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Of Fools and Men:

Iurodstvo in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-century Russia

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SHORT ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the emergence and rise in popularity of a type of saint known in Russian as *iurodivyi*, and in English as holy fool or fool for Christ, in late fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Russia. In doing so, it breaks with past scholarship on the topic, which has often depicted *iurodstvo* as a monolithic phenomenon shrouded in myth, and contributes to the scholarly understanding of the pre-modern cult of saints, while offering a fresh perspective on a period of Russian history often labelled 'of state formation'.

Three main arguments are made here about fifteenth- and sixteenth-century *iurodstvo*, or holy foolery. Firstly, that *iurodivye* were primarily known in this period as saints, whose tombs worked posthumous miracles of healing. In this, their rise in popularity was indissociable, on the one hand, from the growth of the cult of saints and the multiplication of miracle cults; and, on the other hand, from the development of a Moscow-based Church, which claimed spiritual authority over the vast, and still expanding, territories controlled by its grand prince and later tsar.

Secondly, by analysing a large corpus of texts and images, this study argues that there were two occasionally overlapping understandings of *iurodstvo* in this period: one found mostly in ecclesiastical works, focused on the extreme asceticism of its practitioners; the other, apparently vernacular in origin, that conceived of *iurodivye* as charismatic, frequently aggressive living prophets.

Thirdly, by investigating sponsorship patterns behind the cults of *iurodivye*, this thesis identifies the ideological narratives running through writings about *iurodivye* and shows that most cults played a role in supporting the rise of Russian autocracy, rather than being opposed to it, as past studies have claimed.

LONG ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the emergence and rise in popularity of a type of saint known in Russian as *iurodivyi*, and in English as holy fool or fool for Christ, in late fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Russia. In doing so, it contributes more broadly to the scholarly understanding of the pre-modern cult of saints. It also offers a fresh perspective on a period of Russian history often labelled 'of state formation' by identifying the ideological narratives running through writings about saints, while highlighting that centralisation was not a unilateral process.

This study challenges previous scholarship on the topic in several ways, but most notably by its methodology. It acknowledges that *iurodstvo*, or holy foolery, is known to us primarily through texts, written for a variety of purposes. Liturgical texts in particular, mostly unedited, have been consistently overlooked by past studies of *iurodstvo* despite their central role in saint-making and -maintaining, and the fact that these were the texts most people encountered on a regular basis. More inclusive in its choice of source type, building a corpus of images as well as foreign accounts, hagiographical, liturgical, and historiographical texts, this study is simultaneously stricter in its selection of evidence according to the date it was produced. The death of Fedor I in 1598 was used as a rough chronological bookend, as ideas about *iurodstvo* around this time and later in the seventeenth century would acquire new connotations, especially associated with Old Belief.

The present approach captures a snapshot of *iurodstvo* in its first century and a half of popularity. Unlike previous studies, which have often interpreted pre-modern *iurodstvo* through the lens of its significance in modern Russian history and literature, this study lets patterns in its evidence corpus determine what was understood by a *iurodivyi* in this period. As a result, two different, occasionally overlapping, understandings of *iurodstvo* emerge: one found predominantly in ecclesiastical sources and focused on the extreme asceticism and renunciation of its practitioners; the other apparently vernacular in origin, and centred around the more charismatic, aggressive, and prophetic aspects of *iurodstvo*.

Though *iurodivye* in this period are primarily known to us as saints, past studies of *iurodstvo* have neglected to situate them within the development of the Russian Orthodox Church. The late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were characterised by a growing number of saints and the spread of posthumous miracle cults, as well as by the Moscow-based Church's claims to spiritual authority over the vast, and growing, territory controlled by the grand prince and, after Ivan IV's coronation in 1547, tsar. Yet for all of the Russian Church's ground-breaking conciliar activity in this period, saint-making remained a flexible process of negotiation, open to a variety of actors, from anonymous grassroots initiatives to ambitious aristocrats, up to the very tsar, so that the cult of a *iurodivyi*, and of any other saint, was often the result of combined efforts from the clergy, the lay elite, and the faithful at large.

Past studies of *iurodstvo* have often repeated that this form of sainthood became popular in the sixteenth century as a reaction to the consolidation of Muscovite autocracy. Offering Nikolai of Pskov, who stood up to Ivan IV, as an example, such studies argued that *iurodstvo* was a form of opposition to authority. The present study nuances this argument by showing how Nikolai of Pskov was an outlier among sixteenth-century *iurodivye*, whose cults predominantly supported the narrative of Muscovite dominance. The cult of Isidor of Rostov, for example, made a case against the Latin faith and for the superiority of the Russian Orthodox Church and state; the cult of Mikhail of Klopsko argued for Moscow's political and spiritual dominance over Novgorod; and the cult of Vasilii of Moscow gave the reigns of Ivan IV and Fedor I an aura of divine legitimacy, on top of being instrumental in the creation of the independent patriarchate of Moscow, with the blessing of Patriarch Jeremiah of Constantinople, in 1589.

The reasons behind the quick rise of *iurodivye* from obscurity to relative popularity – monastic and other ecclesiastical saints were still prominent in this period – remain hypothetical. Part of the success of *iurodivye* could be due to the fact that, as predominantly urban hermits of lay origin, they had no institutional affiliations. This might have made them attractive to the faithful at large, by demonstrating that anyone, from whatever background, could, at any point, choose to become a saint. It might also have made the posthumous cults of *iurodivye* interesting to potential sponsors. Because they were, generally speaking, neither monks nor even ordained, their cults, which might otherwise have been claimed by their monastic house or episcopal see, were instead open to appropriation by anyone who put their mind and wealth to it.

As much as an argument about *iurodstvo*, this study makes an argument about the cult of saints in late medieval and early modern Russia and the documents involved in it, highlighting the fluidity between written texts, but also between oral and written forms of entextualisation. On the one hand, texts about one *iurodivyi* influenced those about another, and material from a *iurodivyi*'s hagiography could easily migrate to his liturgy. On the other hand, the lines between oral and written texts were blurred, with hagiographical material often circulating orally before being physically recorded, and with miracle beneficiaries telling their stories to shrine priests who noted them. Most aspects of saint-making, including text production and continuity of veneration, involved the collaboration of different groups of people: cults did not thrive by either top-down or bottom-up efforts alone. Likewise, if Moscow claimed spiritual authority over its provinces, local cults of saints mostly happened by local initiative and Moscow did little more than recognise them. In that way, cults articulated a relationship between the centre and the regions where the latter recognised their belonging to the former while maintaining a degree of autonomy.

As saints, *iurodivye* had a role in the ideological narrative of Moscow and its rulers as the ultimate defenders of the Orthodox faith after the collapse of the Byzantine empire. In this sense, they were indissociable from the Russian Orthodox Church, which was itself becoming hardly dissociable from the Russian state. Yet the main difference between

iurodivye and other saints was their existence in the popular imagination beyond their ecclesiastical image. As Nikolai of Pskov eloquently illustrated, *iurodivye* could also be aggressive and charismatic, quite apart from their understanding in liturgy and hagiography as harmless ascetics. Though written sources do not give us more than a tantalising glimpse at this other side of *iurodstvo*, it was certainly present in sixteenth-century minds and, occasionally, texts, though perhaps not to the exclusive extent previous studies have claimed. The possibility of a selective use of either understanding of *iurodstvo* depending on the aims and functions of individual texts probably contributed to the phenomenon's popularity.

In short, by undoing the myth of *iurodstvo* as it has often been presented in popular and scholarly publications, this study offers insight into the complex process of saint-making, its relationship with the Church and state at a turbulent time for Russian politics and society, and the ways in which an atypical, in some regards, category of saint facilitated the creation of narratives through which this period was understood by its contemporaries.

Para o Avô Fernão.

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iconography of *iurodstvo*; and to Aleksandr Evgen'evich Musin, for helping me access elusive items of bibliography. It has been comforting to experience the openness of some intellectual borders in these hopeless times.

Any errors or oversights in this thesis remain, of course, my own.

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ON REFERENCING, TRANSLATION, TRANSLITERATION, AND TRANSCRIPTION

While reading for and writing this thesis, I was often reminded of the absurd separation between Slavonic studies and medieval or early modern European history, especially when it comes to the cult of saints. A belief in the productive effects of a cross-pollinating dialogue has encouraged me to make my text both acceptable to Slavists and accessible to scholars of other fields.

This has inevitably led to compromise in either direction, as there are no perfect solutions when it comes to straddling alphabets. I decided in favour of the *Byzantinoslavica* referencing style as a respected system that uses both Latin and Cyrillic scripts.[1] Transliterating the titles of Russian-language works only makes them harder to decipher for Russian speakers, without making them more accessible to those who do not understand the language. On the other hand, I thought it might be helpful for readers who do not understand Russian to have a working translation of Russian titles in the bibliography, if not in the footnotes, for the sake of clarity.

Transliterations from Cyrillic use the simplified Library of Congress system (without diacritics), rightly condemned by philologists as a linguistic aberration, but widely used in history and easier for non-Russian-speakers to read. Words transliterated from Russian include authors' last names in the text and footnotes, in-text technical terms (explained the first time they appear), text titles, toponyms, and names of historical figures. I have opted to transliterate saints' first names and places of origin – unless the latter have common translations in English, e.g., Moscow rather than Moskva – but give them in an English format, thus Леонтий Ростовский is rendered as Leontii of Rostov (rather than Leontii Rostovskii or Leontius of Rostov). On the other hand, for clarity reasons I have translated church and monastery names whenever possible, thus Благовещенский собор is rendered as Anunciation cathedral and Борисоглебский монастырь as Boris and Gleb monastery.

More than ever, the usage of the terms Rus' and Russia is a vexed issue. I use 'Russia', somewhat arbitrarily, from the reign of Ivan III (1462–1505) to refer to the loosely federated polities increasingly dominated by and including the Moscow principality; and 'Rus'' before that point. I use 'Muscovy' to refer more specifically to the grand principality of Moscow up to Ivan IV's coronation as tsar in 1547.

I am not a philologist, and it has never been my intention to edit sources. Nevertheless, I have tried to quote as accurately as possible from manuscripts. I have omitted accentuation but tried to keep abbreviations (e.g., of *nomina sacra*) as these carry considerable spelling, and occasionally meaning, ambiguity (e.g., depending on the specific manuscript's usage of the *jus* letters or regional attitude to consonants, like цоканье in northern areas). When

[1] For guidance on the *Byzantinoslavica* style, see: http://www.slu.cas.cz/4-byzant-detail-en.html#author (retrieved April 2024).

quoting from pre-revolutionary editions, to avoid further confusion I quote the text as is, without modernising the Russian spelling.

I have translated passages from Russian and Church Slavonic into hopefully functional and accurate, but not literary, English. For the sake of clarity, translations for longer, singled out passages are provided after the Russian / Slavonic in the body of the text; translations of shorter extracts wrapped within the main text are given in the footnotes.

Finally, I often refer to hagiographical texts with the formula '*Life of X*' or '*zhitie* of X'. Though common practice, this is far from ideal. It almost never reflects original titles, which tend to be much longer and more ambiguous, and creates a false impression of homogeneity across very disparate texts. In the absence of a better solution, however, I have kept to this practice.

ABBREVIATIONS

LSJ	*A Lexicon Abridged from Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon*, H. Liddell – R. Scott (eds.), Oxford 1871.
ODB	*The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, A.P. Kazhdan (ed.), Oxford 2005.
БЛДР 2	*Библиотека литературы Древней Руси, Т. 2: XI-XII века* [*Library of early Rus' literature, vol. 2: eleventh and twelfth centuries*], D.S. Likhachev, L.A. Dmitriev, A.A. Alekseev, N.V. Ponyrko (eds.), Saint Petersburg 1999.
БЛДР 7	*Библиотека литературы Древней Руси, Т. 7: Вторая половина XV века* [*Library of early Rus' literature, vol. 7: second half of the fifteenth century*], D.S. Likhachev, L.A. Dmitriev, A.A. Alekseev, N.V. Ponyrko (eds.), Saint Petersburg 1999.
БЛДР 9	*Библиотека литературы Древней Руси, Т. 9: (Конец XV - первая половина XVI века)* [*Library of early Rus' literature, vol. 9: end of the fifteenth century – first hald of the sixteenth century*], D.S. Likhachev, L.A. Dmitriev, A.A. Alekseev, N.V. Ponyrko (eds.), Saint Petersburg 2000.
БЛДР 10	*Библиотека литературы Древней Руси, Т. 10: XVI век* [*Library of early Rus' literature, vol. 10: sixteenth century*], D.S. Likhachev, L.A. Dmitriev, A.A. Alekseev, N.V. Ponyrko (eds.), Saint Petersburg 2000.
БЛДР 12	*Библиотека литературы Древней Руси, Т. 12: XVI век* [*Library of early Rus' literature, vol. 12: sixteenth century*], D.S. Likhachev, L.A. Dmitriev, A.A. Alekseev, N.V. Ponyrko (eds.), Saint Petersburg 2003.
БЛДР 13	*Библиотека литературы Древней Руси, Т. 13: XVI век* [*Library of early Rus' literature, vol. 13: sixteenth century*], D.S. Likhachev, L.A. Dmitriev, A.A. Alekseev, N.V. Ponyrko (eds.), Saint Petersburg 2005.
ПСРЛ	*Полное собрание русских летописей* [*Complete collection of Russian chronicles*]

ПЭ	*Православная Энциклопедия. Под редакцией Патриарха Московского и всея Руси Кирилла* [*Orthodox Encyclopaedia under the redaction of the Patriarch of Moscow and all Rus' Kirill*], Церковно-научный центр «Православная энциклопедия» [Ecclesiastical-research centre "Orthodox encyclopaedia"] 2000–present.
СККДР (XIV–XVI, 1)	*Словарь книжников и книжности Древней Руси, выпуск 2 (вторая половина XIV–XVI в.), часть 1, А–К* [*Dictionary of historical literary figures and book culture of Old Rus', issue 2 (fourteenth to sixteenth centuries), part 1, А–К*], D.S. Likhachev (ed.), Leningrad 1988.
СККДР (XIV–XVI, 2)	*Словарь книжников и книжности Древней Руси, выпуск 2 (вторая половина XIV–XVI в.), часть 2, Л–Я* [*Dictionary of historical literary figures and book culture of Old Rus', issue 2 (fourteenth to sixteenth centuries), part 2, Л–Я*], D.S. Likhachev (ed.), Leningrad 1989.
СККДР (XIV–XVI, 3)	*Словарь книжников и книжности Древней Руси, выпуск 2 (вторая половина XIV–XVI в.), часть 3, Библиографические дополнения. Приложение.* [*Dictionary of historical literary figures and book culture of Old Rus', issue 2 (second half of the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries), part 3, Additional bibliography. Appendix.*], D.M. Bulanin – O.V. Tvorogov (eds.), Saint Petersburg 2012.
СККДР (XVII, 1)	*Словарь книжников и книжности Древней Руси, выпуск 3 (XVII в.), часть 1, А–З* [*Dictionary of historical literary figures and book culture of Old Rus', issue 3 (seventeenth century), part 1, А–З*], D.S. Likhachev (ed.), Saint Petersburg 1993.
СККДР (XVII, 2)	*Словарь книжников и книжности Древней Руси, выпуск 3 (XVII в.), часть 2, И–О* [*Dictionary of historical literary figures and book culture of Old Rus', issue 3 (seventeenth century), part 2, И–О*], D.S. Likhachev (ed.), Saint Petersburg 1993.
ТОДРЛ	*Труды Отдела древнерусской литературы* [*Works of the Department of early Russian literature*]

I. INTRODUCTION:
UNDOING THE MYTH

I.1 Fascinating Fools: Undoing the Myth

> '… they have certain eremites (whom they call holy men) that are like to those gymnosophists for their life and behavior, though far unlike for their knowledge and learning. They use to go stark naked save a clout about their middle, with their hair hanging long and wildly about their shoulders, and many of them with an iron collar or chain about their necks or middle, even in the very extremity of winter. These they take as prophets and men of great holiness, giving them a liberty to speak what they list without any controlment, though it be of the very highest himself … Of this kind there are not many because it is a very hard and cold profession to go naked in Russia, specially in winter.'[2]

When Giles Fletcher, an English diplomat, visited Russia in the late 1580s, he was intrigued by the local culture. Curious, if not open-minded, he evidently had access to local guides, and even got to test a monk's knowledge of the New Testament – how many Evangelists? how many Apostles? how does one achieve salvation? –, which he judged insufficient: 'I asked him why he shore himself a friar. He answered, because he would eat his bread with peace. This is the learning of the friars of Russia…'[3] Beyond the monastic orders, however, Fletcher also noted the presence of 'certain eremites' respected as 'holy men', whom he likened to 'gymnosophists'. The comparison was probably inspired by his background in classics[4] and is not entirely inaccurate: the legendary gymnosophists were, in the Greek imagination, the strange sages encountered by Alexander on his expedition to India and mentioned in the third-century *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*.[5] Their asceticism,

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[2] L.E. BERRY – R.O. CRUMMEY (eds.), *Rude and Barbarous Kingdom. Russia in the Accounts of Sixteenth-Century English Voyagers*, Wisconsin 1972, 218–19.

[3] *Idem*, 218.

[4] BERRY – CRUMMEY, *Rude and Barbarous Kingdom*, op. cit., 87–8: Fletcher was an Etonian and lecturer in Greek at King's College, Cambridge.

[5] E. BOWIE, Gymnosophists, in: *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Oxford 2012 https://oxfordre.com/classics/display/10.1093/acrefore/9780199381135.001.0001/acrefore-9780199381135-e-8025 (retrieved April 2024): *They are omniscient, can levitate, and wear long hair and a single cotton garment. Their diet is vegetarian; they drink wine mixed and served by bronze automata.*

evident from their nakedness,[6] was probably their main commonality with the 'eremites' described by Fletcher, who are easily identifiable as *iurodivye*.

Though Fletcher's account is marked by a disbelief verging on contempt ('whom they call holy men'), which implied the othering of Russians and their unenlightened religious customs, there is also, in his tone, a fascination for *iurodivye* as eccentric figures, whose undeniable asceticism inspired admiration, if not respect. The fact that he compared them to the legendary gymnosophists suggests he saw something larger than life in *iurodivye* and their social status. A similar blend of contempt and fascination, horror and admiration can be found in most foreign accounts of *iurodstvo*,[7] and it was fascination, too, which lured me down the rabbit hole of *iurodstvo* after first encountering it in Evgenii Vodolazkin's novel, *Lavr*, as an undergraduate late in 2015.[8] A modern, fictionalised reinterpretation of a medieval world, *Lavr* is one among many examples of the productivity of *iurodstvo* as a cultural trope, from Pushkin's beggar Nikolka, who accused the fictional Tsar Boris Godunov of murdering a young heir to the Russian throne,[9] to the radical feminist group Pussy Riot, who claimed their 2012 protest performance in the cathedral of Christ the Saviour against Vladimir Putin's alliance with the Russian Orthodox Church to be in the spirit of *iurodstvo*.[10]

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[6] BOWIE, Gymnosophists, op. cit.: They were called 'the naked ones' ('οἱ Γυμνοί') in the *Life of Apollonius*.

[7] See a detailed discussion in section III.2.c.

[8] E.G. VODOLAZKIN, *Лавр*, Moscow 2012. Translated by Lisa C. Hayden in 2015 as *Laurus*.

[9] N.I. GRANOVSKAIA, Юродивый в трагедии Пушкина, *Русская литература* 2, 1964, 92–94.

[10] IU. MALOVERIAN, Прокурор запросил для участниц Pussy Riot по три года, *BBC News* (7 August 2012), https://www.bbc.com/russian/russia/2012/08/120807_pussy_riot_day7_preview (retrieved April 2024): *Мы - шуты, скоморохи, может быть, юродивые, не несем зла /.../ Мотивов ненависти и вражды у нас не было. [We are jesters, buffoons, maybe holy fools, we have no ill will … We were not moved by hatred or enmity.]* See also: H. EYRES, Pussy Riot, punk and holy fools, *Financial Times* (12

It is not easy to explain what a *iurodivyi* is to one unfamiliar with the phenomenon. I have often delivered obscure ramblings in response to casual questioning about my doctoral research, with painful, I am sure, consequences for my interlocutors. This difficulty is, in part, due to the multiplicity of meanings potentially embodied by a *iurodivyi*: a Christ-like figure, an extreme ascetic, an awe-inspiring prophet, a political protestor and defender of the oppressed, a disturbingly naked and aggressive urban character, a strange wanderer, etc. It is unclear which, if any, of these is *the* main defining feature of *iurodstvo*, and the fact that a single *iurodivyi* can manifest them separately in different contexts is all the more confusing. Moreover, the word itself, *iurodivyi*, and its cognates, like *iurodstvo* and *iurodstvovanie*, are difficult to translate accurately. Though 'holy fool' and 'holy foolery / foolishness', or less frequently 'fool / folly for Christ('s sake)', are generally accepted translations, they do not quite capture the ambiguity of the root 'оуродъ', which can invoke a fool or madman generally speaking; a mentally ill person; or a *iurodivyi*.[11] More to the point, there are no exactly analogous concepts in 'western' cultures that would enable *iurodstvo* to be easily understood abroad.[12]

The fascination inspired by *iurodivye*, combined with how difficult they are to define and translate, easily results in a mythology of *iurodstvo*, which may contribute to its cultural and perhaps literary understanding, but, to my mind, detracts from a clear perspective on it as a historical phenomenon. A *New Yorker* writer set the scene for Vodolazkin's novel in the

October 2012), https://www.ft.com/content/ef9b6884-06f7-11e2-92b5-00144feabdc0 (retrieved March 2024); S. KOBETS, From the Tabennisi nunnery to Pussy Riot: female holy fools in Byzantium and Russia, *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, 60:1–2, 2018, 87–107.

[11] I.I. SREZNEVSKII, *Материалы для словаря древне-русскаго языка по письменным памятникам, Т.3*, Saint Petersburg 1912, col. 1255-6.

[12] I am often asked about similarities with court jesters, especially in Shakespeare, or Franciscans. Though there are areas of overlap between either and *iurodivye*, there are also considerable differences.

following terms: 'Medieval Russia was a land trembling with religious fervor. Mystics, pilgrims, prophets, and holy fools wandered the countryside.' He continued, arguing that by having his protagonist Arsenii take up successive religious paths, among which that of *iurodstvo*, 'Vodolazkin aims directly at the heart of the Russian religious experience and perhaps even at that maddeningly elusive concept that is cherished to the point of cliché: the Russian soul.'[13] If cliché and generalisation might be permissible or unavoidable in journalism, their usefulness in academia is questionable. Yet some scholars, like Ewa Thompson, have tried to find in *iurodstvo* an elucidation for the whole of Russian culture. Having argued that *iurodivye* incorporated shamanic practices into the Christian tradition,[14] she concluded that:

> 'Like a holy fool, Russian culture has its meek and trustful side, and its brutal and secretive side. A recognition and analysis of the role holy foolishness has played in the Russian experience is therefore of importance to those who … seek to understand the Russian people and their history.'[15]

Though Thompson's study may have aged, the introduction to a 2011 volume, edited by Priscilla Hunt and Svitlana Kobets, entitled 'Holy Foolishness as a Key to Russian Culture', quotes from it uncritically, noting *iurodstvo*'s 'unique expression and development in Russia'.[16]

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[13] K. KALFUS, Holy Foolery, *The New Yorker* (15 October 2015), https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/holy-foolery (retrieved March 2024).

[14] E.M. THOMPSON, *Understanding Russia: The Holy Fool in Russian Culture*, University Press of America 1987, 123: *... some laymen and monks who had restless personalities began to imitate the behavior of magicians in the lay community ... The institution of holy foolishness seems to have been a way of keeping pagan practices alive without fully submitting to the shamanic religion.*

[15] *Idem*, 199. Other claims, on pages 198 and 185, include: *The Christian-shamanic dialectic of holy foolishness contributed to the rise of the intelligentsia in the nineteenth century*; *The society's perception of itself has been influenced by its perception of holy fools.*

[16] *Holy Foolishness in Russia: New Perspectives*, P. Hunt – S. Kobets (eds.), Slavica 2011, 2–3.

Yet western scholars looking at *iurodstvo* from abroad are not alone in establishing a special relationship between it and Russian culture or the Russian people. In his theological study of *iurodivye*, the priest Ioann Kovalevskii noted the extraordinary development of *iurodstvo* in Russia and attributed moral qualities to the Russian lower classes, whose simple minds enabled them to recognise the deeds of *iurodivye*:

> '... ни въ какой другой странѣ подвигъ юродства такъ не процвѣталъ, какъ въ древней Руси ... юродивые особенно дороги простому русскому народу, который любилъ и цѣнилъ ихъ болѣе, чѣмъ остальные классы русскаго общества ... при всемъ умственномъ и нередко нравственномъ мракѣ, въ которомъ находился русскій народъ, нельзя не видѣть того, что у этого народа нравственное чувство нерѣдко было болѣе развито ... и потому отзывчивѣе ко внушеніямъ истины Христовой.'[17]
>
> '... in no other country did *iurodstvo* flourish as it did in early Rus' … *iurodivye* were especially dear to the simple Russian people, who loved and cherished them more than the other classes in Russian society … despite all the intellectual and often moral darkness where the Russian people found itself, it is impossible not to see that this same people often had a more developed moral sense … and because of it was more sensitive to the suggestions of the truth of Christ.'

A decade later, the hieromonk Aleksii Kuznetsov argued in his theological study of *iurodstvo* and stylitism that the former expressed a deep need, in Russian national psychology, to suffer and atone for sins:

> 'Причины уваженія къ св. юродивымъ русскихъ людей надо искать глубже, въ психологіи самой русской націи ... русскій человѣкъ цѣнилъ и цѣнитъ разнаго рода страданія и уничиженія въ дѣлѣ спасенія ... могучая русская душа разъ сознала свои недостатки и необходимость исправленія — то она требуетъ страданія за всѣхъ и только на этомъ и успокаивается. Въ этомъ то и заключается причина уваженія къ св. юродивымъ русскихъ.'[18]
>
> 'The reasons for the respect Russian people showed the saintly *iurodivye* must be chased deeper in the psychology of the very Russian nation … the Russian person cherished and cherishes various kinds of suffering and humiliation in the matter of

[17] I. KOVALEVSKII, *Юродство о Христе и Христа ради юродивые восточной и русской церкви*, Moscow 1902, 141, 143, 144.

[18] A. KUZNETSOV, *Юродство и столпничество : религиозно-психологическое исследование*, Saint Petersburg 1913, 199–200, see also 261–2.

> salvation … the mighty Russian soul, once it has recognised its flaws and the necessity to make up for them, demands to suffer for them all and will only know peace in that way. This is the explanation for the respect shown the saintly Russian *iurodivye*.'

Even Aleksandr Panchenko, writing in the 1980s, considered that '… юродство стало русским национальным явлением.'[19]

Sanctified madness exists, and has independently arisen, in many different cultures. Sergei Ivanov has noted this in chapters about the Eastern (Jewish, Muslim, Indian) and Western (Franciscan) 'peripheries' of holy foolery.[20] Though it varies wildly in expression, the most basic logic of sanctified madness across cultures is that actions that may appear insane to worldly logic are in fact wise in a spiritual framework. My aim here is not to erase the undeniable uniqueness of Russian *iurodstvo*, and of the historical circumstances in which it arose, but rather to express caution about Russian exceptionalism and the sweeping, unsubstantiated (and unsubstantiatable) statements about *iurodstvo* and Russianness that have sometimes found their way into scholarship. If we are to understand *iurodstvo* as it was perceived at any point in the past, we need to take apart the cultural, and at times scholarly myth that has formed around it. As Nancy Kollmann wrote in response to Thompson's volume, 'defining national character (let alone explaining it with reference to a single phenomenon) is ill-advised; it substitutes entrenched, incomplete, or wrongheaded

[19] D.S. LIKHACHEV – A.M. PANCHENKO – N.V. PONYRKO, *Смех в Древней Руси*, Leningrad 1984, 73: ... iurodstvo *became a Russian national phenomenon*.

[20] S.A. IVANOV, *Holy Fools in Byzantium and Beyond*, trans. S. Franklin, Oxford 2006: See the last two chapters, 'The Eastern Periphery' and 'The Western Periphery'. On Islamic traditions of sanctified madness, see: M. DOLS, *Majnun: The Madman in Medieval Islamic Society*, Oxford 1992; A. KARAMUSTAFA, *God's Unruly Friends: Dervish Groups in the Islamic Later Middle Period 1200-1550*, Oxford 2006; E. WOLPER, *Cities and Saints: Sufism and the Transformation of Urban Space in Medieval Anatolia*, Pennsylvania 2003. LIKHACHEV – PANCHENKO – PONYRKO, *Смех*, op. cit., 80: Panchenko noted the overlap between *iurodivye* and Cynics or dervishes, though he recognised they were 'genetically' unrelated.

stereotypes … for spirited inquiry into a nation's cultural diversity and does not acknowledge change over time.'[21]

The potential change over time mentioned by Kollmann is, to my mind, another problematic element in past studies of *iurodstvo*, which have often either dealt with it as a timeless phenomenon, or as a somewhat continuous one that can be traced from Byzantine, or even early Christian times up to the modern era. Priscilla Hunt has observed that 'Holy foolishness has been relevant throughout Russia's entire history. It has persisted despite the divide between ancient and modern Russia.'[22] It may be true that characters labelled *iurodivye* have existed in some form between eleventh-century Rus' and modern Russia; but I am deeply sceptical of amalgamating them and assuming they always meant the same thing to their contemporaries.

Though this may sound obvious, our perception of *iurodstvo* is shaped by the evidence we accept for it and the way we use it. In his classic study of *iurodstvo*,[23] Aleksandr Panchenko explicitly rejected a historical approach to *iurodstvo*, judging it too narrow for the topic,[24] and instead focused on its phenomenology, i.e., the ways in which society experienced the behaviour of *iurodivye*, arguing that they synthesised lay laughter and ecclesiastical culture.[25] Panchenko's study used the end of the seventeenth century as a rough

[21] N. KOLLMANN, Review of *Understanding Russia: The Holy Fool in Russian Culture*, by Ewa M. Thompson, *Slavic Review* 47/2, 1988, 321.

[22] *Holy Foolishness*, Hunt – Kobets, op. cit.: 5.

[23] LIKHACHEV – PANCHENKO – PONYRKO, *Смех*, op. cit., 72–153: Panchenko's section of the volume, 'Смех как зрелище', had appeared earlier in D.S. LIKHACHEV – A.M. PANCHENKO, *Смеховой мир Древней Руси*, Leningrad 1976, 91–183. It has been translated into English as 'Laughter as Spectacle' in *Holy Foolishness*, Hunt – Kobets, op. cit., 41–148.

[24] LIKHACHEV – PANCHENKO – PONYRKO, *Смех*, op. cit.: 72.

[25] *Idem*, 72, 76.

chronological bookend, noting the association of *iurodstvo* with Old Belief by that point, and its irrelevance in the climate of Western modernity which characterised the reign of Peter the Great.[26] Yet for most of Panchenko's long essay, *iurodstvo* is intentionally presented in an atemporal dimension, the amalgamated evidence for it spanning about a millennium, between Byzantine *Lives* and documents associated with the seventeenth-century schism (*Raskol*) in the Russian Church, and occasionally beyond. In other words, Panchenko's analysis of *iurodstvo*, by making a collage of sources from different times and places, created a kind of Frankenstein *iurodivyi* that may never have existed in any text or reality, including imagined. In a footnote, he responded to a critique of his use of Byzantine sources:

> 'Этот упрек резонен, если иметь в виду только этнографическую, бытовую и историко-прагматическую сторону дела. Но я занимаюсь феноменологией юродства, пытаюсь выделить его стереотипы, свести их в некую общую таксономию, и никак не могу обойтись без византийских житий: они представляли собою нечто вроде инструкции по этикету юродства, и если не подвижники, то русские агиографы строго ей следовали.'[27]
>
> 'This reprimand is reasonable if one is only taking into account the ethnographic, everyday, and historico-pragmatic sides of the matter. But I am dealing with the phenomenology of *iurodstvo*, I am trying to classify its stereotypes, boil them down to a general taxonomy, and absolutely cannot do without Byzantine *Lives*: they constituted something of a set of instructions on the etiquette of *iurodstvo*, and if the saintly men themselves did not follow it, their hagiographers strictly did.'

Panchenko's justification is unconvincing, since the idea that Byzantine culture was blindly copied in Rus' has rightly been complicated,[28] and the relationship between the Byzantine *salos* and the Russian *iurodivyi* is not straightforward. Svitlana Kobets, who compared them in her doctoral research, found, on the one hand, that Russian hagiographers had taken 'the

[26] *Idem*, 150–2.

[27] *Idem*, 100, fn. 49.

[28] See a detailed discussion of the relationship between Byzantine and Rus' cultures in section IV.3.

edge off the holy fool's controversial exploit, almost never presenting him as a scandalous figure'; and, on the other hand, that the *iurodivyi*'s sanctity, unlike the *salos*'s, was apparent already in his lifetime, when he was respected as a social protester.[29] Though there is nothing wrong *per se* with using sources from radically different times and places to create a Frankenstein *iurodivyi* as an intellectual exercise, I am deeply sceptical of applying conclusions obtained through this method to any specific period in history.

Despite its shortcomings, Panchenko's interpretation of *iurodstvo* remains thought-provoking and has been hugely influential for subsequent studies. Framing performativity as the key element of *iurodstvo*, Panchenko argued that, in a society where ritual, especially around the tsar, had a fundamental role in the creation of meaning, the solitary *iurodivyi*, clad in his nakedness costume, put on a disturbing show of madness only when he was being watched.[30] The audience, unable to tell whether he was a genuine *iurodivyi* or an impostor, would laugh only if they were sinners: the performer's earnest message was to denounce behaviour contrary to Christian morals, thereby serving society.[31] Liminal and blind to social hierarchy, *iurodivye* were, in theory, free to condemn immorality even when committed by the tsar, for which they became known as social protesters.[32] It was the *iurodivyi*'s theoretical

[29] S.V. KOBETS, *Genesis and Development of Holy Foolishness as a Textual Topos in Early Russian Literature*, PhD thesis, University of Illinois 2001, 316–17.

[30] LIKHACHEV – PANCHENKO – PONYRKO, *Смех*, op. cit., 92–3, 82–4.

[31] *Idem*, 78–9, 81, 86, 115, 134.

[32] *Idem*, 116–19, 132–5.

ability to condemn the tsar,[33] and their respective positions at either edge of society, that created, according to Panchenko, a special relationship between them.[34]

Because the evidence he used was predominantly hagiographical, Panchenko recognised that his object of study was an ideal, or literary, *iurodivyi*:

> ‘Драма юродства, которой посвящена работа, разыгрывается не столько на улицах и церковных папертях древнерусских городов, сколько на страницах житий.’[35]
>
> ‘The drama of *iurodstvo*, to which this study is devoted, is played out not so much on the streets and church porches of old Russian towns, as it is in the pages of *zhitiia*.’

Yet the tension between the literary and the historical *iurodivyi* is never truly resolved, and one is never sure whether the performance of madness and social protest which Panchenko identified as key components of *iurodstvo*[36] existed only in texts, or, if they existed in historical reality, how texts related to it. In her study, Svitlana Kobets intended to go beyond the literary dimension of *iurodstvo*, but though she acknowledged the boundaries of her literary evidence, it is unclear, just as in Panchenko’s study, how she justifies going beyond the hagiographical *through* the hagiographical.[37]

Panchenko’s approach was enthusiastically praised by Iurii Lotman and Boris Uspenskii who, towards the end of the 1970s, felt the need for theoretical work to complement the painstaking historical efforts, including the monumental *Trudy Otdela drevnerusskoi literatury* (*Works of the Department of early Russian literature*), of the three

[33] *Idem*, 117, 135–6.

