chronicle* for the period 1156–1263 (before a long hiatus).

25 See Vilkul 2004.
26 See the latest survey in Aristov 2011.
27 On the work of this compiler, see Vilkul 2004 and Vilkul 2005.
28 In fact, both chronicles go back to a common Kievan source, which is sometimes even better represented by the *Laurentian Chronicle*; see Vilkul 2005. On the other hand, after 1156 common material exists as well, but it is mostly north-eastern, not Kievan.

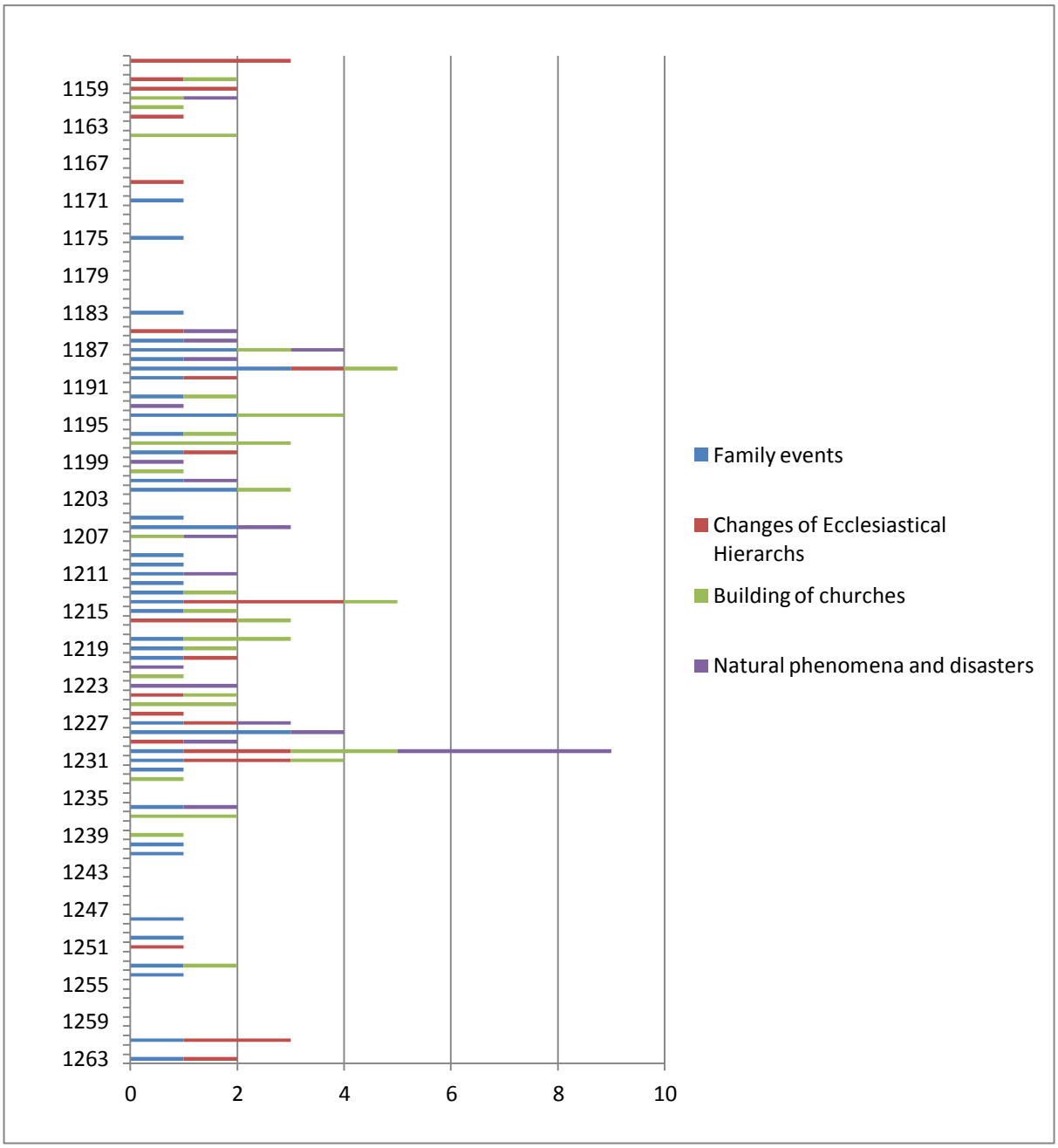

Fig. 7. Distribution of notes in the *Laurentian Chronicle*, 1156–1263.

On linguistic grounds Alan Timberlake (2000) suggested dividing the text of the *Laurentian Chronicle* into four segments during the years 1177–1203, each segment written by a different annalist. The borders of these segments correspond to the changes of bishops in Rostov, and thus a connection between bishops and annalistic writing in Rostov (as in Novgorod) can be established. One can suppose that a similar connection might exist after 1203 as well. At least two dividing lines seen on the diagram above correspond to changes of bishops. In 1184 Luka was ordained bishop of Rostov, and the *Laurentian Chronicle* has more than one 'non-political' note in almost every annual entry from 1185. In 1229 Bishop Cyril I abdicated his see; the new bishop (Cyril II) was ordained only in 1231. In the year 1229 the Laurentian Chronicle describes the trial of Cyril I, and the chronicler sympathised with the former bishop. Thus, one can presume that the annalist writing about Cyril I was active after

the bishop's abdication up until the arrival of the next bishop or even later. The segment in which 'non-political' events are often reported stops after 1233 and may be the end of the section written by this annalist. This hypothesis can be supported by the fact that notes on natural events are especially concentrated in the years1185–1188 (which correspond to the episcopate of Luka, 1184–1189) and 1221–1230 (Cyril I, 1216/17–1229). The 'other' events are concentrated in the years 1218–1231, which also correspond to the episcopate of Cyril I.[29]

As in the *First Novgorodian Chronicle*, the *Laurentian Chronicle* includes a very small number of 'non-political' events after the Mongol invasion, consistent with the general scarcity of the annals for these years. After 1239 only a few births and weddings in the princely family are reported together with changes of bishops and the consecration of one church (1253). No natural phenomena are mentioned in this part of the chronicle.

By contrast, after the hiatus in 1294–1305 the *Laurentian Chronicle* demonstrates a picture similar to the twelfth-century Novgorodian annals: there are several notes on family events, on changes of church hierarchs and on natural events (but none on the construction of churches). Whatever is the exact history of this section, it is clear that the text here is based on a chronicle kept year by year.

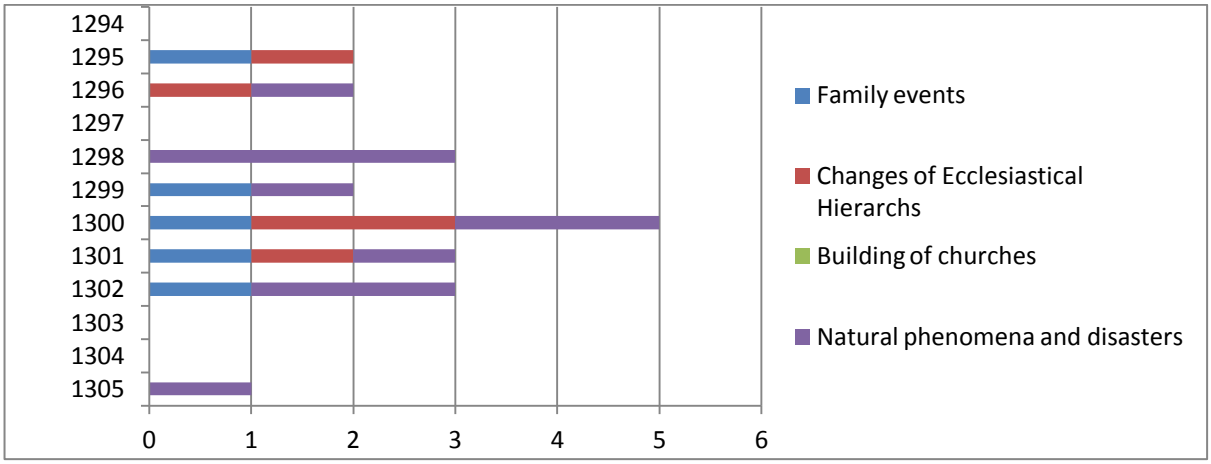

Fig. 8. Distribution of notes in the *Laurentian Chronicle*, 1294–1305.

Let us now turn to the *Primary Chronicle*. There is no sense in creating a similar diagram for all of its text. In its early section (before the Christianisation of Rus' in 988) there are, of course, no notes on changes of ecclesiastical rulers or church construction; there is only one entry on a natural event (about a comet in the year 911 taken from a Byzantine source); and there are several entries on matrimonial events (in the years 903, 977 and three times in 980), all based on oral tradition (with characteristic folkloric elements) and closely connected with the main 'plot', that is, the dynastic history of the

29 See Guimon 2012c, 44–46.

Rurikids. In any case it is quite certain that there was no chronicle writing in Rus' before the conversion in 988, and thus this entirely retrospective text is based on oral tradition and foreign sources.

More interesting from our point of view are the sections of the *Primary Chronicle* from the late tenth, eleventh and early twelfth centuries. Various hypotheses have been advanced about the beginnings of historical writing in Rus', a phase variously dated at some point between the 990s and the 1060s; the first text has been reconstructed by scholars in various ways.[30] General scepticism about these reconstructions was expressed recently by Oleksiy Tolochko, but he also assumes that some brief historical records were made in Kiev much earlier than the *Primary Chronicle*, which was compiled in the 1110s.[31]

There is no room here to discuss these complicated questions. It seems to me significant that in the text of the *Primary Chronicle* for the first half of the eleventh century some of the yearly dates (although certainly not all of them) are quite reliable, as a comparison with foreign sources shows.[32] The first precise dates (month and day) appear in the *Primary Chronicle* for the years 1015, 1050 and 1054, and from the 1060s precise dates become frequent.[33] But the exact history of chronicle writing in the eleventh century is far from clear.[34] Any particular fragment of the eleventh-century section of the *Primary Chronicle* could appear either as an entry made by a contemporary or as part of a retrospective narration or even as a retrospective insertion into an existing text. All the more reason then to look at the distribution of notes on 'non-political' events in the *Primary Chronicle*.

30 See the general surveys in Guimon 2012a, 113–118, 211–213, and especially Gippius 2012.
31 Tolochko 2011.
32 Bakhrushin 1987, 17. I also refer to the paper by Alexandr V. Nazarenko, delivered in the symposium 'The Birth of Historical Writing in Ancient and Medieval Societies' (31 October – 1 November 2011), which has not yet been published.
33 Aleshkovskij 1976, 143–144.
34 See a summary of the present knowledge and discussions in Gippius 2012.

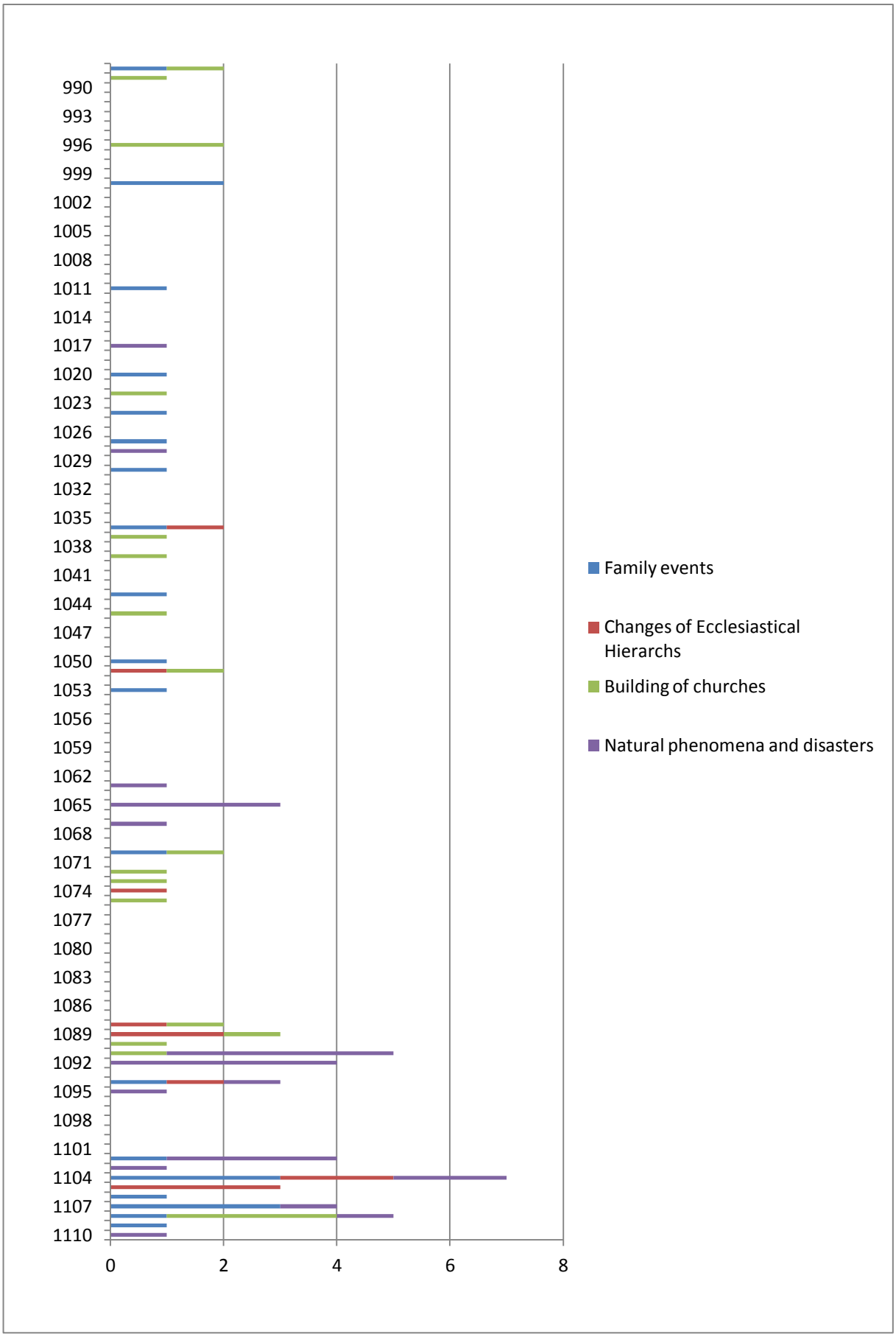

Fig. 9. Distribution of notes in the *Primary Chronicle*, 988–1110.

This diagram shows a certain difference between the text before and after ca 1060 (the time from which precise dates become frequent). Before that year we see no special areas of concentration of 'non-political' notes. While not numerous, they are distributed more or less evenly. Twelve annotations are dedicated to family events. Most of these belong to two series: 1) the brief entries in 1000–1011, dedicated to deaths of men and women[35] in the ruling family (these notes seem to go back to the original brief annals of the early eleventh century);[36] 2) notes on the birth of the sons of Yaroslav the Wise, which, as Tatyana Vilkul has shown, are distributed with an unnatural regularity: according to the *Primary Chronicle*, the sons were born every third year (1024, 1027, 1030, 1036[37]).[38] Nine annotations (or sometimes quite extended narrations) are dedicated to the construction of principal churches – an important part of the Christianisation of Rus' as well as important achievements of Vladimir and Yaroslav (in the years 988, 989, 996, 1037 and 1045). Sometimes (in 989, 1022) church construction is mentioned in connection with military events. The narration on the foundation of the Kievan Caves Monastery (in1051) is certainly a later insertion. Other notes on family events (988, 1020, 1043, 1050, 1053), the consecration of a church (1039), the appointment of a bishop of Novgorod (1036) and a metropolitan of Kiev (1051), a fire (1017) and a 'serpent omen in the sky' (1028) do not belong to any series. It seems likely that at least some of these entries were made by contemporaries, but the material is too sparse to be discussed in this way.

The section of the *Primary Chronicle* after ca 1060 leaves a different impression. Even if we exclude from this diagram the narrations that were certainly inserted retrospectively into a pre-existing annalistic text (on omens in 1065 and on the history of the Kievan Caves Monastery in 1074),[39] the general impression does not change. After the middle of the eleventh century we have three areas with concentrations on family events, ecclesiastical hierarchs, church construction and natural phenomena, namely the years 1063–1075, 1088–1095 and 1102–1110. In all three segments we find entries on all four types, while there are no remarks of these types outside these segments. This is very striking and must be explained.

35 Only women's deaths (in 1000 [twice] and 1011) are reflected in the diagram, as it was decided to treat the deaths of men in princely families as 'political' events.
36 See Guimon & Gippius 2005, 185–186; Tolochko 2011, 214–216.
37 In 1033 there is an entry on the death of Yaroslav's nephew, which probably belongs to the same pattern.
38 See Vilkul 2003.
39 See Timberlake 2001, 209, 212.

Alan Timberlake, analysing the dating formulas of the text of the *Primary Chronicle* for 1050–1110, suggested a preliminary division of this part of the text into five segments, each written by a different annalist.[40] Some of Timberlake's boundaries correspond to our picture:

Timberlake's segments	Areas of concentration of 'non-political' notes
1050–1060	–
1061–1071	1063–1075
1072–1076	
1077–1087	–
1088–1110	1088–1095
	–
	1102–1110

Fig. 10. The correspondence between Alan Timberlake's segments and the areas of concentration of 'non-political' notes.

It must be said, however, that Timberlake's boundary of 1087/1088 is based not only on the analysis of dating formulas (none of them appears in 1088–1090), but on the observation that these three annals include 'a series of important punctual events': the dedication of three churches, the deaths of two metropolitans and the death of an abbot. Timberlake concludes that these three annals belong to a person who started his work in 1091 and was responsible for the revision of the chronicle known as the *Initial Compilation*.[41] Thus, this is not a correspondence of data, but rather an interpretation of the same data.

If Timberlake's division is correct, then two subsequent annalists could form one section of concentration on 'non-political events' (as in 1063–1075) or one annalist could be interested in these kinds of events in some groups of years and not interested in them in other years (as in 1088–1110). Thus, our diagram reveals not only the annalists' personalities, but also something about the character of their work. We can suppose that in 1063–1075, 1088–1095 and 1102–1110 the annalists wrote about the present or the very recent past, and outside these zones they wrote about the more distant past. This would, however, again be an over-simplification. The intervals of 1077–1095 and 1096–1101 are full of precise dates, which probably means that these annals were contemporary with the events. Thus, it is impossible to interpret the diagram in any simple way. Nevertheless, one important observation must be made.

40 Timberlake 2005.
41 Timberlake 2005, 62.

The three segments in which 'non-political' notes are present correspond to three editorial events, which, according to Alexey Shakhmatov and his followers, were crucial points for chronicle writing in the Kievan Caves Monastery: *Nikon's Compilation* of 1073,[42] the *Initial Compilation* (*Nachalny svod*) of 1095[43] and the *Primary Chronicle* itself of the 1110s. Although there are some doubts among scholars about these hypothetical compilations,[44] the existence of all three is confirmed by a solid argument.[45] Our diagram seems to support this general scheme: the bursts of interest in 'non-political' events correspond to these three editorial events. The simplest explanation seems to be that the persons who revised the chronicle in all three cases tended to record 'non-political' events that had taken place several years before the time of their work, as well as perhaps continuing to record them after a compilation had been completed.

This shows a certain instability in the annalists' guidelines in the eleventh and the early twelfth centuries. For example, the person who, according to Timberlake,[46] wrote the annals in 1077–1087 clearly recorded contemporary events, as there are several precise dates in these entries. But all the events written down by this person were political and military. This annalist, one can assume, had no interest in recording the changes of ecclesiastical rulers or natural events. More or less the same can be said for the annals in the years 1096–1101. Such variability in the annalists' guidelines contrasts with the situation later, especially in Novgorod in the twelfth century.

One can conclude that perhaps the Kievan compilers of the 1070s, 1090s and 1110s developed the guidelines for later annalists, giving them an idea of what kinds of events were worth mentioning in a chronicle. These guidelines were observed by many of the annalists who dealt with the present or recent past (especially in Novgorod before the Mongol invasion, but also in Kiev during some parts of the twelfth century, in Rostov in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, in Tver ca 1300). On the other hand, some of the annalists probably had narrower interests, even if they recorded contemporary events, and thus reported fewer 'non-political' occurrences (as in Novgorod and Rostov after the Mongol invasion). Certainly, those chroniclers who described the distant past or expanded pre-existing texts (as did the Kievan compiler of ca 1200) dealt mostly with 'political and military' events.

42 According to Savva Mikheev, 1078. See Mikheev 2011, 123–129.
43 According to Timberlake and Gippius, the early 1090s. See Timberlake 2001, 208; Gippius 2012, 61.
44 See, for example, Timberlake 2005, 68–69, on *Nikon's Compilation*, and Tolochko 2011.
45 See Shakhmatov 2002–2003; Timberlake 2001, 203–212 (for the *Initial Compilation*); Mikheev 2011; Gippius 2012.
46 Timberlake 2005, 59–60.

To summarise, the central subject of the annals is concerned with changes of rulers, political conflicts, military campaigns, and (especially in Novgorod) the relations between the city community and the princes. Notes on princely deaths as well as on other dynastic events also played an important role. But the purposes of the annals certainly were not purely political.[47] Changes of ecclesiastical rulers, the building of churches, natural phenomena (some – if not all – of which were regarded as omens), as well as some other kinds of events were also described. At least the former three groups of annotations are characteristic of all four texts analysed in this article. The annotations are distributed unevenly, but it seems now that in most cases such notes became numerous when the scribes began recording the events at the time they took place. Thus, they all were substantial for the annalistic genre, and in many cases (though not in all) the absence of such notes must be explained in terms of retrospective ignorance, and not in terms of lack of interest.

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47 Here is not the place to speculate on the functions of the annalistic genre in Rus'. For a review of possible or suggested answers, see Guimon 2012d. See also Danilevskiy 2004 (a hypothesis of eschatological purposes of the annals).

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The Past in Snorri Sturluson's *Heimskringla*

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The radical difference between the past and the present is mostly regarded as an invention of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, which marks the origin of the modern understanding of history. Does this mean that in the Middle Ages there was no idea of the past being different? The article will examine this question on the basis of one text, Snorri Sturluson's Heimskringla, which deals with the history of the Norwegian dynasty from Roman times until 1177. The focus will be on two events, the introduction of Christianity and the unification of the kingdom under one king.

Did people in the Middle Ages believe that the Romans fought tournaments? The question was posed by Peter Burke to R.W. Southern during a dinner at St John's College, Oxford. After some consideration, Southern answered that they probably did.[1] The background to this question is, of course, the different attitude to the past in the Middle Ages from that of modern historians. In the Middle Ages history was exemplary; the past served as examples of right and wrong ways of behaving, as expressed in numerous prologues from the Middle Ages, as well as from Classical Antiquity. Consequently, what was interesting about the past was its similarity to the present. By contrast, the modern, linear view of history, whose origin is usually dated to the late eighteenth century, regards history as a process leading to constant change in material culture, technology, political institutions, ideas and so forth.[2] The "Whig view" of English history, which traces the gradual development of democratic institutions from the Middle Ages to the present, is one example of this linear view, and the history of mentality, which deals with fundamental assumptions that dominated in one period and changed during the next, is another.

1 Oral information from Peter Burke.
2 E.g. Iggers 1975, 3–42.

Mari Isoaho (ed.)
Past and Present in Medieval Chronicles
COLLeGIUM
Studies across Disciplines in the Humanities and Social Sciences 17.
Helsinki: Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies. 118–130.

Nevertheless, the medieval view did not imply that the past was exactly similar to the present. Medieval chroniclers, of course, knew that the ancient Romans had a different religion and to some extent different political institutions. Roman ruins, spread over large parts of Europe, showed buildings different from contemporary ones. When Otto of Freising has Frederick Barbarossa state that the Roman political institutions, the senate, the knights and the camp were now in Germany, he does not necessarily imply that the contemporary political institutions were exactly like those of the Romans, but rather that the essential features of Roman virtues had now been transferred to Germany.[3] Thus, it does not follow from the general medieval view of the past that people of that period believed that the Romans fought tournaments. It would seem likely that most of them did, but it was clearly possible for learned men with a sound knowledge of Roman history to see that this was not the case.

Moreover, a possible exception to the static view of the past in the Middle Ages is the Christian idea of periodization. History has a beginning – the Creation – and an end – the Second Coming, while Christ's First Coming represents a radical change in the relationship between God and humanity. In accordance with this, Christianity introduced several kinds of periodization based on the Bible. History was divided into seven epochs, corresponding to the seven days of Creation or into four empires, corresponding to the prophecy in the Book of Daniel. The difference between these epochs is open to discussion, but R.W. Southern himself has pointed to a kind of evolutionary understanding of history in the twelfth-century writings of Hugh of St Victor.[4] It has also been suggested that this understanding of history is an important source for the new, linear idea of historical development that arose in the eighteenth century. Nevertheless, its practical importance for the writing of history during the period should not be exaggerated. As most of the history dealt with by medieval chroniclers took place in the sixth and, in practice, the last epoch, the period from the birth of Christ to the Day of Judgement – the seventh day was eternity – this division gave little aid to the structuring of the narratives.