[34] *Idem*, 140–1.

[35] *Idem*, 81, see also 85–6.

[36] *Idem*, 81.

[37] KOBETS, *Genesis*, op. cit., 23.

previous decades.[38] Panchenko, together with Lotman and Uspenskii, are better understood against their own historical background, where history as an academic discipline was inevitably subordinated to Soviet ideology. Isaak Budovnits, for example, meticulously gathered valuable historical sources, only to conclude that *iurodivye* were mentally ill people whom the Church manipulatively glorified, in an attempt to promote meekness and control the masses.[39] No wonder that Lotman and Uspenskii welcomed Panchenko's work as an innovative and constructive breath of fresh air that explored behavioural and psychological dimensions in history while avoiding the Soviet ideological trap.[40] Compared with Panchenko, Lotman and Uspenskii were more insistent on methodological issues. They asked important questions, such as 'how the nature of written texts is itself affected by the fact that they are only a part and not the whole of the culture'.[41] In other instances, however, their methodological principles can ring somewhat circular:

> 'A text can only be understood if it is compared extensively with the culture, or more precisely with the behavior of the people contemporary with it; and their behavior can likewise only be made sense of if it is juxtaposed with a large number of texts'[42]

In the case of past cultures, it is unclear how behaviour can be accessed independently from textual evidence.

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[38] IU.M. LOTMAN – B.A. USPENSKII, New Aspects in the Study of Early Russian Culture, in: A. Shukman (ed.), *The Semiotics of Russian Culture*, Ann Arbor 1984, 36. Published originally as IU.M. LOTMAN – B.A. USPENSKII, Новые аспекты изучения культуры Древней Руси, *Вопросы литературы* 3, 1977, 148–166.

[39] I.U. BUDOVNITS, Юродивые древней Руси, *Вопросы истории религии и атеизма* 12, Moscow 1964, 194–5.

[40] LOTMAN – USPENSKII, New Aspects, op. cit., 37, 44.

[41] *Idem*, 37.

[42] *Idem*, 38.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, Horace Dewey has explored a literal reading of the evidence for *iurodstvo* and interpreted it from a medical perspective, by connecting hagiographic *topoi* with symptoms of mental illness. Though *iurodstvo* was officially a conscious choice made by mentally able individuals, Dewey argued that many *iurodivye* may have been on the autistic spectrum. This, according to him, would explain their insensitivity to weather, inappropriate use of random objects, disconnected speech, tendency not to eat or sleep much, strong sense of justice and morality, and occasional epileptic seizures.[43] Though his conclusions remain, to my mind, in the realm of speculation, Dewey raised important questions about perceptions of madness in pre-Petrine Russia. Madness, it was believed, was the result of demonic possession, and could therefore be cured by God and His agents, whether priests, monks, saints, or their tombs, including those of *iurodivye*.[44] Elsewhere, Dewey observed that our modern labelling does not always overlap with pre-modern assumptions, according to which alcoholism and political dissent were mental pathologies, but *iurodstvo* was not one.[45]

Sergei Ivanov introduced his immensely learned account of holy foolery by listing the approaches, explored by others, he would *not* take.[46] He treated holy foolery, from early Christianity until the modern period, as a roughly continuous phenomenon:

> '… our subject is holy foolery and its genetic rather than generic connections … The aim is to explore the immediate origins, the emergence, and the life-span, of a

[43] N. CHALLIS – H. DEWEY, The Blessed Fools of Old Russia, *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas,* 22/1, 1974, 2–4.

[44] *Idem*, 84, 88–9.

[45] H. DEWEY, Some Perceptions of Mental Disorder in Pre-Petrine Russia, *Medical History* 31, 1987, 84.

[46] IVANOV, *Holy Fools*, op. cit., 3–4: Ivanov rejected the following angles of study: theological, psychiatric, typological comparison, exploration of carnival, social protest, church conspiracy against the masses, mythology of (self-)sacrifice, study of outcasts.

> specific cultural phenomenon which could only arise in particular historical circumstances.'[47]

It is unclear to me how the 'particular historical circumstances' of early Christianity, where Ivanov placed the roots of holy foolery, produced the same 'specific cultural phenomenon' as Kyivan Rus' or medieval Russia. Nevertheless, Ivanov's chronological account was illustrated with reference to a wealth of hagiographical and other texts, many of them rarely discussed elsewhere. Though most of the volume was dedicated to early Christian and Byzantine holy foolery, four chapters traced *iurodstvo* from eleventh-century Kyiv to the Bolshevik revolution and beyond. Ivanov related how, after a tentative start in the eleventh century, *iurodivye* appeared in a growing number of sources from the fifteenth century, and acquired hagiographical traits absent from Byzantine texts.[48] He went on to argue that 'Russian holy foolery emerged at the same time as the Russian autocracy was taking shape. This is more than a coincidence: apparently society regarded *iurodivye* as a form of divine control over the state authorities.'[49]

Ivanov's discussion of 'The Iurodivyi and the Tsar' built on Panchenko's contention that, by existing respectively at the lowest and highest edges of society, the two shared a special bond and were similarly unconstrained by social conventions.[50] Though much of Ivanov's discussion revolved around Ivan IV, who was a patron of *iurodivye* and occasionally behaved like one himself, he did not address the paradox of why Ivan would so readily promote the cult of a type of figure who questioned his authority. More importantly,

[47] *Idem*, 5–6.

[48] *Idem*, 285.

[49] *Idem*, 286.

[50] *Idem*, 286–92.

his argument that *iurodivye* were popularly perceived as a form of control over the increasingly oppressive central authority is supported by a single, exceptionally well-documented case where a *iurodivyi*, Nikolai, stood up to Ivan IV and prevented him from massacring the town of Pskov in 1570.[51] Though this episode is undeniably important and reflects a certain perception of *iurodstvo*, Ivanov's discussion failed to acknowledge the fact that most texts written about *iurodivye* in the sixteenth century do not mention any interaction with, let alone opposition to, figures of authority.

As Claudia Rapp noted, it is perhaps unfair to judge Ivanov's intentionally broad narrative for its shortcomings in the analysis of specific times and places.[52] Commenting on Thompson's work, Kollmann had already suggested that the author 'unwisely treats the phenomenon as uniform from Kievan Rus' to Rasputin. An examination of the manuscript tradition of the vitae of the holy fools, critical assessment of other written accounts, and greater attention to transformations in holy foolishness would be welcome.[53] Their use of evidence is, to my mind, the most serious criticism to past studies of *iurodstvo*. Though he frequently quoted from textual sources, Ivanov focused on their content, neglecting their nature. He was not interested in basic historical questions of authorship, audience, intention, or bias, and did not recognise that the Church, which he expressed an allergy to in the introduction,[54] was, in one way or another, behind most texts written about *iurodivye* in this period. When it was finally discussed as an opponent of *iurodstvo* in the seventeenth century,

[51] *Idem*, 292–97.

[52] C. RAPP, Review of *Holy Fools in Byzantium and Beyond* by S.A. Ivanov, trans. S. Franklin, Oxford 2006, *The American Historical Review*, 114/1, February 2009, 246.

[53] KOLLMANN, Review of *Understanding Russia*, op. cit., 321.

[54] IVANOV, *Holy Fools*, op. cit., 2.

the Church appeared almost out of the blue, as if it had not been a major actor in the promotion of the phenomenon it was now trying to eradicate.

I.2 (Con)Texts

Theological accounts of *iurodstvo* were concerned with its practical reality and proper theological justification. It was important for their authors to distinguish between true *iurodivye* and false, or uncanonical ones. True *iurodstvo* had to be an act of freewill,[55] and it followed that mentally ill people, whose behaviour was not a choice, could not be considered real *iurodivye*. Moreover, theological writers condemned pretend *iurodivye*, or *lzheiurodivye*, along with the Russian people's eagerness to see a *iurodivyi* in every beggar,[56] and Kuznetsov even proposed that priests take responsibility for accrediting *iurodivye*, though he did not specify how one might distinguish a real *iurodivyi* from a pretend one.[57] Both Kovalevskii and Kuznetsov, writing in 1902 and 1913 respectively, were clergymen and their wordy defences of *iurodstvo* as a legitimate Christian way of life betrayed their institutional anxiety in the face of a deed that was difficult to control and easy to subvert. The most problematic aspects of *iurodstvo* were backed with scriptural quotations,[58] long theological arguments justified the *iurodivyi*'s suspicious wandering lifestyle and meticulously hidden virtue, his disruptive performance was cleared of any accusations of

[55] KUZNETSOV, *Юродство*, op. cit., 9.

[56] KOVALEVSKII, *Юродство*, op. cit., 155–63; KUZNETSOV, *Юродство*, op. cit., 261–3.

[57] KUZNETSOV, *Юродство*, op. cit., 259–60, 263.

[58] KOVALEVSKII, *Юродство*, op. cit., part one, chapter one; KUZNETSOV, *Юродство*, op. cit., chapters two and three.

sinfulness,[59] and his services to society – showing the path to salvation and predicting calamities – were praised.[60] Still, Kovalevskii and Kuznetsov both actively discouraged their flock from seeing literal models in the hagiographies of *iurodivye* and following that 'extraordinarily difficult and dangerous path'.[61]

Kovalevskii and Kuznetsov were not alone in their literal interpretation of hagiography. There was, around the turn of the century, a peak in the production of encyclopaedic works of ecclesiastical history, yet unsurpassed in their scope and learning, written by ordained members of the Russian Orthodox Church, or close associates: Filaret (Gumilevskii), *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi* (*History of the Russian Church*), 1847–1848, in five volumes; Makarii (Bulgakov), *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi* (*History of the Russian Church*), 1857–1883, in thirteen volumes; E.E. Golubinskii, *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi* (*History of the Russian Church*), 1901–1906, in four volumes, and *Istoriia kanonizatsii sviatykh v russkoi tserkvi* (*History of the canonisation of saints in the Russian Church*), 1903. Moreover, I.G. Pryzhov's fieldwork in the nineteenth century resulted in a compilation of testimonies about twenty-six 'false prophets, false holy fools, and idiots' who were recognised as holy men by their communities.[62] Perhaps medieval and early modern communities were not so different from those visited by Pryzhov.

Yet the distinction between 'true' and 'false' *iurodivye*, however crucial it may be in a theological perspective, is not only impossible to ascertain given the nature of the evidence

[59] KOVALEVSKII, *Юродство*, op. cit., 75–85; KUZNETSOV, *Юродство*, op. cit., 246–9.

[60] KUZNETSOV, *Юродство*, op. cit., chapters four, five, and eight.

[61] *Idem*, 8, 11.

[62] I.G. PRYZHOV, *Двадцать шесть московских лжепророков, лжеюродивых, дур и дураков*, Moscow 1865.

available to us, but also irrelevant to literary, cultural, and even historical studies of *iurodstvo*. Panchenko made it clear that the 'drama' of *iurodstvo* took place mostly on hagiographical pages,[63] and Ivanov expressed no interest in theological distinctions: 'I take no position on the question of the holy fool's sanctity, nor on how to distinguish "true" and "false" holy fools. It is wholly irrelevant whether any given Byzantine tale of holy foolery deals with an "actual" saint or with a sinner.'[64] Studies of Byzantine holy foolery also have every reason to focus on its literary side.[65] Unlike the considerable volume of Russian-language texts, only two Greek hagiographies of holy fools, the seventh-century *Life of Symeon of Emesa* and the tenth-century *Life of Andrew of Constantinople*, are known to us.[66] These are sooner interpreted as exceptional literary objects, and their protagonists as predominantly literary constructions, rather than traces of a large-scale phenomenon spanning several centuries.[67] Yet *saloi* apparently lived in Byzantine minds, or so the

[63] LIKHACHEV – PANCHENKO – PONYRKO, *Смех*, op. cit., 81, 85–6.

[64] IVANOV, *Holy Fools*, op. cit., 2.

[65] D. KRUEGER, *Symeon the Holy Fool: Leontius's Life and the Late Antique City*, Berkeley 1996: Krueger traced a direct line between Cynic philosophers and the *salos* Symeon of Emesa. C. JOHNSON, "Base, but Nevertheless Holy": Lessons in Liminality from Symeon the Holy Fool, *Studies in Religion / Sciences Religieuses* 43/4, 2014, 592–612: Johnson analysed the relationship between the marginal *salos* and society. H. MAGOULIAS, Bathhouse, Inn, Tavern, Prostitution and the Stage as Seen in the Lives of the Saints in the 6th and 7th Centuries, *Ἑπετηρὶς Ἑταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν* 38, 1971, 233–252: Magoulias produced a literary analysis of the urban places frequented by *saloi*.

[66] C. MANGO, The Life of St Andrew the Fool reconsidered, *Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Slavi* 2, 1982: Mango argued the *Life of Andrew* was written in the seventh century. L. RYDÉN, *The Life of St Andrew the Holy Fool, Vol. I: Introduction, Testimonies and Nachleben. Indices*, Uppsala 1995, 56: Rydén argued, more convincingly, the *Life of Andrew* was written in the tenth century.

[67] Y. ROTMAN, *Insanity and Sanctity in Byzantium. The Ambiguity of Religious Experience*, Harvard 2016, 17: Rotman observed that mentions of other Byzantine *saloi* in *synaxaria* are rare. IVANOV, *Holy Fools*, op. cit., 108, 202–4: Ivanov argued that Symeon was not an isolated case and other *saloi* cults may have preceded him, though he did not offer evidence for this. Though he mentioned the flourishing cults of Symeon and Andrew in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, he also observed that Andrew only appears in one version of the Constantinople Synaxarion, dated c.1300. One could legitimately wonder whether the significant number of preserved manuscripts of his *vita* indicates assiduous veneration or a purely literary interest.

eleventh-century author Kekaumenos suggested: '[the madman] will insult you and even pull you by the beard. Think of the disgrace! If you let him get away with it, everyone will laugh at you; if you beat him, everyone will blame you and reproach you.'[68] Echoing Panchenko and Ivanov, Youval Rotman placed the ambiguity of holy foolery at the centre of his monograph:

> '… we can never know whether true holy fools really existed in Byzantine Christianity, that is, whether real sane people simulated insanity as a spiritual practice. What is important, however, is that Byzantine society created this phenomenon of "faked insanity" as a cultural construction in order to open a zone of ambiguity in religious experience.'[69]

In the 1970s, Peter Brown, not unlike Panchenko, pioneered a middle way between literal views on sanctity, and strictly literary approaches. Inspired by contemporary advances in anthropology, Brown suggested that fifth- and sixth-century Syrian villages ascribed the role of local patrons – arbiters, mediators, healers – to marginal holy men, at a time when substantial landowners migrated to cities, leaving a 'crisis of freedom' and vacant power niches behind.[70] In other words, he interpreted the holy man's popularity growth in that time and place as the result of specific social needs. Almost three decades later, however, he recognised that 'the figure of the holy man was made to bear far too heavy an interpretative weight',[71] and drew some of the attention previously concentrated on the holy man to village elders, new local elites, and expanding ecclesiastical structures. He concluded that the holy man could not, alone, have been 'the microcosmic essence of a macrocosmic change', no

[68] IVANOV, *Holy Fools*, op. cit., 195.

[69] ROTMAN, *Insanity*, op. cit., 170.

[70] P. BROWN, The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity, *Journal of Roman Studies* 61, 1971, 80, 99, 86–7.

[71] P. BROWN, The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity, 1971–1997, *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 6/3, 1998, 364.

matter how attractive the psychological theory that society was reflected in sanctified marginal people.[72] He added that a wider net must be cast if we are to understand the holy man and his place in late antique society: 'In a vast geographical area, distinguished by the greatest variety of inherited religious traditions, changes happen slowly and in a most untidy manner'.[73]

Brown's reassessment of his own seminal article was prompted by the extensive and fruitful academic discussion it provoked, chiefly to do with the use of hagiography as a historical source. Averil Cameron has drawn attention to the subjectivity of hagiography as a self-conscious construction of saintly figures,[74] and Paul Magdalino has observed that such texts might tell us more about their authors than about their subjects. Their reception, he suggested, contributed to our understanding of past societies.[75] In other words, both Cameron and Magdalino wondered what texts can, and cannot, tell us.

The choice of methodology has a determining impact on studies of holy men generally, and holy fools particularly. Too often scholars have overlooked the circumstances around texts that affected their meaning and tried to 'see through' hagiography as a window into the past. Similarly to Brown and Panchenko, and building on the legacy of Durkheim and Weber, who proposed that 'religious virtuosi' could challenge established authority and bring about a new social order, Rotman argued 'ascetics were not chosen and sanctified as a

[72] *Idem*, 364, 367–8.

[73] *Idem*, 364, 376.

[74] AV. CAMERON, On Defining the Holy Man, in: J. Howard-Johnston – P. Hayward (eds.), *The Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages. Essays on the Contribution of Peter Brown*, Oxford 1999, 34, 38–9.

[75] P. MAGDALINO, 'What We Heard in the Lives of the Saints We Have Seen with Our Own Eyes': The Holy Man as Literary Text in Tenth-Century Constantinople, in: Howard-Johnston – Hayward (eds.), *The Cult of Saints*, op. cit., 83–6, 111–12.

means of social stabilization, but of social transformation.'[76] Using psychology theory, though failing to justify why Byzantine society can legitimately be assumed to behave like modern therapy groups, he concluded that the *salos* 'enables the group to develop and introduce a new mentality, a new interpretation of its world and to transform itself, its perception of reality, and its reality.'[77] It is unclear what the nature of such change was, when it took place, or whether it happened at all. Would Rotman's argument about *saloi* be invalidated if it had not? More importantly, can we be sure that holy foolery was as popular and present in everyone's mind as Rotman assumed it to have been?[78]

One way of avoiding the difficulties of hagiography as a historical source would be to confine studies to the internal logic of texts. Kobets, mentioned above, analysed the literary type of the Novgorodian *iurodivyi*,[79] concluding that, unlike the Byzantine *salos*, he was less provocative or scandalous in his public behaviour, openly respected as a saintly figure during his lifetime, and more inclined to confront secular authorities, including the tsar himself, in defence of the oppressed.[80] Tatiana Rudi, on the other hand, has compared the literary characterisations of *iurodivye* and other saints, especially ascetics, concluding that the two categories were remarkably similar, differing only on a few crucial points. She pointed out that texts about *iurodivye* shared elements with those about venerable monks (including

[76] ROTMAN, *Insanity*, op. cit., 171–2, 129.

[77] *Idem*, 172, 176.

[78] *Idem*, 173–4, 179: Rotman's vague affirmations, especially about intentionality (e.g., *this is the main function, the* raison d'être *even, of the religious environment: rendering abnormality or insanity socially functional.*) are not convincingly backed by evidence.

[79] KOBETS, *Genesis*, op. cit., 24–5: It is not always clear whether Kobets is talking about texts or historical realities, and she discarded non-Novgorod hagiographies too hastily: *Since the holy foolish hagiographies of Muscovian period merely emulated their Novgorodian precursors without contributing to the evolution of the paradigm, they are not included in our discussion.*

[80] *Idem*, 316–17.

extreme fasting, the wearing of metal chains, and the endurance of extreme temperatures) and even with texts about martyrs (fire motifs), but that some elements (nakedness, the intentional provocation of beatings from town dwellers, secret fasting) were exclusive to the literary image of *iurodivye*.[81] Safer still is the philological analysis of hagiography. In this, Vasilii Kliuchevskii was a pioneer, recognising already in the nineteenth century the importance of distinguishing between different versions, or redactions, of the same text. The philological tradition was greatly furthered in the Soviet period, particularly by scholars interested in chronicles, like Shakhmatov and his followers.[82] The philological, or textological as it is known in Russian, approach tends to focus on technical details, systematically noting the places where manuscripts differ, and trying to reconstruct hypothetical protographs. Recent philological studies of *iurodstvo* have, for example, taken the shape of a diplomatic edition of the *zhitie* of Isidor of Rostov and articles about its textual history,[83] or an edition of the cycle of texts around the Ustiug *iurodivye*, Prokopii and Ioann.[84]

A more radical solution for the problematic nature of hagiography as a source would be to avoid or discard it altogether. In his 1871 classic *Drevnerusskie zhitia sviatykh kak istoricheskii istochnik* (*Early Russian lives of saints as historical sources*), Kliuchevskii saw

[81] T.R. RUDI, О топике житий юродивых, *ТОДРЛ* 58, 2007, 461–83, 484. T.R. RUDI, Об аскезе юродивых (из истории агиографической топики), *Slověne* 1, 2015, 468.

[82] T.V. GUIMON, *Historical writing of early Rus (c. 1000–c. 1400) in a comparative perspective*, Brill 2021, 3–4.

[83] O.V. GLADKOVA, Агиографический канон и «западная тема» в «Житии Исидора Твердислова, Ростовского юродивого», *Древняя Русь. Вопросы медиевистики* 2(4), 2001, 81–88. O.V. GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, пришедший с Запада (о малоизученном «Житии Исидора Твердислова, ростовского юродивого»), in: O.V. Gladkova (ed.), *Древнерусская литература: тема Запада в XIII—XV вв. и повествовательное творчество*, Moscow 2002, 167–210.

[84] A.N. VLASOV, *Житийные повести и сказания о святых юродивых Прокопии и Иоанне Устюжских*, Saint Petersburg 2010.

the conventional hagiographic form as 'the main obstacle between historian and historical fact'.[85] Frustrated, he recognised that countless factors could influence the content of a *zhitie*, including the hiring of literate outsiders as hagiographers; long chains of oral transmission; whether texts were used liturgically or for private edifying purposes; whether a shrine or monastery needed income; erasing hagiographically non-conforming elements; whether a text was written before or after official canonisation; the time elapsed since the saint's death, etc.[86] He concluded that hagiography was a poor historical source, historian and hagiographer caring for different kinds of truth: contextual and relative for the former; moral and absolute for the latter.[87]

What one chooses to accept as 'truthful' information has a major impact on one's interpretation of a text. When Dewey diagnosed *iurodivye* as potentially autistic, he was searching for modern medical truth in texts whose aim was to express the agency of God's grace on earth.[88] Moreover, on top of operating on a different definition of truth, modern historians have tended to read pre-modern texts selectively, scanning them for elements that might constitute 'reliable historical information'. However, as scholars of Byzantine hagiography have remarked, '[h]agiographers do not of course intend to tell us anything about society, let alone the economy.'[89] For this reason, Évelyne Patlagean has warned

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[85] V.O. KLIUCHEVSKII, *Древнерусские жития святых как исторический источник*, Moscow 1871, 358.

[86] KLIUCHEVSKII, *Древнерусские жития*, op. cit., 364, 371–2, 381, 386–7, 437, 367–8, 410. For reasons to avoid the word 'canonisation', see section II.1.

[87] *Idem*, 366, 430–2, 435–6.

[88] DEWEY, Some Perceptions, op. cit., 99.

[89] M. KAPLAN – E. KOUNTOURA-GALAKI, Economy and Society in Byzantine Hagiography: Realia and Methodological Questions, in: S. Efthymiadis (ed.), *Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography, Volume II: Genres and Contexts*, Ashgate 2014, 389, 399, 406–7: These scholars go on to extract precisely this kind of information from their sources, advising caution and cross-checking as they do so.

against mining hagiographies for 'facts', ignoring any other elements, such as miracles or visions, that may seem unrealistic, or 'untruthful', to us.[90]

Similarly, on the topic of Byzantine historiographical sources, Leonora Neville observed that the modern historian's favourite texts, Michael Psellos and Leo the Deacon, do not coincide with those that enjoyed greater popularity in Byzantium, Constantine Manasses and George the Monk.[91] Like Kliuchevskii, she argued that our modern scientific, or objective, idea of truth is at odds with the Byzantine impulse to produce entertaining narratives that would commemorate and judge past events in order to offer the audience a moral, and in their understanding truthful, code of conduct.[92] The Byzantines were not failed historians: they simply had different criteria for what history writing was meant to achieve.

Finally, we must keep in mind that, as Lotman and Uspenskii pointed out, written texts 'are only a part and not the whole of the culture'.[93] In fact, Mary Carruthers has argued that written texts were a small fraction of the texts circulating, predominantly orally, in medieval times. She argued that physical books were a minority way to preserve a text that did not for a long time dislodge memory as a text-keeping place: '… medieval culture was fundamentally memorial, to the same profound degree that modern culture in the West is documentary.'[94] Looking at texts from a modern anthropological point of view, Karen

[90] É. PATLAGEAN, Ancient Byzantine Hagiography and Social History, in S. Wilson (ed.), *Saints and their Cults: Studies in Religious Sociology, Folklore and History*, Cambridge 1983, 101–2.

[91] L. NEVILLE, Why did the Byzantines write History?, in S. Marjanović-Dušanić (ed.), *Proceedings of the 23rd International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Belgrade, 22–27 August 2016: Plenary Papers*, Belgrade 2016, 265.

[92] *Idem*, 266–9, 271.

[93] LOTMAN – USPENSKII, New Aspects, op. cit., 37.

[94] M. CARRUTHERS, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*, Cambridge 1990, 9.

Barber likewise rejected our 'scriptocentric' view of societies, defining text as a 'tissue of words' (Lat. *texere*) with a not necessarily written, but 'recognisable existence as a form'. Rather than windows onto remote societies, texts are, in her interpretation, 'themselves the terrain to be studied', and cannot, moreover, be dissociated from the arrangements and structures set up to preserve them. They 'survive because of the efforts that human beings go to, to mark them out, bind them up and project them across time and space'.[95]

Barber also challenged traditional assumptions about the supposed fixedness of written texts and fluidity of oral ones, arguing that not only do both physical and mental supports for texts aim to simultaneously conserve culture and generate new meaning, but also that texts fluctuate back and forth between oral and written forms.[96] We live in a world where printing and the Internet have made it much easier to preserve single, fixed versions of texts, to the point where they have become standard. In the African societies studied by Barber, as in pre-modern Russia, texts were processes in constant interaction with people. Studying them in the form of whatever rare 'stills' may be available to us not only amplifies the particular angle adopted by whoever delivered any specific version, but also reflects the complicated, collective authorship of those who delivered the same text before them. Textual fluidity and collective authorship are not news to medievalists.[97] As scholars of traditions as diverse as sixth-century Christianity and Buddhism or sixteenth-century Sufism have concluded, texts in general, and texts about saints in particular, are never neutral and it is up

[95] K. BARBER, *The Anthropology of Texts, Persons and Publics. Oral and Written Culture in Africa and Beyond*, Cambridge 2007, 1, 9, 28.

[96] *Idem*, 67–8, 71–2, 74.

[97] J. PALMER, *Early Medieval Hagiography*, ARC Humanities Press 2018, 11, 55.

to historians to be sensitive to the personal, institutional, dynastic, and political affinities they express.[98]

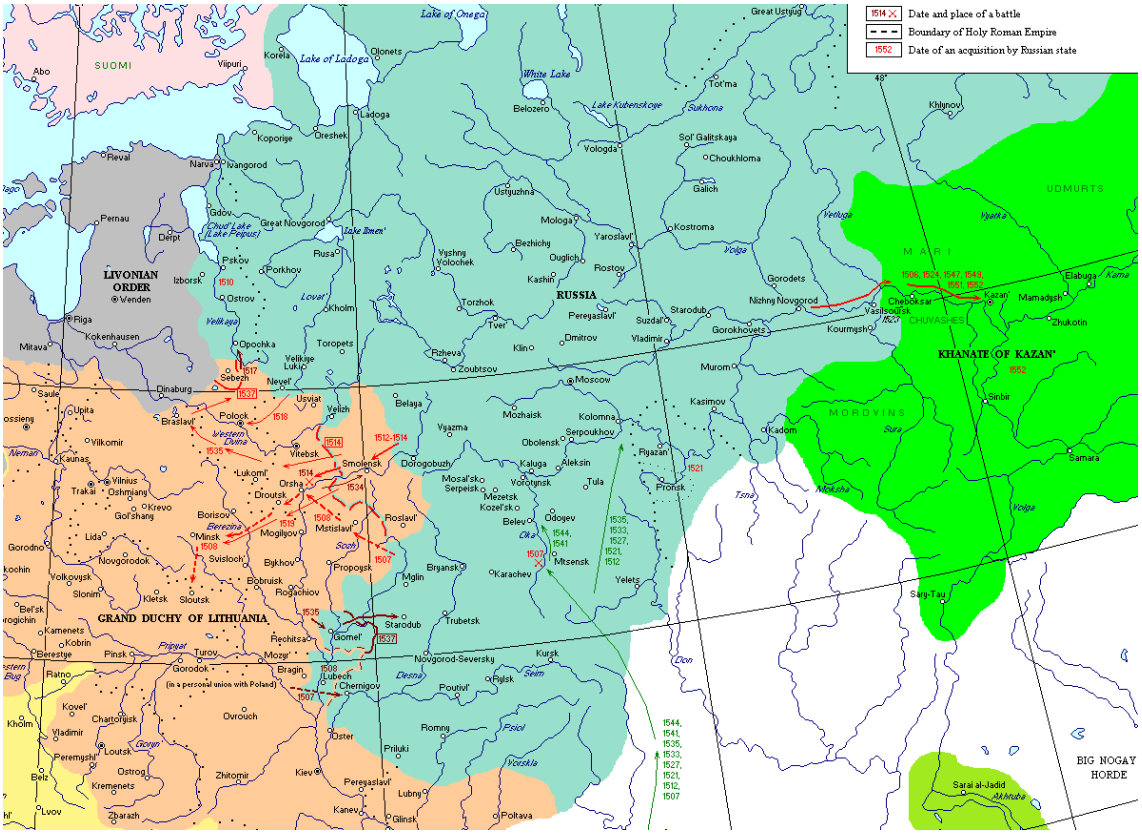
I.3 Methodology

To try and make a meaningful, if small, contribution to our understanding of *iurodstvo*, I have looked for a fresh angle and steered away from the studies mentioned above. In doing so, my approach was resolutely historical. It seemed to me that *iurodstvo* as a historical phenomenon, rather than a cultural myth, needed to be contextualised to be understood. The late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when the available evidence records a sudden increase in numbers of *iurodivye*, looked like a promising, even necessary, start to the path of contextualisation. The death of Fedor I in 1598 and the turn of the seventeenth century, with the heightened political instability of the Time of Troubles (*Smutnoe vremia*), offered a natural bookend, and I was conscious that *iurodstvo* thereafter, though at peak popularity, would soon fall out of grace with the mainstream Church and become associated with Old Belief, thereby gaining different connotations from those it had in the sixteenth century.

The relationship between *iurodstvo* and its historical context is complex, at times difficult to define, and varies from cult to cult and region to region. There is no doubt, however, that military, political, and ecclesiastical developments in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries had a profound impact on *iurodstvo*. The reigns of Vasilii II (1425–1462), Ivan III (1462–1505) and Vasilii III (1505–1533) were characterised by an expansionist

[98] J. PALMER, The Global Eminent Life: Sixth-century Collected Biographies from Gregory of Tours to Huijiao of Jiaxiang Temple, *Medieval Worlds. Comparative and Interdisciplinary Studies* 8, 2018, 3, 35. J. EDEN, A Sufi Saint in Sixteenth-Century East Turkistan: New Evidence Concerning the Life of Khwāja Isḥāq, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 25/2, 2015, 243.

policy which, coupled with a shift from horizontal to vertical dynastic succession – i.e., father to son, rather than brother or cousin – meant that the grand prince was now by far the largest landowner in a polity over which Moscow claimed supremacy. Previously independent, smaller polities fell to the grand prince – Rostov in 1474, Novgorod in 1478, Pskov in 1510 – and after the conquest of the khanate of Kazan' by Ivan IV in 1552, there was an acceleration in the military and economic colonisation of Siberia.



Map 1. Eastern Europe in the first half of the sixteenth century.

In parallel with territorial expansion, grand princes and metropolitans were engaged in the creation of a political ideology of Church and state that accompanied and interpreted contemporary developments, not least among them the – abhorrent, to Muscovite eyes – Union of the Latin and Greek Churches as a result of conciliar negotiations in the 1430s and

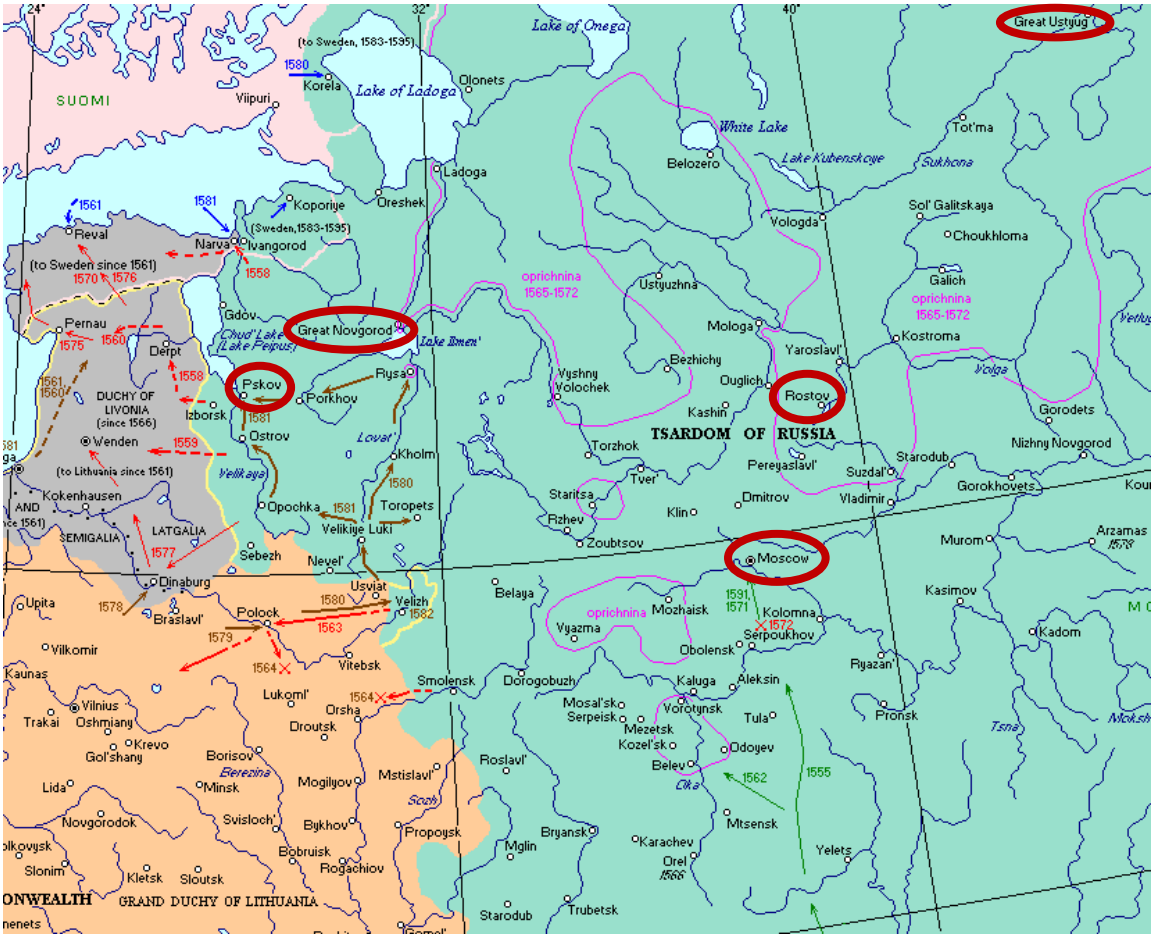
1440s, and the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman empire in 1453, seen in Muscovy as divine punishment for a Union that compromised Orthodoxy. Already in 1448, Metropolitan Iona of Moscow was chosen without ratification from the patriarch of Constantinople, and after 1453 the grand prince was consistently characterised in texts and public rituals, including the 1498 and 1547 coronations, as the last guarantor and saviour of Orthodoxy. By the mid-sixteenth century, the Moscow-based Russian Orthodox Church was approving its own native saints, and by 1589 it had become an independent patriarchate, with the blessing of Patriarch Jeremiah of Constantinople.[99]

The *iurodivye* this thesis focuses on were selected firstly for representing the most visible cults in this period, and secondly for illustrating the variety of forms the narrative around a holy person could take, depending on patronage and local context. These *iurodivye*, by rough chronological order of the surviving evidence for them, and with legendary life dates in parentheses are: Mikhail of Klopsko or Novgorod (d.1471), Isidor of Rostov (d.1474), Maksim of Moscow (d.1430s), Nikolai of Novgorod (d.1392), Prokopii of Ustiug (d.1308), Ioann of Ustiug (d.1494), Vasilii of Moscow (d.1550s), and Nikolai of Pskov (d.1576).[100] The geographical location of a cult influenced its tone: in Pskov, a political and confessional border with Lithuania, the performance of loyalty to the paranoid Ivan IV was important and may have prevented the development of the cult of Nikolai, who legendarily confronted and humiliated the tsar. Ustiug, and its adjacent Sol'vychegodsk, on the other hand, were much further away from the centre of power, on the Siberian frontier, and the cults of *iurodivye* there were sponsored by a wealthy entrepreneurial family who supported

[99] See a more detailed contextualisation in IV.3.

[100] These dates are approximate at best, purely legendary in some cases. For a fuller discussion of the *iurodivye* included in, and left out of, this study, see footnote page 92.

them as local holy patrons. In Rostov and Moscow, an important ecclesiastical city and the seat of central power, the cults of *iurodivye* tended to back Church and state ideology by depicting *iurodivye* and their imperial benefactors as protectors of Orthodoxy against Latin heresy, and divine patrons for the ruling dynastic line. Finally, in Novgorod, the cult of Mikhail reflected the traumatic conquest by Moscow and the struggle for spiritual supremacy between the two rival cities.



Map 2. Eastern Europe in the second half of the sixteenth century (detail).

I was mostly strict in enforcing my criteria for evidence selection: I only considered fifteenth- and sixteenth-century redactions of texts, whether edited or manuscript, as I could not be sure that later redactions did not reflect later understandings of *iurodstvo*. This was

especially important in the case of texts, such as those written for Vasilii of Moscow and Prokopii of Ustiug, that became very popular and originated fertile textual traditions. Rare exceptions were made for chronicles in seventeenth-century versions whose compilation started earlier, and for the unedited miracles of Nikolai Kochanov, to which I only had access in a seventeenth-century manuscript.

Even within the confines of the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, there is no dearth of evidence for *iurodstvo*. The problem, on the contrary, was an *embarras de richesse*. Because many people would know *iurodivye* from their icons, rather than from texts written about them, I compiled as many visual representations of *iurodivye* as I could, even though I am no art historian and my study was, from the onset, predominantly text based. If the number of visual representations of *iurodivye* before the seventeenth century was manageable, a near-exhaustive survey of the textual evidence was never a realistic ambition. I included as many texts, edited or manuscript, for as many *iurodivye* as possible and found that Panchenko's claim that the only evidence for *iurodivye* was hagiographical to be untrue. In fact, and though I have not attempted quantification, I would not be surprised if the overall volume of liturgical texts for *iurodivye* surpassed that of copies of their *Lives*. Apart from the liturgy and hagiography written to commemorate them, *iurodivye* also appeared, with varying degrees of protagonism, in chronicles, foreign accounts of Russia, and the *Lives* of other saints.

A close analysis of this wide visual and textual evidence base allowed me, firstly, to abandon preconceived ideas about *iurodstvo* and be sensitive to the usage of the label '*iurodivyi*' and to the characterisation of figures mentioned as such in sources. I was careful to include sources from Moscow as well as other cities, like Rostov, Pskov, Novgorod, and Ustiug, and was attentive to the nuances in characterisation depending on the evidence's

nature and function. Secondly, the laying out of evidence made it obvious that an overwhelming proportion of visual and textual sources depicting *iurodivye* was produced by or in close association with the Church, with an aim to commemorate them in an ecclesiastical framework. Past studies of *iurodstvo* have mostly ignored the Church, not paid attention to liturgical evidence despite its significant volume, and given far more weight to the story of Nikolai of Pskov, which has often been used to argue for the *iurodivyi* as a defender of the oppressed and a social reaction to the rise of autocracy.[101] Though this may have been one of the ways in which *iurodstvo* was understood in the sixteenth century, the evidence suggests it was not the main one. Though we are, of course, not in a position to assess vernacular understandings of *iurodstvo* that left few written traces, the surviving evidence suggests that *iurodivye* before the seventeenth century were predominantly venerated as saints, whose tombs offered healing miracles. A significant proportion of the evidence also reflects the use of *iurodivye* – including Mikhail, Isidor, Maksim, Galaktion, and Vasilii – as heavenly patrons of Muscovite autocracy.

Representations of *iurodivye* make it clear that they did exist at least in sixteenth-century people's minds. If Kliuchevskii's disappointment at not being able to extract scientific facts from hagiography is understandable, texts do give us information, when carefully dated and contextualised, about their affinities: the people, or groups of people, they were commissioned, written, or disseminated by, and the audience they hoped to reach. Teasing out patterns of understanding and veneration of *iurodivye* has been achieved here by interpreting the results of literary analysis in a historical perspective, though the balance between these components varies throughout the thesis: Part III is primarily literary and

[101] IVANOV, *Holy Fools*, op. cit., 285–310.

philological (and modestly art historical), and Parts II and IV are predominantly historical. Though this approach seemed most likely to yield a solid analysis of sixteenth-century *iurodstvo*, it is also a form of compromise: it could be argued that this study is both not literary-philological enough, and not historical enough.

Other compromises have been made. If the idea was to strike a balance between analysing a broad range of evidence and doing so in considerable detail, it could be said that this is neither a large-scale narrative, nor a meticulous study of any individual piece of evidence. Most frustratingly, I regret not having had space or time to properly compare the cults of *iurodivye* with those of other saints. I do mention the latter and suggest they were often more visible than most cults of *iurodivye*, but a more systematic comparison of their relative scales within a region would have been useful. Finally, if I have framed the rise in popularity of *iurodivye* in the context of the expansion of miracle cults more generally, I am far from a satisfactory answer on why miracle cults were so prominent in the sixteenth century. This, I suspect, can be the subject of several doctoral theses.

This thesis, then, hopes to contribute to the study of *iurodstvo*, if not by superseding previous studies, by being wrong in productive new ways.[102] It departs from the decontextualisation and mythologisation of *iurodstvo*, analysing it as a phenomenon known to us primarily through texts, and making the following main arguments:

1. ***Iurodivye* were a historical phenomenon.** In this Introduction, I hope to have shown that the emergence and rise in popularity of *iurodivye* in the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Russian popular consciousness, as a historico-literary phenomenon primarily known to us through texts, must be studied with the methodological rigour due to the

[102] PALMER, *Early Medieval Hagiography*, op. cit., 84.

use of texts, and especially hagiographical texts, as evidence. It is my firm belief that basing the study of *iurodivye* on the premise that they can somehow unravel the mystery of Russian culture or national character is a profoundly misguided endeavour.

2. ***Iurodivye* were saints.** In Part II, I argue that *iurodivye* became visible in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as part of a broader religious context that favoured miracle cults, and as a result of Moscow-based authorities leaning, however rhetorically, towards the ecclesiastical centralisation of Russia. Most of the evidence for *iurodivye* in this period commemorates them as saints whose posthumous miracles apparently mattered more than their way of life. As a category, *iurodivye* and their cults also tended to be less prominent, in hierarchy and scale, than the cults of their contemporary ecclesiastical saints.

3. **There were two main understandings of *iurodstvo*.** In Part III, I argue that *iurodstvo* in this period was not narrowly defined, and that its ecclesiastical and vernacular understandings coexisted, and occasionally overlapped. The first characterised *iurodivye* as extreme, but essentially harmless, ascetics, whereas the latter depicted them as aggressive, charismatic prophets.

4. ***Iurodivye* were politicised by the patrons of their cults.** In Part IV, I argue that *iurodivye* were easily appropriated as malleable, non-institutional figures, by the people, often in positions of power, who sponsored their cults. Their prophecies in life were interpreted to favour their patrons' political ambitions, and their

posthumous miracles and shrines used to legitimise institutions or dynasties, and to navigate and provide a narrative for political change.

I could rightly be accused of taking a previously exciting topic – eccentric saints and popular opponents to political oppression – and turning it into a reasonably boring thesis. I only hope it can contribute to a more accurate understanding of an intriguing historical phenomenon.

II. MAKING SAINTS

II.1 Saint-making: Terminology and Features

The evidence for fifteenth- and sixteenth-century *iurodivye* was produced primarily in the context of their veneration as saints. But if *iurodivye* became visible as objects of veneration in this period, so did other saints. In other words, there is a very likely correlation between the visibility of *iurodivye* and the increased visibility of saints in general, and miracle cults especially, in this period. This part explores some of the evidence for the increased regulation, or at least recognition, of the cult of saints by the Moscow-based ecclesiastical elite and complicates ideas about 'canonisation' in the Russian Orthodox Church. Saint-making processes shaped the cults of *iurodivye*. Understanding them is an essential step towards an interpretation of the sixteenth-century popularity of *iurodstvo*.

Iurodivye are known to us through images and texts, mostly hagiographical or liturgical, occasionally supplemented by chronicles and foreign accounts. Their names were also recorded in calendars listing the commemoration dates for saints throughout the liturgical year, making saints out of mostly legendary figures. Some such figures, like Maksim of Moscow, might not even have been, as far as we know, the subject of hagiographies. The modern historian, then, is left to wonder what the indisputable markers of sainthood in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were: liturgical calendar entries? a *zhitie*? icons?

The quest for proof of officially recognised sainthood has long troubled scholars of Russian saints' cults, though there is hardly an agreement on what the recognition process entailed. The influence of Evgenii Golubinskii (1834–1912) on the scholarly understanding of saint-making in Russia can hardly be overstated. His seminal work of encyclopaedic scope argued that institutional rules (*pravila*) and customs (*poriadki*) defined who became a

venerated saint in the Russian Orthodox Church.[103] According to Golubinskii, the main criterion for validation was the candidate's ability to perform miracles, in life or posthumously. Official recognition of sainthood was to be pronounced by the diocesan bishop (*eparkhial'nyi arkhierei*) in the case of a local cult, or the patriarch in the case of a pan-Russian one, after an investigation of the relevant shrine. Shrines and veneration, then, preceded official sanction, and Golubinskii distinguished between institutionally approved sainthood (*kanonizatsiia*) and popular veneration (*pochitanie*) of the virtuous deceased (*usopshie podvizhniki dobrodetelia*).[104]

This distinction between the official and unofficial recognition of saints has been countlessly echoed in the historiography since Golubinskii, and scholars have often tried to determine the earliest point at which a cult was promoted from unofficial to official.[105] The fact that this is often extremely difficult, if not impossible, should encourage us to see such attempts as misguided: if being officially recognised as a saint by the Russian Orthodox Church was such a major step for a cult, then why do we not find overwhelming, unambiguous evidence for it?

Part of the problem is encapsulated in the omnipresent and rarely challenged term 'canonisation' (*kanonizatsiia*),[106] found in Russian historiography in its pre-revolutionary,

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[103] E.E. GOLUBINSKII, *История канонизации святых в Русской церкви*, 2nd edn, Moscow 1903, 40.

[104] *Idem*, 40–2: Recognition by the patriarch refers to the period after 1589.

[105] B.N. FLORIA – V.A. KUCHKIN, О профессиональном уровне книг по истории русской церкви, *Вопросы истории* 11, 1988, 153: Some scholars, following Golubinskii, see liturgical commemoration as the turning point of officialdom, though this is not a consensual criterion.

[106] I. THYRÊT, *Saint-making in Early Modern Russia: Religious Tradition and Innovation in the Cult of Nil Stolobenskii*, Washington, D.C. 2019: Isolde Thyrêt's fascinating and meticulous study of the cult of Nil of Stolbnoe makes arguments similar to the ones developed in this thesis, despite a focus on a later period and a different type of saint. Her approach to saint-making in pre-modern Russia is eloquently summarised in her

Soviet, *émigré*, and post-Soviet trends,[107] and western studies alike.[108] The Greek κᾰνών, literally 'any straight rod or bar', was understood metaphorically to mean 'a rule or standard of excellence: – so, the old Greek authors were called κανόνες, rules or models of excellence, classics; and the books received by the Church as the rule of faith and practice are called the Canon or canonical scriptures.'[109] From κᾰνών, Latin developed canonizātiōn, 'The action of canonizing; esp. formal admission into the calendar of saints', and canonizāre, to canonise.[110]

There are good reasons for considering 'canonisation' and its cognates as inadequate descriptors of saint-making in the pre-modern Russian Orthodox Church. First, despite being derived from a Greek root, 'canonisation' in Russian and western European languages is borrowed directly from Latin. In Byzantium, saint-making before the Palaiologan period

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introduction. I have greatly benefitted from her references to studies of the medieval West, and am indebted to Daniel Waugh for recommending her work to me.

[107] A.S. KHOROSHEV, *Политическая история русской канонизации (XI–XVI вв.)*, Moscow 1986: Khoroshev offers an interpretation of the cult of saints through a Soviet ideological lens. Канонизация, *ПЭ Том XXX*, 294 and forward: This is a more contemporary view, aligned with the Moscow Patriarchate. G.P. FEDOTOV, *The Russian Religious Mind, Volume 1, Kievan Christianity: The Tenth to the Thirteenth Centuries*, Harvard 1946, 94–5: *the princes Boris and Gleb, the sons of Vladimir, were the first saints canonized by the Russian Church after its foundation by their father*.

[108] P. PEETERS, La canonisation des saints dans l'église russe, *Analecta Bollandiana* 33/4, 1914, 380–420: Peeters criticises Golubinskii for conjuring up anachronistically formal processes of saint-making but does not abandon the idea of 'canonisation'. P. BUSHKOVITCH, *Religion and Society in Russia, the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Oxford 1992, 75: *The decisions of the church on these issues traditionally have been analyzed under the rubric of "canonization," a term foreign to the church in this period and the result of nineteenth-century scholarship.* Bushkovitch surprisingly uses the term in his own analysis, e.g., *No canonization documents are known before 1339 …* (77). A. POPPE, La naissance du culte de Boris et Gleb, *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 93, 1981, 30–1: Poppe mentions the *cérémonies de la canonisation et de la translation* without specifying what the former entailed.

[109] *LSJ*, 347–8.

[110] *The Oxford English Dictionary*, https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/27172?redirectedFrom=canonisation#eid (retrieved November 2022).

(from 1261) was known as ἀναγνώρισις, or recognition,[111] a loose process involving the veneration of men and women popularly considered to be saints. They were 'commemorated on their feastdays, celebrated in hagiography, and represented in sacred images; the faithful prayed to them for intercession and sought healing from the relics at their shrines.'[112] Popular involvement in saint-making did not, however, exclude members of the Church – priests, monks, or bishops – who also participated in the promotion of cults by recording miracle stories or keeping track of and celebrating saints' feast days according to the liturgical calendar.[113]

Ruth Macrides and Teresa Shawcross detected a change in Byzantine saint-making procedures in the Palaiologan period when the veneration of saints became entangled with political circumstances. Macrides noted a general lack of enthusiasm for saints before the thirteenth century, and a growing interest in them in the fourteenth. She also pointed out that the saints venerated under and after the reign of Michael VIII Palaiologos, unpopular for having usurped the throne, were his political opponents, including representatives of the legitimate dynastic line like John III Vatatzes and John IV Laskaris, Patriarch Arsenios, who had excommunicated Michael and been deposed by him, or Meletios the Confessor, who

[111] *LSJ*, 48.

[112] A.-M. TALBOT, Canonization, *ODB*, https://www-oxfordreference-com.ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/display/10.1093/acref/9780195046526.001.0001/acref-9780195046526-e-0890?rskey=aLQnOs&result=890 (retrieved December 2022). R. MACRIDES, Saints and Sainthood in the Early Palaiologan Period, in: S. Hackel (ed.), *The Byzantine Saint : University of Birmingham, Fourteenth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, London 1981, 84.

[113] S. EFTHYMIADIS, Greek Byzantine Collections of Miracles: A Chronological and Bibliographical Survey, *Symbolae Osloenses* 74/1, 1999, 195–211. R. TAFT, Calendar, Church, *ODB*, https://www-oxfordreference-com.ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/display/10.1093/acref/9780195046526.001.0001/acref-9780195046526-e-0874 (retrieved December 2022).

was twice exiled, mutilated and persecuted.[114] The latter's official recognition as a saint by a synod is well attested,[115] and Macrides contrasted the growing frequency of synodal recognition with a contemporary source acknowledging the legitimacy of spontaneous veneration of '… many other men and women saints whose relics lie in many monasteries in the capital and are celebrated by anyone who wishes, although the Church has never pronounced on this.'[116] She concluded that synodal recognition was 'merely a means of widening the area of a saint's veneration', and that frequent recourse to it in the fourteenth century could, in part, be due to increased contact with the Latin world during the occupation of Constantinople in the thirteenth century, but more likely to the politically controversial nature of the saints in question. Miracles as proof of sanctity were particularly important in this context as a way to deter sceptics and opponents to the cults.[117] Macrides concluded that a turn to the synodal recognition of saints may have been a symptom of institutional caution during a period of adverse circumstances, including the deposition of Patriarch Arsenios and the ensuing schism, the union with Rome, and the hesychast controversy.[118]

By contrast, in the Latin Church a standardised and institutionalised saint-making procedure was developed from the time of Innocent III (1198–1216), who saw 'works of piety during life and miracles after death' as prerequisites for sanctity and required investigation committees to submit complete dossiers, including 'relevant' and 'irrelevant'

[114] MACRIDES, Saints, op. cit., 68–82.

[115] *LSJ*, 50: Also called ἀνακήρυξις, or proclamation.

[116] MACRIDES, Saints, op. cit., 85.

[117] *Idem*, 85–6. T. SHAWCROSS, In the Name of the True Emperor: Politics of Resistance after the Palaiologan Usurpation, *Byzantinoslavica* 66, 2008, 203–27: Shawcross argues that Andronikos II sought to appease political tensions by showing devotion to the saints persecuted and martyred during his father's reign (226).

[118] MACRIDES, Saints, op. cit., 87.

information, to the papal curia. Innocent's successors Honorius III and Gregory IX developed the process further by requesting the 'interrogation of witnesses on the site of the saint's main activity'. By the thirteenth century, canonisation was a judicial-inquisitorial procedure whereby a highly suspicious papacy discarded most claims to sanctity it received.[119] This, however, is only part of the story. If there were thirty-five successful claims to canonisation out of seventy-one applications between 1198 and 1434, there were also, in the same period, hundreds of new saints' cults in Europe. This would suggest that an exclusive focus on papal canonisation *stricto sensu* would greatly exaggerate the papacy's role in the medieval veneration of saints. If the pope could, indeed, cancel a cult he deemed inappropriate, he 'did not expect every small community to await papal permission before it expressed its devotion to a saint'. Instead, canonisation became an optional mark of prestige, '… a luxury open to very few candidates whose followers could afford the expenses it demanded. Though canonization meant that the person was a saint, or at least must be regarded as such, its absence did not mean that he was not a saint.'[120]

Saint-making in the Byzantine and Latin Churches was, then, far from tidy, the term 'canonisation' describing only a judicial procedure in the latter Church, while failing to account for the more spontaneous way in which sainthood was attributed in either. Using 'canonisation' to describe saint-making in the pre-modern Russian Orthodox Church would misleadingly invoke a judicial procedure that was never employed in the time and places that concern us, and that was arguably not central to the veneration of saints in either Byzantium or western Europe. What is more, 'canonisation' (*kanonizatsiia*), being the

[119] A. KLEINBERG, *Prophets in Their Own Country: Living Saints and the Making of Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, Chicago 1992, 27–8.

[120] *Idem*, 21, 27, 37.

invention of nineteenth-century historians, was not a word used by fifteenth- or sixteenth-century Russians, suggesting it was not part of their framework for the attribution of sainthood. I therefore agree with Isolde Thyrêt that we should ban 'canonisation' from our descriptive vocabulary of pre-modern Russian sanctity and use it exclusively to refer to the judicial procedure through which the Roman pope officially recognised a deceased religious figure as a saint in the Catholic Church.[121]

Pope Boniface VIII's 1297 bull, *Gloria Laus*, canonising Saint Louis IX of France is a good example of the elevation to sainthood of a relatively recently deceased person, Louis having died less than three decades before, in 1270. The bull was an argumentative text, thanking God for His new saint and listing 'the noble merits and wondrous works of the blessed Louis', starting with a description of his lineage and character, followed by a short biography focused on his holy land feats, and an account of his Christian virtue, including looking after the sick and poor, spreading the word of God, and practicing an ascetic lifestyle.[122] The bull went on to mention Louis's posthumous miracles,[123] and concluded by establishing and encouraging the celebration of Louis's feast day on the 25 August, the anniversary of his death:

> 'We therefore advise and strictly urge every one of you, directed by apostolic letter, to celebrate the feast day of this saint devoutly and solemnly on the day following the Feast of the Apostle Saint Bartholomew … arrange for the feast to be celebrated through your cities and dioceses by faithful Christians with appropriate veneration …'[124]

[121] THYRÊT, *Saint-making*, op. cit., 502.

[122] M. GAPOSCHKIN – S. FIELD (eds.), *The Sanctity of Louis IX : Early Lives of Saint Louis by Geoffrey of Beaulieu and William of Chartres*, Cornell 2013, 163–70.

[123] *Idem*, 171: *The blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, cured by the invocation of his name.*

[124] *Idem*, 171–2.

Boniface was sparing in his use of the epithet 'saint', preferring to refer to the 'blessed Louis'[125] and switching to the noun 'saint' only towards the end of the bull, in the context of Louis's posthumous miracles and feast day celebrations.[126] Moreover, nowhere in the bull did the pope use the word 'canonisation', perhaps because it was so obviously implied that it did not need spelling out. Having avoided calling Louis a saint for most of the lengthy bull, Boniface finally took the unavoidable leap towards the end, not without mentioning the selective process Louis's application had gone through:

> 'we—reaching absolute certainty through the diligence of careful and solemn inquiry and review of the earlier extended examination … and by the advice and with the assent of the community of our brothers and all the prelates then at the Apostolic See—do hereby hold that he is, on Sunday, the eleventh of August, to be enrolled in the catalogue of the saints.'[127]

It is almost as if Boniface were reluctant, or nervous even, to officially make Louis a saint, despite the thoroughly gathered body of evidence in the king's favour and his ecclesiastical brethren's approval. His bull offers an interesting, if purely artificial, comparison with Metropolitan Makarii of Moscow's encyclical following the 1547 Church council.[128] Makarii, too, strengthened his decision by invoking the council's collective agency and listing its members, from the archbishop of Rostov down to the heads of monastic houses. Like Boniface, Makarii was concerned with appropriate commemoration:

> 'мы ... уставихомъ, на томъ соборѣ ... праздновати въ царствующемъ градѣ Москвѣ въ соборной церкви и по всѣмъ священнымъ церквамъ и по всѣмъ

[125] *Idem*, 171, 163, 160.

[126] *Idem*, 171: *through the power of this saint*; *This same saint shone forth*; *celebrate the feast day of this saint*.

[127] *Ibid.*

[128] On this document, see the detailed discussion from page 58 below.

> святымъ монастыремъ и по всѣмъ градомъ великого царства Россійского пѣти и праздновати повсюду ...'[129]
>
> 'we … established, in that council … to commemorate (*prazdnovati*) in the ruling city of Moscow in the cathedral church and in all the holy churches and in all the holy monasteries and in all the towns of the great Russian kingdom to sing and commemorate (*peti i prazdnovati*) everywhere …'

He specified, for each saint listed, whether commemoration was to be general (to sing and commemorate everywhere, *peti i prazdnovati povsiudu*) or regional (in Moscow, in Tver', etc). Sainthood required expression through regular liturgical practices, and failure to observe them was considered reprehensible:

> 'уставили есмя нынѣ праздновати новымъ Чудотворцомъ въ Руской земли, что ихъ Господь Богъ прославилъ, своихъ угодниковъ, многими и различными чудесы и знаменми и не бѣ имъ доднесь соборнаго пѣнія …'[130]
>
> 'we have now established the commemoration of new wonderworkers in the Russian land, on which the Lord God bestowed glory, on those pleasing to Him, through many and various miracles and signs and there was, to this day, no sung celebration for them …'

Even more than Boniface, Makarii shied away from calling the holy people in his list saints (*sviatye*), referring to them instead as new wonderworkers (*novye chudotvortsy*).[131] This deferred agency to God, who by enabling outstanding individuals to work miracles made them unambiguous vehicles of grace. The *chudotvortsy* were chosen by God, not by the metropolitan. The major difference, however, between the letters of Boniface and Makarii is their scope. The pope's lengthy bull dealt with a single new saint, carefully examining his *curriculum vitae*, putting forward arguments for his canonisation, and reminding the Christian community that Louis's application had been thoroughly examined.

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[129] *Акты, собранные в библиотеках и архивах Российской Империи Археографическою экспедициею Императорской академии наук, Т. 1. 1294–1598*, St Petersburg 1836, 203.

[130] *Ibid.*

[131] Metropolitan Iona was the only great wonderworker, *velikii chudotvorets*. On the problematic textual variations of this text see page 60 and forward.

The metropolitan's encyclical, on the other hand, gives the impression of a Church leader struggling to keep up with the practices of his congregation, and hastily putting his stamp of approval on a dozen miracle cults, the individual merits of which he did not discuss. Louis's miracles were mentioned, almost as an afterthought, in a single short paragraph towards the end of the bull, after the detailed account of his virtuous life. In contrast, the defining characteristic of the 'new Russian wonderworkers' is that they, at least posthumously, worked miracles. Whether their lives were virtuous was not specified.

This last observation is especially significant in the debate on the grounds for veneration. Bushkovitch, though he recognised the growing importance of miracles after the fifteenth century, thought that 'Fundamentally the basis for the recognition of saints was charismatic. It rested on the virtuous life and spiritual power of the individual in question, and only in part on miracles performed in life as well as afterward, in the presence of the person's relics.'[132] However, Makarii systematically referring to the new Russian saints as wonderworkers (*chudotvortsy*), never dwelling on their pious lives, is strong evidence for miracles as the main criterion for veneration, as argued by Golubinskii.[133] Though they proliferated in a later period when criteria might have shifted, cults of corpses about which nothing was known, except that they worked miracles, were seen as enough of a problem by the Church to be addressed in the 1667 council, when it was decided that they should not be venerated without official investigation.[134] The cult of Iakov of Borovichi, later venerated as a holy fool, whose relics were investigated in 1544 at the request of Archbishop Feodosii of

[132] BUSHKOVITCH, *Religion*, op. cit., 79, 81: Bushkovitch argues that 1547 was a major turning point in official saint-making.

[133] GOLUBINSKII, *История*, op. cit., 40–1.

[134] E. LEVIN, From Corpse to Cult in Early Modern Russia, in: V. Kivelson – R. Greene (eds.), *Orthodox Russia: Belief and Practice under the Tsars*, University Park, PA 2003, 84–5.

Novgorod, is one such example of a wonderworking corpse that became the object of a cult.[135] This would suggest that miracles were the only necessary precondition to veneration, and intercession the main currency of the cult of saints.

Once the cult of a deceased person reached proportions such that their name was included in liturgical calendars and their life narrated in a hagiography, or *zhitie*, they were unambiguously, though not systematically, referred to as saintly, or saints (*sviatye*). In the earliest known liturgical calendar where we find Isidor of Rostov, the entry for his feast day on the 14 May reads: 'the saintly and righteous wonderworker Isidor, holy fool for Christ's sake'. The following two entries, for comparison, are dedicated to the memories of 'the venerable and God-bearing father Pakhomii the great' and 'the saintly wonderworker priest Isaia bishop of Rostov'. All persons included in the calendar were considered saintly and most entries followed the formula '*sviatoi* – name – type of holy life', with occasional exceptions for Church fathers (*otets nash*) and monks (*prepodobnyi*).[136] The *Life of Isidor* presented an argument for the recognition of his sainthood and consistently used '*sviatoi*' not only as an epithet ('the saintly Isidor') but also as a noun ('the saint'). This is especially significant in the episode where Isidor's lifeless body miraculously exuded a sweet smell and was buried by a handful of men who believed in him, presumably as opposed to those who did not. When narrating episodes from Isidor's earthly life, the text also uses terms like

[135] Иаков, *ПЭ Том XX*, 486–8.

[136] РГБ. Ф.304/I №761, fol. 279 r, https://lib-fond.ru/lib-rgb/304-i/f-304i-761/#image-5 (retrieved January 2023): This collection includes hagiographical texts and a lunar calendar, as well as the liturgical calendar with Isidor in it.

ugodnik (the one pleasing to God) and *pravednik* (the righteous one), though these are replaced by *sviatoi* after his death and the bishop's approval of his cult.[137]

Though I recognise the previous paragraphs are but a superficial investigation of sainthood and saint-making terminology, it seems significant that neither Makarii nor the documents commemorating Isidor used a word to describe the official recognition of a saintly figure, or even alluded to the process, as Boniface did. Instead, a variety of terms referred to various aspects of saintliness and its expression in people recognised as saintly: *chudotvorets* (wonderworker), *sviatoi* (as an epithet meaning saintly or holy, or as a noun to signify 'the saint'), *prepodobnyi* (venerable, or Christ-like), *blazhennyi* (blessed, as an epithet or noun), *ugodnik* (one pleasing to God), *pravednik* (righteous one), etc. The abundance and frequent usage of such terms, by no means dominated by *sviatoi*, would point to a spectrum in the perception of saintliness. Rather than a binary (either canonised or not), there was a range of descriptors, mostly non-hierarchical, for people identified as saintly that implied actions carried out to commemorate them. The reputation of such saintly people could spread geographically, politically, and in scale, but its nature remained essentially unchanged.

If we are to avoid 'canonisation' as a word and concept, how else can we describe the manifestations of the cult of saints in pre-modern Russia? My suggestions are to use 'recognition' to refer to the singling out of a person, often posthumously, by their community for their pious life and / or spiritual powers; 'veneration', to refer to the devotional practices and infrastructures – including the management of shrines, production of texts and images, pilgrimages, requests for help through singing or praying by a grave, etc – set up to

[137] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 189–90.

commemorate such people; and 'saint-making', to emphasise the fact that saints did not materialise out of the blue, and that groups and individuals had agency in creating them.

Initiatives for the veneration of saintly candidates were argumentative in nature and often had to negotiate for space and attention in a religious landscape. Scholars are divided between those, like Khoroshev, who saw saint-making as a purely political and top-down process,[138] and those, like Peeters, who thought it was a predominantly popular phenomenon to which the Church merely added a stamp of approval.[139] Khoroshev found deep ties between large-scale political developments and the cult of saints. This approach can explain high-profile, exceptional cults like that of Sergii of Radonezh, but hardly accounts for local, lower-profile cults. The approach taken by Peeters, on the other hand, projected an excessively passive image of the Church while drawing a misleadingly hard boundary between clergy and laity. A bishop in a relatively large town and a parish priest in a village hundreds of miles from the nearest see could not have differed more, the latter being much closer to the laity than to the bishop in terms of education, social status, and mindset.[140] Successful cults were likely to be the result of consensus and collaboration between the clergy and laity, whose relationship varied according to the local context.[141] Generally, a popular cult was unlikely to flourish without clerical management of its shrine, and a cult artificially imposed from above was unlikely to gain followers.

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[138] KHOROSHEV, *Политическая история*., op. cit.: See his introduction.

[139] PEETERS, La canonisation, op. cit., 389.

[140] See a more detailed discussion of parish priests from page 68.

[141] THYRÊT, *Saint-making*, op. cit., 14.

One pre-modern Russian cult does not offer a blueprint for another. Despite Metropolitan Makarii's efforts, there probably was no uniformity in the performance and management of cults. New shrines and relics were likely to be investigated if they emerged in the middle of an episcopal town: the followers of Isidor of Rostov asked for the bishop's permission before burying the saint and building a wooden chapel on the site of his grave.[142] But episcopal regulation could take much longer, or even never happen. In 1653, the *voevoda* (tsar's official) of Mangazei, a northern Siberian town, wrote to Archbishop Simeon of Tobol'sk with a list of miracles worked by a corpse that had emerged in a marshy area a few years earlier. Simeon requested an investigation from Moscow, which never took place. When, six years later, he personally observed the shrine, he found a decayed body but made no effort to terminate the by then established cult. Instead, paradoxically enough, his visit was perceived as sanctioning the cult.[143] Though scholars tend to see central recognition of a regional cult as a major event in its history, approving nods from Moscow often came late, if ever, and probably had little impact locally.

Finally, cults were not static. They were a collection of actions – singing, praying, recording, making a pilgrimage, fundraising – that had to be performed over and over again. If or when these actions no longer took place, the cult died: veneration was a process, rather than a once-and-for-all business. Cynthia Vakareliyska has observed that even physical liturgical calendars were not fixed: they were updated and edited, and feasts were added or removed as the sainthood status of individual figures changed.[144] Cults could temporarily

[142] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 190.

[143] LEVIN, From Corpse, op. cit., 87–8, 96–7.

[144] C. VAKARELIYSKA, The absence of Holy Fools from Medieval Bulgarian Calendars, in: P. Hunt – S. Kobets (eds.), *Holy Foolishness,* op. cit., 240.

disappear, only to be resurrected decades later when an individual or group took responsibility for veneration. Isolde Thyrêt has singled out the promoters, or impresarios, of the seventeenth-century cult of St Nil of Stolbnoe. These actors went to great pains to ensure the cult remained alive and grew in prestige, making a 'continuous case for the veneration of this saint' and producing new versions of his hagiography.[145] Cults and their expressions were arguments that had to be constantly reiterated in a continuous process of saint-making.

II.2 Cults and Councils

The absence, in the Russian Orthodox Church, of a discernible or meaningful milestone for official recognition of sainthood should not obscure Moscow's interest in keeping track of regional saints' cults and regulating the lives of provincial subjects. As the organiser of Church councils that aimed at establishing a closer relationship between Moscow and it growing subject territories, Metropolitan Makarii was one of the most important figures of sixteenth-century Russia.

Born around 1482, Makarii was a monk in the St Pafnutii Borovsk monastery (about 100 kilometres south-west of Moscow) before his appointment by Vasilii III to the long vacant see of Novgorod in 1526. As metropolitan of Moscow from 1542, he probably had a role in the education of the young Ivan IV and, despite his frequent intercessions in favour of the tsar's disgraced subjects, remained in office until his death in 1563, one of the few Russian metropolitans in this period to have done so.[146] Though one can hardly speak of the

[145] THYRÊT, *Saint-making*, op. cit., 505.

[146] I. DE MADARIAGA, *Ivan the Terrible: First Tsar of Russia*, New Haven 2005, 47–8, 156.

reign of Ivan IV without mentioning Makarii, the degree of his involvement in Muscovite politics has been the object of scholarly controversy.[147] Bjarne Nørretranders has argued that the metropolitan 'acted more as a statesman than a leader of the church' and that he was 'at the centre of political events and intrigues.'[148] He was certainly present at the most important religious ceremonies in the life of the ruling dynasty, including Ivan's first two weddings, the weddings of his brother and cousin, the baptisms of Ivan's three children (in 1554, 1555, and 1557), and the funeral of Tsaritsa Anastasiia in 1560.[149] As one of the tsar's closest counsellors,[150] Makarii also fulfilled semi-official diplomatic functions by receiving Lithuanian representatives in the context of the Livonian war.[151] And if there is scepticism about him being left in charge of Moscow when Ivan was away,[152] Makarii certainly had an active role in promoting military action against Kazan'.[153]

Religious and diplomatic roles notwithstanding, it is the formulation of an ideology defining the individual roles of and relationship between Church and state that is often

[147] C. HALPERIN, Metropolitan Makarii and Muscovite Court Politics during the Reign of Ivan IV, *The Russian Review* 73, 2014, 450–1.