The Origins of the Norwegian Dynasty in *Heimskringla*

The main subject of the present article, Snorri Sturluson's *Heimskringla*, was written in the vernacular, not by a learned theologian but by a secular aristocrat. Snorri Sturluson (1179–1241) was one of the most prominent chieftains in Iceland and an active participant in the internal struggles on the island. He had close contacts in Norway, notably with Skule Bårdsson, the rival of King Håkon Håkonsson,

3 Bagge 1996: 357–59.
4 Southern 1971.

and was eventually killed as a result of a conflict with King Håkon. Snorri is one of the last in a series of writers in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries dealing with earlier Norwegian history. He knew and used most of the works of his predecessors, the most important of which are *Morkinskinna* (ca 1220) and *Fagrskinna* (ca 1220), which respectively cover the periods 1030–1157 and ca 800–1177. In addition, he made extensive use of the biographies of the two missionary kings, Olav Tryggvason and St Olav Haraldsson, the former by Odd Snorrason Munk (ca 1190), the latter in the so-called *Oldest Saga* and *Legendary Saga* (ca 1200) by one or more anonymous authors.[5] Snorri's work, called *Heimskringla* after its opening words, was probably composed around 1230 and deals with the history of the Norwegian kings from the origin of the dynasty until 1177. It is thus the history of the dynasty, not the kingdom of Norway.

In contrast to normal practice in Latin historiography – such as the twelfth-century *Historia Norwegie* – there is neither a geographical introduction with a presentation of the country nor a systematic account of the chieftains and principalities at the time of the foundation of the kingdom. Instead, Snorri devotes the first saga of *Heimskringla*, *Ynglinga saga*,[6] to tracing the origins of the dynasty to Inner Asia, where the god Odin, whom Snorri regards as a human being and a great king, started his conquests at the time the Romans conquered the Mediterranean. Snorri then lists a total of twenty-eight kings from Odin to Harald Finehair, the founder of the kingdom of Norway. According to Snorri, the majority of these kings ruled in Sweden and had no connection with Norway. Only number twenty-four in the line, Halvdan Whiteleg, moved to Norway, after his father, Olav the Woodcutter, had been killed by the Swedes. Halvdan became king of Romerike and Vestfold in eastern Norway and was buried in Skiringssal in Vestfold. His son Øystein was the great-grandfather of Halvdan the Black, Harald Finehair's father, whose reign can be dated to around the middle of the ninth century.

Ynglinga Saga is relatively brief and gives few details about the individual kings. Its purpose largely seems to be to place the history of the Norwegian kings in wider perspective. If we apply the usual reckoning in generations of thirty years, the combined reigns of the twenty-eight kings amount to 840 years altogether, which dates the beginning of the dynasty to around the time of the birth of Christ. Snorri adds that the founder of the dynasty, the pagan god Odin, whom he regards as a king who was worshipped as a god after his death, lived at the time the Romans conquered the Mediterranean. Odin understood that his own future would have to be in another region and therefore founded his kingdom

5 Andersson 1985.
6 Jónsson 1893–1901, vol. 1, 9–85.

in the north. Thus, Snorri manages to situate the history of the Norwegian dynasty in a larger global context and also connect it to the history of salvation.

The next turning point in *Heimskringla* is the reign of Harald Finehair. Finehair's father, Halvdan the Black, is given a brief history, which sketches the background of Harald's later conquests and contains two dreams prophesying Harald's conquest of the country. Turning to Harald, Snorri follows his predecessors in regarding him as the founder of the contemporary kingdom, but he is unique in giving a detailed account of how and why Harald carried out his conquest. His predecessors confine themselves to stating that Harald conquered the country; some of them also quote some stanzas of the skaldic poem of Harald's last battle, that of Hafrsfjord, just south of present-day Stavanger.

Snorri gives the following explanation of Harald's decision to conquer the whole of Norway. Having heard about a beautiful woman, Gyda, daughter of the king of Hordaland in western Norway, Harald sends for her, asking her to become his mistress. Gyda haughtily refuses, on the grounds that she will not waste her virginity on a petty king who rules over only a few counties. She adds that she finds it strange that no king has attempted to rule the whole country. The messengers report Gyda's answer to Harald, expecting him to become furious and send an army to punish her. However, Harald expresses his gratitude to this woman who has reminded him of what he ought to have thought of himself, swearing by Almighty God never to cut his hair or his beard until he has conquered the whole of Norway.[7] The story is not known from any other source and may well have been Snorri's own invention. It is also very far from the strategic considerations that are normally attributed to great conquerors. It does, however, serve to underline the extraordinary character of Harald's achievement and thus points to the conquest as a turning point in Norwegian history. It is not an extension of ongoing struggles, but rather a plan conceived by one individual, which causes the history of the country to follow a completely new course. Before Harald, there was a series of petty kingdoms whose existence was more or less taken for granted. Although there was a concept of Norway as a country, it had not occurred to anyone that this country could form a political unit. It took a haughty woman to conceive of the idea and a great man like Harald to make it a reality. Harald's oath on this occasion is also significant, for despite being a pagan, Harald appeals to Almighty God. Thus, there is a connection in kind as well as in intrinsic importance between the unification of the kingdom and its Christianisation.[8] Halvdan's dream, with the prophecy about Olav, may also be regarded as evidence of this.

7 Jónsson 1893–1901, vol. 1, 101–03.

8 A similar idea is expressed in an addition to Fagrskinna (Jónsson 1902, 386–87), where in a speech Harald refuses to participate in the pagan sacrifices, pointing to the parallel between God's rule of the world and his own of Norway.

Harald Finehair's Founding of the Kingdom of Norway

In the next part of his narrative Snorri describes a series of struggles and alliances, but in a different way from before. No longer are individual acts of violence followed by reactions or revenge, but rather a systematic war of conquest takes place.[9] Harald proceeds in accordance with the main features of the geography of Norway. He leads his army northwards towards Trøndelag, defeating various rulers on his way. In the north he concludes an alliance with the ruler of Trøndelag, the Earl of Lade, and then moves south along the coast, conquering parts of western Norway. After an interlude in the east, where he fights the king of Sweden, Harald crushes the last resistance against him in the Battle of Hafrsfjord, south of present-day Stavanger. Then he sends for Gyda and makes her his mistress, with whom he has several children.[10]

Whatever the details of the conquest, Snorri is in no doubt that it was a landmark in the history of Norway. This is expressed particularly clearly in his account of Harald's administrative system. He takes hold of all property (*óðall*) in the country, making all its owners his tenants. He appoints one earl (*jarl*) in each county (*Old Norse fylki*) and four officials of lower rank (*hersir*) under each earl, and he fixes the salaries of these officials, as well as their duties and the number of men they have to muster for the king's service.[11] The idea of the king as the owner of the country is probably derived from thirteenth-century ideas about the foundation of royal power.[12] The rest of the administrative system is likely to have been Snorri's construction, although possibly based on a few examples he may have known. Snorri never gives a complete description of the system in practice at any later stage and even contradicts his own account by citing a rule, allegedly introduced by St Olav and his successor Harald Hardrada, that there should be only one earl in the country at one time.[13] However, later in his narrative he occasionally refers to the arrangement he attributes to Harald Finehair when discussing local divisions of power. Although Snorri rarely mentions *hersir*, he does provide detailed information about Harald's appointment of earls. Harald's closest friends and allies, such as Håkon and Sigurd of Lade and Ragnvald Mørejarl, are described as being appointed as earls of more than one county; thus, in practice, the bureaucratic structure Snorri attributes to Harald is modified considerably.

9 Jónsson 1893–1901, vol.1, 103–26.
10 Snorri does not refer to Gyda as Harald's wife, in contrast to some of his other mistresses. It is not clear to what extent he really wants to differentiate between wives and concubines; in any case, Harald is polygamous.
11 Jónsson 1893–1901, 104–05.
12 Bagge 1987, 31–38.
13 Jónsson 1893–1901, vol 3, 142.

It is evident from the sagas of Harald's successors that Snorri regards Harald's unification as final, in the sense that there is now a general consensus that the territory of Norway should form a political unit and that there is a dynasty with a legitimate claim to rule it. Although the following period is far from peaceful, the struggles are all about the control of the country as a whole. The lines of division are as follows: (1) the various descendants of Harald contending against another; (2) the descendants of Harald against the earls of Lade, Håkon Grjotgardsson's descendants and (3) the kings of Denmark seeking to exploit the internal rivalries in Norway to increase their own power. The main outline of these conflicts is found already in the works of Snorri's predecessors, but there are also traces of conflicts there that suggest that this relatively neat arrangement was the result of the saga writers' constructions and that there were still a number of petty kings and chieftains fighting for power.[14]

The Formation of the Christian Kingdom

Harald's conquest thus represents a radically new step in the history of the dynasty, as well as in the history of the country. The next step occurs when the dynasty achieves a monopoly on ruling the country and eliminated its competitors. This largely coincides with the introduction of Christianity, carried out by the kings Olav Tryggvason (995–1000) and St Olav Haraldsson (1015–30), both, according to Snorri, descendants of Harald Finehair. The first Olav arrives from England and replaces the last pagan ruler, Håkon, Earl of Lade. After a long and successful reign, Håkon becomes unpopular in his old age, because he forces the wives and daughters of the leading men in Trøndelag to have sex with him, which leads to a rebellion. At the same time, Olav Tryggvason arrives in Norway, enticed by Håkon himself, who plans to have Olav killed on his arrival. But Håkon has to flee and is helped by his mistress to hide under a pigsty together with his faithful slave, named Kark, who eventually kills him.

The story is mentioned by most of Snorri's predecessors. However, Snorri adds the following comment: "And that was the main reason why this happened, that the time had come when the *blót* and its practitioners were to be condemned, and in its place came holy faith and right customs".[15] Snorri's problem here is the following: why did this clever and highly successful chieftain suffer such a shameful death? Normally, those who are smart and clever are also lucky. Håkon was in this case extremely unlucky. Admittedly, he was partly to blame for his fall; his sexual behaviour was bound to create resentment. The rebellion that followed was thus to be expected, but Håkon was extremely unlucky in that it coincided with the arrival of Olav Tryggvason, whom he could easily have gotten rid of had

14 Krag 1989; Bagge 2006, 495–99.
15 Jónsson 1893–1901, vol. 1, 356.

the rebellion not occurred. Even then, Håkon might have escaped had it not been for his slave Kark's treachery. Kark had apparently been Håkon's private servant throughout his life – the two were born on the same night; he had been treated well and had always been loyal. He was probably the person in Håkon's surroundings most likely to be trusted. His treachery seems in Snorri's account to be the result of a combination of panic and temptation, as he listens to Olav Tryggvason promising a great reward to the person who kills Håkon. Taken together, these factors amount to such extreme bad luck that a supernatural explanation seems likely. Such an explanation easily presents itself when the pagan Håkon is succeeded by the great missionary king Olav Tryggvason, who brings about the conversion of the country.

Snorri's reference to God's providence in this case serves to explain an extremely unlikely event and thus cannot be taken as evidence of a general explanation of historical events by God's providence or of a consistent division between the pagan and the Christian period in the whole work. However, it does point to the introduction of Christianity as marking a new epoch, a feature Snorri develops together with his picture of the Christian kings restoring Harald's unification of the country.

Olav begins his reign with an itinerary that parallels Harald's, although its sequence and purpose are different. Olav travels along the coast from the Oslofjord area to Trøndelag in order to introduce Christianity.[16] He begins in the east, where he has relatives and friends who easily accept the new religion, while the difficulties increase as he moves further west and north. In most places he succeeds by offering his friendship and in some cases by marriage alliances, but in Trøndelag and later in northern Norway, he has to use force, destroying pagan cult sites and killing or threatening to kill those who refuse baptism. Snorri's focus is clearly on the religious change, but it hardly escaped him that the introduction of the new religion implied a royal presence over large parts of the country similar to that of the age of Harald Finehair.

Olav Tryggvason's short reign ends in his defeat and death in the Battle of Svold in the year 1000. Norway is now divided between the victors: the Danish King Svein Forkbeard, the Swedish King Olof Skotkonung and the Norwegian earls of Lade, Eirik and Svein. In practice, the latter two rule most of the country, but on behalf of their Danish and Swedish overlords. Thus, Norway is divided and placed under foreign rule, and Harald Finehair's descendants have lost their power with the exception of a few, who rule as petty kings in the east.

16 On this topic see Andersson 1977 and Bagge 2006, 506–07.

This is the situation at the time when the brilliant young pretender, Olav Haraldsson, returns to Norway in 1015. According to Snorri, Olav was also Harald's descendant one generation removed: Olav Tryggvason was the grandson of Harald's son Olav Geirstadalv, while Olav Haraldsson was the great grandson of Olav's brother Bjørn, nicknamed Merchant (*farmaðr*). All the sagas, including *Heimskringla*, underline the later Olav's link to the dynasty more strongly than that of his namesake.[17] In various ways Snorri depicts Olav as Harald's heir – in the direct sense as the man who descended from him and had the right to his kingdom, as well as in the wider sense as the one who fulfilled the task Harald began. While in England, Olav is commanded by God to return to Norway to become its eternal king. Shortly after Olav's arrival in Norway, Snorri describes Olav giving a speech to his mother and stepfather, proclaiming himself Harald's heir and asking them for aid in conquering the kingdom.[18] After some discussion they accept him and give the necessary support for him to be acclaimed king at the local assembly of Eastern Norway.[19] Later, Olav is also acclaimed in Trøndelag and, after his victory at Nesjar the next year, by all assemblies in the country. Thus, the combination of hereditary right and acclamation by the people is emphasised even more strongly in Olav's case than in that of his predecessors.[20]

However, the political considerations that lead to this result are also more strongly emphasised and discussed in great detail. Olav's legal claim is apparently of no importance in the discussion between the petty kings, who are the first to accept him. The argument in his favour is that he is a winning type, who will be able to reward his supporters and will be most likely to win in any case, so that it would be best to support him at once. The counter-argument is that Olav will be too interfering and that a distant king, the king of Denmark, who at the time held power in Norway, was to be preferred. Olav's final acclamation over the whole country is depicted as the direct consequence of his victory at Nesjar.

Snorri has more to say about Olav's governing of the country than that of his predecessors. In the beginning of his saga, he presents a whole network of men in various parts of the country.[21] In the east Olav has one man on each side of the Oslofjord, one further north around Lake Mjøsa and one even further north in Gudbrandsdalen. Moreover, he has relatives in Ringerike. The network is sparser in the rest of the country. Most important are the Arnasons in the Møre region, one of whom, Kalv, is placed in

17 Bagge 2010, 287–90. The link is expressed particularly strongly in the Legendary Saga of how Olav's foster father Rane entered the grave of Olav's ancestor and namesake Olav Geirstadalv – not Harald's son but his uncle – and brought Olav his sword and ring. See Heinrichs 1989. This story is not included in *Heimskringla*.
18 Jónsson 1893–1901, vol. 2, 46–50.
19 Jónsson 1893–1901, vol 2, 50–54.
20 Jónsson 1893–1901, vol. 2, 57–58, 88.
21 See Bagge 2002, 184–87.

Trøndelag on a farm Olav has confiscated from a man executed for pagan practices. In northern Norway Olav mostly takes over the network of his predecessor, Olav Tryggvason. Most of western Norway is controlled by Erling Skjalgsson, whose power Olav tries to limit.

Does Snorri regard Olav's policy as a novelty or as a continuation of the normal practice of his predecessors? It is clear from Snorri's account that Olav works through personal friends rather than trying to establish a bureaucratic structure. The few local officials (*ármenn*) mentioned in his saga hardly represent a novelty and are in any case not intended to replace the normal network of magnates. Snorri does not specify the size of the areas under the control of Olav's friends or mention whether these areas were smaller than those granted by his predecessors. In any case it is very unlikely that any of them had a territory the size of Erling Skjalgsson's 'principality' in the west. This may indicate that Olav was conducting a different policy from that of his predecessors, notably Olav Tryggvason. On the other hand, there is a difference between granting a large territory to a man appointed and trusted by the king himself and accepting the existence of a similar territory granted by one's predecessor. Snorri seems to think that Olav should have trusted Erling Skjalgsson and that his attempt to reduce his power only created unnecessary tension, but it is easy to see that an ambitious king might object to a magnate with such extensive territory.

The conflict between Olav and Erling continued throughout Olav's reign and eventually contributed to his exile and death. However, Snorri stresses that Erling did not really want to fight Olav but was more or less forced to do so. When open conflict broke out between Olav and Erling, they had just concluded an agreement. Then Erling's stupid nephew Asbjørn kills Olav's local representative in his presence, and Erling is honour bound to intervene on his behalf. Tore Hund, paternal uncle to the same nephew, is under the same obligation and has to avenge Asbjørn who is killed by one of Olav's men, despite Tore's wish to keep the king's friendship. In both cases, Olav exacerbates the conflict because of his stubborn attitude.[22]

Thus, there is a contrast between Snorri's explicit statements about Olav and the opinions conveyed in his narrative. In my book *Society and Politics in Snorri Sturluson's Heimskringla* I regarded the narrative as the expression of Snorri's real opinion and the explicit statements as conventional phrases that had to be included out of respect for the saint who was buried in the cathedral of Nidaros and his successors on the Norwegian throne.[23] Now I am less certain of this interpretation. To know how Snorri

22 Bagge 1991, 66–70 and Bagge 2010, 305–15.
23 Bagge 1991, 68–70.

explains political events, his narrative is no doubt a better source than his explicit comments, but I also believe that he was serious about Olav's sanctity and felt a real admiration for him. He may even have thought that Olav's political blunders were not normal blunders, but could be explained by his high principles of objective justice. Moreover, Snorri is not the only historian to attribute both positive and negative characteristics to Olav. The tension between the two sides of his character is even greater in the earlier *Legendary Saga*, which, directly or indirectly, was Snorri's source, but Snorri achieved greater harmony by reducing the expressions of Olav's ruthlessness as well as the expressions of his sanctity.[24]

In any case, such considerations form an important part of Snorri's long-term interpretation of Olav's reign, as not just a phase in the continuous struggles for power between kings and magnates, but as a turning point in the history of the country. When the petty kings in the east – Olav's alleged relatives – rebel against him soon after they have accepted him as king, Snorri celebrates his victory over them, adding that Olav was now the only man to be named king in Norway.[25] Thus, Olav restored Harald's unification of the country under one king. He also fulfilled the prophecy inherent in Harald's promise about conquering the whole of Norway by converting the people to the Almighty God to whom the pagan Harald had appealed. After Olav, Norway remained united under one dynasty, albeit one whose members did not always keep peace between themselves. The line of the earls of Lade died out with Håkon the Younger, who ruled for a short time during Olav's exile. Despite the fact that the Danes seemed to have won a total victory with Olav's defeat and death at Stiklestad, Olav's reign was a turning point in this respect as well. The Danish tyranny and Olav's sainthood united the Norwegians against the Danes; the men who had fought Olav at Stiklestad joined together to oppose their new lords and chased them out of the country. In the following period Olav's successors, Magnus the Good and Harald Hardrada, fought to conquer Denmark.

Snorri deals with this turning point in considerable detail, describing Olav's miracles, the Danish oppression and the reactions to both. He does not depict a people in sackcloth and ashes in repentance over their killing of a saint, but rather their recognition that Olav was a lesser evil than the Danish rulers. In particular, Olav's old enemy Einar Tambarskjelve, who now emerges as the strong man, exploits Olav's sainthood to serve his own interests.[26] The Danish king Cnut has failed to keep his promises, and Einar now brings Olav's son Magnus back to the country in order to gain for himself the position Cnut promised him as the leader of the country.

24 Bagge 2010, 316–18.
25 "Bar þá Óláfr einn konungsnafn í Nóregi". See Jónsson 1893–1901, vol. 2, 131.
26 Jónsson 1893–1901, vol. 2, 514–15; See Bagge 1991, 214.

The change of regime actually proves to be a success. The young Magnus starts out as a strict ruler, seeking revenge on his father's enemies. After the skald Sigvat rebukes him in a poem, however, he changes and becomes Magnus the Good,[27] in many ways a parallel to Håkon the Good, who reigned one hundred years earlier. Magnus creates peace and unity in the country, respects the people's rights and keeps Einar as his closest friend and counsellor. He is successful abroad, is elected king of Denmark and wins a great battle against the Slavs (Wends) at Lyrskoghede in Schleswig (1043). Towards the end of his reign, Magnus is forced to share power with his uncle, Olav's half-brother Harald, who soon afterwards succeeds him (1046–66).

Magnus's reign does not bring an end to the internal conflicts in the country. There is rivalry between him and Harald during their short rule together, and a new series of succession struggles begins in the 1130s and continues during the rest of the period covered by *Heimskringla*. However, according to Snorri, all conflicts take place among the descendants of Harald Finehair and are directed at controlling the whole of Norway. In this sense Harald's conquest represents a permanent change. An additional change, to some extent anticipated by Harald, is the introduction of Christianity. Snorri deals extensively with the conversion, particularly in the saga of Olav Tryggvason, and is in no doubt that Christianity represents the victory of the true faith. Nevertheless, he is respectful in his account of the old religion and largely explains the conversion in secular terms, notably as the result of the personal charisma of the Christian kings and the desire to gain their friendship. Society as a whole is largely the same in the pagan and the Christian periods. To some extent this sameness also applies to kingship, where the individual differences between kings of both periods are greater than those between pagan and Christian kings, although it is no coincidence that the final consolidation of the Norwegian monarchy takes place under St Olav, who completes the conversion of the country. In this way Olav carries out the task anticipated in Harald's appeal to the highest God, who is represented on earth by the king.

Conclusion: Snorri's Understanding of Historical Change

Snorri creates a more coherent story of the development of the Norwegian kingdom than his predecessors had done. He gives a far more exact chronology – probably to a great extent his own creation – which in turn he uses to show the causes as well as the consequences of various individual actions. He also presents a more precise institutional framework by showing how Harald organised his new kingdom

27 Jónsson 1893–1901, vol. 3, 30–34.

and how this organisation was partly taken over and partly modified by his successors. In particular, he depicts St Olav as the one who carries out Harald's work, partly by gaining full control of the territory Harald had conquered and partly by the final introduction of Christianity, which meant that not only was there just one king for the whole country, but also only one God. Like other historians in the Middle Ages, Snorri mainly deals with individual actors and regards success and failure as the result of greater or lesser skill on the part of his protagonists. Within these limits, however, Snorri creates a more coherent picture of the development of a kingdom than his predecessors or most of his contemporaries in other parts of Europe.

There are some European parallels to Snorri's presentation of national history. William of Malmesbury deals extensively with the Norman Conquest as a disaster as well as an opportunity, God's punishment for the sins of the Anglo-Saxons as well an improvement of the people's morals and the integration of the English into the higher European civilisation.[28] Otto of Freising deals with the crisis in Germany resulting from the Saxon rebellion and the Investiture Contest and with how the crisis is resolve by its brilliant new emperor, Frederick Barbarossa.[29] Both these authors have a more religious emphasis than Snorri, yet both address historical crisis and change from one epoch to another.

Did Snorri believe that the Romans fought tournaments? Most likely, he had never reflected on the problem, as there is no evidence of tournaments either in Iceland or in Norway in Snorri's lifetime. But he was certainly aware of historical change. Snorri knew that Norway had once consisted of petty principalities, that his ancestors had a different religion and different burial customs and, above all, that contemporary conditions were the results of changes over a long period of time. He also tried to explain these changes, partly by secular, partly by religious causes. This does not represent an example of a modern, linear interpretation of history. To Snorri and his contemporaries, history was not primarily about social change; although aware that not everything was the same in the past as in the present, they were more interested in what was similar than what was different. To them, history was exemplary. In addition, Snorri's account of the unification of Norway may have contained some national appeal, presenting to the king and his court a long line of distinguished ancestors and showing how the Christian kingdom of Norway came into being.

28 Gillingham 2001; Sønnesyn 2012: 193–213.
29 Bagge 1996 and Bagge 2002.

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Diarium Vadstenense: A Late Medieval Memorial Book and Political Chronicle

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This article deals with the Diarium Vadstenense, a Liber memorialis originating in Vadstena, the abbey founded by Saint Birgitta of Sweden. Written by a succession of Birgittine friars, this parchment manuscript is still preserved in its original form. It records internal, monastic events from the founding of the abbey in the second half of the fourteenth century to the time the last brother left the community, after the Reformation. Glimpses from the world outside the abbey are seen here and there throughout the text. However, during a central part of the fifteenth century, some of the entries were extended, and the writing changes character. These texts can be seen as a more or less continuous chronicle, tendentiously describing the complicated political situation in Sweden in the 1460s, a time marked by wars and conflicts. Indeed, parts of the texts were so controversial that they were later (partly) erased by a cautious medieval 'editor'. The focus in this article will be on the time frame when the text was written, the personal views and opinions of the writers, confidentiality, political bias and censorship.