[148] B. NØRRETRANDERS, *The Shaping of Czardom under Ivan Groznyj*, London 1971, 58.

[149] HALPERIN, Metropolitan Makarii, op. cit., 451–2.

[150] S.N. BOGATYREV, *The Sovereign and his Counsellors: Ritualised Consultations in Muscovite Political Culture, 1350s-1570s*, Helsinki 2000, 219. HALPERIN, Metropolitan Makarii, op. cit., 449: Halperin pointed out the difficulties in separating Church from state matters, and in discerning individual agency in decisions presented as collective and unanimous, both of which are obstacles to our understanding of Makarii's political role.

[151] BOGATYREV, *The Sovereign*, op. cit., 31. HALPERIN, Metropolitan Makarii, op. cit., 462–3.

[152] DE MADARIAGA, *Ivan*, op. cit., 78: De Madariaga claimed Makarii was often left in charge of Moscow. HALPERIN, Metropolitan Makarii, op. cit., 454–5: Halperin was sceptical on this matter.

[153] HALPERIN, Metropolitan Makarii, op. cit., 461.

mentioned as Metropolitan Makarii's most influential contribution.[154] Far from being confined to written texts, this ideology was enacted in public rituals, the most famous of which was the 1547 coronation of Ivan IV as tsar of all Rus'. Based on an earlier ceremony from 1498, the carefully crafted 1547 script consciously repurposed Byzantine tradition and used objects symbolising political legitimacy to enthrone Ivan as the God-anointed tsar.[155]

If the 1547 coronation is the most obvious example of embodied ideology, Makarii also wove narratives of imperial power into other public appearances, drawing inspiration from Novgorod customs he knew from his time as archbishop. He established the Epiphany ceremony of the blessing of the waters, and the Palm Sunday ritual in which Ivan IV led the metropolitan on a mule, re-enacting Christ's entrance into Jerusalem. Such rituals, behind which Makarii's influence is discernible, publicly tightened the interdependence of Church and state.[156]

Carefully curating the metropolitan's public image, Makarii also brought the white cowl (*belyi klobuk*), traditionally worn by the archbishop of Novgorod, to Moscow. Supposedly given by Constantine the Great to Pope Sylvester I, the white cowl was sent to Constantinople and on to Novgorod in the ninth century for safekeeping. Though this legend is improbable at best, the white cowl was invested with an ancient Byzantine aura, and simultaneously acted as a reminder that, after the fall of Constantinople, Moscow was the

[154] NØRRETRANDERS, *The Shaping*, op. cit., 60, 175: Nørretranders argued that, rather than an achievement, *the church's ideological victory led to its political defeat*, and that the ideology as formulated by Makarii *turned its practical opportunism into a pseudo-ideological credo, and did so with a ruthlessness and a zeal that showed the crown the way to rule by means of terrorism and to turn that terrorism also against the church.*

[155] See a fuller discussion of the 1498 and 1547 coronations from page 268.

[156] HALPERIN, Metropolitan Makarii, op. cit., 458–9.

last stronghold of the true faith.[157] After Makarii's death, it was decided that the metropolitan would carry on wearing the white cowl, and when the Greek Patriarch Jeremiah visited in 1589, the white cowl was given to him so that he could present it to the first Russian patriarch, Iov.[158]

Having commissioned the Book of Degrees (*Stepennaia kniga*), which enshrined the history and joint activity of Rus' heads of state and Church, in the 1560s,[159] Makarii did not neglect the prestige of Byzantine official approval and asked for the Patriarch of Constantinople's blessing on Ivan IV's title of tsar. This was partly granted, after a long process, in 1561, though the patriarch said that Ivan had to be re-crowned by a patriarch rather than a metropolitan. The response seemed good enough to Makarii, and a change in its Slavonic translation gave the impression that the blessing had been the patriarch's initiative.[160]

This episode is an apt illustration of the way in which the Moscow ruling elite used Byzantine symbols of legitimacy for its own purposes: it did not strictly need approval from Constantinople – as shown by the independent selection by Rus' bishops of Metropolitan Iona in 1448 – but it did make ample use of external signifiers of prestige from Byzantium. Though Russian Church leaders forged their own innovative traditions – such as repeating the ordination (*rukopolozhenie* or *khirotoniia*) of a metropolitan, or allowing the head of the

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[157] DE MADARIAGA, *Ivan*, op. cit., 156.

[158] B.A. USPENSKII, *Царь и патриарх. Харизма власти в России : Византийская модель и ее русское переосмысление*, Moscow 1998, 429–31, 438: In Byzantium, the white cowl might have been worn by patriarchs from a white clergy (non-monastic) background. For a fuller discussion of the white cowl's role in the ideological struggle between Moscow and Novgorod, see page 286 below.

[159] DE MADARIAGA, *Ivan*, op. cit., 157.

[160] *Idem*, 52–3.

Church to choose his successor – the promotion of Moscow to a patriarchate by Jeremiah of Constantinople in 1589 was a leap in status for the Russian Orthodox Church, meaning that the Russian patriarch was now the fifth pentarch after the patriarchs of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, thereby excluding the Roman pope.[161]

The collaboration of Church and state, presented as long-standing in the Book of Degrees, was crystallised in mid-sixteenth-century Church councils, the impulse for which probably came from Makarii.[162] Councils were not an established tradition in the Russian Orthodox Church. If not unheard of, they are poorly documented, and it is often difficult to establish what was discussed in them. In his history of the Russian Church before 1448, John Fennell listed six councils, all in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The first two were convened by Metropolitan Kirill II, who hosted a synod of bishops in Kiev in 1273 and organised the election of Bishop Serapion in Vladimir in 1274. The latter council was attended by five bishops who also expressed concern regarding the lay celebration of pagan rituals.[163] According to the sixteenth-century Nikon Chronicle, Metropolitan Maksim gathered all the Rus' bishops in Kyiv in 1284 for an official recognition of saints Ol'ga and Vladimir.[164] Two councils are associated with Metropolitan Petr: in 1310 or 1311 a representative of the patriarch of Constantinople, two Rus' bishops, two sons of the prince of Tver', and (probably) Iurii Danilovich of Moscow gathered in Pereiaslavl' to discuss Petr's accusation of simony by the bishop of Tver'. He was found innocent by the council, and another council was summoned by Ivan I of Moscow in Vladimir in 1327 where Petr's

[161] USPENSKII, *Царь и патриарх,* op. cit., 30–1, 47–52, 495–9.

[162] BOGATYREV, *The Sovereign*, op. cit., 137–8.

[163] J. FENNELL, *A History of the Russian Church to 1448*, Taylor & Francis 1995, 133, 88.

[164] *Idem*, 60.

posthumous miracles were read aloud, and he was officially recognised as a saint.[165] Finally, in 1382 Metropolitan Pimen hosted a council in Pereiaslavl'-Zalesskii, attended by the bishops of Rostov and Zvenigorod, where Savva was consecrated as bishop of Sarai.[166]

There were, apparently, no more councils until 1448, when four bishops – Efrem of Rostov, Avraamii of Suzdal', Varlaam of Kolomna and Pitirim of Perm' – gathered to elect Iona of Riazan' as metropolitan of Moscow, without a blessing from Constantinople. Despite the significance of the occasion, it appears to have been a small-scale gathering, the archbishop of Novgorod and bishop Tver' having excused themselves and sent their written agreement instead.[167] The absence of councils between 1382 and 1448 was most likely due to the political instability and periods of civil war during the reign of Vasilii II, who only established a firm grip on the Moscow throne in 1447.[168] The Church, on the other hand, had its own pressing concerns in the first half of the fifteenth century, including a dispute about the jurisdiction of the Orthodox Christians of Poland and Lithuania, and the Lithuanian grand prince's attempts to make Kyiv the seat of a separate metropolitanate. Worse still, the Greek metropolitan of Moscow Isidor, who left for the council of Ferrara in 1437, agreed to the Union with the Roman Church and was received as a traitor on his return to Moscow in 1441, his office remaining vacant until the election of Iona over six years later.[169]

In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the policing of Judaizing heretical beliefs in Novgorod motivated the gathering of councils. The first, called by Archbishop

[165] *Idem*, 135–6.

[166] *Idem*, 155.

[167] *Idem*, 188.

[168] *Idem*, 184.

[169] *Idem*, 162–3, 172, 174–83. For a more detailed discussion of the Union, see page 263 and forward.

Gennadii of Novgorod, was held in Moscow in 1490 and was followed by a second, also in Moscow, in 1504.[170] Between them, and again in Moscow, took place the much-debated council of 1503, which Donald Ostrowski investigated in his doctoral thesis. Having conducted a detailed analysis of every text and manuscript pertaining to the council, Ostrowski concluded that it was not primarily concerned with the secularisation of monastic and Church lands, as had often been assumed, and that such an agenda was projected back onto 1503 by later polemical sources. Matters otherwise associated with the 1503 council include 'fees for appointment of priests, minimum age for clerics, the disposition of widower priests, monks and nuns living in the same monastery, and drunken priests.'[171]

The later fifteenth and early sixteenth century councils showed signs of a new trend. They reinforced the role of Moscow, not Kyiv or Vladimir or other princely towns, as the decision-making centre, whether this was about choosing the next metropolitan, controlling the heresy spread in Novgorod, or legislating on the lives of the clergy. Moscow, which was producing liturgical calendars (*mesiatseslovy*) by the fifteenth century, was fashioning itself as a spiritually prestigious city.[172] Significant too was the involvement of Grand Prince Ivan III, a sign that matters discussed at a council carried political significance that transcended purely ecclesiastical concerns.

This conciliar trend came into full bloom in the mid-sixteenth century gatherings organised in Moscow by Metropolitan Makarii and Ivan IV. Up to the early sixteenth

[170] J. HOWLETT, *The Heresy of the Judaizers and the Problem of the Russian Reformation*, DPhil thesis, University of Oxford 1979, 2–3.

[171] D. OSTROWSKI, A "Fontological" Investigation of the 1503 Church Council, PhD dissertation, Pennsylvania State University 1977, 1, 325–31, 335.

[172] Канонизация, *ПЭ Том XXX*, op. cit., 297.

century, councils seem to have been summoned, most frequently by a metropolitan, occasionally by a secular ruler, on an *ad hoc* basis to deal with specific issues, such as the election or trial of a bishop, or the emergence of heresy. Though a couple of councils, in 1284 and 1327, apparently had as their main business the recognition of saints (Ol'ga, Vladimir, and Metropolitan Petr), the official approval given to a dozen saints' cults in 1547 was unprecedented. Similarly, and though some councils had previously expressed concern with the lives of the laity and clergy – 1274, and most notably 1503 – the major conciliar endeavour of 1551 and ensuing directives were an innovation for a Church and state which had, until then, not made any real attempts to shape the behaviour of lay and ecclesiastical persons under their jurisdiction.

Though the 1551 Stoglav, or Council of a Hundred Chapters, might have been historically more significant, the 1547 council that preceded it was no minor gathering. According to one of the surviving copies of Metropolitan Makarii's resulting encyclical, the council was attended by Archbishop Aleksei of Rostov and Iaroslavl', Bishop Iona of Suzdal' and Torusk (?), Bishop Iosif of Riazan' and Murom, Bishop Akakii of Tver', Bishop Feodosii of Kolomna and Kashira, Bishop Sava of Sarai and Podonsk, Bishop Kiprian of Perm' and Vologda, and the honourable archimandrites and honourable hegumens.[173] Despite the apparent absence of the archbishop of Novgorod and the lack of information on the monastic leaders present, the fact that Makarii made a considerable number of Church hierarchs travel to Moscow is in itself significant. Meeting counterparts and hierarchical superiors they might otherwise never see and participating in deliberations that affected the

[173] *Акты, собранные*, op. cit., 203.

whole of Russia must have been a powerful, personal reminder that they were parts of a much larger whole.

The relatively meagre evidence for the councils of 1547 and 1549, discussed below, suggests that both councils were primarily concerned with the veneration of saints. This was not a new interest for Makarii who, as archbishop of Novgorod, had devoted considerable resources to the creation of his *Velikie Minei Chetii*, or Great Menology. This was a compilation of edifying readings for each day of the liturgical year that included materials from previous menologies, monastic *pateriki*, psalms, writings by Church fathers, and various other didactic texts, as well as hagiographical works about Russian and foreign saints. Three complete copies of the Great Menology are known, referred to as *Sofiiskii*, *Uspenskii*, and *Tsarskii*. The first was started in Novgorod in 1529–30 and offered by Makarii upon completion in 1541 to St Sophia's cathedral for the memory of his parents. The *Uspenskii* copy was offered to the Moscow Kremlin Dormition cathedral in 1552, and the *Tsarskii*, intended for Ivan IV, was still a work in progress in 1554, over a decade after Makarii become metropolitan.[174]

Makarii's monumental project employed copyists, translators, and writers in Novgorod and later in Moscow, and new works were commissioned to be added to older texts. This was more frequently the case for new Russian saints, some of which did not have appropriate biographies. The *Life of Mikhail of Klopsko*, a monastic *iurodivyi* known for his pro-Moscow stance against Novgorod boyars, existed in two redactions – collages of episodes rather than canonical *zhitiia* – before Makarii asked a certain Tuchkov to compose a third, more stylistically elevated, redaction to be included in the Great Menology. Tuchkov

[174] N.F. DROBLENKOVA, Великие Минеи Четии, *СККДР (XIV–XVI, 1)*, 127.

had been sent by Moscow to Novgorod in 1537 to assemble an army against the Tatars. When this was done, he went for a blessing to Archbishop Makarii, who insisted that he write a new *Life of Mikhail*.[175]

The veneration of saints and the fashioning of appropriate narratives to commemorate them were very much on Makarii's mind from his time as archbishop of Novgorod and well into the 1550s. We can perhaps connect this interest in saints' cults with Makarii's ambition in creating ideological narratives for Church and state. Even if the Great Menology, with its huge twelve tomes, could hardly become widely disseminated, it still represented a desire to compile in one place all the materials for appropriate liturgical celebration, including the *Lives* of new Russian saints in versions acceptable to Moscow. The *zhitie* of Mikhail of Klopsko, a regional saint who endorsed Moscow's hegemony and was declared a pan-Russian saint, is a particularly good example of this.[176]

The councils of 1547 and 1549 were expressions of a similar desire to direct the liturgical celebration of saints and include them in the nascent Russian imperial narrative, even as regional miracle-workers. The evidence for both councils is problematic, though both are attested in the more trustworthy *Stoglav* text. Golubinskii firmly believed that the councils had brought about the 'canonisation' of thirty-nine miracle-working saints,[177] failing to take into account the manuscript traditions, an important part of which have become available since his time.

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[175] *Памятники старинной русской литературы, издаваемые графом Григорием Кушелевым-Безбородко, вып.4*, Saint Petersburg 1862, 50–1.

[176] See a fuller discussion of his cult from page 278.

[177] GOLUBINSKII, *История*, op. cit., 94.

Our main piece of evidence, Makarii's synodal letter of February 7055 (1547), was not widely disseminated. Bushkovitch listed four copies,[178] while Tkachev named seven. The first four were copies of the encyclical addressed by Makarii to the Trinity St Sergii *lavra* (РГБ Ф.304/I №241 fols. 1 r – 2 v), the Vologda see (quoted in this thesis and published in the *Akty Arkheograficheskoi Kommissii*), the Novgorod archbishop Feodosii (РНБ. F.I.356. fols. 441 r – 442 r), and 'to the bishops and archimandrites and hegumens and archpriests and priests and urban and rural deacons and all the Christians of the realm of Vladimir and Moscow and Novgorod and the whole Russian land' (included in the Siberian copy of the trial of Maksim Grek, ГПНТБ СО РАН. F.1.3. fols. 176 r – 177 r). The final three redactions are a retelling of the encyclical published by Karamzin from a St Iosif Volokolamsk monastery manuscript (РГБ. МДА. №362. fols. 223 r – 225 r), an *ukazets* (decree) included in a sixteenth-century liturgical book of the St Kirill Beloozero monastery, and a chronicle entry in the Novgorod IV chronicle.[179]

Though the list of saints recognised, as well as their veneration status (regional or pan-Russian) and order in which they appear, varies confusingly across versions,[180] it is generally considered that the following saints were to receive pan-Russian veneration: Metropolitan Iona of Moscow, Archbishop Ioann of Novgorod, the venerable Makarii of Kaliazin, the venerable Pafnutii of Borovsk, the venerable Nikon of Radonezh, the venerable Mikhail of Klopsko, the venerable Zosima of Solovki, the venerable Savvatii of Solovki, the venerable

[178] BUSHKOVITCH, *Religion*, op. cit., 82–3.

[179] Канонизация, *ПЭ Том XXX*, op. cit., 303. While seven copies is a modest number, there were only ten sees in Russia at this point and Makarii might simply have sent one to every bishop, though most extant copies are not addressed to bishops. More importantly, there is, to my knowledge, no evidence of bishops or heads of monasteries passing on Makarii's instructions to the parish priests under their jurisdiction.

[180] BUSHKOVITCH, *Religion*, op. cit., 82.

Pavel of Obnora, the venerable Dionisii of Glushitsa, and the venerable Aleksandr of Svir'. Nine other saints were to receive local veneration: the blessed Maksim of Moscow, holy fool, the pious Prince Konstantin and his sons Mikhail and Fedor of Murom, the pious Prince Petr and Princess Fevroniia, Bishop Arsenii of Tver', and the blessed Prokopii and Ioann of Ustiug.[181] Though Tkachev accounts for the main textual variations, a critical edition of the synodal letter – a central piece of evidence for our understanding of the sixteenth-century cult of saints and Moscow's attitude toward it – would be helpful in accounting for the different redactions. Such a study might, for example, identify whether any versions tried to promote their local saints by including them in the list, or mentioning them as pan-Russian rather than regional.

One can also speculate about the selection of those 'invariable' saints listed across all copies. Was there a political purpose, as Khoroshev believed, behind the specific saints, mostly monks and Church hierarchs, recognised by Moscow? Were they simply the most prominent cults? Did Makarii carry out regional surveys prior to the council, write to local bishops and hegumens, or was he reliant on the information, however incomplete, he already had?[182] One can wonder about the awareness, in Moscow, of regional cults. We know that Ivan IV was fond of pilgrimages and travelled regularly, especially to the largest shrines in the vicinity of Moscow. Aleksandr Musin has pointed out that the list of saints recognised in 1547 corresponds almost exactly to the itinerary of the tsar's pilgrimages between 1543

[181] *Idem*, 82: Bushkovitch notes some of the variations. Канонизация, *ПЭ Том XXX*, op. cit., 303–4: Tkachev offers a more detailed account of variations across manuscripts, including a list of supplementary pan-Russian saints and of manuscripts that assign pan-Russian veneration to all the saints on the list.

[182] The *Stoglav* passage quoted on page 66 would suggest that investigations were carried out between 1547 and 1549.

and 1552. Could his personal preferences, or the discovery of irregularities in the commemoration of saints have inspired the 1547 list?[183]

Probably due to his frequent travels, whether for devotional or war-waging purposes, Ivan IV appears to have had a reasonably good idea of the religious landscape of his realm. This knowledge is a window into his personal devoutness as much as an indicator of his political shrewdness. In a letter attributed to him, the tsar told Metropolitan Makarii about his divine helpers in the victorious battle of Smolensk in 1563.[184] Ivan followed a logic of proximity to Moscow and privileged ecclesiastical saints: the list started with metropolitans of Moscow, continued with saints, many of them bishops, from the two most important episcopal towns, Novgorod and Rostov, then prominent monastic saints, and finally looked further back in time to the oldest Rus' saints. The passage suggests that the epicentre of Ivan's religious and ecclesiastical mental map was firmly anchored in Moscow and structured by the capital's strongest episcopal and monastic ties. The tsar expected to be helped in matters pertaining to the whole realm, such as the Livonian War, by the most prominent regional saints.

The cults mentioned by Ivan, however, were some of the most popular, and one is left to wonder whether Moscow was ever aware, or even cared to know about, any lesser local cults. A tightening of supervision around corpse cults in the seventeenth century would

[183] Канонизация, *ПЭ Том XXX*, op. cit., 306.

[184] *Акты исторические, собранные и изданные археографическою коммиссиею, Т.1. 1334–1598*, Saint Petersburg 1841, 320, no. 168; A.G. MEL'NIK, *История почитания ростовских святых в XII – XVII веках*, PhD dissertation, Iaroslavl' 2003, 131; E.V. ROMANENKO, «Соборы русских святых» как региональные и надрегиональные «места памяти» Московской Руси XV–XVIII вв., in: A.V. Doronin (ed.), *«Места памяти» руси конца XV – середины XVIII в.*, Moscow 2019, 175. Both these studies quote the passage on Rostov saints.

suggest that such cults were frequent enough, and previously unregulated.[185] Also in the seventeenth century, Grand Princess Evdokiia Lukianovna asked the archpriest (*protopop*) Maksim to tell her about the miracles taking place in the holy sites of Novgorod. She might have been aware of the main cults, but apparently lacked information on their practical expressions, and probably did not know about more recent, early-stage cults, such as that of Arsenii:

> '... мощи преподобнаго Арсенія, лежатъ подъ спудомъ, и отъ мощей его приходящимъ съ вѣрою исцѣленія бываютъ. А тропарь и кондакъ ему составленъ, а празднество еще не уставлено.'[186]
>
> '... the relics of the venerable Arsenii lie in a coffin, and those who come with faith receive healings from his relics. And a *tropar'* and a *kondak* have been composed for him, but a feast day has not yet been established.'

Evidence for the 1549 council is even scantier than that for the 1547 council. It is mentioned in the trials of Maksim Grek, whose associate Isak Sobaka, archimandrite of the Chudov monastery, was tried at a church council in February 1549. That new miracle workers, on top of those listed in 1547, were discussed on the same occasion is more uncertain, and the 'reconstruction' by scholars of a list of saints supposedly recognised at the 1549 council is highly problematic, as the only evidence for it is a sixteenth or early seventeenth century summary of both councils (1547 and 1549) included in the third redaction of the *Life of Metropolitan Iona*.[187] Sceptical of any 'reconstructed' lists, Tkachev is inclined to think that 1549 was concerned with the liturgy used to commemorate the 1547

[185] LEVIN, From Corpse, op. cit., 95–99.

[186] I.E. ZABELIN, Описаніе Новгородской святыни в 1634 году, *Чтения в Обществе истории и древностей российских при Московском университете 1862* 4, Moscow 1862, 54.

[187] BUSHKOVITCH, *Religion*, op. cit., 83.

saints, rather than with recognising new ones.[188] In the absence of new evidence, however, theories about the 1549 council cannot move beyond the realm of speculation.

It is significant, however, that it was the proper commemoration of saints Makarii was concerned with in 1547 at least. This meant, chiefly, the liturgical celebration of saints on their annual feast day, which would probably be how most people learned about saints. Yet our understanding of the cult of saints is largely based on hagiographical, rather than liturgical, texts. Sean Griffin has rightly refocused the attention on the power of liturgical participation and repetition, and argued that liturgy, rather than an afterthought, was integral to the saint-making process from its earliest stages. Complicating Golubinskii's linear 'canonisation' model – a person died, their tomb produced miracles, their relics were investigated, a feast day was created, and only then were a *zhitie*, liturgy, and icons produced – Griffin suggested that liturgical celebration, rather than a final step, was instrumental in elevating someone to sainthood status.[189] Though liturgical texts have not received enough scholarly attention for their composition to be reliably dated, we know that there were *sluzhby* for Vasilii of Moscow and Prokopii of Ustiug before there were *zhitiia*, whereas for Maksim of Moscow, the *sluzhba* is the only text to have survived. As Sergei Ivanov succinctly observed, 'the cult comes first, then the person's alleged miracles are recorded and the biography appears afterwards!'[190]

The practical implications of either 1547 or 1549 are difficult to assess. Bushkovitch has found all the 'invariable' saints of the 1547 list in liturgical books printed under

[188] Канонизация, *ПЭ Том XXX*, op. cit., 307.

[189] S. GRIFFIN, *The Liturgical Past in Byzantium and Early Rus*, Cambridge 2019, 233–4.

[190] S.A. IVANOV, Simon of Iurievets and the Hagiography of Old Russian Fools, in: P. Hunt – S. Kobets (eds.), *Holy Foolishness*, op. cit, 270.

patriarchal supervision from 1602–1610 to the mid-seventeenth century, though this hardly constitutes evidence for regional veneration, or even for a direct causal link with the councils.[191] Peeters, on the other hand, found that liturgical books did not reflect the 1547 resolutions.[192] In the absence of an exhaustive study of late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century liturgical manuscripts, we can only draw more general and hypothetical conclusions.

As discussed above, Makarii shied away, in his 1547 encyclical, from calling the 'new Russian wonderworkers' saints, even as he recognised their cults. Moreover, compared with past councils that recognised at most two saints – Ol'ga and Vladimir in 1284, Metropolitan Petr in 1327 – the scope of the 1547 list is overwhelming. It gives the impression that the cautious Makarii did not really have a choice: he could not prevent people, especially in faraway places, from venerating local figures they considered to be saints. But neither was Makarii's attitude passive. More than simply putting his stamp of approval on a dozen new cults, he harnessed them into a system, a narrative framework that presented Russia as a religious space with plenty of native miracle-workers, some of which had jurisdiction over the whole realm, some over specific regions.

Ivan IV's speech at the 1551 *Stoglav* is the clearest expression of the intentions of the two previous councils of 1547 and 1549, hinting at their agendas and confirming Moscow's active interest in regional saints' cults, even though the *Stoglav* was not primarily concerned with them. In Chapter Four, Ivan started by referring to the council that had happened when he was seventeen, in 1547. He described his soul's longing for the forgotten new wonderworkers, and their numerous miracles:

[191] BUSHKOVITCH, *Religion*, op. cit., 82.

[192] PEETERS, La canonisation, op. cit., 396–401.

> ‘Мы же о сем молим святители всего нашего росиискаго царствиа: в митрополии и въ архиепископъях, и епископъях коиждо во всяких предѣлех, порученных им во градѣх и в монастырѣх, и в пустынях, и въ весѣх, извѣстно пытати и обыскивати о великих новых чудотворцех священными соборы и игумены, и священоиноки, и иноки, и пустынники, и князьми, и бояры, и богобоязнивыми людьми, гдѣ которыи чудотворец прославился великими чудесы и знамении от коликих временъ и в каковы лѣта. Святителие же убо от ... повѣлениа нашего, молениа вскоре собирают каноны и житиа, и чюдеса тѣх великих святых новых чудотворцевъ ...’[193]

> ‘About this we ask the priests of all our Russian empire: in the metropolitan and archepiscopal sees, and in the episcopal sees, each in every locality entrusted to him in towns and monasteries, and wildernesses, and villages, to ask precisely and inquire about great new wonderworkers with the holy congregations and hegumens, and hieromonks, and monks, and hermits, and princes, and boyars, and God-fearing people, where which wonderworker distinguished himself through great miracles and signs, and from what time and in what years. For the priests … following our order, soon gather the prayers, *kanony* and *zhitiia*, and miracles of those great new wonderworkers ...’

According to his account, having ordered the collection of information on new saints in 1547, Ivan went on to organise a second council, when he was nineteen years old, in 1549, to decide on the appropriate celebration of these saints:

> ‘... по нашему наказу архиепископы и епископы, и честныа архиманриты, игумены собираются въ царствующии сеи град к нам, ко отцу нашему к Макарию, митрополиту всея Русии, каноны новых чюдотворцев и житиа их, и чюдеса на соборе полагают и свидѣтельствуют всѣми освященными соборы, и предают церквам божиим пѣти и славити, и праздновати, якоже прочим святым от вѣка богу угодившим по-настоящему коегождо мѣсяца дни и числа преставлениа их и святые имена, и обретениа честных мощеи их ...’[194]

> ‘… following our order the archbishops and bishops, and the honourable archimandrites, [and] hegumens are gathering in this sovereign city by us, and by our father Makarii, the metropolitan of all Rus’, and laying out the *kanony* for the new wonderworkers and their *zhitiia* and miracles to the council, and bearing witness on behalf of all their sanctified congregations, and transmitting to the churches of God [that they should] sing and glorify and celebrate [these new saints] like the other saints from time immemorial pleasing to God, each [with reference to] the month and day of their death, their holy names, and the discovery of their true relics …’

[193] E.B. EMCHENKO et al. (eds.), *Стоглав. Текст. Словоуказатель*, Moscow 2015, 51–2.

[194] *Idem*, 52.

In the passages quoted above, Ivan mentioned more than once his reliance, for information about saints and performance of proper veneration, on members of the clergy, from Metropolitan Makarii down to local bishops, monks, and priests.

The moral behaviour of clergy was, in fact, one of the main concerns of the *Stoglav*, explicitly summoned by Ivan IV, whose questions structured the council's agenda. Widely copied,[195] the council's record was divided into a hundred chapters, two of which, chapters five and forty-one, were composed of a series of questions from the tsar to his assembled clergymen. The first thirty-seven questions, recorded under chapter five, were mostly concerned with the behaviour of priests and monks,[196] and liturgical irregularities.[197] The second set, comprising thirty-two questions, recorded under chapter forty-one, was mostly concerned with liturgical matters and irregularities, though it also touched on problematic lay behaviour, including the celebration of pagan rituals, false prophets, and heretical practices.[198] Some of the questions also addressed regional customs, especially in Pskov (questions fifteen and eighteen) and Novgorod (questions twelve and fourteen), and tried to make them conform to more widely accepted practices. Question five deserves to be highlighted, as it is isolated in its concern with veneration practices: it asked how Evfrosin of Pskov and Avraamii of Smolensk (neither of whom was included in the 1547 list) should

[195] BUSHKOVITCH, *Religion*, op. cit., 85.

[196] *Idem*, 24: *moral shortcomings of the monks, drunkenness, the presence of young boys in the monastery, and contact with women outside the monastery all came in for the tsar's disapproval.*

[197] EMCHENKO, *Стоглав*, op. cit., 54–69.

[198] *Idem*, 113–31.

be celebrated. The council replied that they should be commemorated 'like the other saintly venerable fathers', in sung liturgy.[199]

Though the subjects addressed by other chapters are varied, they mostly revolve around proper religious practices and behaviour, especially when it came to clergy and lay morality. A concern with the latter transpires in the sermons of Metropolitan Daniil and the compilation of the *Domostroi*, a compendium of advice on how to run a household.[200] Parish priests were often blamed for the moral decadence of the laity:

> 'In 1545 Archbishop Feodosii of Novgorod wrote to the clergy of the small market town of Ustiuzhna Zhelezopol'skaia to complain of their misdeeds and shortcomings. They had made unauthorized changes in the liturgy, married people within prohibited degrees of consanguinity, remarried divorced people, moved to other eparchies, and continued to celebrate mass when widowed. All this was done without the authorization of the archbishop's tithers, who had complained to him of the clergy's behavior.'[201]

Parish priests represented the Church at the most local level and were therefore a crucial intermediary between parishioners and the Church as an institution that claimed moral jurisdiction over them. The problem, however, was that parish priests were much closer, in terms of education and priorities, to the members of their (most often) rural community than to any urban bishop, as Gregory Freeze eloquently summarised:

> 'Before the Petrine reforms, the parish clergy of central Russia received no formal education at all. Although they were the most literate group in Muscovite society, their preparation for church service was limited to informal instruction by the local priest or a lay "master." … their literacy was rudimentary—they often could "read" only the primer they had memorized and even more often could only read, not write.'[202]

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[199] *Idem*, 115.

[200] BUSHKOVITCH, *Religion*, op. cit., 23, 46–9.

[201] *Idem*, 23.

[202] G. FREEZE, *The Russian Levites : Parish Clergy in the Eighteenth Century*, Harvard 1977, 78.

Though Freeze's statistical study pertained to the eighteenth century, it is unlikely that the education of parish clergy in the sixteenth century had been any better than it was two centuries on. Jack Kollmann, in his study of the parish priests in the *Stoglav*, pointed out that the Church was chronically understaffed, and could therefore not allow itself to be 'picky' with candidates:

> 'if bishops ordained untrained candidates to the priesthood and appointed them to a parish, that would be in violation of canon law; but if bishops did not appoint them, many parishes would be without a priest, churches would become abandoned, and people would die without benefit of the sacraments.'[203]

This was a dilemma that the Church was not in a position to solve before the eighteenth century and the establishment of the seminary. The *Stoglav* merely recommended that clergymen teach their and others' sons, and that parishioners recruit literate priests to lead them.[204] The fact that parishioners had control over who their priest should be was another problem, as it created an opportunity for bribes, which the *Stoglav* ruled against.[205]

Most parish priests were impoverished, struggling to survive on whatever donations were offered by parishioners for the performance of religious services, and farming a plot of land usually allocated to them in village parishes.[206] Problems concerning their education, appointment, and sources of income were mostly not solved by the *Stoglav*,[207] which in turn failed to have a significant effect on lay morality. Though the *Stoglav* tried to increase the power of bishops over parish clergy, in 1551 Russia only had ten vast eparchies, making it

[203] J. KOLLMANN, The Stoglav Council and Parish Priests, *Russian History* 7/1, 1980, 66.

[204] *Idem*, 67–8.

[205] *Idem*, 75.

[206] *Idem*, 78–81.

[207] *Idem*, 91.

difficult for bishops to look after more remote congregations. Having decided that clergy should only be judged by clergy, the *Stoglav* also established the election of local priest elders to replace the former, often corrupt, lay tithers and supervise parish clergy. If there is some evidence of the new system in operation after the *Stoglav*, its effectiveness was limited, and in 1594 a new council had to repeat the same exhortations for priest elders to be elected and watch over disciplinary and liturgical matters.[208]

The crux of the question is probably that bishops did not have easy access to their parish priests, who in turn were deeply embedded in local communities, more so than in the Church hierarchy. As Kollmann concluded:

> 'One hardly imagines, for example, that many parish priests followed the Stoglav instruction to excommunicate parishioners who misbehaved in church or who failed to attend church regularly. The village priest was too much a part of his community and too economically dependent upon his parishioners to treat them harshly. And bishops evidently lacked the administrative power to force the village priest to obey Stoglav instructions.'[209]

One might get the impression that the councils of 1547, concerned with the recognition and official commemoration of saints, and 1551, interested in the moral behaviour of clergy and laity, were completely unrelated. If the first contributed to a religious narrative of state, the second dealt with very practical, immediate problems. However, all mid-sixteenth century councils were concerned with the articulation of Moscow's interaction with the territories it ruled. The relationship between clergy and laity at the most minute level, that of the parish, was central to this question. Parish priests oversaw and participated in the lives of the laity, which included marriages, funerals, and baptisms, as well as the cult of saints. Though the impact of the *Stoglav* on the lives of the laity might, in practice, have been

[208] BUSHKOVITCH, *Religion*, op. cit., 23–6.

[209] KOLLMANN, The Stoglav, op. cit., 91.

limited, the council did accurately identify the agents of potential change: bishops and parish priests. Though bishops, on the one hand, might have had, especially after the councils, a stronger sense of belonging and subordination to Moscow, they could not easily control their parish priests, or even, as per the *Stoglav*'s decision, their parish priest elders. The parish priests themselves, on the other hand, must have had a strong sense of belonging to their local communities and been reluctant to follow the difficult injunctions of a distant, if not abstract, authority.