The *Diarium Vadstenense*[1] – and especially the chronicle parts of its text – will be at the centre of our attention, but let us start from the beginning. Vadstena Abbey was founded by Saint Birgitta (1303–1373) in the Swedish province of Östergötland and intended for sixty sisters and twenty-five brothers. Not long after the activities began in the abbey in the 1370s,[2] a series of brothers began reporting on events inside the monastery and sometimes also on events outside. Their writings were collected and

1 For a modern edition of the text and an introductory analysis, see Gejrot 1988. The Latin text was reprinted together with a translation into Swedish and a commentary on the contents in Gejrot 1996. All quotations from the *Diarium Vadstenense* (DV) are taken from Gejrot's edition. There are medieval references that suggest that the text was called a 'memorial book' (*liber memorialis*) or (in Old Swedish) a *tänkiebok* in the abbey. The term now used – *diarium* – was not used for the volume in medieval times, but was coined by the first editor (Benzelius 1721). For details on the question of the title, see Gejrot 1988, 73–76. In this article, for the sake of variation, both these expressions – *Diarium* and memorial book – will be used.

2 The abbey's formal opening was not until 1384 (as mentioned in DV 41). On the planning and building of Vadstena Abbey, see Fritz 2000, 55ff (with further references). On the various activities in the 1370s, see also Gejrot 2013.

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Helsinki: Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies. 131–147.

took the form of longer and shorter entries in a memorial book. In addition to the factual information found in the narratives, now and then we see a further dimension: a Vadstena brother's personal views on what was going on in his surroundings. Other documents and written materials preserved from the abbey, such as charters, letters and sermons, do not convey subjective contemporary images in this way to any great extent. Personal opinions and political bias will be discussed later in this article.

The Latin text of the *Diarium* is preserved in its original form, and this medieval source is now kept in the Uppsala University Library. An initial part of an older, medieval volume was separated from the main text at the beginning of the eighteenth century (perhaps in connection with the volume's acquisition by the Uppsala Library). Consequently, the text is found today in two separate parchment manuscripts in the Uppsala collection – Manuscripts C 92 and C 89 – the latter being the main manuscript (232 pages). The shorter C 92 contains only an introductory text, mostly consisting of a series of years without any narrative.[3] Altogether, the Vadstena brothers' memorial book spans the period 1384–1545[4] and consists of almost 1,200 entries, some longer, some shorter texts, often starting with the date of an event. The book was an internal document, written by and intended for the brothers in Vadstena. It seems very likely that their memorial book never left the brothers' part of the abbey until after the medieval period.

The time factor is important in studying the *Diarium Vadstenense*. Is it past or present? During the more than 150 years covered by the book, it seems that the scribes (sometimes the scribe is identical with the author, sometimes not[5]) narrated the events not too long after they had occurred. It is actually possible to study this somewhat more closely by looking at the inclusion of revealing facts and the use of certain phrases that tell us something of the relative time frame. I have set up a very simple survey (the image is taken from my thesis[6]) in order to illustrate. The survey is based on a review of the entries that were probably written in the *Diarium* within a year after the event described (seen in the first column with x's) and distinguishing them from entries which must have been added later (the next column to the right).

3 MS C 92 also contains older annalistic material that must have been in the volume when it began its function in the male part of the abbey in Vadstena. – On the origin of the manuscript and for further codicological information, see Gejrot 1988, 3ff.

4 The numbering of years actually starts with 1323, but very little information has been inserted in the series of years. As the actual recording seems to have started in the 1380s, these entries concerning earlier events (mostly dealing with Saint Birgitta's life) are to be regarded as retrospective.

5 See Gejrot 1988, 18ff.

6 Gejrot 1988, 71–72.

Table 18. Indications in the text as to the time of the writing down of some DV entries.

DV	YEAR	WRITTEN WITHIN A YEAR	WRITTEN MORE THAN A YEAR LATER	DISCUSSED ABOVE
76	1393	-	X	1.4.1.
82	1394	-	X	1.4.1.
87	1396	-	(X)	1.4.1.
114	1402	X	-	1.4.1.
119	1402	-	(X)	-
142	1406	X	-	1.4.1.
143	1406	X	-	1.4.1.
162	1408	(X)	-	-
180	1410	X	-	1.4.1.
235	1414	X	-	1.4.1.
327	1421	X	-	-
328	1421	X	-	-
342	1422	X	-	1.4.2.
352	1423	X	-	-
353	1423	X	-	1.4.2.
382	1427	X	-	-
408	1430	X	-	1.4.3.
409	1430	X	-	1.4.3.
418	1431	X	-	-
419	1431	X	-	1.4.3.
523	1442	(X)	-	-
722	1462	X	-	1.4.4.
759	1464	-	X	1.4.4.
781	1467	-	X	-
838	1479	-	X	1.4.5.
839	1479	-	X	1.4.5.
845	1481	-	X	1.4.5.
848	1481	-	X	1.4.5.
850	1481	-	X	1.4.5.
867	1487	X	-	1.4.5.
874	1487	X	-	1.4.5.
876	1487	X	-	1.4.5.
879	1488	X	-	1.4.5.
884	1489	-	X	1.4.5.
887	1489	-	X	1.4.6.1.
889	1491	-	X	1.4.6.2.
947	1499	X	-	1.4.6.4.
996	1508	X	-	1.4.7.
1037	1516	X	-	1.4.7.
1089	1524	X	-	1.4.8
1096	1524	X	-	1.4.8.
1129	1529	X	-	1.4.8.
1149	1532	X	-	1.4.8.
1173	1540	X	-	1.4.8.
1174	1540	X	-	1.4.8.

Fig. 1. Indications of the time of writing in the *Diarium Vadstenense*.

The list refers to conclusions that can be drawn from comparing the contents with a change of scribes, for instance. One of the first scribes to be identified travelled abroad on three separate occasions, and each time he handed over the writing to a fellow brother before leaving. An analysis of these passages shows that the writing down of entries at this time could take place quite close in time to the event, within weeks.[7] Furthermore, a certain characteristic wording sometimes indicates that the entry was being written more or less directly in connection with what was being described. In an entry made in the year 1413, which gives a detailed account of the death of one of the brothers, the scribe reveals his exact source as the brother 'living in the neighbouring cell' to the deceased friar.[8] A close connection with the events described is the normal situation for large parts of the text. However, as it turns out, there are certain periods when the narrating of events seems to have taken place later, and then in a more edited form. This is true for the 1460s and 1470s (see the red box in Fig. 1) – and especially for the section that I will call *the chronicle of the mid-1460s*. We will return to this later.

The source is in its way unique. There is no other Latin monastic chronicle of this size preserved in Sweden. Not counting a few annalistic sources, mainly from monasteries, we know of only one medieval historical work in Latin that was written in Sweden and has been preserved: the *Chronica Regni*

7 See e.g. DV 143–144.
8 DV 228:1: *... prout ille dixit, qui in vicina iacebat camera...*

Gothorum by the Uppsala professor Ericus Olai, composed around the year 1470.[9] It covers Swedish history from the oldest times up to the author's lifetime.

As for chronicles written in Swedish, these are *rimkrönikor* or 'rhymed chronicles'. This chronicle series, always in verse, begins with the *Erik Chronicle*. Written in the 1320s, it depicts the period 1230–1319. From the fifteenth century we have the *Engelbrekt Chronicle* and shortly thereafter the *Karl Chronicle*, both of which were completed about 1452. The *Karl Chronicle* covers the years 1389–1452. A continuation of this text followed in the *Sture Chronicle*, which deals with the rest of the fifteenth century until 1496. These chronicles were summarised in the term *Stora rimkrönikan*. In the 1450s the *Lilla rimkrönikan* was composed, describing Swedish history from the dawn of time until its own day. This chronicle was revised several times, and the final version covered the period up to 1520. Furthermore, a number of smaller chronicles have been preserved, for example, the bishop chronicles of Skara (from the fifteenth century) and Linköping (from the 1520s).[10]

But let us return to the *Diarium* and look at an entry (DV 658) describing events taking place on 23 February 1455. On this day there were great celebrations in Vadstena, with music played by slide trombones and other instruments, and crowds of people gathering. The reason was that a little girl, only nine years of age, was to enter the women's convent. We cannot know her thoughts, but it would not be surprising if she felt a little uneasy: she was about to be separated from her familiar environment, her family and friends. She probably knew something about the abbey she was about to join, at least the fact that she would never leave. Perhaps someone had told her what was waiting for her: absolute obedience, bans on unnecessary talk and laughter, no personal possessions; she would have to rise at four o'clock every morning for matins.

The *Diarium* writer is our eyewitness report on this event, and we are told that the little girl did not show any signs of distress. 'You could not see any pride, laughter or sadness in this girl, but only great spiritual strength and piety, when the habit was received'.[11] When she was being handed over to the abbess, our source continues, she showed a 'keen desire' to enter the convent as she rushed from her father's hands to the nuns.[12] We are not dealing here with just an ordinary girl, but in fact

9 On the *Chronica* see Heumann-Öberg 1993, Öberg 1995 and Tjällén 2007. There are similarities on a few points between this work and the *Diarium*. See, for instance, Gejrot 1996, 314–315 (commentary).
10 On the historical Swedish rhymed chronicles, see Jansson 1971. On the *Sture Chronicle*, see esp. Hagnell 1941.
11 *In filia regis non superbia, risus sive luctus [non] videbatur, sed constancia animi et devocio in habitus suscepcione* (DV 658:6).
12 *… quando commendabatur abbatisse, voluit prosilire de manibus patris et venire ad sorores … desiderium et amorem intrandi monasterium representans* (DV 658:6)

with a princess. The father leaving his daughter in the convent was the reigning king of Sweden, Karl Knutsson.[13]

In fact, King Karl was actively involved in the initiation ceremony. This was obviously an honour for the abbey, but the *Diarium* writer noticed a violation of the monastic rules.[14] With a crown on his head and dressed in white, the king himself had walked into the closed choir of the abbey church, a place that was to be entered only by confessed Vadstena brothers. In the choir he went so far as to read parts of the Latin ritual during the ceremony.[15] In addition, the girl was being admitted to the Vadstena convent even though she had not reached the age of eighteen (the youngest possible age for entry, which had been decided by Saint Birgitta herself). A papal dispensation had first been acquired.[16]

How typical is the story of the young princess for the book as a whole? This question can be answered in several ways. In fact, the narrative of the events of February 1455 comes at a time when the text in this monastic manuscript can be said to be changing in character, from a monastic focus to an increased interest in political matters. What is distinctive about this time? The writing belongs to an identifiable scribe,[17] who passed away in 1461. That year is a definite *terminus ante quem*, and the entry was written within a time span of six years. All the same, the story was probably written within a year, as was a previous entry reporting on the papal dispensation for the young princess's initiation into the convent, together with most of the texts describing events during the 1450s.

In other respects, however, the story of the little princess differs from the narration of other periods. In the 1380s, the very first decades of the abbey's existence, the structure of the book is simple and quite uniform. The focus is on internal monastic events, namely the introduction of new sisters and brothers to the abbey, obituaries of deceased members of the community and deceased abbey benefactors. There are reports on the regular visits paid by the diocesan bishops (who were to inspect the abbey) and on travels made by the brothers in matters concerning the Birgittine order, which was growing steadily across Europe. News about monasteries being established is common, and negotiations with the curia were seen as a natural part of the brothers' duties. Royal visitors are duly noted, from Queen Margaret's stay in the vicinity of the abbey in the first years of the fifteenth century to events after that time.[18]

13 Karl Knutsson (Bonde), regent of Sweden 1438–1440, King of Sweden 1448–1457, 1464–1465 and from 1467 until his death in May 1470. For Karl Knutsson's biography, see Kumlien 1975, 622–630.

14 (DV 658:2).

15 … *facta est transgressio clausure: Nam primo dominus rex Karolus coronatus intravit chorum fratrum per totum illud officium ibi manens alba subtili et cappa indutus. Et cum evangelium legi debuisset, ipse dixit 'Dominus vobiscum' et sequencia sancti evangelii secundum Iohannem* (DV 658:2–3).

16 On the Birgittine entrance age for nuns, see the passage in chapter 19 of the Birgittine Rule (*Regula Salvatoris*), printed in Eklund 1975, 168 (*Nulla sororum ante decimum octauum annum etatis vmquam ad istam religionem suscipiatur*: 'No sister may be taken into this order before the age of 18'). See also Gejrot 1996, 276 (commentary).

17 The scribe was Johannes Benekini; see Gejrot 1988, 34–39.

18 Queen Margaret (Margareta Valdemarsdotter, 1353–1412) ruled Denmark and Norway from 1387 and Sweden from 1389. For her biography, see Haug 2000.

During this period, the *Diarium* texts as a rule are short and factual in style. All the same, it is not unusual for the views and opinions of the writer (as a representative of the monks at Vadstena) to come through. We saw it above in the remarks on King Karl breaking the rules during the princess's initiation ceremony. Just to mention a few typical cases, there is the obituary of a noblewoman, an abbey benefactress, who was buried in the abbey in 1415. She is reported to have been one of the few women to have 'preserved a praiseworthy manner of dressing'.[19] Another instance can be seen in the report about a nun who died in 1422. In violation of the rules she was found to have kept fur-lined clothes in her cell. 'I hope they are not her own!' – *utinam non propria!* – the writer exclaimed.[20]

As mentioned above, the *Diarium* seems to have remained without exception in the brothers' part of the abbey, and entries like the ones just mentioned show that they seem to have regarded the manuscript in an almost intimate and confidential way. In 1442 there is an interesting annotation that emphasises this sense of confidentiality. Here, the scribe decided to speak directly, as if to a successor:

> Brother! Note the following carefully and avoid telling it to other people: Below the floor and in the space between four walls [...] you will find a treasure trove or a vaulted room. This room has been built so that we can safely and securely store books, treasures of the monastery and other things (shrines, communion chalices, etc.) when discord prevails in the kingdom and the church's immunity is in danger, or when you fear a foreign attack or a war.[21]

Fig. 2. Codex Uppsala C 89, detail of p. 94. The beginning of the text of DV 523 is marked with NB in the margin. Photo: Uppsala University Library.

The writer then goes on to tell his fellow brothers how to gain access to the trove, but we will omit that here.

19 DV 252: *Hec quasi sola conservabat laudabilem consuetudinem in habitu feminarum.*
20 DV 331:. *Hec reliquit post se multa superflua – et utinam non propria! – scilicet forraturas et similia.*
21 DV 523: *Item, frater, nota attente cautumque habeas neque pluribus referas, quod sub pavimento et in spacio infra quatuor muros, ... est una custodia sive domus testudinata. Que ideo facta, ut – dum in regno discordia aliqua habeatur, et immunitas ecclesie violatur, sive dum extraneorum incursus vel bellum timeatur – ibi tunc libri, clenodia monasterii et res alie, videlicet reliquaria, calices et cetera, secure et provide custodiantur ...*

As already mentioned, a gradual shift of focus in the *Diarium* can be observed during the 1450s. The texts on internal abbey events can still be found, but the attention now becomes directed more towards the outside world.[22] When Karl Knutsson became king of Sweden in 1448 – as the Nordic union had broken down for a time – the author included texts on wars and political realities, as well as passages on the king's visits to Vadstena and his interference in the monastic leadership.

Vadstena Abbey, with numerous estates and large revenues, had in fact become an important factor in Swedish financial and political realities. In 1452 factions became apparent in the monastery. During the all but continuous wars against the Danish, King Karl actually managed to remove the pro-Danish abbess (who was the aunt of King Christian[23]) and the confessor general (the male leader), from their offices and have the abbey install instead persons whom he considered loyal to his cause. These events are narrated in the *Diarium* not too long after the decisions were made, and we find a somewhat surprised comment by the scribe on what has happened. After reporting on the investigation into the matter made by the diocesan bishop – who found nothing wrong with the old leadership – the scribe commented: 'But Abbess Ingeborg resigned from her office so that we should not lose any monastic property or expose ourselves to the king's wrath because of them [the abbess and the confessor].'[24]

The *Diarium* chronicles the continued battles against Denmark at this time and several other visits by King Karl. We have already seen how the king placed his daughter Birgitta among the Vadstena sisters and dealt with the abbey leadership. But the monarch made repeated visits. He had opinions on many things, he suggested additions to the monastic rule, he bought valuables from the abbey, and he seems to have been eager to give advice in practical matters.[25] In the *Diarium* narrative of these years – the early 1450s – he is viewed with respect, but also with some caution, it seems.

In 1457 there was a sudden and dramatic change. The archbishop of Uppsala, Johannes Benedicti (Jöns Bengtsson),[26] turned against King Karl, who had to flee the country. As an immediate result, the Nordic union was reinstated when King Christian of Denmark was elected to the Swedish throne. In Vadstena this turn of events meant that the old abbey leaders could now return.

The *Diarium* narrates both King Karl's defeat and the return of the abbess and the confessor general. The story of the royal escape, which was not at all honourable, is told in a way that shows where the author's sympathies lie: with the dethroned king. 'He acted wisely and gave in to their malice' is the

22 On Vadstena and the secular politics of Sweden in this period, see also Berglund 2003, 167ff, where the *Diarium* is one of the most important sources used.
23 Christian (I) of Oldenburg, King of Denmark 1448–1481, of Sweden 1457–1464; see Kumlien 1975–1977, 562ff.
24 DV 627. *Sed ne propter ipsos monasterium in aliquibus bonis dampnum incurreret et regiam indignacionem, abbatissa Ingeborgis fferia ... infra octavas ascensionis officio resignavit.* – The royal letter seems to have reached the abbey in April 1452.
25 E.g. DV 621, 641, 654, 666.
26 On Jöns Bengtsson (Oxenstierna), Archbishop of Uppsala 1448–67, see Gillingstam 1992–1994, 496ff.

expression used.[27] The return of the pro-Danish leadership in Vadstena is carefully described. But something interesting has happened here. A later editor has erased the whole entry, apparently careful not to let anything stand that could disturb the important royal relations. Luckily for us, it has been possible to decipher most of the important words in this entry with the use of ultra-violet light.[28]

Fig. 3. Codex Uppsala C 89, p. 119. The erased text of DV 682. Photo: Uppsala University Library.

This raises several questions. When, by whom and exactly why was this erasure done? We cannot answer these questions for certain, but the situation provides an opportunity to discuss censorship in the *Diarium*. Censorship had taken place before – in earlier parts of the volume, to be precise. In 1403, obviously in connection with a visit to the abbey by Queen Margaret, the abbess had to resign after serious accusations.[29] We do not know the exact circumstances surrounding the resignation, but we would probably know more if someone had not decided to excise an entire leaf.

It would seem natural to conclude that the two pages of missing text touched upon something sensitive, and what first comes to mind are the supposedly scandalous affairs of the abbess. Someone may have thought that keeping this leaf in the *Diarium* constituted a potential risk for the abbey's reputation. The first sentence after the excised leaf, in a text dealing with Queen Margaret, has also been erased. Regrettably, it has not been possible to decipher anything in this erased text that makes any sense. A short version of the abbess's resignation was then squeezed into an empty space on the page before the cut. The text flow is not entirely homogeneous, and the entry seems to have been

27 DV 677 *...et ibi per archiepiscopum et suos fautores obsessus consilio usus meliori cessit malicie eorum.*
28 DV 682 a.
29 The abbess was Ingegerd Knutsdotter. On these events, see Cnattingius 1963, 47ff.

inserted later. We may add that the scribe is the same for the surrounding entries. If our assumptions about the added entry are correct, then this would mean that the manipulation was performed within the active period of this particular scribe, that is, before 1410, when he passed away.[30] The same thing – a leaf having been cut away because of information about a resignation – seems to have taken place in 1454 when one of the male leaders had to leave the abbey. This time, it was the Confessor General[31] who was forced by the two convents to resign because of his illness. A longer narrative – obviously replacing information on the excised leaf – was inserted in an empty space in a previous part of the book. The medieval editor is clear about what has been done:

> It should be noted that the following section has its place below, i.e. at the year 1454, but as it has been left out there, it will be recorded here.[32]

It seems that the *Diarium* had become an important text in the abbey. Even if the volume was not meant to leave its safe haven among the brothers, they could not be sure where it might turn up in the future. And there is further censorship in the text, as we will soon see.

Let us now return to the point where we left off a while ago, at the exile of King Karl and the reinstated union in 1457. It is time to see how the *Diarium* writers deal with the complicated political situation. From 1463, there is a relatively uniform, coherent, unbroken narrative – a chronicle within the narrative frame of the memorial book itself – which continues for a few years, covering about twenty manuscript pages. Who were the main players? And how are they portrayed? Is there a tendency to favour any of the main characters in the turmoil that follows? The standpoint of the *Diarium* is clear, as we will see.

There is the Danish monarch, Christian, since 1457 also the king of Sweden. In opposition to him we find his arch-enemy Karl Knutsson, the exiled Swedish king. A third powerful constellation is seen in two church leaders who also represented two of the leading families of the Swedish nobility, the Archbishop of Uppsala and his young cousin, Kettil Karlsson,[33] then bishop of Linköping.[34] The chronicle of the mid-1460s reaches its climax in the story of the remarkable Battle of Haraker in April 1464, when it reports how a Swedish peasant army celebrated a complete victory over the trained Danish troops.[35]

30 DV 118–120. On the scribe, Andreas Lydekini, who was the abbey's librarian, see Gejrot 1988, 26–27.
31 Botulphus Haguini (Botulf Håkansson).
32 DV 579: *Notandum, quod hec, que sequntur, locum habent infra, videlicet anno Domini etc. liiii. Sed quia ibi omissa fuerunt, ideo hic ad memoriam reducantur.*
33 Katillus Karoli or in Swedish, Kettil Karlsson (Vasa), was Bishop of Linköping from 1459 until his death in 1465; see Schück 1959, 113ff.
34 On other sources available for these events, see Hagnell 1941, 204.
35 DV 753–755.

The *Diarium* is practically the only source for this event. By concentrating on the course of events (no dates are given) and using such stylistic devices as parallelism, exaggeration and heightening of action, the writer managed to give intensity and force to the narration. A brief summary of the contents gives a sufficient illustration of the technique used.

DV 753:1–5: Bishop Kettil and other relatives of the imprisoned Archbishop of Uppsala desire revenge on the king and prepare an uprising. The well-known fighters of Dalarna, *Vallenses… qui maxime sunt feroces et bellicosi*, are among the men recruited.

DV 753:6–8: Kettil is proclaimed *dux tocius regni et guerre incepte*, a fact which makes him even bolder: *et factus ex hoc audacior*. Stockholm is besieged by the rebels.

DV 754:1: Meanwhile, in Copenhagen, King Christian hears about the Swedish revolt and hastens to form a large army (*congregavit … exercitum magnum*).

DV 754:2–6: The Danish troops march at great speed through Sweden; along the way they ravage Bishop Kettil's residence in Linköping and reach Stockholm much sooner than expected.

DV 754:7: However, just before the Danes arrive, the bishop and his men leave Stockholm, pretending to flee in panic. They halt in Västerås.

DV 755:1: Christian stays only one night in Stockholm. Like Kettil in 753:7, he is confident – *factus animosior quam prius* – and immediately sets out to fight the rebels.

DV 755:2: Kettil and the Vallenses once again feign flight; acquainted with the area, they know where to hide. In the forest by Haraker Church they wait for the enemy to come.

DV 755:3: The king, unsuspecting, calls a halt in order to speak to his men in a field just beside the forest, *nesciens hostes in eadem latitare*.

DV 755:4–5: As soon as the Danes leave the field, the Swedish rebels make a surprise attack *cum impetu maximo*; the battle goes on for two hours, and there are great losses among the king's troops, while Kettil's men win an overwhelming victory: *Vallenses vero campum et victoriam optinuerunt*.

The distance between Linköping and Stockholm is about 200 kilometres; that between Stockholm and Västerås, about 100 kilometres. It is obvious that the author simplified and shortened what must have

taken quite some time for the troops to achieve. But the story needed dramatic speed. The increasingly hurried and parallel movements of the royal army and the Swedish recruits and the suspense caused by Christian's ignorance of the ambush combined to create a dramatic effect; the passage ends in an epigrammatic climax, with the men of Dalarna, *Vallenses*, at the centre of attention. The prejudices of the chronicle of the mid-1460s are clear, not least in the passage from 1464 retold above. The Danish king is shown as a nervous man, easy to fool. In other parts of the chronicle he is portrayed as a greedy inventor of new taxes[36] and a violator of ecclesiastical immunity.[37]

According to the chronicle above, Christian's presumptuous behaviour led to the Danish disaster at Haraker in 1464, as we have seen, but in addition, the author managed to portray Christian's timorous character. It is the return of the exiled King Karl that Christian fears:

> A rumour was spread that King Karl was about to return. This news so frightened King Christian that he no longer wanted to reside in the palace in Stockholm. Instead he boarded his ship and hurried towards Denmark.[38]

Christian is portrayed as a coward, but if we continue reading, the author does not show any more benevolence towards the leaders of the episcopal party. After the Battle of Haraker, the author remembers the men of Dalarna and does not mention Bishop Kettil as one of the victors. In fact, the bishops are soon shown to be deceitful and conspiring traitors.[39]

Thus, neither King Christian nor the bishops and their followers seem to be treated favourably by the writer. Instead, he has chosen to support the third of these three alternatives, Karl Knutsson. The partiality towards Karl is revealed here and there, for instance, in the following passage describing the exiled king's return to his country in 1464, to which he was recalled after the Battle of Haraker. The purpose is to convey to the reader a general impression of a popular monarch, who accordingly is connected with the victorious men of Dalarna:

> King Karl arrived from Prussia on the outskirts of Stockholm, bringing with him a large number of ships and armed men. He was at once received with benevolence by the people in his realm and by the Vallenses.[40]

36 DV 719:2, 728:10.
37 DV 733–750.
38 *Sed precurrens fama adventus regis Karuli regem Cristiernum in castro Stocholmensi existentem ita terruit, ut ibidem expectare nollet; sed naves suas mox intravit et ad Daciam festinavit.* (DV 757:4–5).
39 *… nova conspiracio et prodicio per ipsum archiepiscopum et Katillum episcopum… practicatur* (DV 758:2).
40 *…venit rex Karulus de Prucia cum multitudine magna navium et armatorum ante Stocholmiam; qui statim a populo regni et Vallensibus benigne suscipitur* (DV 757:6).