It is tempting to think of the three mid-sixteenth-century councils as part of a wider 'centralisation programme' often ascribed to early modern Russia. Moscow, so the argument would go, was tightening the grip over the vast territories it conquered by using ecclesiastical networks as vehicles of authority. However, the evidence reviewed so far would suggest that public statements of authority, such as encyclicals and council records, might have been more important – and, crucially, more feasible – than their practical application. When it came to the veneration of saints, Moscow did not try to annihilate regional cults and replace them with its own. If it did promote some politically motivated saints, including Moscow metropolitans and Mikhail of Klopsko, it also recognised and celebrated the cults of several non-Moscow saints.[210]

Perhaps Moscow knew that imposing a cult from above to distant populations for whom the shrine was inaccessible had little chances of success. If the regions were aware of the major Muscovite saints, and if they did commemorate them as per Metropolitan Makarii's encyclical, for many if not most, it still mattered to have a physical shrine nearby, where a local saint could offer practical assistance with any immediate needs. Probably for

[210] BUSHKOVITCH, *Religion*, op. cit., 89.

this reason, the predominant iconography in any given place after the mid-sixteenth century was still that of popular local saints.[211]

II.3 Centralisation and Localism: a Symbiosis

The discussion above, because it is based on documents produced in Moscow by the tsar and the ecclesiastical elite, could misleadingly imply unidirectional agency: decisions, it might be understood, were made in Moscow and passed down through the bishops to the regions, even if they might have gotten lost at the level of the parish clergy. Indeed, a study of the role of Moscow in the sixteenth-century cult of saints almost inevitably leads to a series of dichotomies: between state and society; central and regional veneration; centralisation and the development of local identities. Within this framework, it is tempting to assume that pan-Russian veneration was the ultimate metric of 'success' for a cult.

However, this kind of assessment is likely to ignore locally popular cults that Moscow never had an interest in promoting. If we are to understand both central and local cult dynamics, we need to step away from binary ideas about 'success' and assess the visibility of cults on an individual basis. Cults required constant effort and financing to exist, their natural tendency, or gravity pull, being to disappear. This does not mean that, for every cult we know of, we have the same kind or amount of evidence. That a cult is visible to us at all implies a measure of popularity and financial investment. Sometimes visibility extends across a large geographical area and included recognition in Moscow; sometimes it stretched in time but did not necessarily reach Moscow. Different degrees and configurations of

[211] Канонизация, *ПЭ Том XXX*, op. cit., 307.

visibility should not be attached to binary ideas about 'success'. A cult that is very visible because of its political and ideological significance might not have been as popular as a poorly documented local cult. And just as there might have been different reasons for the visibility of a cult, there might have been different reasons why a cult left little or no evidence behind.

In her study of the seventeenth-century cult of Nil of Stolbnoe, Isolde Thyrêt was sceptical of the presumed dichotomy between Moscow and the provinces.[212] Scholarship of the last three decades has tended to agree with her. In her study of Muscovite provincial gentry in the seventeenth century, Valerie Kivelson has, on one hand, questioned the practical ability of pre-modern absolutist states to enforce their ideological claims.[213] On the other hand, she has also suggested that seventeenth-century political culture – defined as a 'zone of intersection between political practices and structures and cultural expectations, norms, and values'[214] – facilitated complex interactions between an increasingly bureaucratised state and its provincial representatives. Rather than a dichotomy, she suggested the relationship between the state and its agents was a matter of symbiosis:

> 'The Muscovite state could not have grown without the cooperation and support of the gentry in supervising, policing, and taxing the peasantry, and the gentry could not have maintained its dependent labor force without the privileges and coercive might of the state to back it.'[215]

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[212] THYRÊT, *Saint-making*, op. cit., 497–8: *... the modern concept of a region, which implies some degree of political independence of a realm's outlying areas or the existence of a conscious belonging to a larger geographical area that comprises various smaller localities adhering to common cultural principles, was poorly developed in Muscovite Russia.*

[213] V. KIVELSON, *Autocracy in the Provinces: The Muscovite Gentry and Political Culture in the Seventeenth Century*, Stanford 1997, 2.

[214] *Idem*, 9.

[215] *Idem*, 209.

In her view, the identities of the gentry as state representatives and members of local communities were not separate, or even separable.[216]

Unlike the parish priests remonstrated by the Stoglav, who received no income or privileges from state or Church, civil servants had an interest in being well-regarded both in local and central administrative spheres. Sergei Bogatyrev's study of the regional administration of justice by local cavalrymen (*gubnye starosty*) agreed with Kivelson in showing that the process of centralisation – by making members of local communities responsible for their administration, taxation, and military conscription – in fact encouraged the formation of regional identities and the cohesiveness of local communities: integration and regionalism were complementary.[217] This is not to say that distinct geographical areas lacked an identity before the sixteenth century. But they probably became more aware of it by contrast with the representatives and demands of an increasingly intervening state.

Thyrêt, Kivelson, and Bogatyrev are interested in slightly later periods, with more developed bureaucratic and administrative systems. Yet their conclusions on the parallel development of local identities and the centralised state remain thought-provoking in sixteenth-century contexts. The overlap of Moscow-based interests with those of local administrators described by Kivelson and Bogatyrev is perfectly illustrated by the relationship between the Stroganov and imperial families.[218] The cult of Arsenii of Tver' is

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[216] *Idem*, 25.

[217] S.N. BOGATYREV, *Russia Takes Shape : Patterns of Integration from the Middle Ages to the Present*, Helsinki 2004, op. cit., 64–5, 103–5. The state also laid claim to regional identities: *the Muscovite tsars retained a long list of former independent Rus' principalities in their title even after Ivan IV's coronation as tsar of all Russia in 1547. As their realm grew, the Muscovite tsars meticulously reproduced the emblems of annexed territories on their seals.* (59)

[218] See a more detailed discussion from page 275.

another example of the convergence of central and local interests. In 1485, when Prince Mikhail Borisovich of Tver' fled the city, Bishop Vassian opened the gates to Ivan III, who took over the principality. Two years earlier, as the Muscovite grip tightened, Vassian had petitioned Ivan III to discover the relics of Arsenii, a local saint who had been bishop of Tver' between 1390 and 1409. The translation of Arsenii's uncorrupted relics was accompanied by the production of new devotional materials, including an icon, a shroud, and liturgy. Arsenii was officially recognised in Archbishop Makarii's 1547 encyclical. By promoting the veneration of a local saint just as Tver' was succumbing to Muscovite pressure, Bishop Vassian performed a balancing act: he reinforced the distinctive identity of Tver' while consulting with the grand prince and showing him the city's willingness to become his subject.[219]

Kivelson's study focused on five central Russian provinces.[220] Narrowing the scope even more, Thyrêt painstakingly dug up every document pertaining to the cult of St Nil at his shrine in seventeenth-century Stolbnoe. Her monograph is close to the spirit of Russian *kraevedenie*, an interdisciplinary tradition that emerged in the eighteenth century alongside local history associations. By blending the medieval chronicle tradition with recent developments in topographical, geographical, and statistical studies, *kraevedenie* enthusiasts conceived of local communities, rather than the centralised state, as the driving force of history.[221]

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[219] I. THYRÊT, Whose Cults are They? The Local and Central Contexts of the Veneration of Saints Arsenii and Mikhail of Tver', in: L. Steindorff (ed.), *Religion und Integration im Moskauer Russland : Konzepte und Praktiken, Potentiale und Grenzen im 14.-17. Jahrhundert*, Wiesbaden 2010, 417–20.

[220] KIVELSON, *Autocracy*, op. cit., 1: Vladimir, Suzdal', Lukh, Iur'ev Pol'skii, and Shuia.

[221] S. SMITH-PETER, How to Write a Region: Local and Regional Historiography, *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 5/3, 2004, 529–32.

There is a tension, in the historiography of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Russia, between studies – like Thyrêt's and, to a point, Kivelson's – whose subject is enclosed in a narrow framework of time and space; and those concerned with the wider-scale transformations of an expanding state. Unlike sweeping narratives, micro-histories are in a position to detect false dichotomies between central and local government, but they also have blind spots. Despite, or because of, their documentary richness and attention to detail, they tend not to be interested in overarching trends or theoretical frameworks.[222] The combination of micro-histories with a wider perspective is especially important in the study of saints' cults, given the significant variation in veneration and promotion patterns across space and time.

The study of saints' cults is, to an extent, the study of a complex sum of interactions, both between intervening actors – local and/or central – and between individual cults. Context mattered: not only were cults more likely to be interfered with 'from above' if they sprung up in the middle of an episcopal town, but they also had to negotiate for space within a devotional landscape. In other words, cults did not emerge in a vacuum, though studies of a single saint might make it appear so. In fact, any new saint or shrine had to compete for attention and donations with many others, especially in urban contexts. New wonderworkers had to find, or negotiate for, a niche in the cult network and economy. This multiplicity of local cults is evidenced by the fact that saints attached to a certain geographical area were often mentioned together in texts and depicted together in images, suggesting that rather than a single patron, cities and their hinterlands associated themselves with 'pantheons', which could be expanded whenever new wonderworkers emerged. If individual healing miracles

[222] *Idem*, 534.

were requested at specific shrines, when it came to defending and looking after a whole region, it seems people thought the more saints the better.

Visual and textual depictions of groups of saints with ties to a certain area tended to be arranged hierarchically. Important Church hierarchs, such as archbishops or bishops, were mentioned first, followed by any monastic founders or monks. *Iurodivye* invariably came last, as shown in the list of saints invoked by the inhabitants of Pskov when their town was besieged by the Polish king, Stefan Báthory, in 1581:

> ‘Християньский же народ ... невозвратну надежду имуще на всемогущаго Бога ... и на Божиихъ угодник, благовѣрныхъ великихъ князей: святаго Владимира, крестившаго Рускую землю святым крещениемъ, и чюдотворнаго Гавриила-Всеволода, и храбраго князя Тимофея-Доманта; и на преподобныхъ отецъ молитву — Антония, и Нифонта епископа, и Корнилия Печерскихъ; и Никулу Псковскаго ...’[223]
>
> ‘the Christian people … having irrevocable hope in God almighty … and in those pleasing to God, the pious great princes: saint Vladimir, who baptised the Rus’ land with holy baptism, and the wonderworker Gavriil-Vsevolod, and the brave prince Timofei-Domant; and in the prayer of the venerable fathers – of Antonii, and Nifont the bishop, and Kornilii of the Caves; and of Nikula of Pskov …’

This list’s order is interesting in that it prioritises princely saints over ecclesiastical ones, starting with Vladimir, traditionally responsible for the Christianisation of Rus’, and the two most popular local saints of Pskov, Princes Vsevolod and Dovmont. These are followed by saints of the Kyiv Caves *lavra* – the founder Antonii and Nifont, later archbishop of Novgorod – and Kornilii of the Pskov Caves monastery, no distinction being made between the different Caves. Nikolai of Pskov, a *iurodivyi*, was at the end of the list.

Ivan IV’s letter to Metropolitan Makarii about the victory of Smolensk in 1563, mentioned above, suggests a more complex hierarchy:

[223] *Повесть о псково-печерском монастыре*, *БЛДР 13,* 492.

> '... отца нашего Чюдотворца Петра Митрополита … отецъ нашихъ Алексѣя и Ионы Чюдотворцовъ, и Никиты и Иоанна и Еуѳимія и Ионы Ноуородцкихъ Чюдотворцовъ, и Леонтія и Исаія и Игнатія и Якова и Аврамія и Сидора и Петра Ростовскихъ Чюдотворцовъ, и преподобныхъ и богоносныхъ отецъ нашихъ Сергія и Варалама и Кирила и Пафнутія и Никиты, и Михаила Клопскаго, и Дмитрія Прилуцкого, и Павла Обнорского, и Александра Свирского ...'[224]
>
> '… of our father the wonderworker Metropolitan Petr … of our fathers Aleksei and Iona the wonderworkers, and Nikita and Ioann and Eufimii and Iona the wonderworkers of Novgorod, and Leontii and Isaii and Ignatii and Iakov and Avraamii and Sidor and Petr the wonderworkers of Rostov, and our venerable and God-bearing fathers Sergii and Varlaam and Kiril and Pafnutii and Nikita, and Mikhail of Klopsko, and Dmitrii of Priluki, and Pavel of Obnora, and Aleksandr of Svir' …'

Ivan's mind seems to follow a geographical hierarchy, which overlaps with an ecclesiastical one to a degree. Saintly metropolitans of Moscow are mentioned first, followed by saints from the two most prestigious ecclesiastical towns: Novgorod, the oldest archbishopric, and Rostov, one of the oldest sees of Rus'. Then comes a group of the most prestigious monastic saints of Rus' – among which Mikhail of Klopsko – and finally, beyond the passage quoted above, some of the oldest saints of Rus', including Vladimir, Boris, and Gleb. Beyond the geo-ecclesiastical hierarchy, which prioritised higher church ranks and prestigious sees, Ivan apparently recognised a hierarchy within the saints of Rostov, mentioning first four episcopal saints, then a monastic one, then the *iurodivyi* Isidor, and finally a converted Mongol khan, named Petr in baptism.[225]

Icons tend to demonstrate a similar sensitivity to the hierarchy of saints, whether in large, full-Church group depictions, such as the late sixteenth-century Moving Church (Fig. 35) or in smaller gatherings of local saints, such as the mid-sixteenth-century depiction of

[224] *Акты исторические*, op. cit., 320, no. 168:

[225] MEL'NIK, *История почитания*, op. cit., 131: Mel'nik makes a similar analysis.

three Rostov bishops between the monastic saints Sergii of Radonezh and Avraamii of Rostov, with the tiny *iurodivye* Maksim and Isidor on the margins (Fig. 11). The latter icon associated Moscow and Rostov saints, concurring with Ivan IV's attachment, apparent in the letter quoted above, to Novgorod and Rostov saints as defenders of the Muscovite state. Whether in icons or texts, then, the growing number of Russian saints was organised according to their geographical belonging, and local groups were in turn structured by hierarchical order.

The fact that individual saints existed, in sixteenth-century minds, as members of geographical 'pantheons' has been interpreted by scholars as the inception of *sobory* as they are known today in the Russian Orthodox Church, that is, the mostly geographical ensembles of saints jointly commemorated on a single annual feast day. Though essential to a serious understanding of the cult of saints, the formation and development of *sobory* as the commemoration of multiple saintly figures on a single occasion has received insufficient scholarly attention. Part of the problem comes from the fact that both the Slavonic *sobor* and the Greek *synaxis* it translates are impossibly polysemic. In Byzantium, σύναξις, broadly speaking a gathering, could signify monastic assemblies to discuss serious affairs, offices of prayer, the assembly for the Eucharist, or the commemorative services following six of the Great Feasts (9 September, 26 December, 7 January, 3 February, 26 March, 30 June).[226] If we focus exclusively on the latter meaning, the oldest *synaxis*, that of the twelve apostles on the 30 June, can be traced back somewhere between the fourth and sixth centuries. Later *synaxes* include that of the Archangel Michael and other Bodiless Powers (fourth – sixth

[226] R. TAFT – A.P. KAZHDAN, Synaxis, *ODB* https://www-oxfordreference-com.ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/display/10.1093/acref/9780195046526.001.0001/acref-9780195046526-e-5244?rskey=EOLMzp&result=5244

century), of St John the Forerunner (or the Baptist, eighth – ninth century), of the Most Holy Mother of God (seventh century), and of the Three Hierarchs (Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and John Chrysostom, eleventh century).[227]

The Slavonic съборъ, or собор (*s''bor''* / *sobor*), was as broad, or possibly broader, than the Greek *synaxis*. Sreznevskii noted eighteen different nuances, including Church councils, clergy as a body, prayer, text collections, or the joint celebration of saints. The latter, described by Sreznevskii as a 'joint celebration of the memory of a few saints', seems to include *synaxis* as a feast immediately following one of the Great Feasts: the example given, from a 1096 liturgical calendar, mentions the *sobor* of Iakim and Anna,[228] which followed the Nativity of the Mother of God.[229] In the Academy of Sciences dictionary, one of the fifteen meanings under съборъ is liturgical, and usage examples include both the early Christian *sobor*, or *synaxis*, of St Michael the Archangel and other Bodiless Powers, celebrated on the 8 November; and the *sobor* of St Sergii of Radonezh, meaning simply his liturgical commemoration.[230] The Orthodox Encyclopaedia, while corroborating the above meanings, also notes the modern usage of a joint feast for the saints of a region, and hints at the tentative beginnings of this practice in the sixteenth century, though it recognises that

[227] ROMANENKO, «Соборы русских святых», op. cit., 170–1. I am grateful to Marc Lauxtermann for clarifying the Byzantine meanings of *synaxis* for me.

[228] SREZNEVSKII, *Материалы, T.3,* op. cit., col. 647–9: It is possible that this meaning was already in existence in the eleventh century.

[229] I am grateful to Ralph Cleminson for clarifying the usage of *sobor* as a subsidiary feast following a Great Feast, and for pointing out the unlikeliness of the usage of *sobor* as a joint, annual feast day for saints of a same region before the seventeenth century or even later. I am also grateful to Cynthia Vakareliyska for her suggestions on determining the usage of *sobor* in the context of liturgical calendars. Any mistakes expressed here are, however, mine.

[230] *Словарь русского языка XI–XVII, выпуск 23*, G.A. Bogatova (ed.), Moscow 1996, 77–81: See meaning 10, apparently the same usage as the Greek *synaxis*.

the word *sobor* was not used in this sense then.[231] I have not, independently, found convincing attestations of *sobor* used in the sixteenth century specifically to mean the establishment of a common feast day for the saints of a certain region.[232] In the absence of more systematic research, we might suspend judgement on whether or not *sobory* existed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as formal geographical groups of saints with a shared annual liturgical commemoration, and rather focus on the fact, significant on its own, that saints from the same area frequently appeared together in texts and images.

It is difficult to determine the earliest point at which saints from the same area were thought of as a group, which suggests this was a gradual, organic process. The development of local 'pantheons' was also significantly different across regions. In Pskov, for example, representations of the Three Hierarchs – Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and John Chrysostom, whose joint *synaxis* was celebrated already in Byzantium – far outnumbered representations of local saints in pre-seventeenth century iconography, with the princes Dovmont-Timofei and Vsevolod-Gavriil conspicuously absent.[233] On the other hand, Mel'nik has argued that the spread of liturgical collections whose contents were dedicated to local saints – including Leontii, Isaia, Ignatii, Avraamii, and Isidor – indicates that those wonderworkers were perceived as a group in Rostov and beyond from the early sixteenth

[231] Соборные памяти, *ПЭ Т. 64*, 554–5:

[232] ROMANENKO, «Соборы русских святых», op. cit., 172–3: Romanenko claims a joint feast day for several Novgorod saints was established in 1439 by Archbishop Evfimii II on the 4 October. I have not been able to verify this information. The *sobor* of Novgorod saints is currently celebrated on the third Sunday after Pentecost. I have not been able to find examples of *sobor* used in this sense in Archbishop Sergii's compilation, *Полный месяцеслов Востока, Том II. Святой Восток*, Vladimir 1901.

[233] I.S. RODNIKOVA, (ed.), *Псковская икона XIII–XVI веков*, Leningrad 1990, item 25: Representation of saint Paraskeva with the Three Hierarchs, Gregory the Theologian, John Chrysostom, and Basil the Great. Saints Paraskeva, Barbara, Uliana, and Nicholas were popular in early Pskov iconography.

century.[234] By contrast, the group of saints that emerged after the fall of the Muslim khanate of Kazan' was very much dictated from above. Following Ivan IV's campaign, or holy war, and victory in 1552, Kazan' became an archbishopric, and after Moscow became a patriarchate in 1589, a metropolitanate. In 1592, Metropolitan Ermogen of Kazan' and Astrakhan' requested Patriarch Iov for the local commemoration, on the 24 January, of Ioann, Petr, and Stefan, martyred for their Christian faith by the Muslim inhabitants of Kazan'. In 1595, the discovery of the relics of Gurii, former archbishop of Kazan' (d.1563) and Varsonofii, former bishop of Tver' (d.1576), led to their official recognition as pan-Russian saints, and their inclusion in the local group of Kazan' saints shaped by the area's history, and designed to strengthen the local Christian community in a context of ethnic diversity and confessional tension.[235]

In the latter case, the constitution of a group of saintly patrons happened over a short period of time and was strongly directed by the politico-ecclesiastical elite. This is perhaps an extreme example of the political potential of local 'pantheons', which has been picked up on by Soviet historians. Following the 1930s work of A.M. Nikol'skii, Khoroshev saw saint-making as a political phenomenon that evolved over time in accordance with the successive phases of state formation: the creation of a Kyivan 'pantheon' at the centre of the Old Rus' state; a period of local saint-making during the political ('feudal') fragmentation phase; the creation of a national Muscovite *sobor* during the territorial centralisation around Moscow; and, finally, the creation of a national Russian pantheon. He concluded that, as a consequence

[234] MEL'NIK, *История почитания*, op. cit., 131: Mel'nik calls it a *sobor*. For an example of a liturgical collection dominated by local saints, see РГБ. Ф.304/I №630, https://lib-fond.ru/lib-rgb/304-i/f-304i-630/#image-255 (retrieved April 2024).

[235] ROMANENKO, «Соборы русских святых», op. cit., 180–1.

of centralisation, the mid-sixteenth century marked the end of local saint-making, from then on a strictly national affair.[236] There are many problems in Khoroshev's narrative, not least the fact that interpreting saint-making exclusively as a political tool, and using the term *kanonizatsiia* to describe it, completely ignores popular agency in an anachronistic attempt to condemn the manipulation of the lower classes by the feudal elite.[237]

Still, it is intriguing that the growing number of miracle cults and their conceptualisation as groups of local patrons should coincide with the establishment and consolidation of Moscow as a central power. This point was taken further by Romanenko, who argued that *sobory* had a culturally unifying aim in the context of the great Muscovite expansion of the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries. Geographical *sobory*, she proposed, expressed a desire for stability and the preservation of local culture.[238] Just as the stagnation of local princely saint-making after the fifteenth century was symptomatic of the concentration on a single dynastic line ruling from Moscow,[239] the tension between local and pan-Russian *sobory* might have been an expression of territorial and cultural renegotiations. Moscow had to sharpen its own image to present it to its new subjects; conversely, recently conquered regions probably had a heightened sense of cultural self-awareness as a consequence of their increased contact with Moscow.

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[236] KHOROSHEV, *Политическая история*., op. cit.: 6–7, 189–90.

[237] On top of the strong ideological bias, which gets in the way of historical analysis, he also assumes *sobory* to have always existed as groups of regional saints celebrated together.

[238] ROMANENKO, «Соборы русских святых», op. cit., 169–72.

[239] *Idem*, 173: Romanenko argues the transition from princely to ecclesiastical saints was due to the latter's role in the creation of a unified state.

Romanenko's interpretation is difficult to prove and open to debate, though two points could be made in its favour. The first is about the growing importance and prestige of bishops in the sixteenth century, and their ability to shape local saints' cults. Though I would not fully embrace Bushkovitch's narrative of 'monastic decline' after the fifteenth century, I would agree that fifteenth- and sixteenth-century bishops were recognised to a greater degree than their predecessors. The *Lives* of Metropolitans Petr and Aleksei set the tone for the fifteenth-century *Lives* of Novgorod archbishops,[240] and the promotion of saintly bishops in Rostov. As intermediaries between Moscow and their sees, bishops attended councils in Moscow, and had the opportunity to shape the religious landscape in their jurisdiction by choosing which cults to endorse and fund. We might expect them to try and raise the profile of their sees *vis-à-vis* Moscow, but also to respond to the popularity of local cults and their ability to represent a city or region. Part of the advantage of having a group of patrons, rather than a single one, was that some cults, like that of Leontii of Rostov, could answer a diocese's need for prestige, while others, like that of Isidor of Rostov, might remain primarily a bottom-up initiative.

A second point in favour of Romanenko's hypothesis is that the evidence does suggest both a heightened self-awareness *vis-à-vis* Moscow, and a sense of regional pride. The mid-sixteenth-century Sol'vychegodsk hagiographer prided himself on miracles happening not only in the Holy Land, but also in Russia, and in his own town.[241] By the seventeenth century, the identification of regions with their groups of heavenly patrons was so strong that the editor of the *Tale* about the miracles from the relics of Prokopii and Ioann of Ustiug

[240] BUSHKOVITCH, *Religion*, op. cit., 12.

[241] VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 176.

(*Skazaniia o chudesakh ot moshchei Prokopiia i Ioanna Ustiuzhskikh*) invented a Constantinopolitan 'pantheon' to act as a counterpart and (imaginary) predecessor to the other regional groups of saints he knew of:

> 'Царь убо град блажит и прославляет великих и досточюдных святых и блаженных муж Симеона, и Иоанна, и Андрея, иже Христа ради юродивых. Великий же Новоград блажит архиепископов Иоанна, Евфимия, Никиту и Иону, и преподобнаго Варлаама, и Савву, и Михаила Клопскаго. Псков же град блажит блаженных благоверных и великих князей Всеволода и Доманта. Московское же Росийское государство блажит и славит преосвященных митрополитов Петра, Алексея, Иону и Филиппа, и блаженных Христа ради Максима и Василия, и иных святых. Ростов же блажит и славит епископов Леонтия и Исайю, и Игнатия, и Иякова, Василия и Ефрема, и Авраамия, Исидор [sic: и Сидора] блаженнаго ... И каяждо убо странна и град блажат и славят, и похваляют своих чюдотворцов.'[242]
>
> 'For Constantinople blesses and glorifies the great and wondrous saints, the blessed men Symeon, and John, and Andrew, holy fools for Christ's sake. Novgorod the Great blessed the archbishops Ioann, Evfimii, Nikita and Iona, the venerable Varlaam, and Savva, and Mikhail of Klopsko. The town of Pskov blesses the blessed pious and great princes Vsevolod and Domant. The Muscovite and Russian state blesses and glorifies the reverend metropolitans Petr, Aleksii, Ioan and Filipp, and the blessed fools for Christ's sake Maksim and Vasilii, and other saints. Rostov blesses and glorifies the bishops Leontii and Isaiah, and Ignatii, and Iiakov, Vasilii and Efrem, and Avraam, and the blessed Isidor … For each country and town bless and glorify and praise their wonderworkers.'

* * *

Saint-making in pre-modern Russia was messy and flexible. Rather than a judicial process of canonisation, it involved negotiation at different levels and between a variety of actors, including the faithful, members of the local and central ecclesiastical hierarchy, and members of the lay elite. Moreover, the recognition of sanctity did not automatically immortalise a cult: only continuous celebration could secure the status of a saint over time. If it is tempting to see, in the mid-sixteenth-century conciliar activity orchestrated by

[242] *Idem*, 351.

Metropolitan Makarii, a desire to control the cult of saints, we should perhaps distinguish between centralising discourses and practices. My impression is that Makarii was simply reacting to the overwhelming number of – from his perspective, unofficial – new miracle cults by ordering them to carry on. He was not attempting to prescribe a more rigorous or structured saint-making process, which would, in any case, not have been familiar to him from Byzantine tradition, or been enforceable in any meaningful way. This is not to say that his centralising discourse did not have an impact on the bishops he summoned to the councils, on their awareness of the local cults under their jurisdiction, and on the importance of patron saints to the cultural cohesiveness of their sees – though that impact is difficult to assess.

That *iurodivye* were often minor patron saints and a relatively small part of the wider proliferation of miracle cults should remain clear in Part III, which separates them from their local context and the other saints, often more popular, alongside whom they were venerated.

III. *IURODSTVO* SCRUTINISED

From the late fifteenth century, figures started cropping up in visual and textual sources that did not easily fit into any traditional category of sanctity – e.g., priests, monks, martyrs, hermits, pious princes, etc. – despite sharing the characteristics of some. In texts, like Metropolitan Makarii's encyclical acknowledging the cults of new Russian wonderworkers, these figures were sometimes referred to as fools for Christ, or *iurodivye Khrista radi*, though more general epithets of sanctity were also used to describe them in liturgical and hagiographical texts. In iconographic sources, however, unlike clerical or monastic saints, *iurodivye* were not represented wearing an instantly recognisable uniform: most of the time, onlookers, if they were unable to decipher labels, would have had to be familiar with the saint's name and background to know they had led a life in *iurodstvo*.

Modern understandings of *iurodstvo* are varied. In her PhD thesis on the emergence of the phenomenon as a textual *topos*, Svitlana Kobets noted a tendency among scholars to describe rather than define it.[243] Because it can refer to figures and behaviours ranging from early Christianity to the Soviet period or beyond, *iurodstvo* has become an umbrella term for a complex range of meanings. Kobets herself defined it as 'a peculiar form of East Orthodox asceticism whose practitioners feign madness in order to provide the public with spiritual guidance but eschew praise for their saintliness',[244] while also stressing the *iurodivyi*'s rejection of institutionalised asceticism and conspicuous participation in public lay life.[245] *Iurodstvo* was perceived as a primarily ascetic feat in the works of nineteenth-century scholar-priests, who saw in it an extreme form of surrender, a rejection of all worldly things down to the very mind, and a model of inner strength and piety – of course, not to be literally

[243] KOBETS, *The Genesis*, op. cit., 2.

[244] *Idem*, 1.

[245] S. KOBETS, Foolishness in Christ: East vs. West, *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 34/3, 2000, 337.

emulated.[246] Adding a culturological layer to this theological interpretation, Georgii Fedotov explained *iurodstvo* as a 'radical manifestation of Christian kenoticism', i.e. Christ's self-emptying and -humiliation as a man.[247]

More recently, Sergei Ivanov interpreted the asceticism of *iurodstvo* as secondary to its performativity. For him, a *iurodivyi* was 'a person who feigns insanity, pretends to be silly, or who provokes shock or outrage by his deliberate unruliness'. Ultimately, Ivanov's understanding relies on the reception of *iurodstvo*: one could only be a *iurodivyi* if one's deliberately strange behaviour was perceived as a cover for piety and spiritual wisdom by spectators.[248] Unlike nineteenth-century understandings of *iurodstvo*, this interpretation emphasises the holy fool's relation to others (his performance) over his relation to himself and to God (his asceticism). Along the same lines, Priscilla Hunt conceived of the *iurodivyi* as one 'who makes a public display of his lowliness and uncleanliness' both to partake in Christ's self-humiliation and to show others the way to spiritual salvation. She placed holy foolery in a 'clash of viewpoints': that of the hagiographer, who knew the *iurodivyi* to be a pious ascetic, against that of the unenlightened crowd, who might take him for a beggar or street entertainer.[249] Ivanov and Hunt owe much to Aleksandr Panchenko, a pioneer in phenomenological studies of *iurodstvo*, who situated it at the intersection between the lay world of laughter and serious Church culture. For him, there were two sides to the coin of

[246] KOVALEVSKII, *Юродство*, op. cit., 1–2. KUZNETSOV, *Юродство*, op. cit., 6.

[247] G.P. FEDOTOV, *The Russian Religious Mind, Volume II, The Middle Ages: The Thirteenth to the Fifteenth Centuries*, Harvard 1966, 316.

[248] IVANOV, *Holy Fools*, op. cit., 1.

[249] *Holy Foolishness*, Hunt – Kobets, op. cit.: 1–2.

iurodstvo: one passive (ascetic self-humiliation and performance of madness), and another active (denunciation of the sins of others and guidance to salvation).[250]

Taken together, the above, and other,[251] studies offer a kaleidoscopic picture of *iurodstvo*. However, and despite their specific approaches to the topic, they neglect to clarify how their understanding of *iurodstvo* emerges from the body of evidence available to us, and whether such an understanding is limited by boundaries of space or time. Interpretations of early Christian holy foolery, quoting Paul the Apostle, are often recycled, scholarly tropes about *iurodstvo* recited, and primary sources rarely contextualised. The sections below aim to add a new angle to the kaleidoscope of *iurodstvo* by gathering as many visual and textual sources from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as possible, and looking at the ways in which they characterise *iurodivye*. It is hoped that this approach will circumvent assumptions – others' and my own – about *iurodstvo*, and let contemporary evidence outline the understanding(s) of *iurodstvo* by those in whose minds it lived.

There are limits to this approach. On one hand, the corpus of images and texts presented here, though significant, is far from exhaustive. In my analysis, I have considered every image of a *iurodivyi* I could find, and the earliest version of every text I knew of and had access to, in print or as a scanned manuscript.[252] If the volume of iconographic material

[250] LIKHACHEV – PANCHENKO – PONYRKO, *Смех*, op. cit., 72, 79.

[251] CHALLIS – DEWEY, The Blessed Fools, op. cit., 1–11: Challis and Dewey argued that, in the twentieth century, holy fools might have been diagnosed as autistic.

[252] In the case of manuscripts, I have generally consulted one copy per text, though my impression is that liturgical texts exist in a large number of copies. As for images, I have not reproduced here the full corpus I created but have chosen representative examples to illustrate the main trends.

Owing to a pandemic (2020–2023) and a war (2022–), though I hoped to consult manuscripts of texts that have neither been edited nor digitalised, I have not been able to visit Russia during my PhD (2020–2024). I have, therefore, had to rely on published texts and scanned manuscripts. The collection of scanned manuscripts from the Russian State Library and Trinity St Sergii *lavra* has been invaluable: https://lib-

before the seventeenth century is manageable, the number and length of liturgical and hagiographical texts has made it impossible to fine comb them within the three years allocated to my doctoral research project.[253] Despite my frustration, I have remained faithful to my original intention to strike a compromise between depth and breadth, which I felt was indispensable to an overall understanding of *iurodstvo* in this period.

On the other hand, the very creation of a corpus of images and texts relating to *iurodstvo* is anachronistic in that it is highly unlikely any contemporary would have encountered this many representations of *iurodstvo* in their lifetime, let alone made sense of them as expressions of a unified phenomenon. Presented here is a twenty-first century bird's-eye view of cultural artifacts produced over more than a century in different places, by and for different people, and for different reasons. If helpful to the historian, this is an artificial perspective. I have, therefore, tried to remain open to the possibility of multiple understandings of *iurodstvo* coexisting, and potentially overlapping, within my chosen time frame.

The images and texts gathered here pertain mostly to the cults of Mikhail of Klopsko, Isidor of Rostov, Maksim of Moscow, Nikolai of Novgorod, Prokopii of Ustiug, Ioann of Ustiug, Vasilii of Moscow, and Nikolai of Pskov. These were the most visible fifteenth- and sixteenth-century *iurodivye*. Despite their rough contemporaneity, the scale of their cults varied, they operated in different geographical areas, and were promoted – or, in the case of

fond.ru/. I have also made extensive use of icon catalogues, both physical and virtual, especially the vast collection at https://www.icon-art.info/. I hope, one day, to be able to visit the museums and shrines I have written about here.

[253] Some hagiographical texts considered here, like the *Life of Vasilii*, have not been edited according to modern philological standards. Some, like the miracles of Nikolai Kochanov of Novgorod, have not been edited at all. There are, to my knowledge, no editions of fifteenth- or sixteenth-century liturgical texts, which exist in more copies than I could reasonably hope to read through.

Nikolai of Pskov, discouraged – by different groups of people. I have also considered evidence for a ninth, somewhat less prominent, *iurodivyi*, the monk Galaktion of Beloozero.[254] The source material selected has been, on the whole, dated to the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries, with occasional exceptions for early seventeenth-century evidence, when earlier evidence was unavailable. This is not to say that later sources are worth less to the historian, but they may convey later, possibly transformed, understandings of *iurodstvo* beyond the scope of this thesis.

Because I am primarily interested in holy fools as cults rather than historical figures, I have not interpreted their often legendary life dates literally, and have therefore left out of my analysis those holy fools who supposedly lived in the sixteenth century but can only be found in seventeenth- or eighteenth-century evidence.[255] Finally, the inception of cults is often elusive, and my tentative chronology under III.2.a gives but a rough idea of the relative development of the cults discussed.

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[254] The only text mentioning him in this period is the *Stepennaia kniga*. There are no depictions of him before the seventeenth century. I also consider an even vaguer *iurodivyi* from the same chronicle, Domentii.

[255] *Iurodivye* excluded from my study because the earliest evidence for them is dated to the seventeenth century or later include: * Georgii Budilov of Shenkursk, who reportedly lived in the fifteenth century, and for whose cult there is thin sixteenth-century evidence, though his *zhitie* was only written in the seventeenth century and there are no surviving depictions of him, see Георгий, *ПЭ Том XI*, 22–3. * Lavrentii of Kaluga, who supposedly died in 1515 and whose posthumous miracles were only put in writing in the seventeenth century, despite Ivan IV mentioning his tomb *en passant* in a document from 1565, see Лаврентий, *ПЭ Том XXXIX*, 595–8. * Kirill of Vel'sk, who reportedly died in the early sixteenth century, and whose relics, according to the seventeenth-century tale about his miracles, were translated in 1587, see Кирилл, *ПЭ Том XXXIV*, 378–81. * Ioann, nicknamed Bol'shoi Kolpak (Big Cap), of Moscow, who reportedly died around 1589, and whose *zhitie* is dated to 1647, see M.D. KAGAN, Житие Иоанна, Московского юродивого, по прозвищу Большой Колпак, *СККДР (XVII, 1)*, 355–9. * Ioann Vlasatyi (the Hairy) of Rostov, who reportedly died around 1580, and whose *zhitie* was written in the seventeenth century, see Иоанн, *ПЭ Том XXIII*, 333–40. * Artemii Tret'iak of Rostov, whose single-paragraph biography was included in the *Life of Ioann Vlasatyi*, see previous reference. * Simon of Iur'evets, who reportedly died in 1594 and whose *zhitie* is dated to 1698, see IVANOV, *Holy Fools*, op. cit., 326; and * Arsenii of Novgorod, who reportedly died in 1572, and whose *zhitie* is found in manuscripts from the eighteenth century on, see Арсений Новгородский, *ПЭ Том III*, 438–9.

III.1 *Iurodivye* in Visual Sources

I am by no means an art historian, and this thesis is primarily based on texts. Nevertheless, my intention being to sketch a holistic picture of *iurodstvo* in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, I realised that a study dealing exclusively with texts risked exaggerating their accessibility to and importance for their mostly illiterate contemporaries. Unlike texts, images did not depend on performance, i.e., private or public reading, to be accessed, and if some wonderworking icons were controlled by clergy, most were available for personal devotion in public places of worship. There was an immediacy to visual representations of saints: icons symbolised holy persons with which one could interact.[256] In a rare description of the faithful's relationship with icons, the Sol'vychegodsk hagiographer explained that the icon of Prokopii was an embodiment of the saint himself:

> 'Сия убо чюдотворная икона сокровище неистощимое. Сию убо чюдотворную икону мы видящу, аки самого того жива отца своего зрим, но духовно всегда с нами есть и неотступно пребывает во святей сей обители и видит всех нас.'[257]
>
> 'For this wonderworking icon is an inexhaustible treasure. For when we look at this wonderworking icon, it is as if we were seeing our very father [Prokopii] alive, but spiritually he is always with us and unremittingly remains in this holy house [the Boris and Gleb monastery] and sees all of us.'

The presence of icons in communities was central: they dispensed individual healings and protected cities or whole regions in response to prayers, thereby forming relationships with believers that texts could hardly establish. In other words, the image of a saint played a crucial role in consolidating their cult.[258]

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[256] H. MAGUIRE, *Icons of their Bodies : Saints and their Images in Byzantium*, Princeton 1996: Maguire writes on relationships with icons of saints in a Byzantine context.

[257] VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 175.

[258] O.A. TUMINSKAIA, *Икона юродивого (образ юродивого во Христе в русском изобразительном искусстве позднего Средневековья и Нового времени*, Saint Petersburg 2016, 204.

Saints were frequently identified in writing on visual representations, though most people would not have been able to read the labels. Instead, they had to rely on visual literacy to identify images of saints. The iconographic archetypes at the base of this visual vocabulary were codified in icon painting guides, or *ikonopisnye podlinniki*, used by icon painters as a reference on how to represent any saint they might be called to depict.[259] *Ikonopisnye podlinniki* were structured like liturgical calendars, listing every feast day in the year and giving a detailed description of every saint's physical appearance, often with reference to other type-defining saints. The religious way of life chosen by a saint was usually obvious from their representation: monks and hegumens were represented in monastic garb, bishops and metropolitans wore episcopal vestments, hermits had long hair and beard and were quasi-naked, pious princes were richly dressed, etc. Within these generic types, details, such as beard shapes or special attributes, could offer clues as to the individual identity of a saint.

Holy fools did not fall neatly into any visual category, and, when taken together, their representations might at first seem confusingly heterogeneous. One reason for this might have been that, as recent saints, their representations might have been based on living memory and not yet subjected to archetyping. However, their visual heterogeneity could also be due to them not being perceived as part of a homogenous and well-delineated category of sanctity. Their representations borrowed traits from those of prophets, martyrs and pious laymen, hermits, and in one case, monks. I have tried to trace these genealogies in my

[259] I will be referring to a late sixteenth-century icon painting guide in a Novgorod manuscript, edited in the nineteenth century: *Иконописный подлинник новгородской редакции по софийскому списку конца XVI века. С варьянтами из списков Забелина и Филимонова*, Moscow 1873. The editors do not, as far as I can tell, name the manuscript, though they say on page 9 it is from the seventeenth century. Not having been able to consult the manuscript myself, I suspect it is this: РНБ. Соф. № 1523, dated to the second quarter of the seventeenth century. A much more comprehensive eighteenth-century icon painting guide, along with other later *podlinniki*, is frequently cited in secondary literature, but I will not be using them in the present study as my aim is to capture fifteenth- and sixteenth-century understandings of *iurodstvo*.

analysis. I have also divided representations of holy fools into artificial categories, hoping these would help make sense of the evidence.

III.1.a (Semi-)naked *Iurodivye*

One famous holy fool was frequently depicted in Rus' long before the sixteenth century: the *salos* Andrew of Constantinople. There are, curiously, almost no iconographic precedents for him from Byzantine times, with the notable exception of a fresco in the hermitage of St Neophytos in Cyprus, dated to the late twelfth century.[260] St Andrew the Fool for Christ is identified by an inscription transcribed by Cyril Mango and Ernest Hawkins, who published and described the image when they collaborated on the restoration of the wall paintings in the monastery of St Neophytos in 1963. The holy fool was depicted in a rectangular panel on the south wall of the cell (Fig. 1 below), with 'unkempt grey beard', wearing a 'short-sleeved fleecy white garment tied around his waist with a cord', and holding a 'branch with red, blue and green leaves' in his right hand.[261] The branch might be identified as some of the extraordinary flowers Andrew encountered in the episode of his *Life* where he had a vision during which he was shown around paradise.[262]

[260] A. KAZHDAN – N. ŠEVČENKO, Andrew the Fool, *ODB* https://www-oxfordreference-com.ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/display/10.1093/acref/9780195046526.001.0001/acref-9780195046526-e-0267?rskey=LZbJWR&result=267 (retrieved May 2023).

[261] E. HAWKINS – C. MANGO, The Hermitage of St. Neophytos and Its Wall Paintings, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 20, 1966, 121, 179, fig. 92.

[262] L. RYDÉN (trans. and ed.), *The Life of St Andrew the Fool, Vol. II: Text, Translation and Notes. Appendices*, Uppsala 1995, 47–6: I am grateful to Marc Lauxtermann for pointing this out to me.



Figure 1. St Andrew the Fool.
Hermitage of St Neophytos, Cyprus, late twelfth century

Very rare in Byzantium, the above iconography, was probably not known in Rus', where an iconographic scene involving Andrew of Constantinople emerged in connection with the establishment of the feast of Pokrov by Prince Andrei Bogoliubskii in the twelfth century.[263] Based on an episode from the Byzantine *Life of Andrew*, where the saint saw the Virgin lay her protective veil – or *pokrov*, meaning both veil and protection in Slavonic –

[263] J. SHEPARD, "Constantinople Imaginaire" in Northern and Western Eyes: The Uses of Imperial Imagery to Twelfth-century Outsiders, *Constantinople Réelle et Imaginaire Autour de l'Oeuvre de Gilbert Dagron, Travaux et Mémoires* 22/1, 2018, 785; I. ŠEVČENKO, Russo-Byzantine Relations after the Eleventh Century, *Proceedings of the XIIIth International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, Oxford 1967, 95.

over a Constantinopolitan congregation in the Blachernae church,[264] the feast inspired a very popular type of icon. Though it might have existed as early as the thirteenth century,[265] one of its earliest and best-preserved examples dates to c. 1399 and comes from the Zverin monastery (Fig. 2 below) in Novgorod, a region where this iconography was especially popular.[266] In Pokrov iconography, Andrew is usually depicted in the bottom right corner, pointing out the Virgin hovering above the congregation to his confidant and spiritual disciple Epiphanios (Fig. 2 to 5 below).



Figure 2. Pokrov.
Zverin monastery, Novgorod, c. 1399
Novgorod State Integrated Museum-Reserve



Figure 3. Pokrov.
Vologda (?), mid-sixteenth century
Tretyakov Gallery

[264] RYDÉN, *Life of St Andrew, Vol. II*, op. cit., 255–6.

[265] L.S. MILIAEVA, Памятник галицкой живописи XIII в., *Советская археология* 3, 1965, 250: There is at least one thirteenth-century example from modern-day Ukraine.

[266] Á. KRIZA, *Depicting Orthodoxy in the Russian Middle Ages : The Novgorod Icon of Sophia, the Divine Wisdom*, Oxford 2022, 215–17.

Sergei Ivanov has argued that the iconographic type of Andrew in Pokrov scenes underwent a transformation as one version of the saint, with long hair and beard and wearing a fleecy tunic (Fig. 2 above), gradually gave way to another, with shorter hair and beard and wearing a rag that bared his shoulder and chest (Fig. 3 above), concluding that Andrew 'was transformed from a prophet into a holy fool.'[267] Incidentally, the first, prophet-like, type is strikingly similar to the fresco in the hermitage of St Neophytos, and we can wonder whether an image like it did, after all, find its way to Rus'. More importantly, the conclusion that Andrew was first perceived and depicted as a prophet, and then as a holy fool is perhaps hasty, considering that, as Ivanov admits, the two iconographic types coexisted almost from the start, and the representation of Andrew in a fleecy tunic, albeit rarer, persisted into the sixteenth century (Fig. 5 below). It seems, moreover, dangerously teleological to suggest that Andrew was depicted 'as a holy fool' in the fifteenth or early sixteenth century, a time from which no other depictions of such saints survive, and when icon painters were probably in the process of working out ways to depict *iurodstvo*. More probably, the semi-naked iconographic type of Andrew influenced the way later *iurodivye* were depicted and might have been influenced in return: in one sixteenth-century icon, Andrew uncharacteristically wore a white loincloth similar to Maksim's (Fig. 4 below, compare with Fig. 15 below). But it would be inaccurate to say Andrew conformed to a pre-defined visual understanding of *iurodstvo*.

[267] IVANOV, *Holy Fools*, op. cit., 256-7, 263–4.

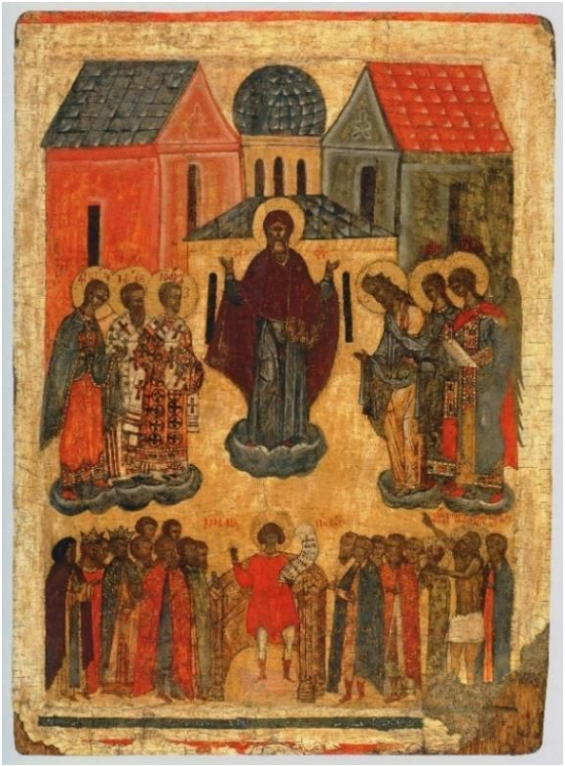


Figure 4. Pokrov.
Obonezh'e, first third of sixteenth century
Collection of E.A. Terletskii

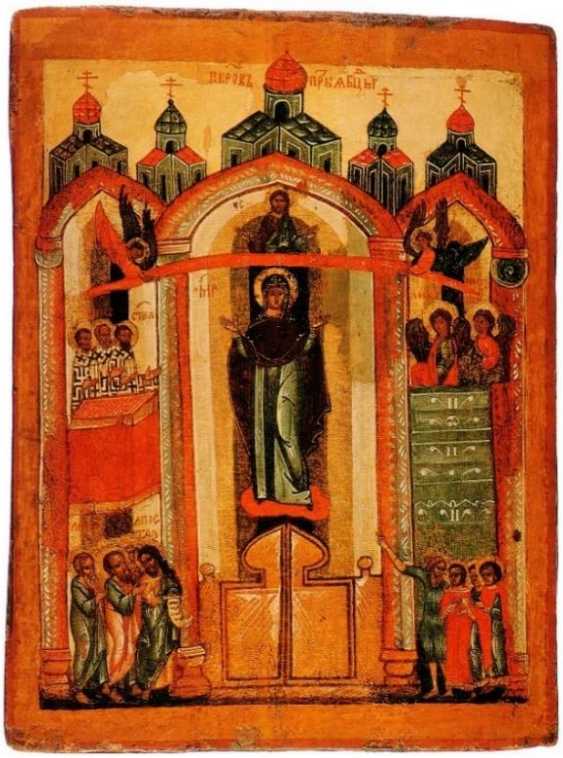


Figure 5. Pokrov.
Novgorod region, early sixteenth century
Nizhny Novgorod State Art Museum

Though the Pokrov iconography remained popular well into the sixteenth century, St Andrew of Constantinople was virtually indissociable from it and was almost never depicted by himself. Even within the Pokrov iconography, and despite his important role in the scene, Andrew's silhouette was somewhat lost in the crowded composition, whose central figure remained the Virgin. He was, after all, only a witness to her powers. The only preserved representation of Andrew by himself is a remarkable mid-sixteenth-century State Russian Museum icon, where the saint is wearing a green rag baring his chest and surrounded by eighteen vignettes with scenes from his life, including some of his visions (of a fight with the devil, of St John the Apostle, of Jesus Christ, of the *pokrov* of the Virgin in the

Blachernae church) and the miracle where closed church doors opened for him.[268] Andrew's lack of popularity as an independent subject of iconography is reflected in the sixteenth-century icon painting guide, where he is not mentioned on the 1 October under the feast of the Virgin's Pokrov, and though he does appear under his own feast day, on the 28 May, the guide only informs of the passing of Andrew, the fool for Christ, without specifying any iconographic characteristics.[269]

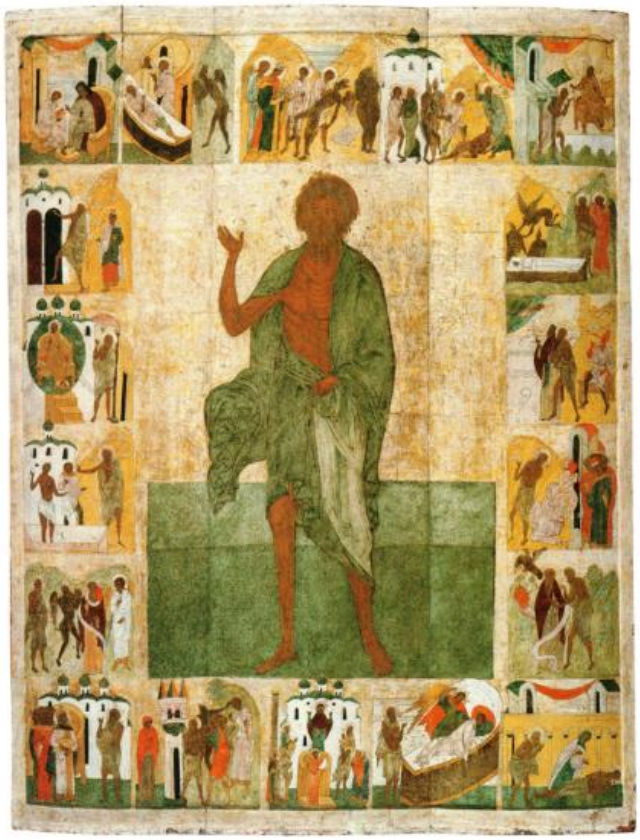


Figure 6. St Andrew of Constantinople.
Moscow, early sixteenth century
State Russian Museum

[268] Андрей юродивый, *ПЭ Том II*, 391–3, esp. 393: Probably from a church dedicated to him in the Novgorod Sitetsk monastery. Соборы.ру, Народный каталог православный архитектуры, Ситецкий монастырь, урочище. Церковь Андрея Блаженного (Юродивого) на Ситке. https://sobory.ru/article/?object=49881 (retrieved April 2024): The monastery's church, built in 1371 by a certain Natal'ia, had an unusual dedication to St Andrew of Constantinople and is currently underground. The monastery was already in decay by the seventeenth century.

[269] *Иконописный подлинник,* op. cit., 23–4, 107.

Despite the ultimate prevalence of the semi-naked type of Andrew, the survival of his prophet-like type into the sixteenth century shows that he was perceived not only as an ascetic mortifying his body, but also as a visionary, a characteristic he shared with most *iurodivye*.[270] On the other hand, the association with prophets and hermits anchored Andrew, and *iurodivye* more generally, in a respectable tradition of Christian asceticism. Though it was not particularly well-known in Rus',[271] the *Life of Symeon of Emesa*, another Byzantine *salos,* is a good illustration of the conceptual discomfort brought about by the idea of a homeless ascetic living alone in a city. Its author, Bishop Leontios of Neapolis, was eager to demonstrate his subject's ascetic pedigree by having him live in the desert as a hermit for twenty-nine years before moving on to the supremely challenging feat of living in the city, a place that epitomised sin.[272] The reader is constantly reminded of 'the indescribable austerity of Symeon's regimen, although he lived in the city and associated with women and men.'[273]

It is probably no coincidence that both of Andrew's iconographic types shared traits with those of prophets and hermits who spent most of their lives in the desert, and whose semi-nakedness often highlighted their physical exertion (Fig. 10 below). Not least among them was St John the Forerunner, or the Baptist, whose popular and flexible iconographic type alternated between a fleecy tunic (Fig. 7 below) and a bared shoulder and chest (Fig. 8

[270] IVANOV, *Holy Fools*, op. cit., 308: Ivanov goes as far as suggesting that the ability to make prophecies was the principal characteristic of *iurodstvo*.

[271] O.V. TVOROGOV, Переводные жития святых в древнерусской книжности XI–XV вв., *ТОДРЛ* 59, 2008, 65–6: The *Life of Symeon* is preserved in a single fourteenth-century and five fifteenth-century Rus' manuscripts.

[272] KRUEGER, *Symeon*, op. cit., 148.

[273] *Idem*, 153.

below).[274] Mary of Egypt, who atoned for her past as a prostitute by spending over four decades as a solitary ascetic in the desert, was celebrated in Rus' from the late eleventh or early twelfth century,[275] and represented with a bared shoulder and chest; the lack of a beard was her main distinction from Andrew (Fig. 9 below). Perhaps the ascetic, rather than the prophetic, iconographic type of Andrew – and its *iurodivyi* variations – prevailed not because the visionary aspect of holy foolery was perceived as less important than the ascetic, but because there was unease about justifying the presence of solitary pious men in cities. Emphasising the feat's ascetic, over its prophetic, aspect was perhaps the most effective way to deflect suspicions of sinfulness.



Figure 7. St John the Baptist.
Tver' region (?), fifteenth century
Tretyakov Gallery

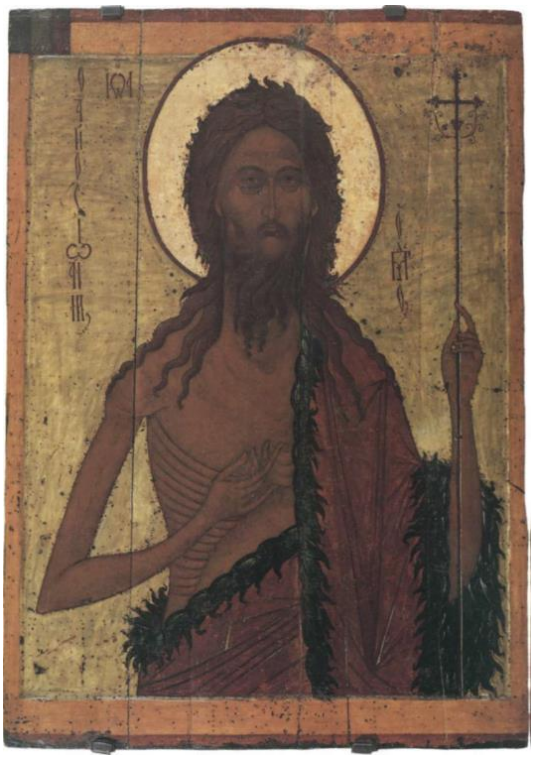


Figure 8. St John the Baptist.
Iaroslavl', c. 1570
Yaroslavl Museum-Preserve

[274] TUMINSKAIA, *Икона юродивого*, op. cit., 221: Tuminskaia has identified St John the Baptist as the main iconographic model for fifteenth- and sixteenth-century images of *iurodivye*.

[275] Мария Египетская, *ПЭ Том XLIII*, 549.

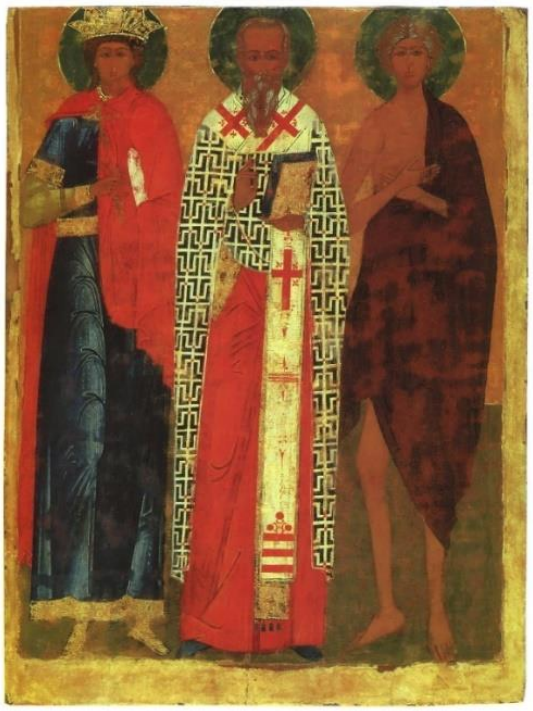


Figure 9. Saints Catherine, Jacob, and Mary of Egypt.
Novgorod region, late sixteenth or early seventeenth century
Tretyakov Gallery

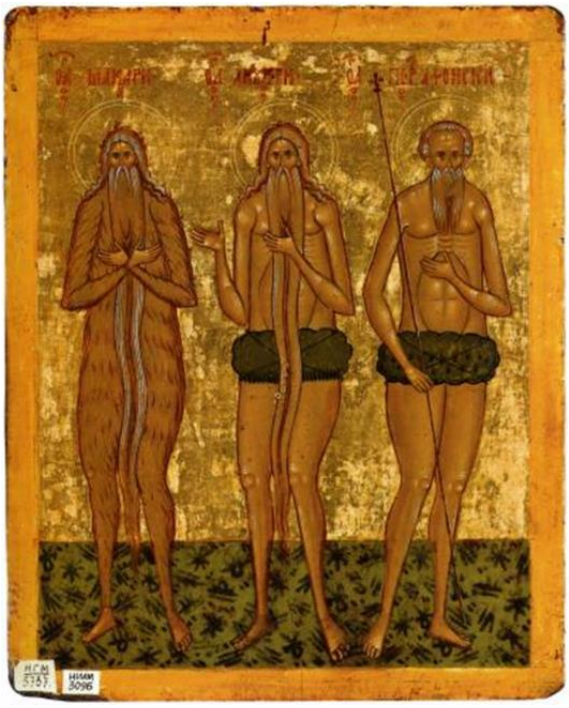


Figure 10. Hermits Macarius of Egypt, Onuphrius the Great, Peter the Athonite.
Novgorod, late fifteenth or early sixteenth century
Tretyakov Gallery

Though it is often difficult to date icons with any degree of precision, there are, to my knowledge, no representations of *iurodivye* firmly dated to the fifteenth century, and very few to the first half of the sixteenth century. One of the earliest known icons where *iurodivye* appear is an image of Rostov saints, with the small figures of Maksim of Moscow and Isidor of Rostov on the margins, variously dated from the late fifteenth- to the mid-sixteenth century (Fig. 11 below). An unusual icon of Prokopii of Ustiug, depicted from the waist up, has also been dated to the first half of the sixteenth century (Fig. 25 below). All other icons of *iurodivye* in the period that concerns us belong to the second half of, and many of them to the late sixteenth century. Like their textual counterparts, and like Pokrov icons, visual

representations of *iurodivye* have been traced back primarily to northern Rus', including Vologda, Ustiug, and Novgorod, and, with the rise of Vasilii to popularity, Moscow.

If one had to guess how Russian *iurodivye* were to be depicted, it would be reasonable to assume their iconography to copy images of the only holy fool familiar from Rus' iconography: Andrew of Constantinople (Fig. 2 to 6 above). In reality, however, there were almost as many ways of depicting *iurodivye* in the sixteenth century as there were *iurodivye*. Only one, Isidor of Rostov, out of the eight considered here, bore a strong iconographic resemblance to Andrew of Constantinople. Keeping in mind that these are anachronistic categories for the modern historian's convenience, we can empirically organise representations of *iurodivye* in three groups: one emphasising the ascetic nakedness of *iurodstvo*, one highlighting the lay provenance of its practitioners, and a single outlying monastic holy fool.

The tradition depicting *iurodivye* as fully or semi-naked associated them, if not *verbatim*, with Andrew of Constantinople and through him with early Christian prophets and hermits. As with Andrew, the (semi-)nakedness of *iurodivye* exposed their ascetic prodigy, winters in Russia being harsher than in Constantinople or the Egyptian desert, and revealed their skinny, mortified flesh.[276] This was a way of hinting at their behaviour, as images usually lacked the narrative dimension of texts, especially as hagiographical icons of *iurodivye* were rare. On the other hand, nakedness also called to mind the nakedness and purity of Adam before the Fall.[277] Both meanings – the ascetic rigour of hermits and sinlessness of the first man – were displayed in images of (semi-)naked *iurodivye*, almost as

[276] A. PREOBRAZHENSKII, Иконография Василия Блаженного: некоторые аспекты изучения, in: E.M. Iukhimenko, *Юродивые в русской культуре*, Moscow 2013, 54.

[277] *Idem*, 52.

an argumentative shield against those who viewed them as fundamentally suspect isolated men, unregulated by any religious community or hierarchy and living among sinful laypeople.

If nakedness tagged *iurodivye* as ascetics and gave them credibility as such, it also opened up performative meanings for *iurodstvo*. One of Andrew of Constantinople's first gestures as a *salos* was to take his shirt off and 'cut it into pieces like a lunatic';[278] and when Deacon John asked Symeon of Emesa if he wanted to wash his mortified body, the *salos* 'stripped off his garment and placed it on his head, wrapping it around like a turban' before entering the women's bath.[279] Panchenko famously stated that nakedness was the costume of holy foolery, thereby implying its performative dimension and the role of nakedness in identifying the holy fool in the eyes of the spectator.[280] Even when they were depicted with other saints, (semi-)nakedness singled out *iurodivye* as different and drew attention to them. Performative nakedness had a double edge, though: if it could be interpreted as a symbol of purity, it could also recall the potential sinfulness of the flesh and be shocking to viewers.

One of the earliest preserved depictions of *iurodivye*, dated to the first third of the sixteenth century, included the tiny marginal figures of Isidor of Rostov and Maksim of Moscow on either side of episcopal and monastic saints, all identified with red labels above their heads, though the one for Isidor is severely damaged.[281] The episcopal and monastic

[278] RYDÉN, *Life of St Andrew, Vol. II,* op. cit., 19.

[279] KRUEGER, *Symeon,* op. cit., 153.

[280] LIKHACHEV – PANCHENKO – PONYRKO, *Смех*, op. cit., 92–3.

[281] A.G. MEL'NIK, *Иконография ростовских святых : Каталог выставки*, Rostov 1998, 54, item 34. The dating is not universal; a discussion of different opinions can be found in: A.G. MEL'NIK, О времени создания иконы «Ростовские и избранные московские святые» из собрания Ростовского музея, in: V.V. Ziakin (ed.), *История и культура Ростовской земли*, Rostov 2007, 308–316. The following date this icon to the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century: V.I. VAKHRINA (ed.), *Иконы из собрания Ростовского*

saints – St Sergii of Radonezh, and Saints Avraamii, Iasaia, Ignatii and Leontii of Rostov – were four times larger than the *iurodivye* on the margins, who look like an afterthought (Fig. 11 below).[282] Though symmetry was clearly a concern for the author of this composition, who surrounded the three episcopal saints at the centre with two monastic saints, next to which he placed the smaller *iurodivye*, Maksim and Isidor were depicted in slightly different ways that matched their individual iconographic types found elsewhere: Maksim wore nothing but a white loin cloth, and Isidor was covered in a dark rag showing his bare shoulder and chest, like Andrew of Constantinople. Curiously, Maksim and Isidor were represented in similarly marginal positions in a three-tiered icon, dated to 1565, with scenes of the elevation of the cross and Pokrov on the upper tier, and a selection of thirty-two saints on the lower tiers. Maksim and Isidor are respectively on the left and right edges of the middle tier, as in the Rostov icon, each with his characteristic clothing.[283]

музея-заповедника: Каталог, Moscow 1991, 16–17, item 6; A.V. RYNDINA (ed.), *1000-летие русской художественной культуры*, Moscow 1988, 67, item 85.

[282] IVANOV, *Holy fools*, op. cit., 270.

[283] V.I. ANTONOVA – N.E. MNEVA, *Каталог древнерусской живописи XI – начала XVIII в.в., 1 (XI–начало XVI века)*, Moscow 1963, 52–3, item 14.



Figure 11. Saints Maksim of Moscow (left detail), Sergii of Radonezh, and Isaia, Leontii, Ignatii, Avraamii, and Isidor of Rostov (right detail).
Rostov region, mid-sixteenth century
State Museum-Preserve "Rostov Kremlin"

In agreement with his surviving depictions, in the late sixteenth-century *podlinnik* Isidor was listed under the 14 May as 'blonde, long hair, beard like Christ, bared right shoulder, ochre clothing'.[284] He was invariably represented in this way,[285] including in the magnificent embroidery commissioned in 1571 by Ivan IV – but only completed in 1585,

[284] *Иконописный подлинник,* op. cit., 102: *рус, власы велики, брада Христова, плечо правое наго, риза санкир*.

[285] PREOBRAZHENSKII, Иконография Василия, op. cit., 54: Preobrazhenskii offered examples of other representations of Isidor, including a detail of a late sixteenth-century group composition where Andrew's rag is uncharacteristically white. A.G. MEL'NIK, Пядничные иконы XVI – начала XVII в. русских святых, *Древняя Русь. Вопросы медиевистики* 2(46), 2011, 86, item 19, 87, item 26: Two late sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century depictions of Isidor in smaller groups of saints.

after his death – for the saint's tomb (Fig. 12 below).[286] Isidor was rarely depicted alone, and never, as far as I know, before the seventeenth century, though he did appear in sixteenth-century menology icons, where all the saints celebrated in one same month were depicted together. He was also represented with other saints, identified by labels above their heads, in wood carving, a technique popular in sixteenth-century Rostov (Fig. 13 below).[287]



Figure 12. St Isidor of Rostov.
Moscow, 1571–1585
State Museum-Preserve "Rostov Kremlin"

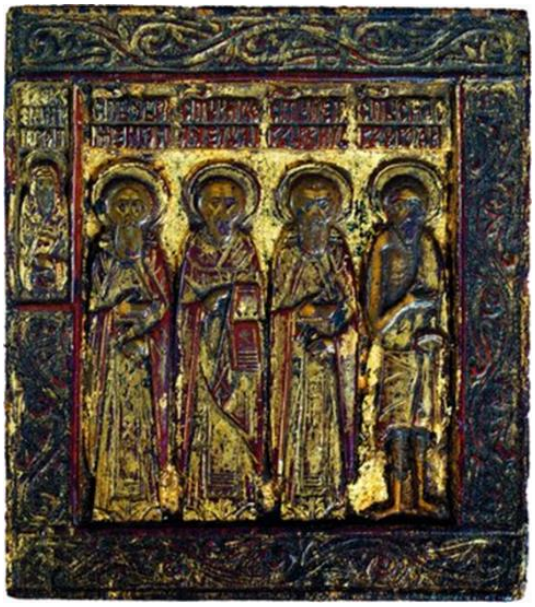


Figure 13. Saints Nicholas the Wonderworker, Petr the Horde tsarevich, and Avraamii and Isidor of Rostov (St Aleksii Metropolitan of Moscow, left margin).
Rostov, mid-sixteenth century
State Museum-Preserve "Rostov Kremlin"

[286] V.G. PUTSKO, Шитые покровы XVI в. с изображениями Христа ради юродивых, *Сообщения Ростовского музея. Выпуск 19*, Rostov 2012, 213–14, 218: The writing along the shroud's edges was transcribed by Putsko and offers information on the commission by Ivan IV and completion of the work under Fedor I, as well as identifying the saint represented as Isidor, the *iurodivyi* for Christ's sake and Rostov wonderworker.

[287] Исидор, *ПЭ Том XXVII*, 174, 176; I.M. SOKOLOVINA, Об одной группе резных ростовских икон XVI в., *Сообщения Ростовского Музея. Выпуск 6*, Rostov 1994, 114.

Maksim and Isidor were both depicted in frescoes. In the Moscow Kremlin Annunciation cathedral, whose frescoes are dated to 1547–1551, they appear from the waist up in round frames next to each other (Maksim, Fig. 14 below).[288] In the Annunciation cathedral of Sol'vychegodsk, whose design was based on that of the Moscow Kremlin and whose frescoes were started in 1597 and completed in 1600, Isidor was part of the main altar decoration and Maksim was represented in the chapel of St John the Theologian, not far from the hermits and martyrs.[289]

Though he was one of the first *iurodivye* represented visually, Maksim was not described in the late sixteenth-century *podlinnik*. If he might have been depicted in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries,[290] some of his earliest representations were likely lost in the 1737 fire that destroyed the church dedicated to him in Moscow, along with his remains.[291] He does, however, appear in an early sixteenth-century Hexameron (*Shestodnev*) composition (Fig. 36 below). In surviving representations, and apart from fresco decorations, Maksim was always depicted with other saints, especially Vasilii of Moscow, other *iurodivye*, or Rostov saints. In the 1570s illustrated manuscript of the *Letopisnyi svod*,[292] there is a miniature of a miracle where Maksim, depicted lying in his tomb with a small identifying label above his body, posthumously healed a man's leg (Fig. 15 below). In this

[288] The fresco is severely damaged, and I have only seen a partial reproduction of it where no label is discernible. The identification of Maksim is made by A.S. Preobrazhenskii in Максим, *ПЭ Том XLII*, 743.