Soon, when Karl is again betrayed by the cunning bishops, the wording of the *Diarium* shows the author's sympathy with a king in distress. The narrator depicts the bishops as 'eagerly' looking for a way to expel poor King Karl.[41]

'Poor' Karl is indeed in a hopeless position, or, as our writer, borrowing a phrase from the Bible's King David, puts it, 'in the midst of tribulations' (*in medio tribulacionis positus*):[42] Surrounded by enemies, Karl is soon forced to surrender. This humiliating turn of events is, however, reported in words that praise King Karl's wise conduct, whereas the archbishop, despite his temporary success, is referred to as a usurper. The bias of the chronicle in the 1460s can be summarised as follows:

- *Christian*: a coward, only interested in raising taxes
- *The bishops*: traitors and conspirators
+ *Karl Knutsson*: an efficient king; the victim of evil and treacherous enemies

Karl Knutsson having left the political scene again – this time travelling to Finland – the bishops rule for a short period, but they fail to establish their secular power. When Bishop Kettil dies from the plague, their rule is practically over. Finally, two years later, King Karl is once again back in Stockholm, and now his position is supported by a new, forceful group of leaders.

Karl Knutsson's third reign (1467–70) has been described by historians as 'completely illusory'.[43] The *Diarium* treats the period without any longer narrative, but the lingering picture is nevertheless that of a forceful and efficient monarch whose rule is still being marred by treacherous enemies.[44] The author of this section is at pains to put King Karl in as favourable a light as possible. We have also seen that the chronicle's bias or prejudice towards King Karl Knutsson is quite strong in the mid-1460s. What is the reason for this obviously partisan way of describing the king and his actions? The answer may be found in the opinions that were current after King Karl's death in May 1470, when his nephew and 'political godson', Sten Sture, was appointed regent of Sweden.[45] The new Swedish ruler based his powerful position on a direct connection to Karl Knutsson, who is said to have transferred his authority to Sten Sture on his deathbed.[46] It was clearly in the new leader's interest to describe his predecessor in as positive a light as possible.

41 ... *et de expulsione pauperis regis Karuli studiose pertractatur* (DV 758:3).
42 DV 762:6; cf. Vulgata, Psalms 137:7.
43 Andersson 1956, 95.
44 Cf., for instance, DV 787 and 789 on the struggle for control of Axvall Castle in 1468 and 1469. Here Karl is the careful ruler, who has to act with force, when – once again – he is betrayed: *Et tunc quibusdam proditoribus procurantibus factum est magnum bellum*... (DV 789).
45 Sten Sture the Elder (Sjöbladsätten) was the son of Karl Knutsson's half-sister Birgitta Stensdotter (Bielke). He was the regent of Sweden from 1470 to 1497 and from 1501 until his death in 1503. On his biography, see Palme 1968.
46 DV 804.

We may conclude that the chronicle text of the mid-1460s and the remaining entries of the 1460s were composed and written down at the same time, probably around 1470, but no later than the autumn of 1471, that is, perhaps six or seven years after the first events took place in 1463. This is indicated both by the regular appearance and coherence of the manuscript pages and by the text itself, for instance, in a remark about an outbreak of pestilence that says that the epidemic lasted for two years (*et duravit hec pestilencia in regno continue fere per duos annos*).[47] And it is further shown by what the text does not say. In the autumn of 1471 Christian I and his followers were defeated at the decisive Battle of Brunkeberg; the fact that this battle is not mentioned indicates that the writing was finished before this momentous event took place.[48]

One explanation for the inclusion of these external, political narrative parts could be that the town of Vadstena seems to have served as the headquarters of King Karl during the operations of 1469. It is not far-fetched to assume that relevant records – and witnesses to the operations – were close at hand. We may further assume that at this time, when the abbey was geographically – and, it seems, politically – close to Karl Knutsson and his supporters, the author[49] of our chronicle had access to various written sources that are now lost, sources that may also have been used by writers of other, vernacular, texts, such as the *Sture Chronicle* (*Sturekrönikan*).[50]

Let us close by looking at an unusual part of the chronicle, a sort of climax when it comes to bias and critique. It comes in the form of a forceful poem written in the metre of a late medieval sequence[51] and is found in the middle of the chronicle of 1465. In the previous cases, interior monastic problems (the resignations of an abbess and a confessor general) were behind the manipulations. This time the criticism is directed towards the highest Swedish ecclesiastical leaders. The targets of this highly critical poem are the bishops who ruled the country in 1465. The tone is indeed harsh, and this led to something that we have already seen several times: the erasure of a controversial text from the parchment, most probably by a cautious later editor in the abbey.[52]

47 DV 759.
48 In MS C 89, the battle is mentioned on an inserted, loose piece of paper (in medieval script, but not in the hand of the main scribe of the 1460s).
49 It is, in fact, possible to suggest a name for the author of the chronicle in the 1460s: Brother *Johannes Johannis*. He had been elected confessor general at Vadstena in 1468.
50 Above all, *Sturekrönikan*. See further Gejrot 1988, 49.
51 DV 762a. On the metre, see Norberg 1958, 173–174.
52 The verses were discovered during the author's work on the edition of the manuscript in the 1980s, and the passage with the erased text was closely examined under ultra-violet light. The results were first reported in an appended entry to the edition in Gejrot 1988, 317–318.

Fig. 4. Codex Uppsala C 89, p.141. The erased poem (DV 762a) was the first entry on the page. Photo: Uppsala University Library.

Here we see the same kind of censorship discussed above, even if this time no leaves were excised.

Regnum manet absque <rege>

<– – – – – – – –>

<– –> et opprimitur

per tres post sequentes annos,

donec ipsum per tyrannos

in partes dividitur.

Civitates depredantur,

navigantes spoliantur,

franguntur ecclesie

B<ona> cleri rapiantur

et plebani pregrav<antur>,

<da>ti sunt inedie.

Nullus gaudet in tellure

nec in mare nec in rure;

sed letantur impii

Quis predatur non est cura;

latro firmus stat cum fure,

cum sunt ambo socii.

Translation (prose)

The kingdom is without a king

<– – – – – – – –>

<– –> and is oppressed.

During three consecutive years

until the tyrants decide

to divide it into three parts

The towns are looted,

people at sea are plundered

the churches are broken down.

Clerical property is stolen

the priests are suffering gravely

and must starve.

No one is happy on the earth

not at sea, not on land.

But the impious are joyful.

They do not care who is being ravaged;

the robber stands firm with the thief,

as the two are companions.

Let us now summarise. We have seen a monastic memorial book that changes its character from an internal narrative, recording mostly monastic events, into a chronicle directed to events in the external world. The text allows personal opinions to be expressed, but also sometimes political inclinations. This later led to censorship of sensitive passages, by erasure or excision. The reasons for this carefulness with the opinions expressed and for the editorial manipulations are to be found in the fact that the book was preserved and used by a succession of Birgittine friars who rightly thought – and feared – that present or future readers would see it as expressing the views of the brothers at Vadstena.

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Crime and its Punishment: Alfonso Ceccarelli's False Chronicles

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This article focuses on the tradition of false chronicles in the early modern period, presenting some famous impostors and forgers, their motives, methods and justifications for their work. One interesting figure in the history of forgeries was Alfonso Ceccarelli (1532–1583), a medical doctor who, in order to acquire easy money, began composing fictive historical documents such as family trees that traced a family's roots to important bishops, popes and ancient heroes. To give credibility to these fictive genealogies, Ceccarelli compiled historical manuscripts, which he passed off as genuine documents, and he referred to non-existent chronicles to verify his claims. When his frauds and forgeries were finally revealed and he was publicly accused in court, Ceccarelli confessed that he had indeed created many kinds of documents, but he appealed to his good intentions and insisted that when he added something to an old book, he justified it by adding truth. Ceccarelli's case is particularly fascinating because he was severely punished for his forgeries; before his death he produced an apology that questioned the distinctions between true and false histories. This article argues that Ceccarelli's story reveals important conventions in traditional historiography (to use his expression) and broadens our notions of the functions and significance of such falsifications in rewriting the past.

Defining Forgeries

This article discusses the reasons why historical documents and chronicles were fabricated and how early modern impostors and forgers justified their actions. In order to provide some background I will first briefly present what was understood by the concept of literary forgery in the early modern period; secondly, I will present some famous sixteenth-century fabricators in order to illustrate their practices, and thirdly, I will focus on one figure in the history of forgery, Alfonso Ceccarelli (1532–1583, also known as Ciccarelli), who, in order to earn easy money, gave up his career as a medical doctor and began composing fictive historical documents, family trees and chronicles. Ceccarelli's case

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is particularly compelling, because he was severely punished for his forgeries. Before his death he produced an apology in which he questioned the conventional methods of historiography. In an almost postmodern way Ceccarelli tried to justify his forgeries by appealing to the dominant cultural practices of producing and reproducing new texts through invention and copying.[1] What should we make of Ceccarelli's argument that his manner of correcting history with useful additions and interpolations merely stabilised former truth? How could such forgeries be justified? What were the usual punishments for such frauds? The main argument here is that Ceccarelli's case shows us some important conventions in traditional historiography (to use his expression) and broadens our notions of the functions of forged chronicles and other falsifications in rewriting the past.

First of all, it should be recognised that, according to early modern critics, literary thefts, forgeries and the misuse of sources were common phenomena. Literary frauds were addressed in a number of seventeenth-century Latin treatises, including ethical, philosophical and polemical works. These treatises have remained relatively unknown and unstudied, and therefore modern critics are unaware that in these works literary frauds were, for example, divided into different types.[2] In a plagiarised text the author usually intentionally adopts and steals the writings of others and publishes them as his own, whereas in a forgery the author intentionally fabricates texts and attributes his own falsifications to someone else.

'Suppositions' or replacements (*suppositiones*) were mentioned as a separate class of literary fraud, and this is the class which we today associate with forgeries. According to Burkhard Gotthelf Struve's literary-historical dissertation *De doctis impostoribus* (1703), there were two main ways of making such forgeries (*suppositiones*): the first was by changing words or entire passages in old books; the second was by publishing books under a false name.[3] The latter category included several sub-forms:

1 Postmodern critics have often considered borrowing, imitation and even plagiarism as inevitable or creative literary practices; see Kivistö 2012, 292.

2 One type of literary fraud was plagiarism. In his important philosophical dissertation on plagiarism entitled *De plagio literario* (1673), the Leipzig philosopher and jurist Jacob Thomasius (1622–1684) defined plagiarism as literary theft in which an author transcribed the writings of others and represented them as his own, deliberately suppressing the name of the original author with intent to deceive (§98). Thomasius's treatise and other early modern texts on plagiarism identified different types of plagiarism, each of which reflected the quantitative extent of the stolen material and the nature of the theft. These types were given Latin names: *totale* (total), *partiale* (partial); *manifestum* (evident), *occultum* (concealed); *crassum* (thick, obvious, concerning both words and ideas) and *subtile* (subtle, concerning thoughts alone); see Thomasius 1673, §50, §265–282. These categories have not usually been recognised in modern works. For a more detailed discussion of these treatises and for discussion of early modern plagiarism, see Kivistö 2012 and 2014, 118–134. Parts of the present article previously appeared in the latter publication in slightly different form.

3 Struve 1703, §II. For Struve, *suppositions* (*suppositiones*) were one type of literary frauds (*fraudes, imposturae*). Another interesting text that mentioned learned imposters was the archivist Johann Gottfried Büchner's *Schediasma historico-literarium de vitiorum inter eruditos occurrentium scriptoribus*, which was published in Leipzig in 1718. On suppositions, see Büchner 1718, Cap. II, Sect. II, §VII–VIII. Büchner was the first to collect a bibliography of writings about scholarly sins. In his treatise Büchner identified books on scholarly vices in general or specifically related to certain professions (see Kivistö 2014). He divided suppositions into different types relying on Struve's dissertation.

authors could publish their own writings under someone else's name, or they could use pseudonyms. Works were often published that were falsely attributed to Aristotle, Plato, Homer, Hippocrates and Galen.[4] These acts of concealment were not always contemptible, but they were criticised if the author published something suspicious, infamous or heretical under a fictitious name, or if such compilers falsely added the names of illustrious authors to their own modest creations, thereby attempting to gain money, credibility or merit.[5]

Struve described how newly written texts were presented as old manuscripts in order to deceive those who venerated antiquity. It has been argued that the fabrication of classical fakes and antiquities became big business around the early sixteenth century, whereas in the Middle Ages classical fakes and inscriptions had been rare.[6] The antiquarian interests of the Renaissance humanists inspired the production of pseudo-antique artworks and 'rediscovered' historical texts, whereas religious controversies produced other kinds of forged documents. The invention of the printing press and the growing book market made the dissemination and circulation of (true and false) knowledge much easier than before. The corpuses of Latin inscriptions, for example, included a vast number of fake inscriptions, produced when Renaissance antiquarians and other men were inspired by nostalgia for the past.[7] 'Classical' forgeries included ancient stones and inscriptions, which cheaters secretly buried and which, when unearthed, passed for ancient monuments and original epigraphic writings. These pranks also found their way into literary storytelling, in satirical texts ridiculing experts and enthusiasts who would not praise anything unless it was old and ancient and who were easily deceived in their enthusiasm. In his famous lectures on learned charlatans from 1715, Johann Burkhard Mencken ridiculed the learned Jesuit, Athanasius Kircher, for his admiration of antiquity:

4 Morhof 1714, I. I. IX.4.

5 Struve 1703, §II: "De illis autem potissimum agemus, qui scriptis suis illustrium nomina praefixerunt, vel ut fidem aliquam scriptis facerent, vel ut fallerent ementes, vel ut sententiam suam stabilirent". See also Büchner 1718, Cap. II, Sect. II, §VIII. Büchner mentions several learned imposters, such as Annio da Viterbo and Alfonso Ceccarelli.

6 See Stephens 2004, 206–207; Hiatt 2004, 9; Constable 1983, 14; Bernheim 1908, 331–376. Of course, there were many other kinds of forgeries in the Middle Ages, such false relics. Bernheim distinguishes between different types of forgeries, ranging from material forgeries, such as relics, statues and coins, to written documents, such as inscriptions, privileges and chronicles. He also mentions the oral tradition of telling sagas as an instance of untrue stories, which rely in their narration on historical events or memories of the events. Bernheim states that the additions made to these stories are not forgeries in the strict sense unless they are entirely fictitious and intentionally falsified to serve some purpose, such as vanity, local patriotism, false religiosity or something else. Aetiological explanations could also be fabricated with certain ends in mind. According to Hiatt, the two primary types of non-textual forgeries in the Middle Ages were the manufacture of relics and the counterfeiting of coins. Another characteristic feature of the medieval forgeries was that the forger was usually an anonymous figure, whereas in the post-medieval period the identity of the forger was significant in the discussion of such frauds. Hiatt 2004, 13–14. Hiatt argues that especially in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries forgeries were often produced to substantiate a genealogy or to provide evidence for historical arguments, whereas in the Middle Ages the motivations had been different (such as seeking to assert the antiquity of certain privileges or writing pseudo-hagiographies). Hiatt's opinion is that forgeries were very common in the medieval period, for example, in monasteries. Hiatt 2004, 9.

7 Grafton 1990, 28.

> Some mischievous youths of Rome, hearing that a building was to be erected on a certain site, resolved to put Kircher's ingenuity to the test. So they secretly buried there a rough stone on which they had designed some appealing voluptuous figures. When the foundation of the new structure was being dug, the stone was found – and promptly, admired as a new monument of antiquity, remarkable for its perfection. At once an interpreter was sought, and Kircher was chosen. As soon as he saw the stone, he began to leap and dance for joy – and to give a beautiful interpretation of the circles, the crosses, and all the other meaningless signs.[8]

In this case the reason for the forgery was simply to humiliate and ridicule the unsuspecting Kircher, who was known for his love of oriental languages, antiquities and ancient relics. The literary reproduction of this story in Mencken's oration served similar purposes of derision and scorn for learned authorities.

Struve recorded another story about the Portuguese poet Henric Cajado (Cajadus, d. 1508), a disciple of Angelo Poliziano, who had buried three marble tablets outside the city walls of Sintra on which he had inscribed some verses. Cajado's forgery was meant as a joke; he arranged everything so that the treasure was found by his drunken friends. The tablets were praised as ancient relics and their inscriptions read as oracular sentences predicting how India would someday be conquered by the King of Portugal. This all happened in the very year that the king actually travelled to India. The king, who was aware of the joke (and apparently also of the forgery), ordered that the prediction be printed and distributed in the Christian world as evidence of his success and brave deeds.[9] It appears that the reasons for fabricating historical documents ranged from profit and jest to deceiving those who adored antiquity. However, there were also reasons other than mockery for fabricating ancient texts, and these reasons will be illuminated below through other sixteenth-century cases.

Famous Fabricators

Struve and other early modern critics of forgeries mentioned several famous fabricators from the past. Their colourful lives served anecdotal writing and provided material for amusing stories about deceivers and their victims. A continuing critical interest in past forgers partly stems from their intriguing and deviant personalities, as these interesting figures were going against the mainstream in their ways of writing history. On the other hand, modern scholars have found it fruitful to study forgers who falsified not just for economic gain or other selfish reasons, but for some higher purpose or those whose

8 Mencken, *De charlataneria eruditorum,* 1715, 38–39. English translation in Mencken 1937 (ed.), 86 (translation by Francis E. Litz).

9 Struve 1703, §XXVI. Similar stories about buried and 'rediscovered' inscriptions were attached to legends of Annio da Viterbo (see e.g. Stephens 2004, 207).

activities somehow influenced the course of history.[10] Some of these forgers worked on ancient relics, while others were more interested in drawing on written historical records. By studying the motives behind these falsifying activities, it is possible to identify some recurring reasons for the success of forged historical documents. These reasons often point to the vanity of those who commissioned the forged texts or to the conceits of the reading public.

One of the most famous and also most studied fabricators, someone who forged entire books and advertised new writings as old manuscripts, was Annio da Viterbo (Giovanni Nanni, ca 1432–1502), a Dominican friar and papal theologian celebrated for his exceptional linguistic skills, remarkable manuscript discoveries and pseudo-archaeological findings.[11] Many of his findings, however, were entirely fictive, including some marble stones which were 'discovered' near Viterbo and which passed for ancient treasures.[12] Annio forged chronicles that he attributed to ancient sources, including his most famous composition, the Chaldean chronicle *Berosi sacerdotis Chaldaici antiquitatum libri quinque*, which he wrote ca 1492 and published ca 1498. His edition, also known as *The Antiquities of Annius*, was believed to contain writings by ancient authors, but the collection was his own creation. It included forged works under the ancient names of the Babylonian astronomer Berosus, Cato Maior, Archilochus, Sempronius and many others.[13]

Annio's *Antiquities* was reprinted many times: between 1498 and 1612 eighteen Latin editions were published. The work inspired many later adaptations and rewritings of national histories in France as well as elsewhere.[14] Richard L. Kagan observes that while "documenting" the early history of the Spanish ruling house, Annio da Viterbo's forged history of antiquity allowed Ferdinand II, the King of Aragon, to assume that his Spanish monarchy was older than those of his rivals.[15] Annio's major goal was to prove that his hometown of Viterbo was the oldest city in Europe and that the Etruscans were the most learned and ancient people in history.[16]

Annio da Viterbo's forgery was quickly detected – the first suspicions were raised in 1504 by Italian humanists[17] – but his authority was not unanimously dismissed. In any case throughout the early

10 See Constable 1983, 7.
11 See Struve 1703, §XXV–XXX. Annio da Viterbo has also been studied by many modern scholars. See Stephens 2004; Ligota 1987; Grafton 1990; Grafton & Blair 1990, 8–38; Grafton 1991, 76–103 and Schmidt-Biggemann 2004, 421ff. Ligota provides useful additional references to studies on Annio da Viterbo's case, his motives, influence and the use of his texts in ideological contexts. Ligota's own article examines Annio's writing methods in his forgeries; these methods included chronology, the use of various authorities, onomastics (the use of names as the most reliable historical evidence) and euhemerism (the reduction of gods to human status).
12 Struve 1703, §XXV. See also Stephens 2004, 207.
13 Annio da Viterbo 1552; Struve 1703, §XXVIII; Büchner 1718, Cap. II, Sect. II, §VIII.
14 See e.g. Stephens 2004, 204–205.
15 Kagan 2009, 49.
16 Stephens 2004, 208.
17 Ligota 1987, 44 n2; Stephens 2004, 206. Struve 1703, §XXVIII observes that the famous Spanish humanist Juan Luis Vives also discussed Annio's *Antiquities* as forgeries.

modern period he was famous for his forgeries. The "Chaldean Antiquities" was also mentioned in Mencken's list of impostors (*falsarios et sycophantas*) who forged entire books (presented here with the rhetorical device of *praeteritio*):

> I pass over other sycophants and impostors who have forged whole books: Annius of Viterbo, with his "Chaldean Antiquities"; Inghirami of Florence, with his "Etruscan Antiquities"; Antonio Dominic Fiocci, with his book on "Roman Judges and Priests," falsely accredited to Fenestella; Hieronymus Roman de la Higuera, with his bogus "Chronicles" under the names of Flavius Lucius Dexter, Marcus Maximus, Braulio, and Heleca; Antonio Lupian Zapata, with his history ascribed to Hautbert; and Gregor de Argaez, with his history supposed to be by Liberatus. They were all wise enough to say beforehand that everything was described exactly in accord with the old manuscripts. Some – Zapata, for instance – hoping to be believed the more easily, attempted to persuade their readers that they had secretly taken manuscripts from foreign libraries. Others, like de Argaez, invented new histories to support the forgeries they had previously published.[18]

Annio da Viterbo was also known for having traced the origins of the Borgia family to Isis and Osiris,[19] while still others traced family lineages as far back as the beginning of the human race.[20]

Sometimes accusations of forgeries and plagiarism were used as a means of destroying someone's reputation as an upstanding citizen. A good example is the sixteenth-century Italian orator and poet Giovanni Gioviano Pontano, whose enemies claimed that, having found Cicero's texts in the library of Monte Cassino, Pontano made small changes and published the texts under his own name. Yet according to Struve, this rumour was false, a result of the anger that Pontano's biting verses aroused in his contemporaries.[21] Thus, sometimes the hostility of colleagues gave rise to accusations of dishonesty; for example, although Angelo Poliziano's Latin translations of Herodian's histories were generally greatly admired, some of his rivals declared that he had borrowed his translation from another humanist, Gregorius Tiphernas (Gregorio Tifernate).[22]

Stealing manuscripts from public libraries for personal use seems to have been rather common.[23] For example, in 1622 Duke Maximilian of Bavaria decided to send a large collection of manuscripts and

18 Mencken 1715, 86–87. English translation in Mencken 1937 (ed.), 125–127 (translation by Francis E. Litz).
19 Grafton 1990, 38; 2009, 74.
20 Mencken 1715, 89–90.
21 Struve 1703, §XLVII.
22 Struve 1703, §XLVIII. Struve also described how some imposters burned their original sources so that no one would recognise their forgery. George Rüxner was rumoured to have burnt the source text of his sixteenth-century book of tournaments so that no one would be able to use it. The original was an old codex from Marburg written in the Saxon language. Struve 1703, §XLIX.
23 For that reason, in some medieval and early modern libraries larger books were chained to the shelves; other books could only be used behind locked cage doors. I thank an anonymous referee for this note.

book treasures from Heidelberg to Pope Gregory XV. It was Leone Allacci (Leo Allatius, ca 1586–1669), a Greek scholar and librarian for the Vatican, who was responsible for supervising the transport and conveying the famous library of Heidelberg to Rome, but many of the treasures were lost before they reached Rome. They ended up in the private collections of cardinals and other men.[24] The sixteenth-century Lutheran reformer from Istria, Matthias Flacius Illyricus, for his part, disguised as a monk and using a false name, stole material from German abbeys and libraries. If he was unable to steal an entire book, he used a knife to cut the most interesting pages from the manuscript; the knife – *cultellus Flacianus* – became almost proverbial. By using this method, Matthias Flacius Illyricus collected excerpts from old manuscripts and composed new texts to go with them. He justified his actions by appealing to his good intentions: he had committed the crimes for the common good so that private knowledge, stored in cloisters, would become public.[25] The thefts were thus part of his anti-Catholic activities. It has been noted that Flacius was in fact a hard-working and ambitious scholar, who collected and edited a large number of documents; ultimately, his reputation was destroyed by his enemies who spread gossip about his razor.[26]

The Methods and Motives of Fabricators

A chronological framework, describing a whole series of events starting from the very beginning of the world or from biblical happenings, was crucial to Annio da Viterbo's method of writing history. He emphasised the primacy of chronology in the same way as chronicles are dominated by a chronological structure. Annio also followed the principle that since no historian could be his own authority, he had to rely on official records and other historical sources.[27] These sources were not necessarily written by historians, since, for Annio, historians were no better or more privileged authorities than other writers; some of their stories were true and some were false, and one had to select the best sources. Christopher R. Ligota has described how Annio da Viterbo had recourse to the testimony of ancient poets, geographers and even satirists in order to glean the most useful information.[28] One can imagine that poets were invaluable for going back to mythical times and providing descriptions of periods inaccessible to historians. Annio gave special significance to place names when drawing up his chronologies, since the names of founders, towns and other places formed the best type of historical evidence for recording past

24 Struve 1703, §LIII. Allacci's role in these events was investigated, but according to Struve he defended himself successfully. I will return to Allacci soon, since by coincidence he is our main source for Ceccarelli's case.
25 On Flacius, see Struve 1703, §LIV.
26 Grafton 2009, 104 mentions that Flacius was falsely accused of using a razor to get what he wanted.
27 Ligota 1987, 48.
28 Ligota 1987, 48, 51, 54.

events.[29] All the names were "verified" with reference to historians and other sources and explained in various ways in order to "reveal" the story behind the toponyms. Needless to say, the method left room for creative interpretation.