[289] *Ibid.* A. PREOBRAZHENSKII, Монументальная живопись Благовещенского собора, in: K. Velikhovskaia and T. Iudkevich, *Вклад. Художественное наследие Строгановых XVI-XVII веков в музеях Сольвычегодска и Пермского краясборник*, Perm' 2017, 156–7, 213 (item 57), 228.

[290] Максим, *ПЭ Том XLII*, op. cit., 743: An early example is the (now renovated) fresco of Maksim near his namesake, Maksim the Confessor, in the Moscow Kremlin Dormition cathedral, dated to 1481 or 1513–15.

[291] *Ibid*.

[292] *Idem*, 742: The illustrated manuscript is РНБ. F.IV.232. fol. 601.

image, Maksim's white loincloth is longer than elsewhere, a slight modification that would later take over from the rather scanty loincloth still predominant in the sixteenth century.

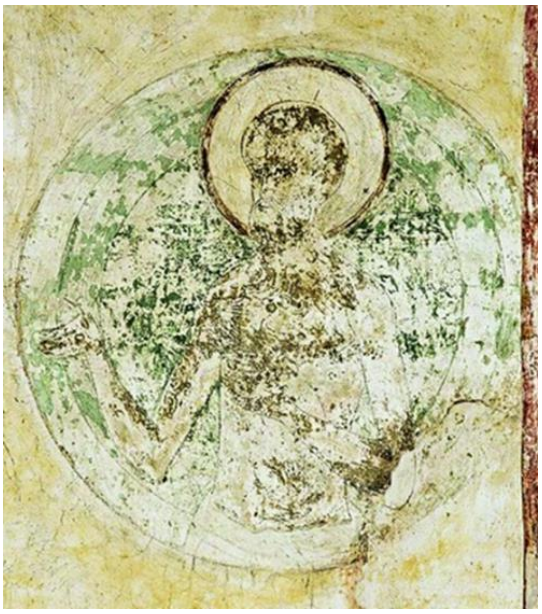


Figure 14. St Maksim of Moscow.
Annunciation cathedral, Moscow Kremlin, 1547–1551

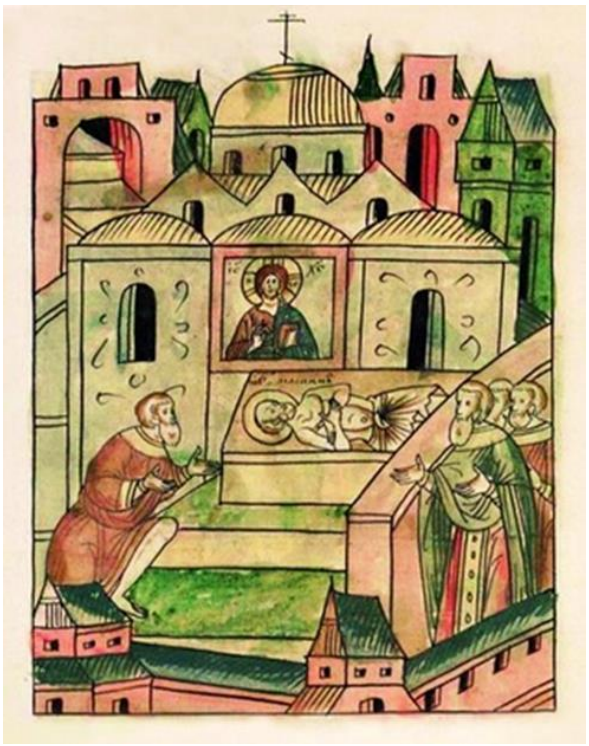


Figure 15. Tomb of St Maksim of Moscow working a posthumous miracle.
Moscow, 1570s (РНБ. F.IV.232. fol. 601)
National Library of Russia

By the time the iconography of Ioann of Ustiug was developed, representations of Andrew, Maksim, Isidor, and Prokopii were already in circulation,[293] and it is surprising that he did not entirely conform to any one of them, though he adhered to the semi-naked group of *iurodivye*. His most distinctive feature was his young age: unlike his bearded colleagues, Ioann was consistently depicted as a beardless youth, a characteristic that might have been based on living memory or on his hagiography. The first known representations of Ioann of

[293] Иоанн, *ПЭ Том XXIII*, 352.

Ustiug followed his *zhitie* and recognition as a local saint by Metropolitan Makarii in the mid-sixteenth century. Though the late sixteenth-century *podlinnik* does not mention him, he was depicted with Prokopii of Ustiug, both praying to the Virgin, on an icon of the second half of the sixteenth century, and with twenty-four scenes from his life on two hagiographical icons, respectively from the late sixteenth century and 1602.[294] Rarely depicted alone, especially beyond Ustiug, Ioann was almost always seen by Prokopii's side (Fig. 16 and 17 below, both bearing identifying labels). However, Prokopii, whose cult and iconography were far more widespread than Ioann's, was frequently depicted with other saints or by himself, and without his younger compatriot.

Though he wore a white tunic in the Sol'vychegodsk cathedral fresco (Fig. 16 below),[295] Ioann's iconographic type in the seventeenth century converged towards Andrew's and Isidor's, his tunic becoming more ragged and revealing his bare shoulder (Fig. 17 below).[296] In its earlier version, however, Ioann's tunic was not unlike that of Alexios the Man of God, or that of Iakov of Borovichi in some of his seventeenth- or eighteenth-century icons. Surprisingly for a corpse whose history was unknown, Iakov was occasionally remembered as a *iurodivyi* in some sources, rather than a pious layman, or *pravednyi*, his official title. Some of his depictions are strikingly close to the later type of Maksim of Moscow, with the longer loincloth. Like Ioann, Iakov was generally represented as a

[294] *Idem*, 354, 356: I have not been able to see any of these icons. Preobrazhenskii mentions that the hagiographical icons of Ioann are very similar to three hagiographical icons of Prokopii, two from the late sixteenth century, and one from 1602.

[295] PREOBRAZHENSKII, Монументальная живопись, op. cit., 202.

[296] M.S. TRUBACHEVA (ed.), *Иконы строгановских вотчин XVI–XVII веков : По материалам реставрационных работ ВХНРЦ имени академика И. Э. Грабаря*, Moscow 2003, item 38 on page 158, description on page 54.

beardless young man.[297] There seems to have been, in fact, a continuum between iconographic types of *iurodivye* and pious laymen like Alexius and Iakov, suggesting that *iurodivye* were perceived as an extension of the pious layman, a hypothesis supported by the fact that they were often grouped together in large-scale iconographic compositions (Fig. 35 to 37 below).[298]



Figure 16. Saints Prokopii and Ioann of Ustiug before the Virgin and Child.
Annunciation cathedral, Sol'vychegodsk, 1600

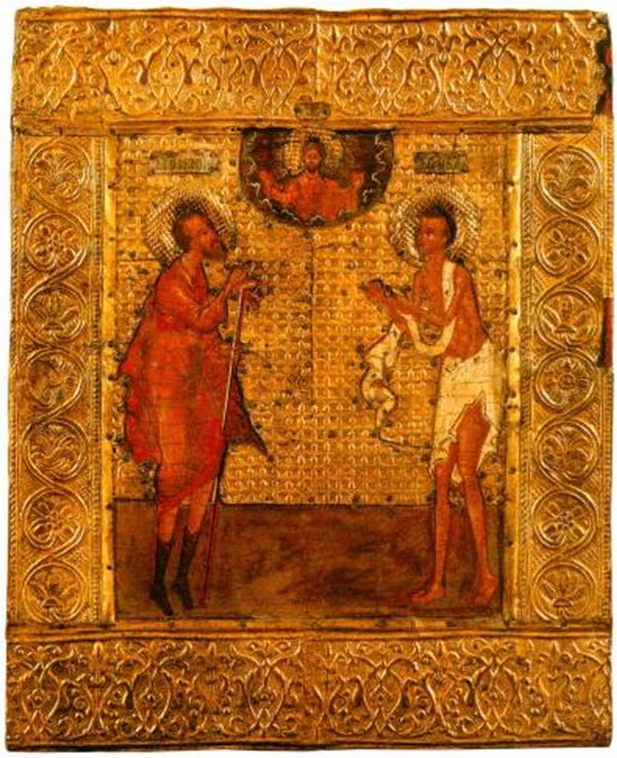


Figure 17. Saints Prokopii and Ioann of Ustiug before Christ.
Sol'vychegodsk, 1611
Solvychegodsky Museum-Reserve

Vasilii of Moscow was by far the most widely depicted *iurodivyi*, and the only one in the sixteenth century for whom the ascetic iconographic type of *iurodstvo* was taken to its

[297] Иаков, *ПЭ Том XX*, op. cit., 491 and forward.

[298] PREOBRAZHENSKII, Иконография Василия, op. cit., 66–7.

logical extreme: full nakedness. Reminiscent of Adam's purity before the Fall, Vasilii's haloed and fully naked body was a highly unusual iconographic type and made him instantly recognisable both among *iurodivye* and other saints.[299] As Ol'ga Tuminskaia pointed out, nakedness, especially in its most extreme representations, like Vasilii the Naked's, was shocking; it provoked a reaction and forced the viewer to do intellectual work. Medieval distaste for the Classical veneration of the human body's beauty meant that Christ was the only figure regularly represented with little to no clothing. Probably more than Adam before the Fall, representations of Vasilii likely reminded viewers of Christ's passion more than anything.[300] Yet Tuminskaia has also argued that the 1589 embroidery of Vasilii might have been designed from a real likeness, which touches on the ecclesiastically controversial matter of whether real, individual people should be represented.[301] The striking appearance of Vasilii, along with the highly individualised representations of many other *iurodivye*, would suggest that the portraiture trend in icons became acceptable in the later part of the sixteenth century. Living memory of Vasilii might still have been alive in 1589. After his death in the 1550s, he was consistently mentioned as the Naked, or *nagokhodets*, in the earliest sources, including the 1560s *Stepennaia kniga*, and it is likely that his fully naked representations reflected the strong image he left in the popular imagination of Moscow dwellers. When his cult was officially sponsored by the Church and state – which shaped the places, images, and narratives celebrating him – his fully naked figure, though potentially controversial, was fully embraced and disseminated far and wide. Vasilii became the only *iurodivyi* to be frequently represented by himself.

[299] Василий Блаженный, *ПЭ Том VII*, 123–31, esp. 129 and forward.

[300] TUMINSKAIA, *Икона юродивого*, op. cit., 208, 216, 234–6.

[301] *Idem*, 237–9, 242.

The earliest known representation of Vasilii is a miniature from the 1570s illustrated *Letopisnyi svod*, based on events from 1521, when he predicted the Tatar invasion of Moscow.[302] In connection with the public recognition of Vasilii in 1588, Tsar Fedor I commissioned an embroidery for the saint's tomb, a rare example of a frontal, rather than three-quarters, representation of the *iurodivyi* (Fig. 18 below).[303] Other late sixteenth-century depictions include an embroidery of Vasilii and his namesake, St Basil the Great, with whom he was often represented (Fig. 19 below);[304] and an icon from Sol'vychegodsk, attesting to the spread of his popularity and the Stroganov family's enthusiasm for *iurodivye* (Fig. 20 below).[305] Vasilii was also one of the few *iurodivye* to become the subject of hagiographical icons (Fig. 21 below).[306]

[302] Василий Блаженный, *ПЭ Том VII*, op. cit., 128: РНБ. F. IV. 232. Л. 833. This is the same illustrated manuscript as the one with a miniature of Maksim, see Fig. 15.

[303] PUTSKO, Шитые покровы, 212: The writing along the shroud's edges was transcribed by Putsko and offers information on the commission by Fedor I and his wife Irina for the tomb of Vasilii the Blessed, the *iurodivyi* for Christ's sake.

[304] See: PREOBRAZHENSKII, Иконография Василия, op. cit., 61. The embroidered writing around the naked figure's halo identifies him as Vasilii the *iurodivyi* for Christ's sake.

[305] TRUBACHEVA, *Иконы*, op. cit., item 17 on page 34–7, description on page 54, details on pages 36 and 39, reproduction on page 129. Vasilii is identified by a red ink label above his head.

[306] See: PREOBRAZHENSKII, Иконография Василия, op. cit., 56: The individual scenes from his life are labelled (and recognisable) though I have found neither transcriptions nor high-enough-resolution reproductions to allow my own transcriptions.



Figure 18. St Vasilii of Moscow.
Moscow, 1589
Pokrov cathedral (St Basil's cathedral)

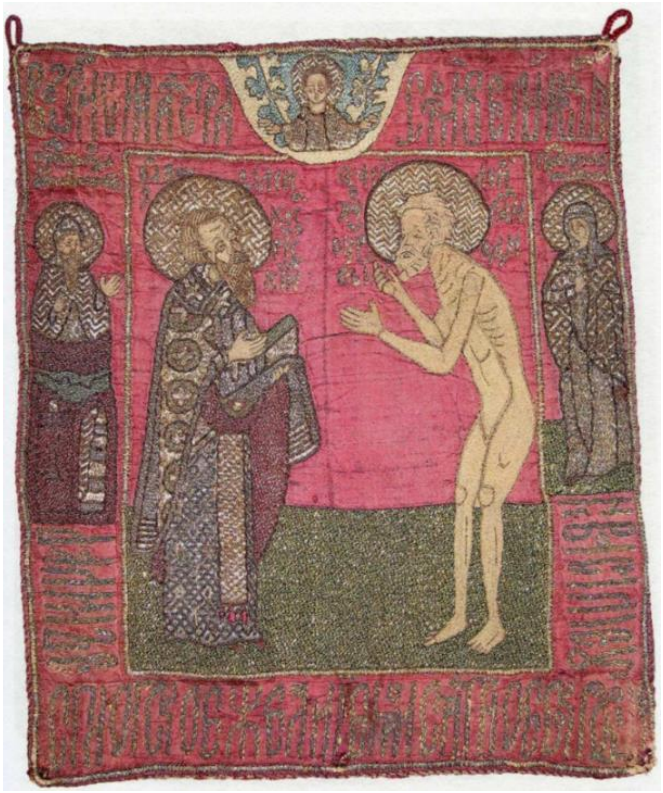


Figure 19. Saints Vasilii of Moscow and Basil the Great.
Moscow, late sixteenth century
State Russian Museum

The iconography of Vasilii of Moscow was the culmination of an iconographic trend that emphasised the ascetic nature of *iurodstvo* by depicting its practitioners as (semi-)naked, while not cutting their genetic ties with hermits and, more generally, pious laypeople.[307] The semi-naked iconographic types of Andrew of Constantinople, Isidor of Rostov, and Maksim of Moscow paved the way for Vasilii and, later and not quite as naked, Ioann of Ustiug.

[307] Unlike monks, hermits could be unordained laypeople, e.g., Mary of Egypt.

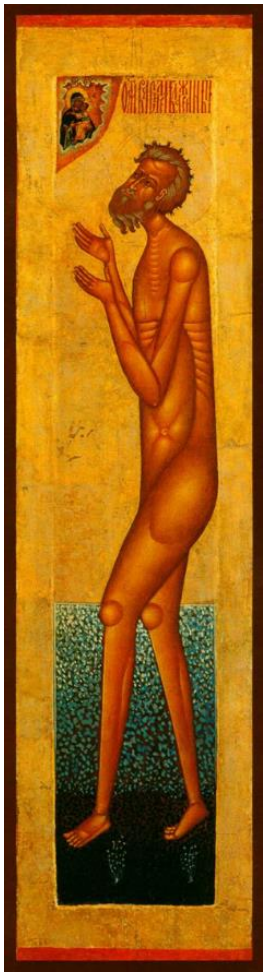


Figure 20. St Vasilii of Moscow before the Virgin and Child.
Sol'vychegodsk, late sixteenth century
Solvychegodsky Museum-Reserve

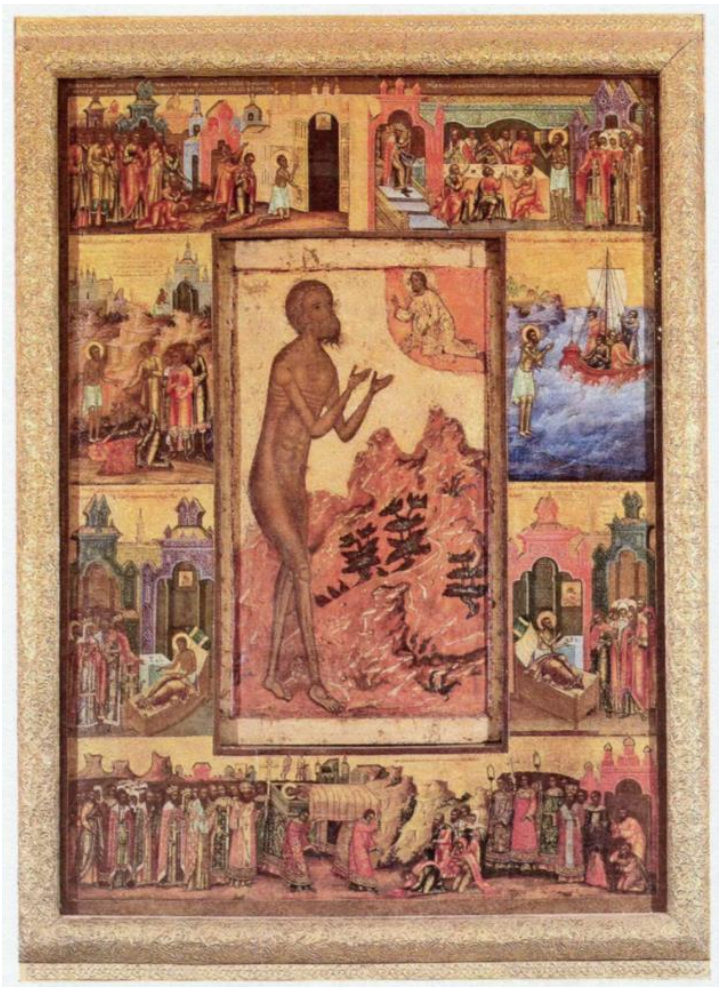


Figure 21. St Vasilii of Moscow with scenes from his life.[308]
Moscow (?), late sixteenth or early seventeenth century
State Historical Museum, St Basil's cathedral

III.1.b A Monastic *Iurodivyi*

Not all sixteenth-century depictions of *iurodstvo*, however, conformed to this broad archetype. Mikhail of Klopsko might have been the first *iurodivyi* known in text, though

[308] Interestingly, Vasilii is depicted naked in the central image, but wearing a loincloth in the vignettes.

there are no surviving depictions of him before the mid-sixteenth century. Nothing in Mikhail's pictorial likeness, however, suggested that he was a *iurodivyi* rather than a saintly monk or monastic founder. Though he is not mentioned in the sixteenth-century Novgorod icon painting guide, attesting perhaps to his greater popularity in Moscow than in the area where he spent his life,[309] a late seventeenth-century icon painting guide described his beard with reference to a bishop, St Basil the Great, and his monastic habit as ragged.[310] He was usually bearded, wearing a brown monastic cloak over his lighter tunic, his right hand raised in a blessing and left hand occasionally holding a scroll.

Some of his earliest preserved representations are the 1562 relief on his sarcophagus, a 1572 fresco in St Sophia cathedral, Novgorod (Fig. 24 below), with an identifying label still legible on either side of his head, and a mid-sixteenth century icon currently in the Tret'iakov Gallery.[311] Other depictions include an icon from the second half of the sixteenth century, where he stands between Varlaam of Khutyn' and Dmitrii of Priluki (Fig. 22 below),[312] and a recently renovated mid- to late-sixteenth century fresco in the Trinity cathedral of Aleksandrovskaia Sloboda (Fig. 23 below).[313]

The only sixteenth-century *iurodivyi* to have lived in a monastery and not wandered in towns, Mikhail was frequently called a *prepodobnyi*, venerable or Christ-like monk, in texts,

[309] For a discussion of Mikhail's anti-Novgorod leanings, see page 278 and forward.

[310] Михаил, *ПЭ Том XLV*, 556: ИРЛИ. Бобк. № 4. fol. 64 г.

[311] V.I. ANTONOVA – N.E. MNEVA, *Каталог древнерусской живописи XI – начала XVIII в.в., 2 (XVI–начало XVIII века)*, Moscow 1963: The mid-sixteenth century icon from the Tret'iakov collection is unfortunately not reproduced in the catalogue. Михаил, *ПЭ Том XLV*, op. cit., 557.

[312] The labels above their heads are still just about readable. Dmitrii is identified as of Vologda.

[313] Михаил, *ПЭ Том XLV*, op. cit., 561: Both this and the St Sophia fresco were sponsored by Ivan IV. The label above Mikhail's head in the Aleksandrovskaia Sloboda fresco is very clear – I can only assume the restoration followed the original lettering.

which distanced him from either the semi-naked or the dressed archetype of *iurodivye* and its visual connections with saintly laypeople. Ol'ga Tuminskaia has observed that there is no separate iconographic type for the category she called *prepodobnye-iurodivye*, or monastic holy fools: they were simply depicted as monks.[314] Representations of Mikhail put forward his monastic respectability rather than highlighting his controversial behaviour and prophetic gift. In other words, if a believer were to encounter Mikhail for the first time on an icon, as many probably did, they would be addressing their prayers to a monastic saint.

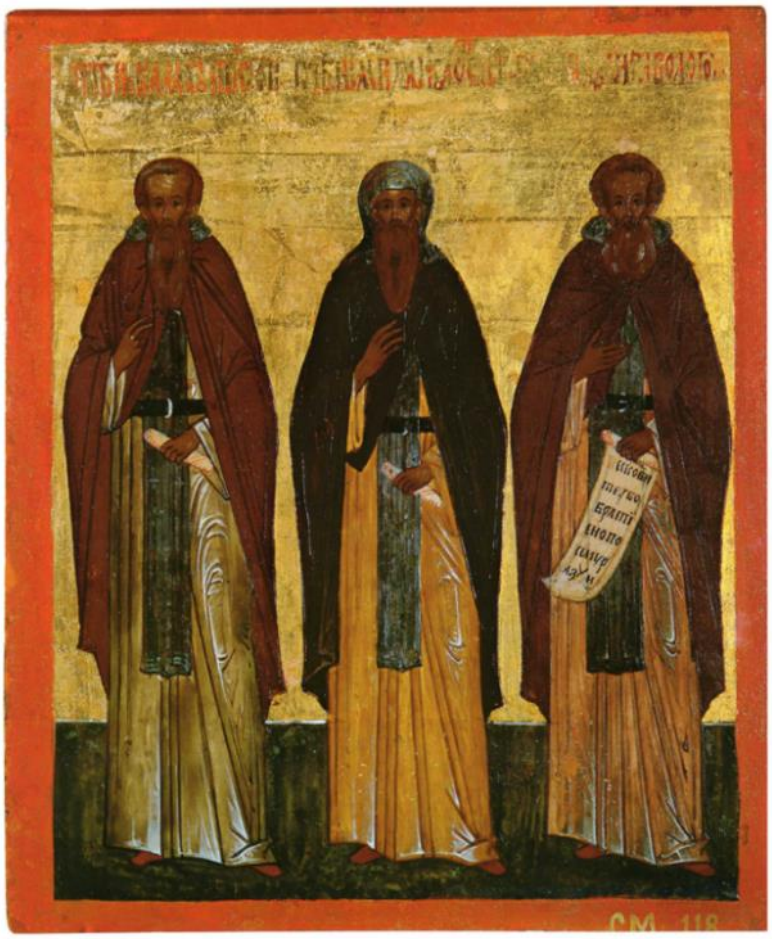


Figure 22. Saints Varalaam of Khutyn', Mikhail of Klopsko, and Dmitrii of Priluki.
Suzdal', second half of the sixteenth century
State Vladimir-Suzdal Historical, Architectural and Art Museum-Reserve

[314] TUMINSKAIA, *Икона юродивого*, op. cit., 224.



Figure 23. St Mikhail of Klopsko.
Trinity (formerly Pokrov) cathedral, Aleksandrovskaia Sloboda, middle to second half of the sixteenth century



Figure 24. St Mikhail of Klopsko.
St Sophia cathedral, Novgorod, 1572

III.1.c Clothed *Iurodivye*

Of the three *iurodivye* represented as dressed laymen, only one, Prokopii of Ustiug, was frequently depicted in the sixteenth century. The subject of one of the oldest *iurodivyi* cults,[315] Prokopii was probably the second most depicted *iurodivyi* after Vasilii. He was especially popular in Ustiug and Sol'vychegodsk, where members of the Stroganov family encouraged his cult (Fig. 16 and 17 above, 27 and 28 below). Like Vasilii, though less

[315] A.N. VLASOV, *Устюжская литература XVI-XVII веков: Историко-литературный аспект*, Syktyvkar 1995: Vlasov places the start of the cult of Prokopii in the mid-fifteenth century.

frequently, Prokopii appeared by himself in icons (Fig. 25 below)[316] and was the subject of at least two hagiographical icons before the end of the sixteenth century (Fig. 28 below is a later example).[317] Absent from the late sixteenth-century *podlinnik*, Prokopii was bearded and usually wore two layers, a tunic and a cloak, often blue and brown respectively (Fig. 27 and 28 below).[318] He also wore high boots and carried three fire irons in his left hand. The latter were a feature of the earliest, probably oral, tales about him, which might have been associated with a pagan tradition and endured as a unique feature of his iconography.[319]

[316] RYNDINA, *1000-летие*, op. cit., item 121 on page 99, description on page 349. The label on either side of the saint's head is clear.

[317] Иоанн, *ПЭ Том XXIII*, op. cit., 360; see also TRUBACHEVA, *Иконы*, op. cit., item 50 on page 167, description on pages 63–4, with a transcription of the inscription detailing the icon's commission by Nikita Grigorev Stroganov and an identification of the vignette scenes surrounding the central depiction of Prokopii.

[318] For Fig. 27, see TRUBACHEVA, *Иконы*, op. cit., item 18 on page 129, description on page 37. The label above the saint's head is clear. For Fig. 26, see A.S. PREOBRAZHENSKII, Инок и юродивый: сопоставление двух типов святости в русской иконографии Позднего Средневековья, *Иконы Русского Севера: Двинская земля, Онега, Каргополье, Поморье: Статьи и материалы*, Moscow, 2005, 170–1. The labels above the saints' head are clear.

[319] IVANOV, *Holy Fools*, op. cit., 274.

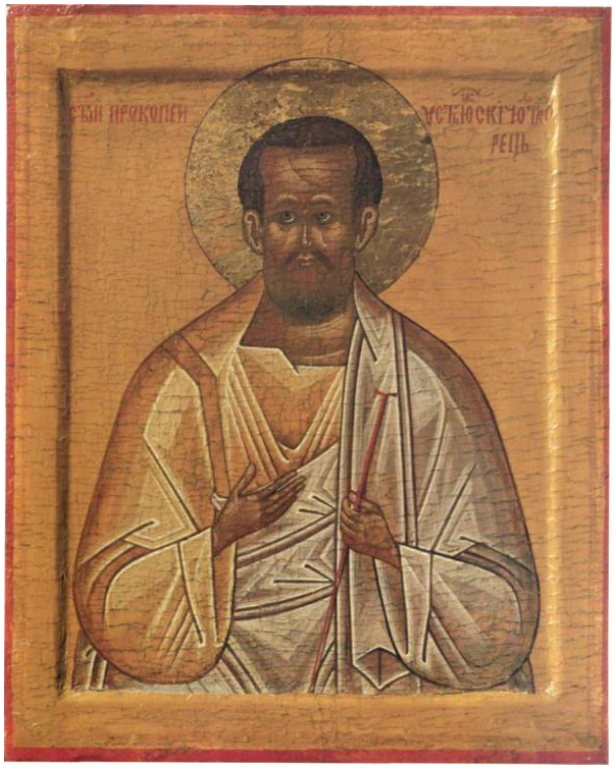


Figure 25. St Prokopii of Ustiug.
Ustiug, first half of the sixteenth century
Tretyakov Gallery



Figure 26. Saints Prokopii of Ustiug and Varalaam of Khutyn' before Christ.
Mid-sixteenth century (1544?)
Arkhangelsk Regional Museum of Fine Arts



Figure 27. St Prokopii of Ustiug before the Virgin and Child.
Annunciation cathedral, Sol'vychegodsk (?), end of the sixteenth century
Solvychegodsky Museum-Reserve



Figure 28. St Prokopii of Ustiug with 24 vignettes from his Life.
St Prokopii cathedral, Ustiug, 1602
Veliky Ustyug State Historical-Architectural & Art Museum Reserve

Compared with Prokopii of Ustiug, Nikolai Kochanov of Novgorod was an elusive figure. Though his cult may have been relatively old,[320] he was not depicted before the mid-

[320] Николай, *ПЭ Том L*, 275: He is mentioned in a late fifteenth-century manuscript from the St Iosif Volokolamsk monastery.

sixteenth century, probably in connection with the building of a church dedicated to him in 1554. His cult and iconography never became widespread, though, and it is difficult to find representations of him outside of very large-scale compositions (Fig. 37 below) or menology icons. A 1597 description of the Solovki monastery mentioned a small, now lost, icon of Nikolai Kochanov. Rarely found in small groups, Nikolai was depicted, as was often the case for new Russian saints, with his more established namesake, the hugely popular St Nicholas the Wonderworker, on a small icon (*piadnichnaia ikona*) from around 1554 (Fig. 29 below).[321] On both this and the menology icon below (Fig. 30), where he is identified by a red ink label above his head, he was presented as a wealthy, bearded layman or boyar, wearing an aristocratic coat and boots – a far cry from his semi-naked colleagues above. In one fascinating case, a 1550s or 1560s Novgorod embroidery of the holy wisdom of Christ surrounded by saints (Fig. 31 below), Nikolai was labelled 'Nikola' and depicted in his usual layman's clothes but holding three fire irons.[322] This is a remarkable contamination of the iconographic type of Nikolai Kochanov by that of his much better-known colleague Prokopii of Ustiug. That they could be confused, at least by the craftsmen who executed the embroidery, suggests that they were perceived as having something in common, perhaps a lay origin or a type of holy life.

[321] *Idem*: I have not found reproductions of Fig. 29 anywhere other than in the *ПЭ* where the image's low resolution does not allow for an independent reading of what seems to be a blurry label above the saint's head, leaving no choice but to trust A.S. Preobrazhenskii's identification of the saint.

[322] A.V. SILKIN, Пелена «София Премудрость Божия» из собрания Вологодского музея-заповедника. К вопросу атрибуции и датировки, in: S.F. Vigasina (ed.), *VI Грабаревские чтения: Международная научная конференция, 16–17 октября 2003 г.*, Moscow 2005, 69.

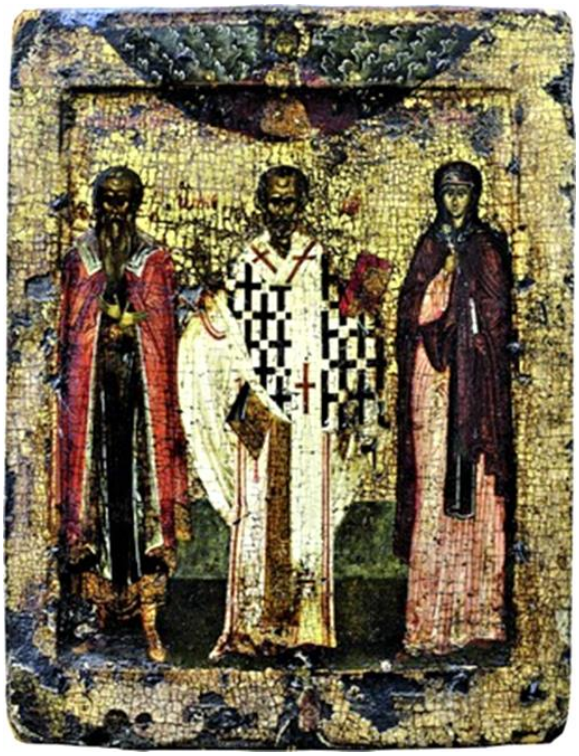


Figure 29. Saints Nikolai Kochanov, Nicholas, and Matrona of Kargopol'.
c. 1554, Collection of Russian icons of the Fund of St Andrew the First-Called



Figure 30. Menology icon for July (detail: Nikolai Kochanov).
End of the sixteenth century
Church-Archaeological Cabinet of the Moscow Theological Academy



Figure 31. Sophia the Holy Wisdom of Christ (detail: Nikolai Kochanov).
Novgorod, 1550s–1560s
Vologda State Historical and Architectural Art Museum-Reserve

Ioann Bol'shoi Kolpak (Big Cap) of Moscow reportedly died in 1589, and there is no textual evidence for him before the seventeenth century. This makes it all the more remarkable that he should have been represented in the fresco decorations of the Sol'vychegodsk cathedral (Fig. 32 below),[323] on which work was done between 1597 and

[323] PREOBRAZHENSKII, Монументальная живопись, op. cit., 224. The only reproduction of this fresco, in Иоанн, *ПЭ Том XXIII*, op. cit., 345, leaves out any potential labels.

1600. On the fresco, Ioann wore a long coat, almost down to his shod feet, with a row of peculiar buttons at the front. In later iconography, Ioann could also be seen wearing a long tunic.[324]



Figure 32. Ioann of Moscow (Big Cap).
Annunciation cathedral,
Sol'vychegodsk, 1600

Preobrazhenskii has argued that the change toward representing *iurodivye* dressed as (generally wealthy) laymen, occasionally with accessories – Prokopii's fire irons, Ioann's cap in later iconography – was a reflection of them being modelled on historical figures and living memory, rather than legend. According to him, these dressed iconographies were more like portraits and less like symbols.[325] Though this might be true in some cases, I would

[324] Иоанн, *ПЭ Том XXIII*, op. cit., 346–7.

[325] *Ibid.*

contrapose that, as argued by Tuminskaia on similar grounds,[326] Vasilii of Moscow's iconography seems to have reflected a real-life character, though naked, and that you can hardly find a more legendary cult than that of Prokopii of Ustiug, who was dressed. In any case, the two main trends – (semi-)naked and dressed – in the iconography of *iurodstvo* were not sequential. Though the less clothed iconography was older, it persisted through the sixteenth century and overlapped with depictions of *iurodivye* dressed as laymen: images of Prokopii, with his boots and cape, preceded those of Vasilii, fully naked.

Nevertheless, the emergence of alternative iconographies of *iurodstvo* should not be overlooked. It could be a sign that *iurodstvo* had, by the end of the sixteenth century, become a recognisable and recognised form of saintly life, and no longer required the legitimation of extreme ascetic archetypes. Their iconography had, by then, made the point that *iurodivye* preserved their purity and developed their spiritual abilities among laypeople just as well as their predecessors in uninhabited deserts. In other words, the people depicting and promoting *iurodstvo* had gained confidence in it as a type of religious life, and probably felt a lesser need to explain or justify it with reference to early Christian or Byzantine models. However, it could also be that representations of *iurodivye* as semi-naked – aside from those of Vasilii, whose cult was heavily endorsed and protected by the Church and state – were somehow too uncomfortable to spread beyond the types of Isidor and Maksim, and that once *iurodivye* became known as category of new wonderworkers, it was visually more comfortable to depict them dressed – the question is difficult to prove either way, and the hypotheses are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

[326] See the discussion on page 113.