Concerning chronicles, it is important to note that they were often anonymous and the authors difficult to identify, but by the same token uncertain authorship aroused curiosity, and many chronicles were attributed to known authors.[30] False chronicles have been a peculiar feature of documentary writing throughout history.[31] Especially in seventeenth-century Spain, historians invented chronicles about their own towns to celebrate the mythical past of the locale. This activity was part of a wider search for new sources that would document the early history of Christianity in Spain.[32] The most famous false chronicle in Spain was the so-called Dextro-Máximo chronicle by the Jesuit of Toledo, Higuera (ca. 1595), who was also mentioned on Mencken's list of impostors given above. The name of Higuera's chronicle referred to the late fourth-century Roman writer Flavius Dexter and to the continuator of his work, a seventh-century writer and bishop named Maximus, whose writings this forged chronicle was supposed to contain. These fictions and fables were challenged in the 1660s by so-called innovators who attacked all mythical representations of the past and demanded more critical writings of history.[33]

Richard L. Kagan, who is among those who have studied this curious phenomenon of Spanish historiography, has explained that the reasons for fabricating chronicles were usually political. Kagan has shown how princes and other political leaders employed chroniclers to celebrate their (the princes') victories, justify their actions and build up their reputations, in effect, paying to create a favourable impression of their political achievements and thereby legitimate their rule. Kagan observes that in the sixteenth century nearly all towns and rulers used the services of hired chroniclers to write official accounts of a glorious past, often transforming history to establish a favourable impression of a ruler's accomplishments.[34] Kagan further states that "controlling the past was essential to controlling the future, or at least the future's understanding of a particular ruler or regime."[35]

29 Ligota 1987, 52–54.

30 The polyhistor Vincent Placcius mentioned several chronicles written under false names in his *Theatrum anonymorum et pseudonymorum* in 1707. For example, Joseph Scaliger composed an anonymous Greek chronicle. Grafton 1990, 31.

31 Bernheim 1908, 365–369, argues that annals and chronicles have always formed an important subgroup among forgeries. Bernheim mentions several Italian chronicles that were forgeries. One fabricator was the German abbot Johannes Trithemius, who composed false chronicles about the Franks and great Benedictine houses. His falsifications are studied, for example, by Grafton 2009, 70–78, and Staubach 1988, 263–316.

32 Kagan 2009, 257.

33 See Kagan 2009, 256–265; Godoy Alcántara 1868. Godoy Alcántara's book is the foundation work on Spanish false chronicles. See also Katrina Beth Olds's extensive dissertation on the topic: Olds 2009. It has been observed that Higuera's forgery has been well-known at least since the work of the seventeenth-century Spanish bibliographer, Nicolas Antonio, whose *Censura de historias fabulosas* was published posthumously in 1742.

34 Kagan 2009, 10.

35 Kagan 2009, 11.

Different versions sometimes competed for the official or truthful interpretation of events, and sometimes unfavourable accounts were deliberately branded as fabrications so that the more laudatory memory would prevail. Kagan's account allows us to see that the narrative practices and processes of chronicle writers involved several techniques for preparing a sympathetic interpretation of history that would satisfy the individual who commissioned the text. Chroniclers could select relevant sources and arrange them in a favourable way to show a family's alleged ancient ancestry, for example, or demonstrate the divine origin of a town and its founders. Highlighting facts by dramatizing them was another common practice.

Thus, one of the motivations behind forgeries was to provide material for the commissioner of the text to support and confirm the view of the past that he (or a town or a church) considered valid and wanted to perpetuate. Yet the motivations behind forging varied, the same as with any other historians or chroniclers, and ranged from direct commissions to more spontaneous activities. Some forgers were driven by love of a subject, others by feelings of anger towards their rivals or enemies. The reasons for producing forgeries included financial profit and ambition, careerism, amusement, derision and the wish to ridicule authorities – or "the sadistic pleasure derived from seeing others fooled", as Anthony Grafton has put it in his book on forgers and critics.[36] Grafton has emphasised that some forgers were simply irresponsible persons who were completely uninterested in ethical questions, but their activities were often useful in giving impetus to the intensive development of textual criticism. Sometimes the forgers were actually skilful, hard-working individuals fully competent in philology and historical studies. It has been observed that Annio da Viterbo was very careful in modifying and polishing his epigraphic forgeries.[37] Moreover, forged writings also included many familiar and verifiable facts.

According to Alfred Hiatt, Annio da Viterbo marked a clear change in the production of forgeries, because instead of searching for personal gratification or producing forgeries to satisfy an important patron, his main goal was to construct a seamless world history and the history of the Etruscans.[38] Annio's motivation was thus partly the same as that of genuine historiographers. Because Annio was highly critical of the methods of writing history, the concepts of forgery and criticism intertwined in his activities. In the following section, I will concentrate on another, slightly less well-known, but equally talented forger and intriguing figure from the early modern period who tried almost every kind of forgery.

36 Grafton 1990, 38. On forgers' selfish motives, see also Bernheim 1908, 331.
37 However, Stephens notes that Annio was perhaps not as learned as he is often believed to be. Stephens 2004, 213–214.
38 Hiatt 2004, 11.

The Crime

One of the most industrious and creative fabricators of historical documents outside Spain was Alfonso Ceccarelli, who put together several historical texts and claimed that they were genuine documents. His historian's activities started developing around the 1560s, when he gave up his career as a medical doctor and began composing fictive genealogical trees for famous families, as well as for less well-known clans, first in Marche and Umbria and then in Rome, Florence, Bologna and elsewhere.[39] Ceccarelli's forgeries were commented on in later polemical literature. The German Protestant theologian Gottlieb Spitzel, in his work on the unhappy scholar, *Infelix literatus* (1680), devoted one section of this book to the tragic life of Ceccarelli, who was exhibited as a warning of the fate of a literary impostor who desired worldly fame.[40]

Ceccarelli's story was borrowed from *Antiquitatum Etruscarum fragmenta* (1642) by Leone Allacci, in which the author made Ceccarelli's crimes known to the world. Alois Riegl has argued that in Allacci's time historians and others who used historical sources were still being deceived by Ceccarelli's forgeries, and therefore Allacci thought it important to give an overview of these crimes.[41] Allacci mentioned several historians misled by Ceccarelli's sources,[42] and he described how Ceccarelli wrote his falsifications (*imposturae, falsificationes, fraudes*) by using names other than his own and even invented or created manuscripts, antiquities and acta that he passed off as historical. Drawing his information from the Vatican archive, Allacci also detected other possible impostors. Here, I will focus on Ceccarelli's story as it was presented in Allacci's version of events.[43] Allacci's reliability may of course be questioned, as his approach is clearly polemical and his tone indignant; he describes Ceccarelli's activities in terms of different (moral) maladies (*lues, pestis*).[44] But even if Allacci's account may not

39 On Ceccarelli, see Allacci 1642, 255–360. Ceccarelli's case is also briefly described in Struve 1703, §XXXI, with reference to Allacci's account. For further information on Ceccarelli, see Riegl 1894; Fumi 1902, 213–277; Pistarino 1958; Petrucci 1979. On late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Italian articles on Ceccarelli, see the references in Mercati 1951, 72.

40 See Spitzel 1680, Commonefactio XIIX. On Spitzel, see Kivistö 2014.

41 Riegl 1894, 195–196.

42 Allacci 1642, 357–360. These historians include Petrus Riguardatus, who wrote *Historia monastica*; Monaldus Monaldeschus de Cervaria, who wrote *Commentaria historica*; Ferdinandus Marra, who wrote *Chronologia familiarum*, and others. Allacci observed that these historians also imitated Ceccarelli's fabrications and sometimes appealed to non-existent sources. See also Riegl 1894, 194.

43 I am heavily reliant on Allacci's account (1642) here, because Allacci devoted a whole treatise to Ceccarelli's case and this treatise is the main historical source for Ceccarelli's activities. As the main sources for his account, Allacci used the correspondence between Ceccarelli and Alberico Cibo-Malaspina, the Prince of Massa, and Ceccarelli's written apology for his falsifications (see below). Allacci received these documents from the Vatican archive and its prefect Felice Contelori. Allacci 1642, 261. Some of Ceccarelli's autograph papers, miscellaneous correspondence and falsifications have been preserved in the Vatican Library (Vat. lat. 12487–12488). Like Allacci, Riegl (1894) studied various documents in the Vatican Library related to Ceccarelli and his sentence. Riegl mentions several documents that Allacci did not use in his investigations; these include notebooks written by Ceccarelli in the late 1570s and various letters. Here my interest is in studying how fraudulent activities were justified rather than in righting the falsehoods committed by Ceccarelli.

44 Allacci 1642, 255.

be entirely unbiased, it is the main source for Ceccarelli's case and also a useful one, since it allows us to see how Ceccarelli justified his activities. One of my arguments here is that Ceccarelli's case is considerably more complex and ambiguous than his critics have suggested.

Allacci mentioned more than 120 authors quoted by Ceccarelli who either did not exist or did not write the books Ceccarelli attributed to them. Allacci added three indices to his life of Ceccarelli as set forth in *Antiquitatum Etruscarum fragmenta* in order to take into account all of Ceccarelli's work. The first index contained a list of the texts usually attributed to Ceccarelli. One of Ceccarelli's main activities was to make up illustrious family trees for famous families, tracing the family's roots back to important bishops, cardinals, popes and ancient heroes and "verifying" these identities by inventing great ancestral names.[45] These genealogies included those for the families Boncompagni, Casa Cibo, Casa Farnese, Santa Croce and Casa Conti Romana, as well as several other clans in Bologna. Allacci's list of forgeries also mentioned the history of all noble families in the world (*De historia familiarum illustrium totius orbis*).[46]

To give credibility to these impressive, albeit fictive, genealogies, Ceccarelli had recourse to supposedly old manuscripts, which he also fabricated. These included imperial and papal documents and privileges of ancient and medieval emperors (*Imperatorum ac Pontificum diplomata, ac Privilegia*), which supposedly contained ancient family names that proved the family ancestry. These false privileges were attributed, for example, to Charlemagne, Otto I and other rulers.[47] Like Annio da Viterbo, Ceccarelli was careful with names and used these as proof in his chronologies and genealogies. According to Allacci, Ceccarelli could add fictitious cognomens to existing proper names and thereby make up fake individuals at will.[48] He added information to original texts or changed their passages to serve his own purposes and verify his claims. One of his fabrications was a family tree for Guido Cavalcanti, a Florentine nobleman, whose family, according to Ceccarelli, stemmed from ancient times and was represented in an old chronicle written two hundred years earlier – an example of Ceccarelli's habit of appealing to old chronicles to confirm a family's noble ancestry.[49]

Ceccarelli's writings also contained several town histories, astrological texts, horoscopes and predictions, as well as lives of priests. He offered astrological services to customers and pretended that his wisdom, which in fact was his own creation, was based on old Greek, Arabic and Chaldean

45 Allacci 1642, 258 (. . . "ex capite ipse suo Maiorum nomina fingere").
46 Allacci 1642, 292–304 ("Index primus"). On Ceccarelli's false genealogies, see Tiraboschi 1789; Bizzocchi 1991 (who notes the medieval background of genealogies and discusses their social dimensions in sixteenth-century Italy).
47 Allacci 1642, 258. See also the list of imperial privileges given in Riegl 1894, 227–232 (103 items, all produced by Ceccarelli).
48 Allacci 1642, 258.
49 According to Riegl (1894, 203), in 1581 Ceccarelli mentioned to a representative of the Cavalcanti family that he had in his possession several old chronicles that referred to the Cavalcantis.

sources. He wrote predictions for old cardinals who cherished dreams of ascending the papal throne and revealed the future to them, asking them to keep his secret prognostic letters to themselves and not show them to anyone until they were elected to the papacy.[50] All the "genres" of forgery that Ceccarelli employed were traditional; for example, in the Middle Ages privileges and property rights were rather commonly forged.[51] Amusingly, it appears that Ceccarelli did not forget his former career as a medical doctor, since one of his mythical works was entitled *De omnifaria arthritidis curatione*, in which he recommended medication for the pain caused by gout and boasted that he was the first doctor to cure gout. Gout was also a disease that often figured in parodies and satirical contexts.[52]

Allacci's second index contains a list of manuscripts that Ceccarelli claimed to have in his personal library. These included many otherwise unknown or spurious chronicles, such as *Chronicae Carrarienses, Castrenses, Gualdenses,*[53] *Senenses, Spoletanae, Viterbienses, Urbevetanae, De Brunforte* and *Canapinenses*. Other annals and chronicles explicitly mentioned here were *Ioachimi Abbatis Chronica, Ioannis Filii Comitis Nicolai de Barbiano Chronica, Ioannis de Capistrano Chronica, Ioannis Petri Scriniarii Chronicon,* Selinus's *Chronica,* Ioannes de Virgilio's *Chronica* (allegedly from Dante's time), *Petri Baccarini de Horta Chronicae* and *Petri de Caffarellis Chronica*.[54] Apparently, many of these writers were Ceccarelli's pseudonyms or other invented names. Some of these chronicles were actually fabricated and produced by Ceccarelli, whereas others did not exist at all, but were probably merely the product of his imagination.

Allacci's third index contains Ceccarelli's source texts to which he referred in verifying his claims, but which were equally suspect as being spurious and were no longer extant in Allacci's time if they had ever existed at all. Again, these sources included numerous chronicles and other texts forged or invented by Ceccarelli: Albertus Patriarcha Hierosolymitanus's *Chronicae, Anselmus civis Brixiensis Chronicae,* Aymo's (the brother of Bede) *Chronicon Ecclesiae Romanae* from 690, Bernardinus Ligurinus's and Pigurinus's *Chronicae*, Brunus de Garleonis Neopolitanus's *Chronica* and many other chronicles from different regions of Italy.[55] One chronicle on the origin of the world by the Spanish bishop Decius "confirmed" that the Donation of Constantine had taken place in 460, whereas Epiphanius's chronicles

50 Allacci 1642, 276, 298, 301.
51 See, for example, Constable 1983, 8. For a more profound view of different forgeries in the medieval period, see the articles in *Fälschungen im Mittelalter*. Several articles in this volume also deal with the vague distinctions between fiction and historiography.
52 On this treatise, see Allacci 1642, 299–300. In Paracelsus's funerary monument in Salzburg it is also stated that he succeeded in curing gout, which was usually thought to be incurable. On gout in parodic and satirical writings, see Kivistö 2009. Allacci (1642, 291) and Spitzel also quoted Ceccarelli's epitaph to his wife, which described her as the sweetest woman in the world. It is difficult to say how sincere this epitaph was considering the writer's notorious reputation as a fabricator. Ceccarelli also wrote a book on truffles (*Opusculum de tuberibus*), which was a parody and falsification.
53 On Ceccarelli's *Chronicae Gualdenses scripturae antiquae*, see Heullant-Donat 2005.
54 Allacci 1642, 305–329 ("Index secundus").
55 Allacci 1642, 330–357 ("Index tertius").

dated the event to 340. Ceccarelli's false chronicles, which he attributed to certain bishops, included Dorotheus's *Chronicon de primatu ecclesiae Romanae* from 451.[56]

The false texts were identified with familiar critical methods: studying the vocabulary and style of a text and its coherence, relying on the seller's word (which could, of course, be unreliable) and detecting anachronistic expressions, mistakes and inconsistencies, which revealed that the chronicles were not as old as claimed. For example, in the chronicles related to Siena the author (considered to be Ceccarelli) tells about the construction of the city towers in Siena; these, however, did not exist at the purported time of writing. Allacci rightly wondered how an author allegedly writing in 970 could know about events happening in the fourteenth century.[57] Another work supposedly fabricated by Ceccarelli, *Monaldeschi fragmenta annalium Romanorum*, which tells the story of the Monaldeschi family of Orvieto, was considered spurious because in its pages the author records his own death at the age of 115.[58]

According to Allacci, all of this was done by Ceccarelli for profit, to acquire money and to make a career. Allacci talks about a business affair (*mercatura, negotium*).[59] It was assumed that Ceccarelli did indeed earn substantial sums by composing family trees and local histories, since rich families in Italy and France, uncertain of their origins, paid considerable fees to historians to trace their roots and find distinguished ancestors. Town (and cloister) histories served similar purposes; they were intended to show that a town had ancient origins. These qualities gave a place authority and a distinguished reputation and sometimes meant concrete benefits in the form of special rights.[60] Ceccarelli knew many noble families in his capacity as a medical doctor, which apparently helped him build contacts. Alois Riegl quotes passages from Ceccarelli's notebooks from the late 1570s, and their brief remarks record Ceccarelli's health, mention the women he made pregnant and the sums of money he was given for his literary activities. Ceccarelli mentions that in 1578 he created many documents that were believed to be ancient texts, from which he profited nicely; he specifically mentions the sums of 25 and 19 scudi. For his history of the ancient Conti family, he received several financial donations from the bishop of San Gregorio in 1579 and 1580. Likewise, he received several sums (of 12 scudi and 25 scudi) from members of the Savelli family for providing them with privileges telling about their family.[61]

56 Allacci 1642, 336–337.
57 Allacci 1642, 308.
58 See Gibbon 2013, 300.
59 Allacci 1642, 259.
60 Cf. Ceccarelli's interpolation in the history of the ancient city of Tadino; on this episode, see Heullant-Donat 2005, 232 et passim. Such additions to official histories often led lives of their own in later historical writing as well as in politics, whenever towns and their rulers competed for power.
61 Riegl 1894, 201–202, 210–211. According to Riegl, these notebooks from 1578–1580 are preserved in the Vatican Library (Cod. Vat. 6158, fol. 115–125).

Ceccarelli's services were extremely popular, at least if we believe the descriptions given by Allacci, who claimed that Ceccarelli managed to fool many common and learned men who desired his services and who considered him a supreme authority to the point that, for a while, his name was on everyone's lips. One may wonder how it was possible that learned men allowed themselves to be deceived by forgeries to such an extent despite the texts' manifest fraudulence. It is true that forgers were sometimes skilful historians, albeit unethical. Ceccarelli quickly earned a reputation for being an expert in genealogy. One reason for his success was undoubtedly the continuing interest in the services he offered to powerful men by drawing up their histories in a favourable way. Cities desired records that would testify to their heroic pasts, and Ceccarelli was ready to find great ancestors and useful records whenever these were needed. The success of forgers has been explained by the fact that they told people what they wanted to hear about their past.[62] Sometimes these services probably satisfied simple curiosity.

Another reason for the success of historical forgeries was their professional style. It has been said that Annio da Viterbo's *Antiquities* was in fact a well-written and coherent work.[63] Forgers understood the value of source criticism, and the most successful of them relied on seemingly convincing historical methods and careful source criticism. Annio da Viterbo emphasised (ironically, from a later point of view) that a historian should select his sources very carefully and verify his claims by reference to the best historical and archaeological sources. Stephens argues that it was precisely this mimetic aspect of Annio's writings and his seemingly meticulous philological apparatus that ultimately deceived his contemporaries.[64] At the same time his philological precision raises questions about the valid narrative techniques of historiography and exact knowledge.

As for Ceccarelli's case, Allacci's account reveals how in the 1570s men became suspicious of him and began asking Ceccarelli to disclose his sources and even show them to readers, since no one else had seen them. The alleged source texts were not found in booksellers' shops or in libraries when people began looking for them in the libraries of Milan, the Vatican and elsewhere. It turned out that many authorities used by Ceccarelli were completely unknown, even by name. Allacci mentions that Alberico Cibo-Malaspina (1534–1623), the Prince of Massa, who had used Ceccarelli's services in the 1570s, wrote to Ceccarelli asking to see the original manuscripts, anticipating that the dark origins of his family had not been reliably described by Ceccarelli. Cibo announced that if he was not allowed to see the sources, it was difficult to regard them as reliable, but if they existed, he promised to purchase

62 See Stephens 2004, 203.
63 Stephens 2004, 214–215.
64 Stephens 2004, 217.

them at a considerable price. According to Allacci, Cibo also asked other literate men to search for the authoritative texts mentioned by Ceccarelli. One learned scholar, Adriano Polito, sought Ceccarelli's authoritative sources in booksellers' shops and in all the libraries of Rome, including the Vatican and Jesuit libraries, and consulted his learned contemporaries and pedagogues. But in vain: no one had heard of these writers or of their books. Allacci reports that some bishops, such as the Bishop of Novara, also asked Ceccarelli to show his sources; in reply, Ceccarelli prattled on about everything else but these sources. When he could no longer avoid the questions, his responses were vague – either he had once owned the book or heard about its contents from someone else. Cardinal Sirleto, a famous linguist who worked in the Vatican Library, was yet another person who insisted on seeing Ceccarelli's sources, curious that no one else had seen them.[65]

Ceccarelli's Apology

When Ceccarelli's frauds were finally revealed and he was publicly accused in court, he responded to the accusations by writing a defence of his actions (usually called *Libellus supplex ad Iudicem* and quoted in Latin by Allacci and later in Spitzel, although the text was originally written in Italian).[66] This interesting document, together with the letters exchanged between Cibo-Malaspina and Ceccarelli over the years starting from 1574, was the main source for Allacci's account of the forger's life. In his apologetic booklet Ceccarelli openly confessed to many of his forgeries, but at the same time he argued that no one should consider his work worthless because it referred to and relied on source texts that were no longer known or available. Allacci noted that in Ceccarelli's view, if men were to believe only texts that they had seen, then many ancient authors should be rejected as completely unreliable. Pliny's and Plutarch's works as well as sacred texts were all composed with the help of earlier sources that were unknown by Ceccarelli's time. By the same logic, *Liber Iustorum* (The Book of the Upright) or *Liber bellorum Domini* (The Book on the Wars of the Lord) mentioned in the Old Testament or the Book of Enoch mentioned in the New Testament should be discredited as unreliable sources of information, since no one had read or seen them either. In Ceccarelli's view the reliability of the narration increased rather than decreased when the author relied on well-established secondary sources.[67]

References to mythical and imaginary authors were meant to prove the authenticity and importance of the forged texts. Ceccarelli argued that his sources were cited and praised by other authors, although

65 Allacci 1642, 260–268.
66 For Ceccarelli's *Libellus supplex* (which he addressed to his judges) we are dependent upon Allacci; the apology is preserved in a Latin translation of Allacci in Allacci 1642, 278–288. Riegl mentions that he did not find the original document at the Vatican Library, and it may not have survived. Riegl 1894, 214.
67 Allacci 1642, 268–269; see also Riegl 1894, 204–206.

there were very few manuscripts in circulation. However, it appears that many of these authorities ("Fanusio Campano", "Corelli", the Italian chronicles of "Pietro Baccarino", etc.) were in fact names Ceccarelli had himself invented. He used several pseudonyms, including Marco Settimani, Francesco or Fanusio Campano, Bulgars and N. Corelli.[68] In his source criticism Ceccarelli, knowing how important it was to verify events and names by references to mentions made by earlier scholars, appealed to these and other non-existent scholars he had made up. According to Allacci, Ceccarelli claimed to have Fanusio's book on noble Italian families in his personal library and moreover, that Fanusio's work, which he used repeatedly for his forgeries, was praised by many historians.[69] However, these historians too were invented by Ceccarelli, who, aware of the scholarly apparatus that was needed to give credibility to historical writings, created an extensive network of imaginary references and cross-references.

As for the actual location of the manuscripts used, Ceccarelli argued that many of his sources were found in Roman or monastic libraries, although they were not readily available.[70] It is known that Ceccarelli frequently visited various small libraries and studied old manuscripts, which he then imitated in making his forgeries. Sometimes he gave the location of the source texts to give credibility to his fabrications, saying, for instance, that such-and-such a chronicle was compiled according to an exemplar preserved in the abbey of St. Benedict's in Gualdo in Umbria.[71] But it appears that Ceccarelli also relied on entirely imaginary libraries and their librarians, claiming that his sources could be found, for example, in the library of Diego Mendoza in France or in the library of Wilhelm of Choul (D. Gulielmi à Choul).[72] He claimed that he had discovered some works and manuscripts in small towns, obscure chapels and in their libraries and back rooms. He had come across imperial and papal privileges among ancient books in the old chest of a certain curate called Eusebius who lived in the (imaginary) town of Thoscella. And some of his sources, he said, he had already sold or given to princes, who were often reluctant to share their treasures.[73] Similar excuses had been given by Trithemius and other previous forgers of chronicles.[74]

Sometimes the copies were so rare – if they existed at all – that they were retained only in Ceccarelli's own library. An interesting example is a chronicle by Johann Selinus (Giovanni Selino), which, according to Ceccarelli, was in his personal possession. He claimed to have found old works in

68 These names are later given as Ceccarelli's pseudonyms in various dictionaries; see Lancetti 1836; Weller 1856; Riegl 1894, 205–206n. On Fanusio Campano as Ceccarelli's main source, see Riegl 1894, 219.
69 Allacci 1642, 309.
70 Allacci 1642, 269.
71 Heullant-Donat 2005, 228.
72 Allacci 1642, 269.
73 Allacci 1642, 265; see also Riegl 1894, 207.
74 See Grafton 2009, 73 et passim.

town archives, such as Selinus's compendium *De rebus Italiae* written on parchment and Johannes de Virgilio's fourteenth-century *De origine urbium Italiae*. However, these texts were unknown to other scholars. A related ancient chronicle he claimed to have found was *De rebus memorabilibus Umbriae*, in which the author praised such works as Corradus Essius's *Chronica de Italia*, *Chronica Dominorum de Brunfort*, Johannes Selinus's chronicle *De memorabilibus Italiae*, Mauritius Campanus's *Chronica de Spoletio*, Olympiodorus Hamaal's *De annalibus mundi* and so on.

To verify his claims Ceccarelli asserted that these works had been praised in other ancient chronicles and by such authors as Fanusio Campano, a name that, as noted above, was Ceccarelli's pseudonym. According to Allacci, Ceccarelli's explanations were often contradictory, and it was impossible to verify his sources. Ceccarelli argued that he had seen many of Selinus's chronicles in Rome: *De notabilibus et memorabilibus mundi* was preserved in the Capitolium Archives; *Breve compendium historiae Italiae Ioannis Selini* belonged to another Roman archive; other Selinus texts were found in various Roman libraries. Finally, Ceccarelli declared that he had bought other anonymous volumes in Rome at the Campo dei Fiori, which turned out to be Selinus's historical treatises.[75]

In studying these sources in detail, Allacci managed to obtain Selinus's supposed chronicle or a series of chronicles concerning the Roman past, which Ceccarelli had used in his work. Allacci noted that Selinus's name was in fact added to these originally anonymous works by another hand, apparently the hand of Ceccarelli, since the handwriting and the ink colour of the author's name were different from the rest of the manuscript and the added handwriting closely resembled that found in Johannes Petrus Scriniarius's chronicles. Allacci concluded that both works were forged by the same man.[76]

In his apology Ceccarelli openly admitted that he had ascribed the anonymous chronicles to Selinus by adding the author's name to the volume, but maintained that this was a small crime since he did not attribute the text to himself, as so many historians had done in similar circumstances. Angelo Poliziano, for example, had published Plutarch's book on Homer as his own creation.[77] This confession also brought attention to other fabrications, including works in which Selinus's chronicle was praised before Ceccarelli had made his forgery. It appears that Ceccarelli had already laid the foundations for this particular fabrication by creating works by authors such as Fanusio Campano, Baccarinus and Nicolaus de Barbiano, all of which referred to Selinus.[78] In his history of the Casa Cesarina from 1579, Ceccarelli relied heavily on the testimony of Selinus and Campano, claiming at the end of his document

75 On Selinus's chronicle, see Allacci 1642, 270–274.
76 Allacci 1642, 272–273.
77 Allacci 1642, 282.
78 Allacci 1642, 274; see also Riegl 1894, 219–220.

that the sources were in his possession and that he had transcribed the references word for word and signed the work in his own hand, a formula which in this case does not confirm authenticity, but does sound deeply ironic (*ad verbum ex ipsis exemplaribus quae citantur . . . manu propria subscripsi*).[79]

In his written defence Ceccarelli confessed that he had created many kinds of documents, claiming that they were genuine, and had published books under names other than his own. But he called attention to his good intentions and insisted that when he added something to an old book, he compensated for it by adding truth (*res veras addidisse ab Auctoribus veris excerptas; pro veritate*).[80] He reminded his accusers that many theologians had likewise appealed to apocryphal sources without any damage to the religiosity or truth of their writings. Ceccarelli argued that he had used unknown sources in the same way and had followed earlier historians' habit of inventing "facts" to confirm what was true.[81] In his view it was possible to add simulated facts if the real ones were lacking, an apology that had been used in the medieval period.[82] Ceccarelli argued that his manner of correcting books with useful additions and interpolations merely stabilised truth (*stabilire enim fulcireque veritatem*) and should not be condemned.[83]

To provide an example of this common practice, Ceccarelli reminded his accusers that none of the four gospels actually mentioned Pontius Pilate's condemnation of Christ, yet this event was considered true by the Catholic Church. Ceccarelli mentioned several authors who, in writing on the life and passions of Christ, added Pilate's reaction to their texts. And yet none of these authors was found guilty of any crime.[84] Ceccarelli said that he too had made interpretations that favoured the church (*pro Ecclesia, & in favorem Ecclesiae . . . pro confirmatione veritatis contra haereticos*);[85] so why should he be condemned when it should be considered laudable to help the church by all possible means? Ceccarelli appealed to his good, religious and Catholic intentions. In fact, Ceccarelli had many predecessors in this sense. As Anthony Grafton has mentioned in reference to Annio da Viterbo, the mendicant friars of the Middle Ages were accustomed to dramatising factual records.[86] By doing so they believed they were doing justice to the sacred subjects, which should not be presented too plainly. Colourful details also made the stories more appealing.

79 Ceccarelli 1579/2009, (145) 39.
80 Allacci 1642, 284. In the same way, Annio da Viterbo emphasised in the Preface to his Antiquities that he told the plain truth and nothing else ("solam & nudam veritatem").
81 Allacci 1642, 279.
82 Constable 1983, 41.
83 Allacci 1642, 283.
84 Allacci 1642, 279–280.
85 Allacci 1642, 280–281.
86 Grafton 1990, 48.

Ceccarelli confessed that he had invented some imperial privileges in order to give grandeur to certain noble families (*ad decorem Familiarum* and *pro veritate in favorem nobilium et illustrium Familiarum*), as many earlier historians had done before him (apparently also presenting things in a favourable light and supporting the ruling families).[87] He gave here a brief list of earlier historians (Franciscus de Rosieres, Wolfgang Lazius, Francesco Sansovino, etc.) who in the same way had composed privileges to support their claims. He stressed that he too followed the preconceptions and expectations of men, documenting the past along favourable lines and collecting his information from reliable authors and factual sources (*ab auctoribus veris excerptas; ex Auctorum approbatorum libris, aliisque scripturis erui*).[88] His intention was to praise by amplifying his narration with certain added details (*ut laudent, res amplificant*).[89] He appealed to Socrates, who argued that men should always speak well of families, and to the Roman representative of Stoic moral integrity, Cato the Younger, who said that the example of his virtuous ancestors greatly helped him in his own devotion to virtuous living.

Why, then, asked Ceccarelli, was it wrong to show that many families in fact did have noble origins, which helped men to maintain virtue? Ceccarelli claimed that if he had published vilifying words about noble families, then his work should be condemned as insulting, but when he merely praised the nobility of men in words they loved to hear, why should that be considered criminal? People esteemed nobility even more than they worshipped God, and they greatly enjoyed having their families praised. Ceccarelli emphasised that even his imaginative family trees and Italian town histories followed the tradition of praising famous families and beautiful cities.[90] If this practice was mistaken, then all earlier histories, both old and new, were false.

Ceccarelli's main arguments in his defence were, firstly, that he did nothing that had not been done before by other learned men, historians, doctors and writers (*aliorum vestigia sequor; more aliorum id feci*).[91] He gave examples of other historians who had invented privileges or published their works under false names; for example, Marcus Marcellus was an esteemed Roman noble and learned man, who published all of his writings under other names.[92] Secondly, Ceccarelli repeatedly emphasised that all the additions he made, all the compilations he put together from various sources, and all the works he

87 Allacci 1642, 281–282.
88 Allacci 1642, 284, 283.
89 Allacci 1642, 285.
90 Allacci 1642, 285–286.
91 Allacci 1642, 279, 287.
92 Allacci 1642, 283.

published under pseudonyms had only one goal: to reveal, restore and defend the truth (*pro veritate*).[93] He endeavoured to do justice to the church or the noble families, providing a kind of corrective to official history. His words were like any other additions and appendices normally attached to historiography.[94]

Thirdly, Ceccarelli defended his methods, including the use of verisimilitude, amplification and compilation; in his view these methods were used by all historians. He appealed to the verisimilitude of what he narrated (*verosimilibus fingimus*)[95] and frequently mentioned that when he amplified (*amplificare*)[96] facts or extended (*adaugere*)[97] family merits, he was following the usual custom of writing family histories. He characterised his writing as acts of compilation in which he collected material from different sources and put the pieces together. According to Allacci, Ceccarelli argued that when he came across factual information in different manuscripts and annals which had never been compiled in one work, he decided to present the material in a single document for readers.[98] Like his medieval predecessors, Ceccarelli emphasised the considerable worth of his collecting activity, since the new, coherent presentation was more instructive than the earlier, scattered pieces of information. The snippets of reliable information he had excerpted from different sources taken together formed new historical documents, such as the "Confirmation of the Donation of Constantine" (the Donation of Constantine itself being a famously forged imperial decree) by Theodosius the Emperor. Ceccarelli claimed that this "document", the "Confirmation of the Donation of Constantine", although produced by himself, was created from reliable information about its existence and contents taken from various sources. Although the original document no longer existed, in Ceccarelli's view there was enough evidence about its contents to re-create it and thereby reply to those historians who denied the historicity of the Donation of Constantine.[99] Ceccarelli here placed himself in famous company, since the Donation of Constantine was one of the most influential forgeries ever made, its aim being to promote the independence and claims of the papacy.[100]

It is true that chronicles were rarely created by a single author, but rather were the collective efforts of several writers who gathered and organised information. Ceccarelli knew that he could appeal to an

93 Allacci 1642, 284 et passim.
94 Allacci 1642, 284.
95 Allacci 1642, 287.
96 Allacci 1642, 285.
97 Allacci 1642, 287.
98 Allacci 1642, 278. Ceccarelli appealed to the usefulness of his compilation activities, just as in the medieval period historians considered compiling to be a useful activity, as it arranged knowledge and made material easily accessible. On the concept and vocabulary of compilation, see Hathaway 1989, who mentions that the concept of compilation was also used in the Middle Ages to describe the writing of chronicles. Hathaway shows how the word compilation, which first implied the defacement of someone's work, turned into a neutral term signifying a legitimate borrowing; this change took place gradually in the twelfth century.
99 Allacci 1642, 278.
100 See Constable 1983, 7; Hiatt 2004, 136–155.

almost endless chain of predecessors here. The phrases Ceccarelli used for his activities referred to the collecting of true and reliable material in one place (*recentiorum de ea scribentium testimonia in unum veluti fascem colligere; ex veris Historiis compilavi*)[101] and to the rearranging and forming of a unity that was useful to readers (*ut una simul omnia concinnarem, collegi*);[102] these expressions resembled medieval notions and defences of compilation.[103] Ceccarelli stressed that he made his compilations to benefit the church and the truth (*in favorem Ecclesiae, pro veritate, ex veris historiis compilavi illud privilegium*).[104]

Furthermore, Ceccarelli admitted that his writings sometimes contained manifest errors, but in his view this was merely human, since all writers inevitably make mistakes. Ceccarelli stressed that he had not made any religious errors or insulted the church, which would have been serious crimes; on the contrary, his mistakes were very small.[105] Apparently, Ceccarelli also imitated old handwriting in his fabrications and used old materials and parchment to strengthen the illusion of antiquity.[106]

In a certain sense Ceccarelli's arguments were valid, since histories had always included narrative techniques that are closer to fiction than non-fiction, and he certainly had many predecessors through the centuries. In his satirical account on learned charlatans, Johann Burkhard Mencken placed historians among the learned impostors, claiming that while they were recounting the exploits of famous rulers or drawing genealogies of illustrious families, historians also often had recourse to "quackery".[107] They inserted long imaginary speeches into their historical accounts and adorned their books with attention-grabbing pictures, which gave beautiful and orderly illustrations of wars, which in reality had been fought without any structured plans. Others invented exciting story lines to make their histories more appealing. They did these things in order to capture the attention of readers. As has been shown, for example, in the case of the fake Spanish chronicles, there was a long tradition in courts and churches of hiring professional writers to prove the ancestry of these institutions, and for this purpose, official historians sometimes invented records of heroic pasts. Thus, Ceccarelli was accurate in saying that he was writing in a long tradition in which the distinction between real facts and mythical events, between

101 Allacci 1642, 278.
102 Allacci 1642, 284.
103 According to Hathaway, common phrases employed by compilers of histories included such expressions as "to collect into one work" (*in unum redigere*) and "to collect things excerpted from individual *dictores*" (*de singulis dictoribus deflorata colligere*). Hathaway observes that medieval compilers identified two steps in the act of compiling: excerpting and unifying. In its final incarnation the collected material formed a well-arranged unity that was more perfect than the separate pieces of which it was made. Hathaway 1989, 21, 43.
104 Ceccarelli's phrases are found in Allacci 1642, 280, 287 and 278.
105 Allacci 1642, 287–288.
106 On these devices, see De Luca 1706, 325; Riegl 1894, 219–220.
107 Mencken 1937, 122–123.

history and fiction, and ultimately between forgeries and licit forms of history writing, was never clear-cut, given that authentic historical documents often contained elements that, strictly speaking, can be labelled false.[108] Thus, the distinctions among the historian, the forger and the storyteller were not unambiguous either.

The Punishment

The usual understanding of forgeries today as well as earlier in history is that such texts promoted the forger's selfish ends and were intended to deceive for the purpose of personal gain.[109] However, many forgers have appealed to their good intentions of serving some higher goal than mere personal advancement. As shown above, Ceccarelli referred to his good, pious and honest motivations (*mente non mala, recta mente*) and to his intention to protect truth and justice by correcting inaccurately written sources with (false) documents that served good ends.[110] In the Middle Ages as well, falsifiers had sometimes appealed to their good intentions, for example, an intention to realise God's plans or to establish good and truthful order in the world by means of their forgeries.[111] When these motivations and their possible impact on the punishments of forgers have been assessed, it has been concluded that in the Middle Ages pious motivation did not excuse a reprehensible act.[112] Alfred Hiatt mentions that when legal historians have studied the concept of forgery in the Middle Ages, their research has unambiguously shown that real forgeries and deceptions were severely punished despite the forgers' alleged good intentions. Hiatt argues that the punishments for forgery specified in various medieval legal codes ranged from the cutting off of the hand or fingers to imprisonment and fines.[113] It was reported that forgery was punished whenever it was discovered and that it was not rare to hear about falsifiers who had had their hands cut off.[114] In the case of clerics imprisonment was a usual penalty if the forgery concerned papal or curial documents.[115]

The most severe punishments were often meted out to forgers of official and formal documents, as it was obviously more dangerous to forge legal documents and *fidei commissa* than literary sources. But sometimes historians and chroniclers faced similar consequences, even when their actions had not

108 See Constable 1983, 10.
109 Hiatt 2004, 7; Constable 1983, 39.
110 Allacci 1642, 283, 288.
111 Constable 1983, 20.
112 Hiatt 2004, 7, with reference to Elizabeth Brown's investigations on medieval forgeries (see Brown 1988); Constable 1983, 20.
113 Hiatt 2004, 8. Hiatt relies here on Peter Herde's studies on the medieval punishments of forgers; see Herde 1988.
114 Constable 1983, 17.
115 Hiatt 2004, 8.

involved any crime. Kagan suggests that in early modern Spain if a hired chronicler fell into disfavour for some reason, he soon found himself jobless on the street; sometimes he could even be violently treated and on occasion, put to death.[116]

Punishment by death for forgery existed long after the Middle Ages. In Scotland, for example, in early modern criminal law it was customary for the fabricators of important papers such as charters or bonds and bills to receive capital punishment. Such a punishment was more likely if the forger had imitated the handwriting and signature of the alleged granter of the deed. Smaller offences could be punished by amputating the hand.[117] This same principle reigned in every part of Great Britain. For example, in early nineteenth-century England the issue of capital punishment for forgeries was widely discussed, and it was observed that forgery was a serious crime that could not be punished too severely. In his *Thoughts On the Punishment Of Death For Forgery* (1830), the British jurist Basil Montagu discussed this penalty in London, noting that forgery was considered a crime of fraud and its immediate effects small, but the later consequences were always alarming. However, this was the time when capital punishment for forgers was finally abolished.[118]

Some forms of punishment remained associated with forgeries and other fabrications. Early modern legal studies, such as Jacob Thomasius's work on plagiarism, listed possible punishments for literary thefts, but in these studies the punishments described were not so severe. In academic circles plagiarists were often subjected to social punishment. Men who were found guilty of stealing other scholars' writings were stigmatised, shamed and excluded from social networks; thereafter, they were unable to find better positions.

The central figure in this case study, Alfonso Ceccarelli, belongs among the unfortunate forgers whose punishments were the most severe possible. Although Ceccarelli claimed in his apology that he was not the only one guilty of unethical action, he was ultimately unable to dissociate himself from the most serious accusations. He was executed under Pope Gregorius XIII on the 9th of July 1583. Ceccarelli was first sentenced to lose his right hand, then he was suffocated and, when pronounced dead, he was burned at the stake. Other versions related that he was decapitated at the bridge of Castel Sant'Angelo

116 Kagan 2009, 39, 50. Moreover, Kagan (2009, 11) notes that in the courts of the Maya rulers in Central America, the kings sometimes ordered unreliable or unsympathetic historiographers to be violently treated if they had worked in the court of the enemy: sometimes their fingers were amputated so that they could no longer exercise their job. This testifies to the wide condemnation of forgeries.

117 See Burnett 1811, 192–193. Burnett mentions that sometimes the person convicted might be hanged with the forged document around his neck.

118 On the (death) penalty for forgery, especially in eighteenth-century England, see the references to the research articles in Eder 2004, 13, n43.

and then buried at the church Santi Celso e Giuliano near the bridge.[119] Apparently, his willingness to confess his many forgeries did not help his case, since his crime became clear through his own confession (*cum crimen non negasset, falsitatis reus ad supplicium ducitur*).[120] The ultimate reason for the severe punishment came from the fact that Ceccarelli had cheated many important families and fabricated official documents, testaments and privileges, not just literary texts.[121]

Final Remarks

Allacci admitted that Ceccarelli must have been a clever and witty man, but he condemned and despised Ceccarelli's behaviour, especially because he forged and distorted modern history, which many reliable scholars had worked to establish. Allacci considered it more damnable to distort modern facts than to forge ancient and in many ways uncertain histories by adding darkness to darkness, as Annio da Viterbo had done with his pseudo-classical forgeries. Many families then living were cheated by Ceccarelli's works. Allacci warned that there were many ordinary and also educated men who longed for noble ancestors (*nobilitatem inhiant*), and Ceccarelli had wrongfully created these ancestors. Some men who recognised the forgeries tried to have Ceccarelli's books destroyed, but the texts were too popular, too widely read and stored in too many libraries; in a word, they were too successful to be destroyed.[122] Thus, libraries preserved fake manuscripts along with genuine documents.

Allacci presented Ceccarelli's story as a warning example so that all men would learn to avoid such nefarious activities. But the more general questions that Ceccarelli's actions pose are also crucial: How often do we in fact rely on unknown sources or on texts that we have not read? What is the distinction between fiction and non-fiction in history? Is the discourse of praise (or other value judgements) still used in writing history? Can forgeries have some positive outcomes? Ceccarelli's self-defence reveals how certain kinds of recurring narrative modes of history were supposed to create reliability, and thus his works and forgeries in general raise many fundamental questions about the proper methods of

119 See the references in Mercati 1951, 72.
120 Allacci 1642, 277.
121 On the accusations presented against Ceccarelli, see his judgement and death sentence ("Sentenza di morte contro di Alfonso Ceccarelli da Bevagna famoso impostore di Scritture antiche"), which is printed in Fontanini 1711, 319–326. Ceccarelli's most serious crimes mentioned here were the composition of the "Confirmation of the Donation of Constantine" (see also Fontanini 1711, 129–131) and several false testaments of noblemen. Fontanini presents the following statement, which mentions that Ceccarelli composed privileges, family trees and histories, thereby cheating noble and illustrious men out of money: "Ac etiam falso composuerit diversa Imperatorum privilegia, genealogias et historias, ac alia praetensorum instrumentorum transumpta, ac illa falso fabricaverit: aliasque falsitates et crimina commiserit in actis causae et causarum hujusmodi deductis et specificatis: pro quibus etiam respective a diversis nobilibus et illustribus personis dictis malis artibus varias pecuniarum summas extorsit. . ." Fontanini 1711, 320–321. Cf. Allacci 1642, 277, and Struve 1703, §XXXI, who mentioned serious crimes related to *fidei commissa*, which ultimately resulted in official accusations against Ceccarelli.
122 Allacci 1642, 255–257.

writing history (for example, concerning truthfulness, source criticism or the motives of the historian). At the same time Ceccarelli's forgeries teach us something about the history of taste, since fraudulent works responded to certain demands and reflected the needs of the time, including the timeless human appetite for magnificent and ancient origins. As Alois Riegl has noted, Ceccarelli was responding to this latter need, the thirst for ancient origins, which was prevalent in the fifteenth century among Italian noble families who wished to find their roots in venerable Roman ancestors or even biblical heroes.[123]

An interesting question is what makes distinguished ancestry so appealing to the point that one is willing to produce forgeries to prove it? It does bring prestige, but why?[124] I would argue that in the case of individuals, one reason is quite often simply vanity, and Ceccarelli's false genealogies served this fashionable and vainglorious desire. But in the case of families, towns, cloisters and whole countries the issue was more complex, since seniority also implies continuity (of power), and ancient roots could justify specific privileges and powerful positions. For example, cloisters were excused from various payments through papal privileges.[125] False genealogies were politically useful: they could be used to attest to a family's nobility, purity or respectability. Thus the question of providing noble ancestry (and noble titles) to commissioners of pedigrees was not only a matter of fashion, but also closely related to the central importance of nobility in history and to the social, economic and legal life of early modern Europe.[126] In religious controversies and many other kinds of cases falsifications could also be helpful in giving legitimate ancestry to ethnic minorities. We know that other fabrication booms took place in Europe, for example, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, along with national romanticism and its collective urge to find mythical and heroic roots for nations.[127] As in earlier centuries a view of the past served the purposes of the present, and forgeries shaped the past "to meet the needs of the living rather than to depict the diversity of the dead."[128]

123 Riegl 1894, 193; Allacci 1642, 259.
124 I thank an anonymous referee for raising the profound question of the prestige of seniority; however, this question cannot be discussed in further detail in the present article.
125 See Constable 1983, 8.
126 I thank an anonymous referee for this comment. On the proliferation of (noble and academic) titles in early modern Germany, see Kivistö 2014, 134–143.
127 For these later cases and similar practices of producing forgeries, see e.g. Porter 2001; Lass 1988. Lass shows how tradition is always "a selective tradition" and how it is sometimes deliberately falsified in order to serve some political regime or nation-building. Thus, in history, past and present always meet. Porter, for his part, discusses the ambiguous figure of James Macpherson, who compiled the poems of Ossian. Macpherson was branded a forger (by Samuel Johnson and others), one who compiled his poems to satisfy Scottish national longings, but other views have suggested instead that he adapted genuine material to fit his ideas of a national epic. I thank an anonymous referee for these useful references. As Constable 1983 has pointed out, each generation has created its own deceptions, and in the twentieth century the techniques of reproduction have called into question the whole idea of originality and authenticity. Constable 1983, 15.
128 Constable 1983, 20–21.

In sum, forgeries demonstrate how political or personal ends can sometimes lead to manipulation of the facts, presumably for the noblest of ends. At the same time forgeries remind us of how much creative work, imagination and, indeed, originality was in fact required of these (admittedly dishonest) writers. Librarians such as Allacci began to work against falsifications by investigating manuscripts and detecting forgeries. Although Allacci definitely did not pay much attention to the potentially positive outcomes of fraudulent works, one of the positive effects can be seen in the strong impetus they gave to the development of critical tools for studying falsifications, thereby enhancing literary and philological criticism.

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From Public to Private: A Curious Chronicle from Nineteenth-century Finland

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Efraim Lindgren (1834–1909), a modest country tailor from south-western Finland, produced a curious chronicle around 1880. Lindgren started by copying annals from Ajantieto, the list of historical events published as an appendix to the Hymnal of the Finnish Lutheran Church. Yet the closer he came to his own time, the less concerned he was with 'big' history. Instead, local events and the chronicler's own life became his main interests. This article explores the biographical and cultural contexts of Lindgren's chronicle. It also touches upon sources of historical consciousness among the non-elite and unschooled in nineteenth-century Finland.

From the late seventeenth century to the early twentieth, the Finnish Lutheran Church promoted literacy among the country's population in accordance with the Protestant idea that people should be able to read the Scriptures for themselves. Yet unlike reading, the skill of writing was not considered necessary for everyone. The fear that schooling would wean rural children from manual labour was often shared by both clergy and common people alike.[1] Nevertheless, before the era of compulsory education there were those from the lower ranks of society who wanted to take up the pen for various purposes.[2] Texts written by individuals with little or no formal schooling have been the subject of recent multi-disciplinary research focusing on the processes and practices of literacy during the long nineteenth century in the Nordic countries.[3] The present article has its background in this research, which emphasises the active role of self-educated people in producing and disseminating written texts.

1 See Mäkinen 2007.
2 The decree for establishing primary schools was given in 1866, but it was not until 1921 that the law for mandatory school attendance was passed in the Finnish Parliament.
3 See e.g. Kuismin & Driscoll 2013.

Mari Isoaho (ed.)
Past and Present in Medieval Chronicles
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Both private and public motives induced the Finnish common people to write, and practical and ideological motives were intertwined. In part, the desire to write was spawned by Pietist movements, which emphasised conversion and personal spirituality. Documents published by Matias Akiander[4] and those stored in the archives of the Finnish Society of Church History include hymns, sermons, diaries, memoirs and letters written by farmers, crofters and rural craftsmen, among others. They express various motives for writing: writing down hymn texts to be sung at gatherings, mentoring others, soul searching or recording the course of a revival movement to which one has belonged.

In 1908 Sakari Loimaranta, a student of theology, donated to the Finnish Society of Church History a collection of miscellaneous manuscripts belonging to Efraim Lindgren (1834–1909), a modest tailor from Laitila, some sixty kilometres from Turku, the former capital. The collection mostly consists of texts – most of them religious – copied by Lindgren, but there are also some writings of his own, such as diaries. There is no manuscript in longhand by Lindgren among his papers: he wrote in print style. On the other hand, one has to keep in mind that the writings filling one archival case may well represent only some of the materials Efraim copied and wrote during his lifetime. Lindgren's archive includes diaries kept from 1888 to 1903; the entries deal with weather, work, prices and purchases. There are frequent entries in which he mentions buying paper and ink. Lindgren had also collected manuscripts written by others. For example, he got hold of a sermon written by Nils Helenius, the chaplain of Laitila, from 1874.

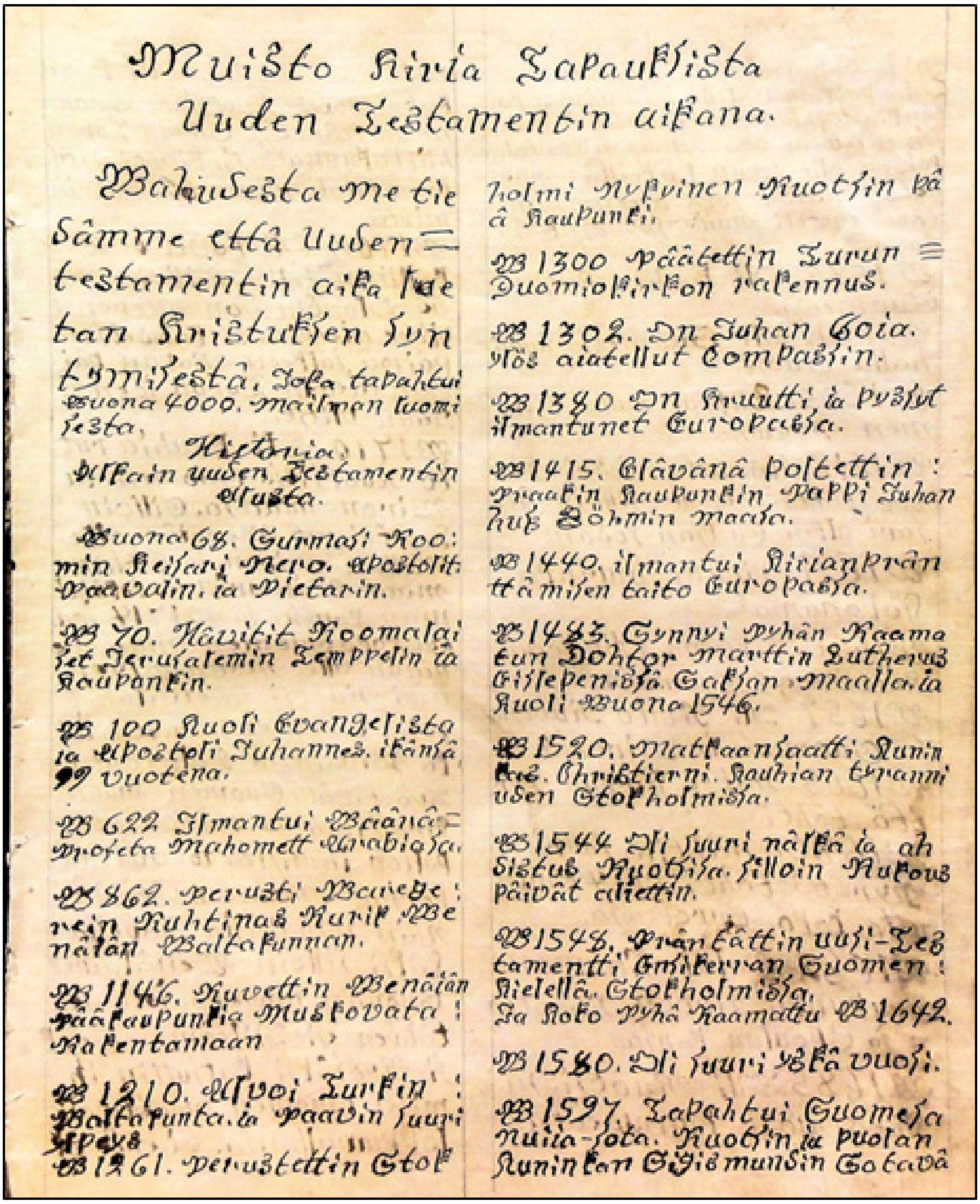
In the archival catalogue of the Finnish Society of Church History Lindgren's archive is listed as 'Papers of the Prayerists'. The roots of this Pietist revival movement go back to Liisa Eerikintytär's conversion in the parish of Santtio, in south-western Finland, in 1756. The ecstatic movement soon spread to parts of Laitila. A new upswing reached the area in the early nineteenth century,[5] and there was another resurgence in the 1840s.[6] The ecstatic form gradually gave way to quiet types of worship. Religious texts were read and home prayer meetings were organised, but the Prayerists usually attended regular Lutheran masses as well. Several texts in Lindgren's archive point to the Prayerist heritage, such the hand-written copies of *Augsburgin tunnustuksen puolustus* (Philip Melanchthon, *Apologia Confessio Augustanae*, 1531) and the visions of Anna Lagerblad (1745–1811), a well-known religious

4 Akiander edited seven volumes of *Historiska Upplysningar om Religiösa rörelserna i Finland i äldre och senare tider* from 1857 to 1863.
5 Koivisto 1976, 366–375; Heino 1976, 99–100.
6 See Heino 1976, 189–190.

figure in south-western Finland. However, the description in the archival catalogue refers to the nature of the copied texts, not to Lindgren's personal faith.

Efraim Lindgren's chronicle is a self-stitched booklet (17.7 cm x 22.5 cm), written with print-style letters on ordinary paper. Apart from the title – *Muisto-Kirja merkillisimmistä tapauksista* (*Memorial Book of the Most Remarkable Events*) – the text is set in two columns. There are also some watercolour illustrations. Lindgren's chronicle is part of a collection of texts that have been bound together, with a leather spine and cardboard covers. The compilation consists of two issues of *Kristillisiä Sanomia* ('Christian News') from 1862 and 1863, three leaflets published in the series *Lukemisia kansalle* ('Reading for the People'), the topics of which are bears, whales and the telegraph, a map of ancient Israel drawn by Lindgren and embellished with references to the Bible, as well as an eleven-page manuscript in Lindgren's hand, entitled *Ensimmäisen Sunnuntaina Adventissä* ('On the First Sunday of Advent'). The chronicle is the last text in the compilation, the meaning of which can only be guessed. One thing is evident, however: Lindgren thought that these texts were worth saving.

Lindgren's 'Memorial Book' starts as a more or less faithful copy of a printed popular chronicle called *Ajantieto* (literally 'Knowledge of Time'), but the model is discarded in the middle of the text: the focus shifts from general history to local events and finally touches upon the chronicler's own life in retrospective diary-like entries. The overall impression of the text is curious indeed. Why did a country tailor, an unschooled man from south-western Finland, choose the archaic genre of the chronicle in 1880? What were the sources of historical knowledge in a semi-literate society in which Lindgren lived? For whom did Lindgren write?


Muisto Kiria Tapauksista
Uuden Testamentin aikana.

Wahuksesta me tie
dämme että uuden=
testamentin aika lue
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tymisestä. Joka tapahtui
Wuona 4000. mailman luomi
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Historia.
Alkain uuden Testamentin
alusta.
Wuona 68. Surmasi Roo:
min Keisari Nero. apostolit
Pawalin. ia Pietarin.
W 70. Hawitit Roomalai
set Jerusalemin Templin ia
Kaupungin.
W 100 Kuoli Evangelista
ia Apostoli Juhannes. ikänsä
99 wuotena.
W 622 Ilmantui Wäärä=
Profeta Mahomett Arabiasa.
W 862. perusti Wenäje:
nin Ruhtinas Rurik We
nälän Waltakunnan.
W 1146. Ruvettin Wenäjän
pääkaupunkia Muskowata:
Rakentamaan
W 1210. Alwoi Turkin:
Waltakunta. ia paawin suuri
Apeys
W 1261. perustettin Stok
holmi Nykyinen Ruotsin pää
kaupunki.
W 1300 Päätettin Turun =
Tuomiokirkon rakennus.
W 1302. On Juhan Goia.
Yös aiatellut Compassin.
W 1340 On Ruutti, ia pyssyt
ilmantunet Europasa.
W 1415. Elävänä poltettin :
Praakin Kaupungin Pappi Juhan
hus Böhmin maasa.
W 1440. ilmantui Kirjainpran
täämisen taito Europasa.
W 1483. Syntyi Pyhän Raama
tun Dohtor Martin Lutherus
Eislebenisä Saksan maalla. ia
Kuoli Wuona 1546.
W 1520. Mattkaansaatti Kunin
kas. Christierni. Kauhian tyranni
uden Stokholmisa.
W 1544 Oli suuri nälkä ia ah
distus Ruotsisa. silloin Rukous
päivät alettin.
W 1548. Präntättin uusi-Tes
tamentti Agrikolan Suomen:
Kielellä. Stokholmisa.
Ja koko Pyhä Raamattu W 1642.
W 1580. Oli suuri yksi wuosi.
W 1597. Tapahtui Suomesa
Nuija-sota. Ruotsin ia puolan
Kuningan Sigismundin Sotawä

Picture 1. Title page of Efraim Lindgren's Chronicle.

Efraim Lindgren's Life

To understand Lindgren's chronicle one needs to know more about Efraim's life, as well as about the social and cultural contexts in which his texts were produced. Information on Lindgren can be found in three kinds of sources: parish records, oral lore and the tailor's own texts. Parish records reveal that Efraim's father, Erik Mikkelinpoika, was born in 1792 as a crofter's son in Vahantaka, a village in the municipality of Laitila. He worked as a farmhand at the Ala-Sunila farm in the nearby village of Valko and married one of the farmer's daughters, Liisa Matintytär (b. 1799), who had had an illegitimate child, Eva, in 1818. The marriage took place in November of 1823, and the couple's first child was born in March 1824. Erik and Liisa became crofters at Ala-Sunila. They were good readers, receiving

mostly top marks on their annual examinations. Efraim too became a good reader, and he did well in the confirmation classes in 1849. Because he read well and knew his Catechism, he was given a copy of the New Testament as a prize. According to the parish records, Efraim usually took communion twice a year as was the custom.

As for his writing skills, Lindgren may have sought a teacher from among his relatives, neighbours or the clergy, or perhaps he had simply taught himself to write by copying printed texts. Lindgren's writing ability was more of an exception than the rule in his surroundings. A rural correspondent for the newspaper *Ilmarinen* wrote in 1878 that Laitila could not boast of citizens with good writing skills. To prove his point, the author quoted poorly written passages from minutes kept at a communal meeting.[7] According to more or less reliable statistics, in 1880 about 17 per cent of the population over ten years of age in the district of Turku and Pori knew how to write.[8] Many self-taught writers were tailors by occupation, which is not surprising as both sewing and writing involve fine motor skills.

According to Akseli Kajantola, an amateur local historian, Efraim lived on the edge of the village of Valko in Laitila. He mostly sewed work clothes and fur-lined coverlets; on his small patch of land he grew flowers and turnips, whose seeds he later sold. Kajantola's short narrative, based on oral lore, paints a picture of an eccentric individual: Lindgren built himself a tiny church with a pulpit and decorated the walls with his own paintings. In the summertime his church attracted a lively crowd of young and old, to whom the tailor preached and sold his flowers. Rewarded with coins and material goods, he was willing to repeat his sermon if given a drink. Sometimes he was too drunk to preach. Lindgren was not a religious leader, and the life around his church was not always pure in nature.[9]

It is interesting to compare Kajantola's narrative based on oral lore with Lindgren's *elämäkerta* (biography) included in his undated manuscript *Saarna Kirja koti hartauden tarpeeksi. Mukaillut. Efraim Lindgren* (*A Book of Sermons for Home Use. Modified. By Efraim Lindgren*). This home-made booklet, made of cardboard, is divided into columns, but the sermons are missing; the booklet contains only the life story of Lindgren, written in the third person and positioned as a preface. It starts with the author's birth date and the names of his parents. The rest of the text reads like this:

> As a little boy, Efraim was herding his parents' lambs. Up to the age of 12. And then other Animals. In 1849 he was confirmed. Because his weak and sickly body did not withstand hard work, he became a tailor in 1854 and lived with his parents up to the year 1864. Then with his brothers Samu and Juha he built a croft

7 *Ilmarinen*, 10 August 1878.
8 Leino-Kaukiainen 2007, 432. The first primary school started in Laitila in 1873.
9 Kajantola 1954, 472–473.

> on the land of Tuuna-Väiskä and cultivated a bit of land and called that place Ruodsila. And he established a garden in which he planted apple trees, which he had grown from seeds. He sowed fir tree seeds in 1870, and then he planted saplings around his garden. He also grew oak trees and bird cherry trees by planting saplings.[10]

Lindgren tells nothing about his religious views in his life story, even though the text is part of a manuscript meant to consist of sermons. The narrative is also silent about his copying and publishing activities. In addition to *Kuusi hengellistä laulua* ('Six Spiritual Songs', 1861) mentioned by Kajantola, Lindgren had given out three other broadsheets, consisting of hymns or songs.[11] He might have sold them during his trips to the market in the neighbouring towns or to the villagers – or perhaps someone else did the selling on his behalf.[12]

The documents in Lindgren's archive reveal that the tailor had an interest in languages other than Finnish. A line written in Swedish in one of his notebooks reads: 'Efraim Lindgren Tillhör denna Bok År 1861' ('This Book Belongs to Efraim Lindgren in the Year 1861'), and a diary entry in 1899 mentions that Lindgren had bought books in Swedish. His archive also includes a list of ecclesiastical terms in Finnish, Swedish, German and Russian, written in Lindgren's hand. It is difficult to know why Efraim told so little about himself; perhaps he meant to continue his narrative. As it is, the narrative places emphasis on the garden and the work of growing trees from seeds.[13] Needless to say, a preface of this kind in a collection of sermons was extraordinary indeed.

10 'Pikku=poikana paimensi E Wanhempiensa. Lampaita 12=ta ikä=vuoteensa asti. ja sitte muita Eläimiä. W 1849 kävi hän Rippi=koulun. mutta Ettei hänen heikko ja kivulloinen Ruumi=rakennus siettänyt. Raskasta tytötä niin meni hän skraatarin oppiin. Ja 5.si. Wuotta oppia käytyänsä rupesi hän pitejän skaatariksi W 1854 ja asui Wanhempainsa tykönä Wuoteen 1864. silloin hän kahden Weljensä Samun ja Juhan kansa rakensi torpan Tuuna-väiskän maahan ja otti vähän maan=viljellystä ja kutsui sen paikan Ruodsila. ia istutti siihen puu=tarhan niistä Omena=puun taimista kuin hän siemenistä oli istuttanut. kuusen siemeniä kylvi hän Wuona 1870. ja niitä kuusen taimia hän sitte istutti puu=tarhansa ympäri. Tammen omenista hän viljeli taimia istuttamalla. kuin myös Tuomen marjoista.' Translations A.K.

11 *Kristillisiä wirsiä kääntyneille ja armon halaawaisille sieluille*. Pränttäyttänyt Efraim Lindgren (Turku 1861); *Sipirjan Laulu, kokoonpannut Turun Linnassa 20 päiwänä Syyskuussa wuonna 1827 Johan Lillius Eurajoen pitäjästä ja Irjanteen kylästä*. Pränttäyttänyt Efraim Lindgren Laitilasta (Turku: 1862); Kaksi hengellistä wirttä. Kirjoittanut wuonna 1861 Efraim Lindgren. J. E. (Rauma: 1891).

12 The broadsheets published in the early 1860s were printed in Turku. The fourth broadsheet, released in 1891, was printed in Rauma, a small town in south-west Finland. Efraim Lindgren is mentioned as the writer (signifying a copyist in this case), and the publisher was 'J. E.' It is not known for whom the initials stand, or why there was a delay of thirty years in releasing the broadsheet.

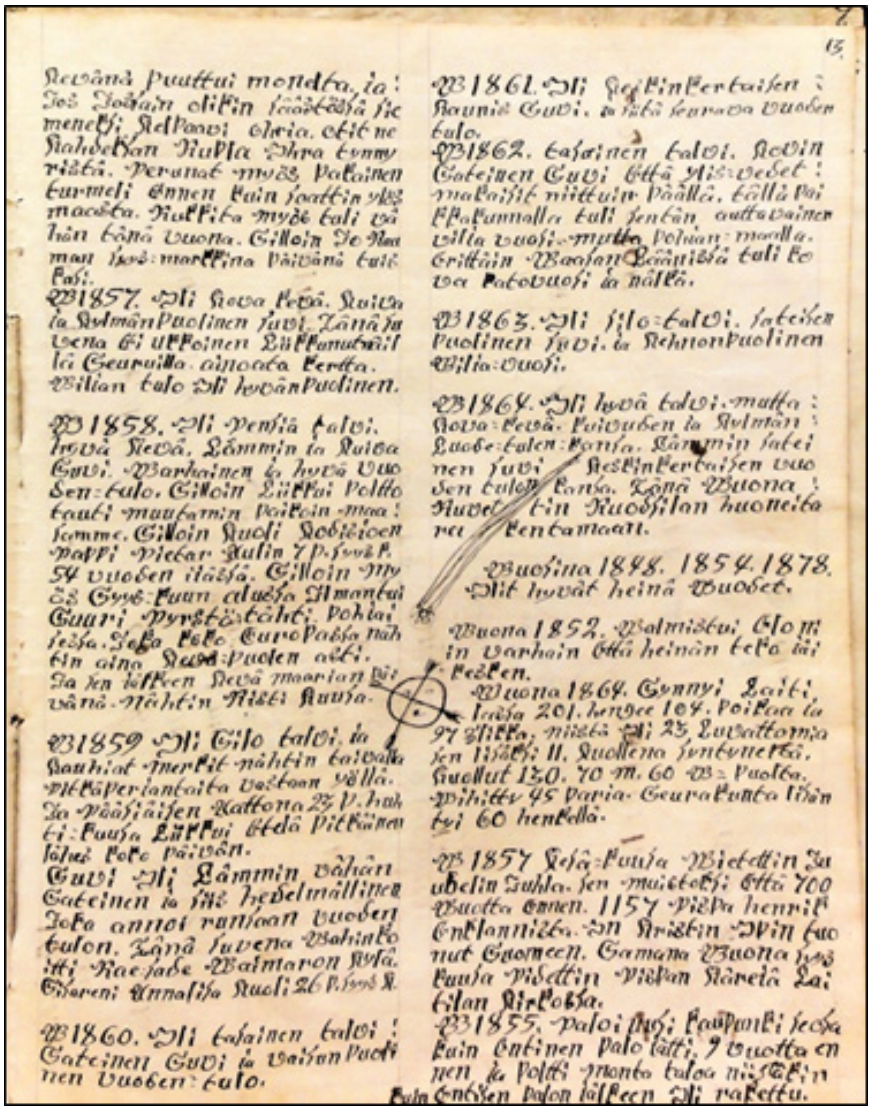
13 According to the Laitila parish records for 1867–1876, Lindgren is still listed in his father's household, and in the records for 1877–1886, his brother Juha (Johan) is not included in the household.

A History of the World in Lindgren's Chronicle

Historical consciousness among the unschooled in nineteenth-century Finland drew on both oral and written sources. Traditional lore transmitted information about the origins of place names, the rulers of the country and the times of persecution, among other topics.[14] Natural disasters and wars, news of which circulated both orally and on printed broadsheets, were among the subjects of songs, which generally dealt with current events, yet the passage of time turned the content into history. The image of the past was also shaped by the Bible. The Scriptures had a beginning and an end: the vicissitudes of the first generations, the wanderings of the people of Israel, the passion of Christ and the phases of his disciples. Newspapers included articles on history, but they did not reach the Finnish-speaking masses until the last decades of the nineteenth century.

The most important source of historical knowledge for underprivileged people in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was *Ajantieto* ('Knowledge/Information about Time'), a chronicle published as an appendix to the Hymnal of the Lutheran Church, a book found in the majority of Finnish households.[15] The chronicle, along with the *Kalendarium Perpetuum*, was first included in the Hymnal in 1701 and updated in various editions up to the last version published in 1885. *Ajantieto* grew in length over time, but the first remarkable event remained the same: the flood that took place in 1656 after the Creation of the world. The chronicle served a meaningful role because of the scarcity of history books in Finnish until the last decades of the nineteenth century.[16] The annals – recorded events of specific years – in the earliest editions were rather laconic, but over the years the style became more verbose, and some entries expanded into short narratives.[17]

14 Lehtipuro 1982.
15 Kauranen & Kuismin 2011, 284.
16 The word *ajantieto* was occasionally used as a synonym for history. Kauranen & Kuismin 2011, 284. See also Neovius 1911.
17 Melander 1957, 40.



Picture 2. A page from Efraim's Chronicle.

Efraim Lindgren's chronicle starts as a more or less freely copied version of the early editions of *Ajantieto*, but the title of his text, *Muisto-Kirja merkillisimmistä tapauksista* (*Memorial Book of the Most Remarkable Events*), refers to *Ajantieto*'s subtitle, which was included in many of its later editions: *Muisto Kirja Tapauksista Uuden Testamentin aikana* (*Memorial Book of the Events from the Time of the New Testament*). Lindgren's orthography is typical of unschooled writers. For example, the punctuation is idiosyncratic and there are traces of the local dialect in the text.

'As we know, Christ was born 4,000 years after the Creation of the world', writes Lindgren at the beginning of his chronicle. The first annals record the execution of the disciples Peter and Paul by Emperor Nero (in the year 68 AD) and the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem two years later. The third entry concerns the death of John the Apostle, and the fourth leaps to the year 622, recounting the arrival of the 'false prophet Mahomet in Arabia'. Lindgren notes down the birth of the Russian Empire, the founding of Moscow, Stockholm and the Turkish Empire. He also mentions the inventions

of the compass, gunpowder and the printing press, the Club War[18] and the birth of Luther, among other things. Lindgren's annals of the seventeenth century mainly concern crop failures, epidemics and extraordinary celestial events:

> 1601. Growing season in Finland was disrupted by severe frosts.
>
> 1603. The plague spread through Finland.
>
> 1618. A huge comet appeared in the winter. Then the Emperor began the German war.
>
> 1621. A total eclipse of the sun.
>
> 1650s. In those times there were years of crop failure in Finland.
>
> 1657. The plague was in Sweden, Finland and Estonia.
>
> 1665. A bright comet was seen.
>
> 1680. A huge comet was seen. For nearly four months. Throughout all of Europe.[19]
>
> 1682. Fire in Rauma [Finland]. The church, courthouse and school were burnt down.
>
> 1696 and 1697. Hard years of crop failures in Sweden, Finland and Estonia. In the Turku Diocese more than 62,000 people miserably starved to death.

'Terrible Signs were seen in the sky at night on Good Friday', wrote Lindgren in 1859.[20] The entry Lindgren dedicated to *Isoviha* ('The Great Wrath'), the Russian invasion and subsequent military occupation of Finland during the last years of the Great Northern War, differs from the account in *Ajantieto*. Lindgren's version is longer than most of his other annals, and the tone of the narrative is emotional. In naming the period of oppression Lindgren refers to oral tradition:

> In 1714 the whole of Finland was taken by Russia. But in 1721 Sweden drove the Russians out of the land of Finland. They [the Russians] angrily burned and robbed the land of Finland, tortured and killed many people, and took the best men with them. It was with such an angry hand that the Russian left the land of Finland, and thus our fore-fathers called it the *Big Ryssä*. Finland was left with hardly any people. There were only two hundred thousand people. And they were mostly the old or helpless children. For the Russians took the men away....[21]

18 In 1596 the peasants, mostly from Ostrobothnia, rose up in rebellion (see e.g. Lavery 2006, 42).

19 'W 1601. Oli Suomessa suuri halla=vuosi. / W 1603. Liikkui rutto Suomen maassa. / W 1618. ilmantui suuri Pyrstö=tähti talvella. silloin Keisari alkoi Saksan sodan. / W 1621. Pimeni Aurinko=Kokonansa. / W 1650. aikoina. Olit kovat Katovuodet Suomessa. / W 1657. Oli Rutto Ruotsissa. Suomessa ja Wirossa. / W 1665. Näkyi Kirkas Pyrstö=tähti. / W 1680. Nähtin suuri pyrstö=tähti. liki 4 kuukautta. koko Europassa.'

20 'Kauhiat Merkit nähtin taivalla Pitkäperjantaita vastaan yöllä.'

21 'W 1714. joutui koko Suomen maa Wenäjän alle. Mutta W 1721. ajoi Ruotsi Wenälaiset poies Suomen maasta. jotka Wihaisena Polttivat ja Ryöstivät Suomen maan Kiruttivat ja tappoivat palion ihmisiä. jo ottivat parhat miehet myötänsä Näin vihaisella Kädella Läksi silloin Wenäläinen Suomen maasta. joka sen tähden esi=Isiltämme Isoksi Ryssäksi kutsuttin. ihmiset Suomen maasta olit loppumallansa. Ei enä ollut kuin kaksi=sata tuhatta henkiä. Neekkin Enimmäksi osaksi Wanhoja ja avuttomia Lapsia. sillä Wenäläinen Wei Miehet pois.'

Laitila, like many other places, had suffered from the Russian occupation. According to the history of Laitila there had been torture, and some people had been captured by the Russians.[22]

Lindgren's annals do not always follow chronological order. For example, some eighteenth-century events – an eclipse of the sun, the building of the fortress in Helsinki and the practice of growing potatoes in Finland – are listed among the nineteenth-century entries. Also the brief mention of Finland's changed position from being part of the kingdom of Sweden to becoming an autonomous Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire in 1808–09 has been added later.

After an entry for 1709 that mentions a cold, long winter there is a change of focus: the chronicler leaves the general and turns to the particular. 'Now we travel with history. To Laitila,' Lindgren declares, shifting his attention to local events. In so doing, he creates a text that does not follow the example of *Ajantieto*. At this point the chronicler uses the third person plural that had figured in the beginning of the chronicle. This choice emphasises the role of the narrator leading the reader to a new turn in his historical story.

History of Laitila

It is not possible to know whether Lindgren planned to write about local history from the outset or whether the decision occurred in the process of writing. After this change of focus turn, the text first concentrates on Laitila's church and the clergymen of the parish. 'Juhan Munttin' (Johan Montin), whose portrait can be seen in the church vestry, was the vicar of Laitila at the end of the eighteenth century, explains Lindgren. He goes on to state that '*Hete*' (Nils Hedeen) then succeeded Munttin, and it was during his tenure of office in 1792 that there was a fire at the church. The fire started with a spark blown from the hearth of the Mattila farm; fortunately, the Lord provided yet another snowfall in the spring, which made it easier to find wood in the forest to make the needed repairs on the church.[23] These pieces of information clearly belong to oral history. There are mistakes in dates: Johan Montin (ca 1680–1745) was not the vicar of Laitila at the end of the eighteenth century. Moreover, the fire actually took place when Johan Helsingberg (1765–1812) was in office.[24] Also the following passage seems to stem from stories Lindgren had heard:

22 Koivisto 1976, 263–264.
23 Lindgren's papers include another, shorter chronicle. There is a mention of the fire at the Laitila Church in 1880.
24 Koivisto 1976, 283.

> Juhan Helsenberc died in 1813. He was succeeded by Dean and Vicar Jakob Amnell in 1816. And his spouse Brita-Kristina Hästesko. Died in 1818. But he held the office of the vicar in Laitila for almost 27 years. He was also acting as a District Dean for a while. It was during his time that the Churchyard was cleaned up so that the bones were no longer lying around, but had to be hidden in the earth. It was also then that the Church was extended on its eastern side. It was during his time that the Drawings for the Belfry were ordered. But he died on the 23rd of January 1843, and the Building of the Belfry was set aside. His Memorial statue still stands in the Churchyard. He was born in 1764.[25]

Lindgren occasionally follows the life of clergymen even after they had left the parish, probably using newspapers as his source.[26] Some entries dealing with the repairs and construction work on the church are animated by Lindgren's coloured drawings of the Laitila Church and its belfry with appropriate captions. In addition to the portrait of Hedeen, Lindgren mentions the memorial statue of Simon Appelgren in the Laitila cemetery.

Efraim's chronicle occasionally includes yearly statistics: the number of births, deaths and marriages in Laitila. For example, Lindgren records that in 1865, 173 babies were born, 92 male and 81 female. Twenty-four of all the children born were illegitimate. Thirty-seven couples were married, and 133 people died. These kinds of figures were collected by the vicar from parish records and read out from the pulpit during the mass on every New Year's Day. Many rural correspondents included the statistics in their reports to the newspapers. However, the Laitila figures did not appear in *Sanomia Turusta*, the newspaper read in Laitila, until the 1880s. Either Lindgren had a good memory or he made notes during the church service – or he asked for the information from the parish office.[27] Lindgren also mentions individual deaths and their causes: 'In June, Juhan Samuel's son of Tuunaväiskä died at the age of 24. He became sick to death after swimming in Peräjärvi. And old Aunt Rikina died in the spring of 1850.' An entry in 1853 is the most comprehensive, listing all the people who had died in the village

25 'Juhan Helsenberc Kuoli W. 1813. Ja hänen siaansa tuli Provasti Ja Kirkko=herra. Jakob Amnell. W 1816. hänen puolisonsa Briitta=Kristina Hästesko. Kuoli W 1818. Mutta hän itse teki Kirkkoherran virkaa laitilassa lähes 27 vuotta Läänin Provastin Wirkka teki hän myös yhden aian. hänen aikanansa siivottin Kirkko=tarha ettei Ruumien luita enä ajellut maan päällä. vaan ne piti multaan kätkettämän. silloin myös Enettin Kirkko tarhan itäisestä päästä. hänen aikanansa pyydettin Tornin Riitinkiä. Mutta hän kuoli 23. päivä Tammi=kuusa Wuona 1843. ja Tornin Rakennus jäi toistaseksi. hänen Muisto patsansa seiso Wielä kirkko-tarhassa. hän oli syntynyt W 1764.'

26 A rural correspondent for *Ilmarinen* reported the number of newspapers and magazines subscriptions in Laitila. For S*anomia Turusta* there were 57 subscriptions in 1878. One farmer had subscribed to seven different papers and magazines. (Pitäjän Poika, Laitilasta, *Ilmarinen*, 13 January 1877.)

27 There are similar entries in the diary of Juho Valtonen (1856–1930), a crofter's son from Laitila. For example, Valtonen wrote on the first of January 1880 that more than 200 children were born, more than one hundred people died and marriage banns were read for 68 couples. (Kauranen 2009)

of Valko.[28] Sometimes there is a short biographical account of the deceased. These passages evoke the *personalia* part of a funeral sermon or an obituary published in a newspaper.

The years 1867 and 1868 were the time of the Great Famine in Finland, during which eight per cent of the population died. In the annal for1867 Lindgren writes that there were sick people and many deaths in Laitila:

> The mistress of the Tuunaväiskä farm died on the 18th of March. On the 24th of April four corpses were transported past Ruotsila, all together. [...] It was a hard winter, then severe frost and lots of snow. And a severe burning disease. 12 people died in our Parish in one week. Miserable hunger and also stealing.[29]

Lindgren also deals with the Great Famine in a separate passage entitled *Muisto Kirja Nälkä Wuosista* ('Memorial Book of the Years of Famine'). 'There was Great Hunger in Our Country', Lindgren writes. There are no local details in this description of the plight; the depiction could have been applied to almost any place in Finland. Nevertheless, it is interesting that the account of the famine years is called *muisto-kirja* – a chronicle is embedded in the chronicle, which emphasises the scope of the misery the famine had caused in people's lives. In depicting the famine, Lindgren refers to the Old Testament: 'And it is true that those who eat will not be satisfied, as the Lord's Prophet foretold.'[30]

There were also many others who shared the belief in God's punishments.[31] One of the texts Lindgren had copied was a long narrative poem inspired by the Lisbon earthquake of 1755 and published in 1756 by Abraham Achrenius (1706–1769), a Finnish clergyman. Achrenius saw the catastrophe as a punishment of the Catholic Church, but his text also points out that Lutherans should take the earthquake as a sign to repent – there had been omens of punishment in Finland too: fires and lightning had killed people and animals. Obviously, Lindgren was a man of the old mentality, informed by traditional knowledge and ways of thinking.

Historian Jouko Vahtola has analysed the responses of 14 Finnish peasants to an essay competition on the topic 'How to prevent crop failures?' organised by the Finnish Literature Society in 1857–58. According to Vahtola, there were three types of responses, one of which represented a traditional, Bible-

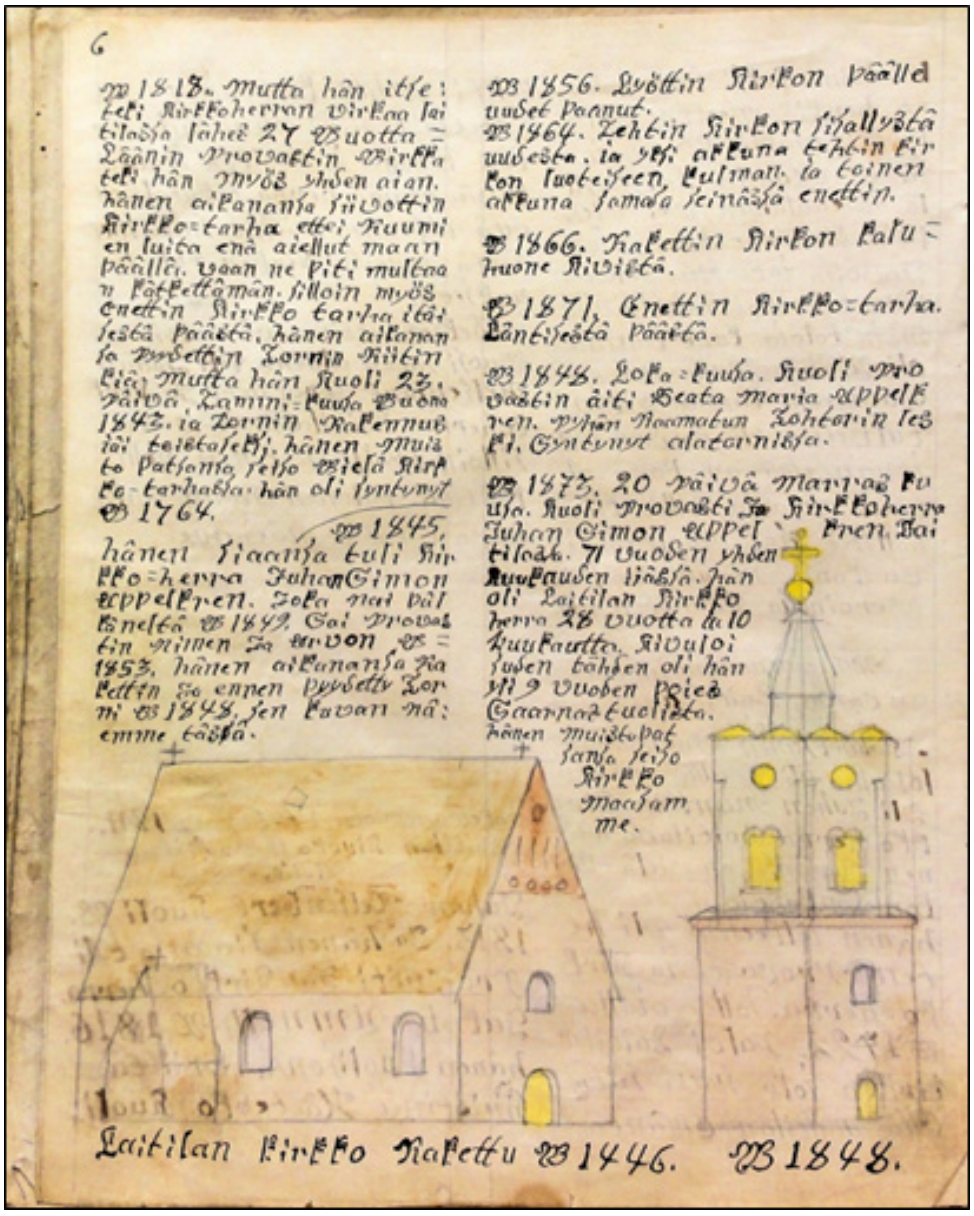
28 'Kuolleet Walvon Kylässä 1853. Mikhael Nyykoort. / Äijälän piika Wilhelmina. / Yli Sunilan Muori. / Mathias Ruutman. / Fredrikka. Skraadar Palmrasin vaimo / helena ittellisen Ruustenin vaimo. / Wanha Sotamies Waali. / Kylä Puhjun Faari / ~~Yli äijälän muori~~ Helkkulan Faari) / hakalan tytär Maria helena. / Torpar Kusta Lungrenin 3 Lasta. / Ylipastilan 9vuotinen poika Wilhelm / Kylä puhjun vähä lapsi.' The names of the children are not mentioned.

29 'Oli sairaita ja kuoli Runsaasti. 18 p. Maalis:kuusa Kuoli tuunaväiskän Emäntä. 24 p. huhti k. Wiettin 4 Ruumista Ruodsilan sivuitse yhdessä postissa.[...] Silloin oli Luja talvi Kovilla pakaisilla ja paliolla lumella. Sekä kovalla polte taudilla. Seurakunnasamme Kuoli 12 välin yhtenä Wiikkona. nälkä ja varkkaus myös olit Surkiat.'

30 Isaiah 9:19.

31 According to Martyn Lyons, Spanish 'memory books' noted miraculous and astounding events, cholera epidemics, floods and storms, fires and earthquakes. 'Apart from the material damage caused by such destructive events, the litany of disasters often had a religious dimension, as they might be seen as divine punishment for human wickedness.' (Lyons 2013a, 231–232)

based view. Crop failures were decreed from above: man himself, through his evil ways and breaches of morality, was to blame for the punishment that God inflicted in the form of crop failure, and man was incapable of eliminating the causes other than by returning to a life lived strictly in accordance with Christian virtues. One should treat the temporal authorities and the prevailing social order with respect, as these were ordained by God.[32] Efraim Lindgren fits this conservative type of response in Vahtola's grouping.[33]



Picture 3. Laitila Church. Efraim Lindgren's illustration.

32 Vahtola 1978, 242–243.

33 The second type of response was expressed by writers who possessed a firm Christian outlook, but attempted to explain the years of crop failure by appealing to reason and experience, considering it their Christian duty to be industrious and well-informed in trying to eliminate the causes of crop failure and alleviate its consequences. The third attitude represented a liberal view. Man and human reason were viewed as the sole agents able to influence the existing state of affairs in that man was deemed potentially capable of understanding fully the systems operative in nature and calculating in advance the occurrence of crop failure. (Vahtola 1978, 243)

From Family History to Personal Life

In addition to general and local history, Lindgren's chronicle concerns family history and some events in Efraim's own life. The entry of 1791 records the birth of Erik Mikkelinpoika, Lindgren's father, and the next annal, for 1799, starts with the birth of Liisa Matintytär, Lindgren's mother. The chronicler records Erik's and Liisa's marriage in 1823 and lists their children, first presenting the seven boys. Efraim, the fifth, is given more attention than his brothers by the mention of the time of his birth:

> Boy Kustaf. Born in March 1824. Boy Samuel born in August 1825. Boy Juhannes born in February 1827. Boy Adam born in December 1831. **Boy Efraim born on the 1st of May between 3 and 4 p.m. 1834**. Boy Matias born in July 1838. Boy Abraham born in June 1841.[34]

After this, Lindgren turned to a sister, Annaliisa, who was born in 1828. She was married in 1855 and died on the 26th of September 1859 at five o'clock in the morning, after having lived 30 years, 11 months and 2 days. Her only child, Maria, was born on the 27th of March 1855. Lindgren must have drawn the information from his parents' record of the births and deaths in the family; this kind of information was often written on the inside covers of the family Hymnal or Bible. Apparently, Annaliisa was the only one of the Lindgren children to have married and borne a child. The list of siblings reveals that two of the youngest children died shortly after birth, another child died at the age of two, and one child was born dead. Juhannes (Juha in Lindgren's life story) died in 1878. Lindgren also writes that his sister was born in December 1818 and died in December 1880. This refers to the child to whom his mother gave birth in her youth. Why does Lindgren not mention her name? Was it because Eva was illegitimate?

The entry of 1864 includes the following mention: 'This was the year during which the building of the rooms of Ruodsila was started,'[35] which refers to the cottage in which Efraim and his brother Samu lived. There are a few instances at the end of the chronicle in which the narration changes from third person to first. This happens first in the entry of 1866:

34 'Poika Kustaf. syntynyt Maalis kuusa. W 1824. Poika Samuel Syntynyt Elo=kuusa W 1825. Poika. Juhannes. Syntynyt Helme=kuusa W 1827. Poika Adam Syntynyt Joulu=kuusaW 1831. Poika Efraim Syntynyt 1 päivä Touko=kuusa. k 3. 4. välillä Ehtona W 1834. Poika Matias syntynyt Heinä=kuusa W 1838. = Poika Abraham Syntynyt Kesä=kuusa W 1841.'
35 Tänä Wuona Ruvettin Ruodsilan huoneita rakentamaan.

A storehouse by the church was built of stone, then I worked there for 2 days. On the 29th of July I was at the church in Uusikaupunki. On the 1st of August I ate new potatoes. [...] Many people have died of an infectious disease. But I haven't found out how many people had died in Laitila.[36]

There was not much snow in the winter of 1870; the summer came early and the lake was free of ice on the 21st of April, writes the chronicler. The first person is used again: 'I sowed fir tree seeds for the first time,' mentions Lindgren, and goes on to write that he planted the fir saplings around the garden – a piece of information also included in Lindgren's life story. In addition to oral stories and his own memory, Lindgren must have consulted the volumes of his diary in writing about these details of his life.

The year 1870 saw the death of the chronicler's father, Erik Mikkelinpoika. According to Efraim's chronicle, the father passed away on the 5th of July at the age of 79 years, 5 months and 28 days. The entry includes an excerpt from a hymn of repentance that expresses the chronicler's feelings in thinking about death:

O! Jesus come to my rescue
So that I would repent
And turn to you
Before the Gate of Grace is closed
So that you would find me prepared
To take me with you when you'll return.'[37]

The passages in which Efraim reveals something of his life are not numerous. The focus of the latter part of the chronicle is on local events in general. Lindgren's chronicle can hardly be classified as autobiographical writing, unlike some other Finnish nineteenth-century texts. For example, Pietari Västi (1751–1826), a land-owning farmer from western Finland, wrote a chronological list describing important events in his life – when he was born, married, took over his father's farm, was elected a juryman. On several occasions, Västi comments on his choices: he worked on another farm or enlisted as a solder as a young man because he wanted to learn and know more about the ways of the world. Abraham Hjerpe (1766–1833), a churchwarden and former soldier from Ostrobothnia, was another

36 'Rakettin Kirkon kalu huone kiveistä. sillon tein 2 päivä työtä siihen 29 p. heinäk Olin uudenkaupunkin Kirkossa. 1 p Elo=kuusa Söin uusia perunie. Kulku:tauti polte on tänä vuona Wienyt maan poveen monta ihmistä. Mutta en ole saanut tiettä montako Laitilassa on kuollut.'

37 '[H]einä=k.sa 5 p. Kuoli Isäni Erik Mikkelin poika Lindgren 79 vuoden 5 kuukauden 28 päivän iässä O! Jesu riennä avuksen. Ett Kiirust parannuksen teen. Sun tykös ennen= Kääntyisin. kuin Armon Ovi pannaan kiin. ett valmisna mun löytäisit. Tultuas tyköös korjaisit.'

non-elite writer who presented his life as a chronological list of events, devoid of self-reflexivity.[38] What unites these texts is the fact that they are retrospective – the entries were not written shortly after the events had taken place, as is the case with family chronicles or notebooks in which people wrote down things they wanted to remember. In Sweden these 'memory books' were called *minnesböcker*[39] and in Spain, *libros de memoria*.[40]

Reflections and Conclusions

What can we say about Efraim Lindgren, based on his chronicle and other writings? First of all, he was a religious man who respected the Lutheran Church. He noted down in this chronicle the birth of Luther, the Finnish translations of the New Testament and the Bible, as well as the Jubilee celebrated on the anniversary of 700 years of Christianity in Finland. It is also significant that local history begins with the mention of Laitila clergymen and the church buildings. Even though Lindgren had copied Pietist texts, the Prayerist movement does not figure in the chronicle.

In writing about local events, Lindgren envisioned himself as an historian preserving important data for future generations. He chose the form with which he was familiar and adapted it to his own purposes. In writing about local and family history, he could draw on oral tradition, his own memories, family inscriptions and newspapers. The chronicle moves from 'global' to local history, and the act of copying changes into the act of producing a text of his own. Lindgren's case bears out Martyn Lyon's observation: copying assists textual comprehension and appropriation, and it can also act as a preliminary phase leading to more autonomous literary composition.[41] The emergence of the 'I' is visible in Efraim's chronicle, even though the instances are few and do not reveal much of Lindgren's thoughts.[42]

Ajantieto, the popular chronicle included in the Hymnal, provided a basis or a framework for Lindgren's text. The choice of genre becomes more understandable with the discovery that Lindgren was not the only nineteenth-century grassroots writer in Finland to have written a chronicle. Kustaa Brask (1829–1906), a crofter from Joroinen, a municipality situated in eastern Finland, produced two

38 Kuismin 2013, 64–73. See also Liljewall 2002.
39 E.g. Backman 1993.
40 According to Antonio Castillo Gomez, the 'Notebooks of Some Curiosities' by the Canary Islands merchant Betancourt consist of five in-quarto manuscripts written between 1796 and 1807. Betancourt noted down personal and family events as well as events which occurred during those years at Las Palmas, whether related to commercial and maritime affairs, religious questions, festivals, historical notes or social issues. Pedro Santos Fernández, a weaver from Tuy in Galicia, left a similar manuscript in the same format, entitled 'Memory book and various notes to explain the happenings of days, months and years, as contained within'. The author recorded a host of personal, family or public events in the years 1779 to 1826, preceded by a pair of registers covering 1777. (Castillo Gómez 2011, 620.) On French and Spanish 'memory books' see also Lyons 2013a, 222–244.
41 Lyons 2013b.
42 Cf. Lyons 2013a, 236–240.

chronicles. One of them is entitled *Puheita Ihmisen sikijämisen jälkeen kuluneesta, Ajasta* ('Speeches about the Time since the Inception of Man'). Running to 80 folios, it begins with Adam and Eve and ends with the assassination of Nikolai Bobrikoff, the General Governor of Finland, in 1904. From the seventeenth century on, the history of Finland and her neighbouring countries were at the forefront of this chronicle.[43] Unlike Lindgren, Brask did not include details of his life in his text.[44] Even though Lindgren and Brask were contemporaries and had a similar social status, their mental worlds were different in many respects. Brask was influenced by ideas of popular education and nation building, whereas Lindgren was a man of the Bible and the popular tradition.

For whom did Efraim Lindgren write? His activities must have been known to those in his surroundings. He participated in scribal culture – the production, dissemination and consumption of handwritten texts[45] – and had a hand in popular printing culture as well. The oral lore describes him as a person who did not shun contact with other people. Why would he not have shown his chronicle to his visitors? But one can also assume that the most important reader was Lindgren himself – he clearly enjoyed writing and producing book-like texts.

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43 Kauranen & Kuismin 2011, 289–294.

44 According to Kaisa Kauranen, Brask contributed to newspapers for twenty years (1858–77), but as his sprawling texts began to expand to such a degree that they could not be edited and published, he began to send his manuscripts to the Finnish Literature Society. His contributions – 5,700 pages in all – include religious and philosophical texts as well as deliberations on societal matters, agriculture, popular education and history. Brask's texts are difficult to classify. The longest of his 'speeches' is 294 pages. The material also includes poems and drafts of school textbooks as well as collections of folklore and ethnographic material (Kauranen 2013, 120).

45 Davíð Ólafsson 2013, 40.

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