Representations of dressed *iurodivye* – other than Mikhail of Klopsko, the monk – highlighted their lay origins and, to an extent, belonging. The image of semi-naked hermits and, by extension, *iurodivye* indicated that they lived separately from society – even when, in the case of *iurodivye*, they lived *in* it – and had no desire to return to the world they had left. The depiction of *iurodivye* as clothed laymen, on the other hand, distanced them from world-rejecting hermits, while creating a space between the lay and religious spheres, eschewing both earthly sinfulness and the shelter of monastic or clerical institutions and hierarchies. Their clothing, and the fact that they were recent Russian saints, argued that anybody, including the laypeople around them in towns, could become a *iurodivyi* and lead a saintly life. The way Prokopii of Ustiug, Nikolai of Novgorod and Ioann of Moscow were depicted reminded onlookers of their biographies: these were laymen like them, who had chosen to leave all their wealth behind to follow their religious vocation, without going through monastic or clerical gate-keeping, and without even leaving town.

III.1.d *Iurodivye* in Group Depictions

Other than Vasilii of Moscow and, occasionally, Prokopii of Ustiug, *iurodivye* were rarely depicted alone. Even the iconography of Vasilii of Moscow could hardly compete with the popularity and scale of cults like that of St Nicholas of Myra the Wonderworker or Saints Boris and Gleb, a fact that puts the significance of *iurodstvo* as a cultural phenomenon in perspective. The most popular *iurodivye* were depicted in smaller groups: we have seen above that Isidor of Rostov was frequently depicted with other Rostov saints, and sometimes with Maksim of Moscow (Fig. 11 and 13 above); Prokopii of Ustiug was often seen with Varlaam of Khutyn' or Ioann of Ustiug (Fig. 16, 17, and 26 above). *Iurodivye* were also depicted with their more established namesakes: Vasilii of Moscow with Basil the Great (Fig. 19 above and 34 below), Nikolai Kochanov with St Nicholas (Fig. 29 above).

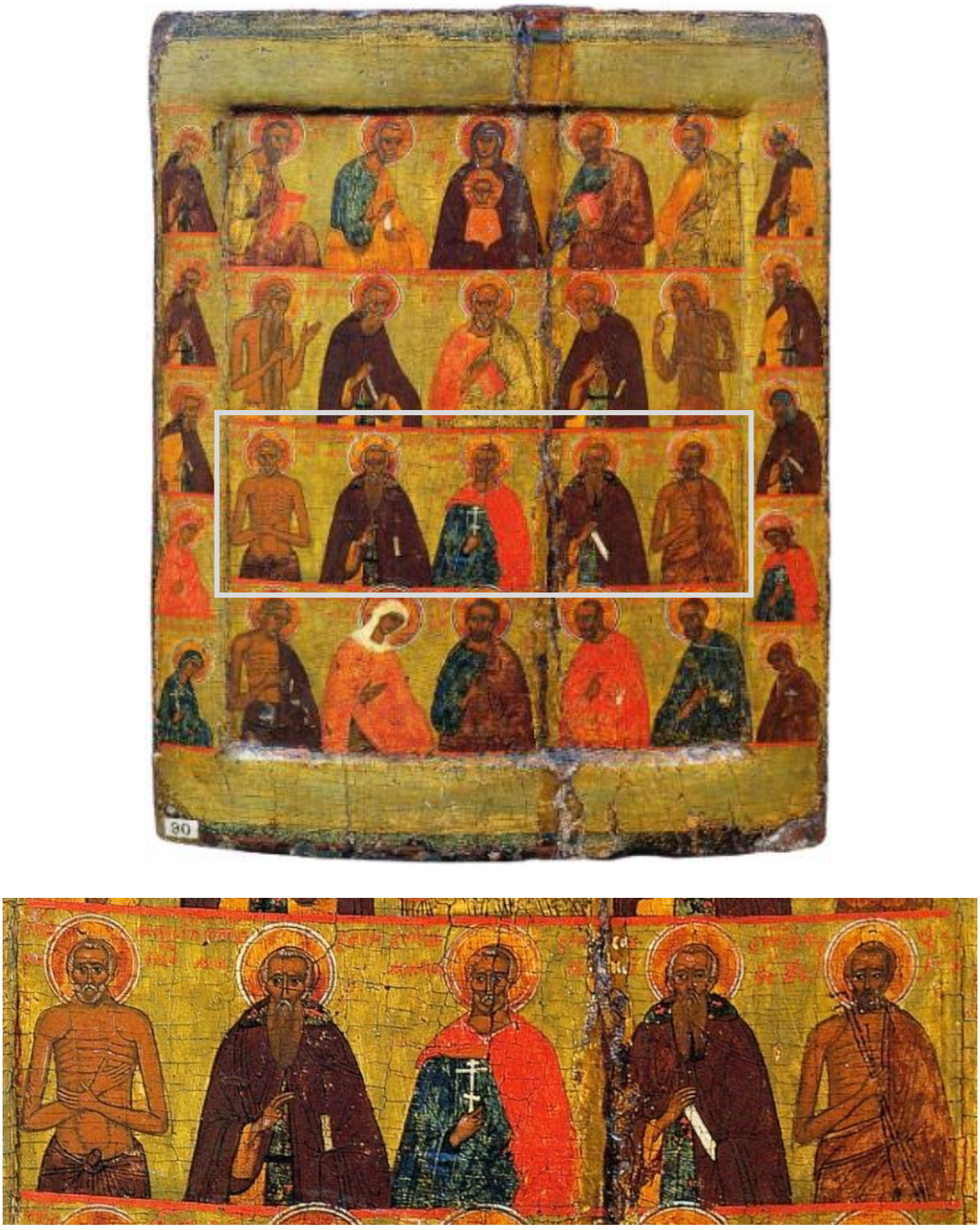


Figure 33. Selected saints (left: Maksim of Moscow; right: Prokopii of Ustiug).
Kargopol', sixteenth century
State Russian Museum

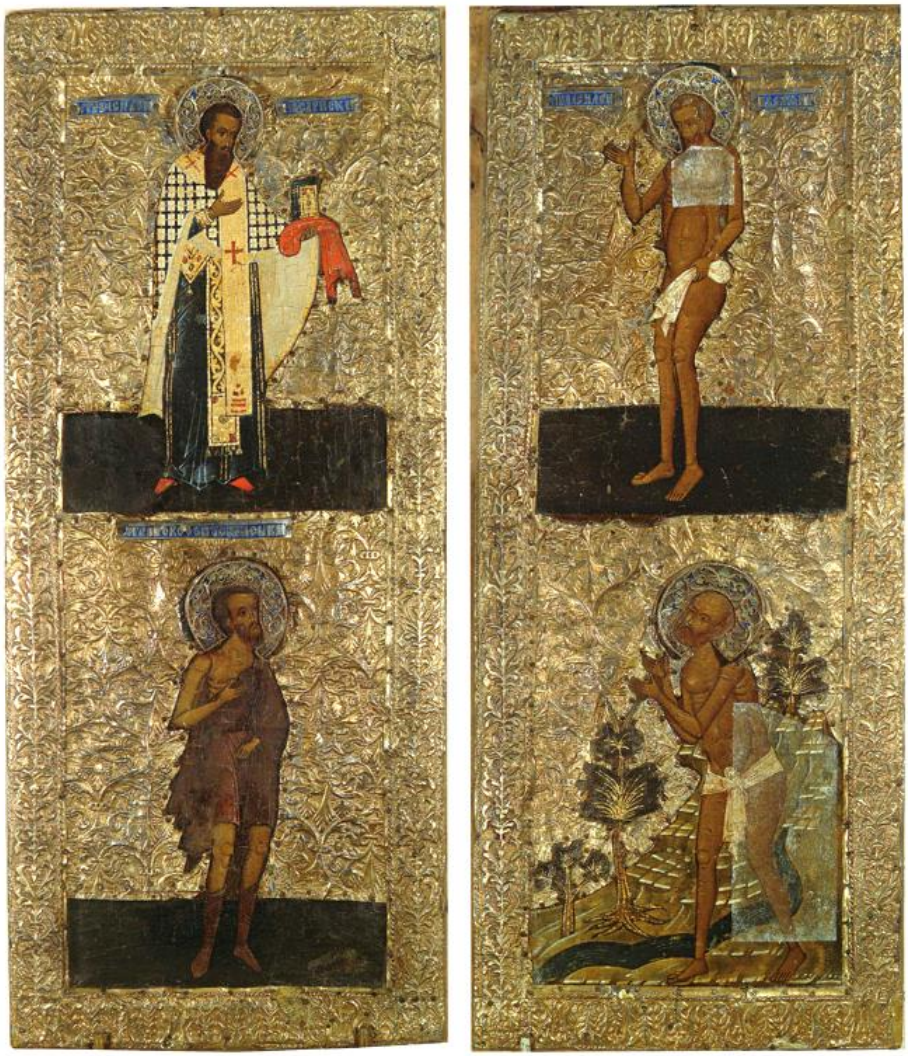


Figure 34. Saints Basil the Great, Vasilii and Maksim of Moscow, Prokopii of Ustiug.
Pokrov monastery cathedral, Suzdal', last quarter of the sixteenth century
State Vladimir-Suzdal Historical, Architectural and Art Museum-Reserve

Iurodivye appeared in complex iconographic compositions like menology icons (Fig. 30 above), or large-scale, multi-tiered scenes with crowds of saints (Fig. 35 to 37 below).[327] Depending on how these were organised, *iurodivye* could either have their own bubble (Fig. 36 below) or share an area or row with hermits, martyrs, or monastic saints (Fig. 35 below).

[327] I have not found individual identifications in the literature for the saints represented in the large compositions in figures 35 to 37; identifications of individual saints are therefore my own educated guesses. In figure 37, saints are labelled in a handwriting too minute to read in digital reproduction, though the literature identifies the group where I identified *iurodivye* as that of *blazhennye*, see: TRUBACHEVA, *Иконы*, op. cit., item 75 on pages 198–201, description on pages 77–78.

On a 1603 Stroganov icon, types of saintliness (*liki*) and individual saints were painstakingly labelled (Fig. 37 below). *Iurodivye*, along with hermits, appeared in the *blazhennye* (blessed ones) compartment dedicated to saints with a lay background.

If individual saints are sometimes difficult to identify on the available reproductions, it is noteworthy that most *iurodivye* – unlike saintly bishops, monks, or hermits – were relatively easy to identify individually, and that even when they were depicted together, they mostly preserved their distinctive characteristics: Maksim's loincloth is always easy to spot, as is Vasilii's glaring nakedness, Nikolai's aristocratic coat, or Prokopii's three fire irons. Only Isidor of Rostov and Andrew of Constantinople, and later perhaps Ioann of Ustiug, could be confused. Occasionally, compromise was achieved. In the icon above (Fig. 34),[328] the three *iurodivye* depicted with Basil the Great had their individual types slightly homogenised: Vasilii holds a small white cloth to moderate his full nakedness, and Prokopii, though still wearing high boots and holding his fire irons, is wearing fewer layers than usual, showing his unusually bare shoulder and chest. The dressed and the naked both converged towards the semi-naked type of Maksim as their gravitational centre. A similar phenomenon can be observed in figure 33 above, where Prokopii was significantly more lightly dressed than usual, in keeping with the semi-naked Maksim, symmetrically on the other end of the row (both identified by adjacent red ink labels). Only his three fire irons distinguished him from Andrew or Isidor.

[328] PREOBRAZHENSKII, Иконография Василия, op. cit., 62.

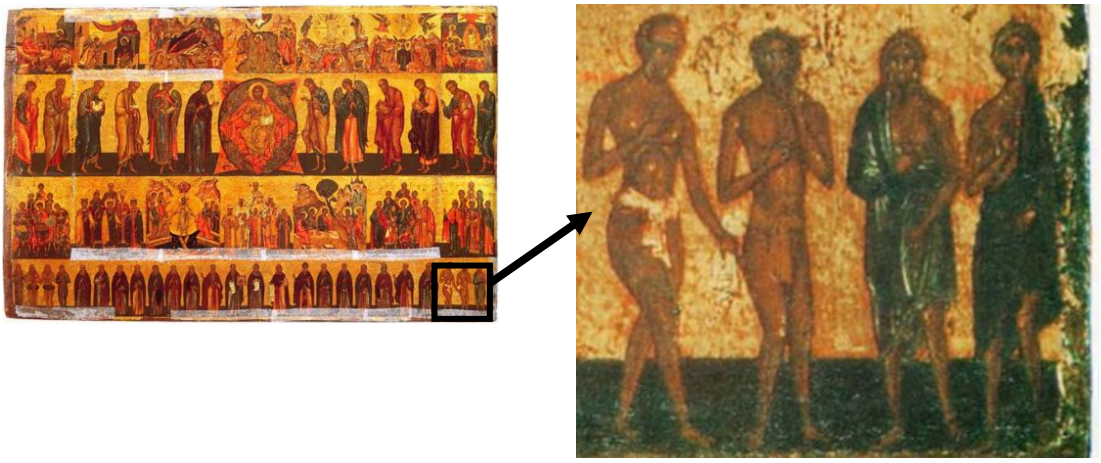


Figure 35. Moving Church
(detail, left to right: Maksim and Vasilii of Moscow, Andrew of Constantinople, Isidor of Rostov?).
Pskov' / Tver', 1588–1590
Tver Regional Art Gallery



Figure 36. Hexameron
(detail left to right: Alexios Man of God, Maksim of Moscow, Isidor of Rostov?).
Vologda (?), early sixteenth century
Tretyakov Gallery

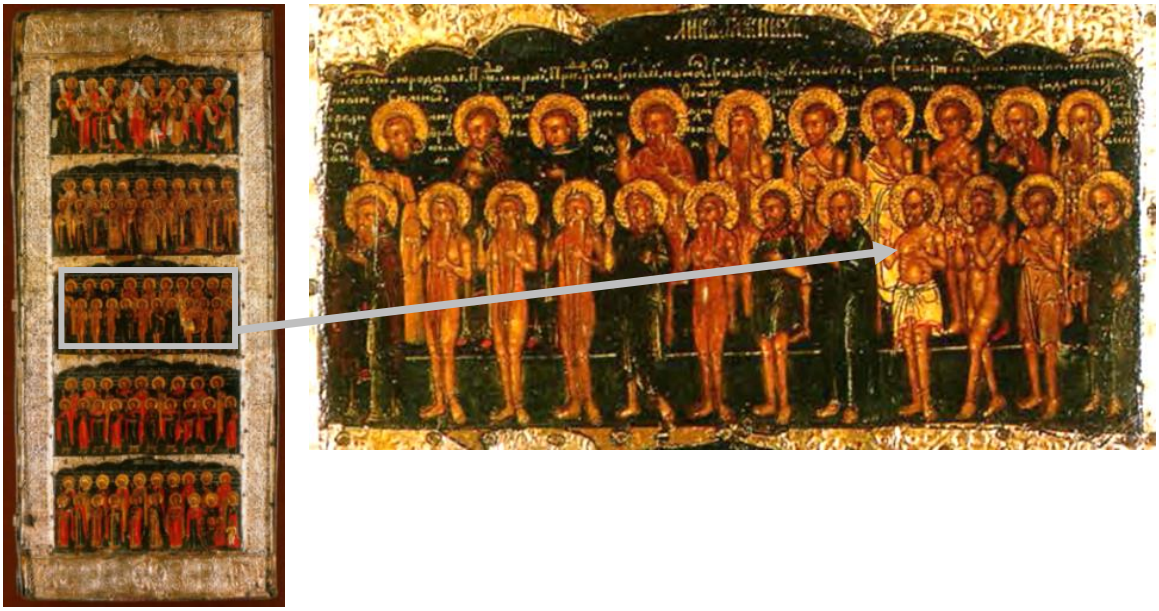


Figure 37. Vladimir Mother of God
(Maksim and Vasilii 3rd and 4th from the right, front row).
Church of the Praise to the Mother of God, Perm' region, commissioned by Nikita Grigor'evich Stroganov, 1603
Perm State Art Gallery

The above description and analysis of iconographies of *iurodstvo* has, I hope, uncovered a tension between, on the one hand, the highly individualised iconographic types of *iurodivye*, even within my empirical (semi-naked or dressed) subcategories; and, on the other hand, the fact that *iurodivye* were frequently 'lumped together' in large-scale compositions where saints were organised according to their chosen spiritual path. The individualised iconographies would suggest that the saints we have looked at were not perceived as having much in common: typical depictions of Prokopii of Ustiug and Vasilii of Moscow could hardly be intuitively connected. But the convergence of *iurodivye* in complex compositions does not allow us to say that contemporaries thought of them as entirely unrelated. It is, to my mind, significant that the 'bubbles' where *iurodivye* were painted in large-scale compositions were never exclusive to them: they frequently included hermits or laymen, like Alexios the Man of God. We can, therefore, hypothesise that

iurodivye were, in the sixteenth century, understood as part of a loosely defined category of saintly laymen who had their rejection of the world – even if most lived in it – and lack of institutional affiliation in common, rather than their physical appearance or specific lifestyle.

III.2. *Iurodivye* in Textual Sources

Most people probably interacted more frequently with images than with any text we have written evidence for. The rare literate, predominantly clergy,[329] might have privately read texts about *iurodivye*, but laymen would only have heard (excerpts of) them read aloud at the saint's yearly commemoration. Still, most images lacked a narrative dimension, and there was a limited amount of information one could infer from a saint's static depiction.[330] Texts, on the other hand, could add depth to a saint's characterisation by describing their background and early years, behaviour and interactions with others, and private devotional life. Texts, unlike images, offered the possibility of expressing the *iurodivyi*'s point of view.

If the analysis of visual depictions of *iurodivye* above has been based on a representative sample of iconographic sources, an analysis of texts, owing to their number

[329] S. DIXON, *The Modernisation of Russia, 1676–1825*, Cambridge 1999, 152, 157: Dixon comments on the Church monopoly over education prior to the reign of Peter I, and places adult male literacy c.1680 at 3 to 5 percent, possibly 13 percent in urban areas. B.N. MIRONOV, The Development of Literacy in Russia and the USSR from the Tenth to the Twentieth Centuries, *History of Education Quarterly* 31/2, 1991, 233: Similarly, Mironov places male adult literacy in the last quarter of the seventeenth century no higher than 13 percent in urban areas and no higher than 2 to 4 percent in rural ones. C. HALPERIN, Three "Hands" and Literacy in Muscovy during the Reign of Ivan IV: "I Affix My Hand," "By My Own Hand," and "My Man's Hand", *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 51/1, 2017, 46–7: Halperin argues for a more optimistic assessment of literacy and education in the reign of Ivan IV, claiming the elite's functional literacy might have compared well with that of other European elites.

[330] Hagiographical icons, or *zhitiinye ikony*, did offer a narrative perspective by surrounding a central depiction of a saint with small vignettes encapsulating scenes from their life. Hagiographical icons of *iurodivye* are rare, especially before the seventeenth century. Examples above include one of Andrew of Constantinople (Fig. 6), one of Vasilii of Moscow (Fig. 21), and one of Prokopii of Ustiug (Fig. 28).

and length, cannot be as thorough. The aim here is twofold. First, to compile information on the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century texts that described or in any way mentioned *iurodivye*; and second, to survey how the latter were characterised across these texts.

The challenges of studying *iurodivye* in texts are similar to those posed by the study of Russian saints more generally. Nineteenth-century scholars like Kliuchevskii and Barsukov recorded, in their yet unsurpassed reference works, hundreds of hagiographical and liturgical manuscripts.[331] However, as Oleg Tvorogov pointed out in 2005, these compendia have aged, with new texts being discovered and manuscripts changing reference numbers as older private collections were donated to state archives.[332] Moreover, if some of the largest manuscript collections, such as the Trinity St Sergii library, have been indexed in nineteenth- or twentieth-century catalogues, some regional collections still lack such detailed *opisaniia* (descriptions).[333] Arguing that serious studies of Russian hagiographical material cannot be carried out unless most copies of a text are known and compared, Tvorogov called for the (utopian, if desirable) creation of a 'New Barsukov', drawing on extensive research in central and regional Russian archives, following which editions according to modern philological standards could be established.[334]

[331] KLIUCHEVSKII, *Древнерусские жития*, op. cit. N.P. BARSUKOV, *Источники русской агиографии*, Saint Petersburg 1882. TVOROGOV, О "Своде", op. cit., 4: Kliuchevskii referenced over 160 hagiographies in over 660 copies, distinguishing between different redactions, and Barsukov compiled a list of Russian saints and known manuscripts about them, including *zhitiia*, short biographical notes, encomia, miracle tales, liturgical texts, and, occasionally, chronicle passages.

[332] TVOROGOV, О "Своде", op. cit., 5.

[333] *Idem*, 56–7.

[334] *Idem*, 56–7, 5–7.

In the absence of a 'New Barsukov', the section below references, and summarises in a table,[335] as many fifteenth- and sixteenth-century texts about *iurodivye* as possible. Though the information presented here is mostly not original research, it is hoped that it can serve as a useful, time-saving starting point for future studies of *iurodstvo* in this period. It must, however, be prefaced with a few words of caution, first and foremost about liturgical texts, which, owing to their large number of copies and lack of editions, are underrepresented. Secondly, the textual analysis of the characterisation of *iurodivye* by source genre is sometimes based on unpublished or poorly edited manuscripts,[336] which fail to take into account multiple versions of a text. The general intention in the textual analysis was to quote as much as possible from the sources, to give an idea of the material's richness, but also to show the significant points of intersection or divergence between texts.

In selecting texts, the net was cast as widely as possible, within the confines of the sixteenth century, or very occasionally the early seventeenth. Studies of the cult of saints often tend to focus on 'hagiographical material' to the exclusion of other kinds of texts. In the case of *iurodivye*, they were present in the collective imagination in a way that did not confine them to documents produced in ecclesiastical circles. On top of liturgical and hagiobiographical texts, passages from chronicles and travellers' accounts have also been included. A wide evidence base is sometimes the only way to find meaningful information about *iurodivye*, like Maksim of Moscow or Nikolai of Pskov, who have not been represented in *zhitiia*.

[335] See page 161.

[336] The *Life of Vasilii*, a long and important text, only exists in an early twentieth-century edition that would horrify any twenty-first-century philologist. There are no editions of the miracles of Nikolai Kochanov, or of any liturgical texts. In these cases, manuscripts were consulted, though generally no more than one per text.

The analysis below is organised by type of text, as the intention was to explore whether texts written for different purposes depicted *iurodivye* in different ways. This methodology deserves a few more words of caution. The analysis of texts by category should not obscure the fact that the usefulness of 'genre' in pre-modern texts has rightly been questioned, and that the term 'hagiography' in particular has been deemed anachronistic by scholars of Eastern and Western Christendom.[337] Alternative ways to refer to writings about saints, such as 'hagiographical discourse', have been proposed, though scholars have also acknowledged that medieval people did recognise subcategories, like *vitae, passiones, miraculae*.[338] These were often flagged in the title of a text, and determined at least some of its themes.[339] Coming from an anthropological perspective, Karen Barber has defined genre as a framework, or a recognisable mode of interaction between someone delivering a text and their audience. The identification of genre enables the audience to 'bring the right kind of expectations to bear on [a text]' and links an individual work with the wider tradition.[340]

In the case of Russian writings about saints produced in ecclesiastical circles, titles of texts were generally long and rarely as unambiguous as '*zhitie*'. Even when the word '*zhitie*' is found in the title, usually buried in a long red ink heading, the text is a combination of some or all of the following, with individual components varying in length: a biographical notice, sometimes preceded by a rhetorical introduction, anecdotal stories of miracles

[337] M. HINTERBERGER, Byzantine Hagiography and its Literary Genres. Some Critical Observations, in: S. Efthymiadis (ed.), *Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography, Volume II. Genres and Contexts*, Ashgate 2014, 26–7: *it is questionable if the Byzantines perceived the corpus of hagiographical texts as a separate literary category*; PALMER, *Early Medieval Hagiography*, op. cit., 8; A. KAHN et al. (ed.), *History of Russian Literature*, Oxford 2018, 25.

[338] PALMER, *Early Medieval Hagiography*, op. cit., 10.

[339] HINTERBERGER, Byzantine Hagiography, op. cit., 26, 28.

[340] BARBER, *The Anthropology*, op. cit., 32, 37, 43, 138.

worked by the saint during their lifetime, stories about wondrous healings after their death, stories about their miraculous icons, short and prayer-like encomiastic texts (*pokhvaly*), or notices about their death.[341] If the term '*zhitie*' is often used in secondary literature as shorthand for much longer and clunkier titles, it can give a false impression of structural or stylistic homogeneity: in reality, a *zhitie* is almost never an adequate blueprint for another, even when they drew from a common pool of themes and expressions, or *topoi*. There was less structural variation in liturgical texts, as they followed the set order of rituals and prayers and were frequently modelled on previous liturgies for saints who had led the same kind of religious life, though I have found more individuality in *sluzhby* than is often implied in the secondary literature. Moreover, the boundaries between *sluzhby* and *zhitiia* were not as rigid as one might assume, as they were often composed by similar or the same people, who easily migrated information or phrases from *zhitie* to *sluzhba* and vice versa. Keeping these complications in mind, and as advertised in my note 'On referencing, etc' on page xi above, I adopt the very imperfect practice of a) using the terms 'hagiography' and 'hagiographical'; and b) referring to most hagiographical texts as *Life of X* or *zhitie* of X, though I do give full titles for most texts in the section summarising textual evidence below (III.2.a).

Iurodstvo and its representations did not emerge in a vacuum. Not unlike state rituals, new saintly figures would have had to draw on recognisable and established types, to which they added an innovative trait.[342] In the case of holy fools, this innovation might not have been so much the performance of insanity, which had long been a feature, albeit minor, of

[341] The first redaction of the *Life of Mikhail of Klopsko* followed yet a different model, being composed of short vignettes put together with minimal concern for overall structure of the text.

[342] A. VUKOVICH, How Byzantine Was the Moscow Inauguration of 1498?, in: M. Rossi and A. Sullivan (eds.), *Byzantium in Eastern European Visual Culture in the Late Middle Ages*, Brill 2020, 36-70.

ascetic practices among hermits and monks, or even the prophecy-making, but the fact that they led strictly religious lives by themselves in urban, worldly environments: an innovation in context more than spiritual lifestyle. Though an in-depth analysis of other forms of religiosity and types of sanctity present in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is far beyond the scope of this thesis, the ways in which representations of *iurodivye* engaged with a familiar vocabulary of sanctity will occasionally be pointed out, to evidence how *iurodstvo* attached itself to, or grew out of, more established spiritual paths.

Finally, though I stand by the need for a comprehensive list of texts, as precisely dated as possible, relating to each *iurodivyi*, this has made for a rather awkward encyclopaedic section.[343] Its existence can nevertheless be justified in three ways: 1) it contributes to the clarity and comprehensiveness of the subsequent textual analysis; 2) it offers an easy starting point for anyone wishing to study fifteenth- and sixteenth-century *iurodstvo*; and, most importantly, 3) the philological detail presented here, including manuscript dates and potential authorship, has important repercussions for the interpretation of texts in their social and political contexts, as shown later in Part IV.[344] Though I give a succinct idea of the tone and contents of each text in the overview below, their main analysis only takes place in subsequent sections (III.2.b and forward, and Part IV).

III.2.a Textual Evidence: Overview

Mikhail of Klopsko

[343] I am much indebted to two excellent reference works, the *ПЭ* and the *СККДР*.

[344] Too often have late texts been used to interpret earlier periods. Manuscripts are, however, often hard to date with precision. In each case, I have offered what seemed to me like the most convincing dating.

Mikhail of Klopsko, nicknamed after the Klopsko Holy Trinity monastery where he lived (*Klopskii Sviato-Troitskii monastyr'*), may have been born in the late 1390s or early 1400s, and reportedly died on the 11 January 1471.[345] Metropolitan Makarii's 1547 encyclical confirmed his annual celebration on the 11 January, in agreement with all fifteenth- and sixteenth-century calendar entries I have seen, and declared him a pan-Russian saint, 'to be sung and celebrated everywhere'.[346] The earliest evidence for Mikhail is hagiographical. Three redactions of his *Life* were known to Kliuchevskii in the late nineteenth century and edited by Dmitriev in the mid-twentieth century.[347] The latter was aware of sixty-eight copies of the *Life of Mikhail*, including nine of the first redaction, six of the second, and fifty-two of the third.

The first redaction[348] was based on monastic notes (*zapiski*) and legends about the saint and composed by a monk of the Klopsko Holy Trinity monastery in the 1470s, within a

[345] Михаил, *ПЭ Том XLV*, op. cit., 554: Turilov gives 1471 as the date of Mikhail's death based on the saint's interaction with the fleeing Dmitrii Shemiaka, who arrived to Novgorod in late 1470 and left in March 1471. Turilov infers that Mikhail died shortly after this meeting, on 11 January 1471. BARSUKOV, *Источники*, op. cit., col. 165: Barsukov gives an approximate date of 1456 for Mikhail's death. For additional literature: L.A. DMITRIEV, Житие Михаила Клопского, *СККДР (XIV–XVI, 1)*, 305; *СККДР (XIV–XVI, 3)*, 146–8.

[346] *Акты, собранные*, op. cit., 203.

[347] KLIUCHEVSKII, *Древнерусские жития*, op. cit., 209–17: Kliuchevskii thought of what is now considered to be the second redaction as the first redaction. DMITRIEV, Житие Михаила, *СККДР (XIV–XVI, 1)*, op. cit., 303; L.A. DMITRIEV, *Повести о житии Михаила Клопского*, Leningrad 1958: I could not get access to this volume.

[348] Михаил, *ПЭ Том XLV*, op. cit., 552–3. This first redaction exists in two versions, A and B, with the following titles: A) *Прихожение Михайла уродиваго Христа ради ко святей Троицы на Клопско* [*Arrival of Mikhail the holy fool for Christ's sake to the [monastery of the] Holy Trinity in Klopsko*]; B) *О житьи святого Михайла Христа ради уродиваго* [*About the life of Mikhail the holy fool for Christ's sake*]; or *Месяца генваря 11 день преставление преподобнаго Михайла Клопского в Великом Новеграде* [*Month of January 11 day passing of the venerable Mikhail of Klopsko in Novgorod the Great*]; or *Месяца генваря в 11 день пророчество и приход Михайла святыя Троица, зовомо Клопско, новгородцкаго чюдотворца* [*Month of January 11 day prophecy and arrival of Mikhail the Novgorod wonderworker of the Holy Trinity, called Klopsko*]. *Повесть о житии Михаила Клопского*, *БЛДР 7*, 513: Some episodes of version A are not found in version B, and vice versa.

decade of the saint's presumed death. The text takes a staunch pro-Muscovite perspective on the loss of independence of Novgorod and its boyars, whom it ridicules through the untouchable Mikhail. It is a *sui generis* work, in which the fragmentary nature of its source material has barely been smoothed out: it lacks rhetorical glue, provides no background on its protagonist, and features colloquialisms, dialect words, rhymes, and popular sayings.[349] According to Dmitriev, the second redaction[350] was composed in the 1490s with the blessing of Archbishop Gennadii of Novgorod. It included all the episodes from the first redaction's two versions but elevated the style somewhat and enriched the text with scriptural quotations.[351]

The third redaction[352] was commissioned in 1537 to the Muscovite military serviceman Vasilii Tuchkov by Archbishop Makarii of Novgorod (future Metropolitan of Moscow) as part of his Great Menology compilation. The text, which exists in two versions, adds four new miracles and also differs from the two previous redactions by conforming to a more embellished and standardised hagiographical model: it starts with a rhetorical

[349] *Повесть о житии*, *БЛДР 7*, op. cit., 512.

[350] Михаил, *ПЭ Том XLV*, op. cit., 552: *Месяца генваря в 11 день прихожение преподобнаго Михайла уродиваго Христа ради ко святей живоначальней Троицы, иже есть монастырь зовомый Клопьско. Повесть от житиа его и како пророчьствова в лета бывшая* [*Month of January on the 11 day arrival of the venerable Mikhail the holy fool for Christ's sake to the Holy life-giving Trinity, which is the monastery called Klopsko. Tale from his life and how he prophesied in bygone years*].

[351] *Повесть о житии*, *БЛДР 7*, op. cit., 512.

[352] *Памятники старинной русской литературы*, op. cit., 36. This edition was prepared after the РГБ sixteenth-century manuscript Ф.113 №632, with the *Life of Mikhail* starting on fol. 99 v and the red title taking up a whole page: *Мес. генваря в 11 день, повесть о житии, и отчасти чюдес исповедание преподобнаго и блаженнаго Михаила нарицаемаго Саллоса, сиречь Христа ради уродиваго, пожившаго блаженную свою жизнь во обители живоначалныя Троица, еже глаголется Клопской, во области великаго Новаграда. Списано же по повелению преосвященнаго архиепископа Макариа того же преименитаго и славнаго великаго Новаграда* [*Month of January on the 11 day tale about the life and in part record of the miracles of the venerable and blessed Mikhail called Sallos, orphan [and] holy fool for Christ's sake, who lived his blessed life in the house of the life-giving Trinity, which is called Klopsko, in the region of Novgorod. Written by the order of the consecrated archbishop Makarii, of that same famous and glorious Great Novgorod*].

introduction and ends with an encomium to the saint.[353] The commission was recorded by Tuchkov towards the end of his text, as well as in one of the Novgorod chronicles, under the entry for 1537 (7045).[354] Finally, Mikhail also appears in an episode of the sixteenth-century *Life of Archbishop Iona of Novgorod*, who was in office between 1458 and 1470, and failed to obtain a *Life of Mikhail* from Pakhomii.[355] In a foolish fashion, Mikhail predicted to the child Ivan (the future Iona) that he would become archbishop.

Barsukov listed six sixteenth-century copies of the *sluzhba* for Mikhail.[356] The text has been characterised as grandiose, and includes two different *kanony*, one by a presbyter called Iliia, with a complex acrostic, and another anonymous one. The relative dating of these is uncertain, though they both circulated in the sixteenth century. Sung *stikhiry* were also in circulation, in musical notation, in the sixteenth century. Turilov argues that the *sluzhba* benefitted from Mikhail's recognition as a pan-Russian saint in the mid-sixteenth century, and its inclusion in the menology for new wonderworkers.[357]

Finally, two chronicles briefly noted the existence of Mikhail: in the late seventeenth-century Novgorod III, the entry for 1408 (6916) recorded his arrival to Novgorod;[358] and in

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[353] Михаил, *ПЭ Том XLV*, op. cit., 552–3; DMITRIEV, Житие Михаила Клопского, op. cit., 302–5.

[354] BARSUKOV, *Источники*, op. cit., col. 368–9; *Памятники старинной русской литературы*, op. cit., 50–1; *ПСРЛ, Т. VI, Софийские летописи*, Saint Petersburg 1853, 301.

[355] *Памятники старинной русской литературы*, op. cit., 33: The editor claims to have prepared the printed text with reference to a sixteenth-century manuscript from the archives of St Sophia's cathedral in Novgorod.

[356] BARSUKOV, *Источники*, op. cit., col. 370.

[357] Михаил, *ПЭ Том XLV*, op. cit., 555.

[358] *ПСРЛ, Т. III, Новгородские летописи*, Saint Petersburg 1841, 235. V.V. IAKOVLEV, Летопись Новгородская III, *СККДР (XVII, 2)*, 287–9.

the 1540s *Voskresenskaia letopis'*, the entry for 1440 (6948) registered the saint's prophecy about the birth of Ivan III and the annexation of Novgorod by Moscow.[359]

Isidor of Rostov

Isidor of Rostov[360] was a largely legendary figure, whose most widely agreed upon year of death was 1474, though this date first appeared in seventeenth-century liturgical calendars.[361] His feast day, the 14 May, was likely chosen to coincide with that of Isidore of Chios, a third-century martyr who, as an established early Christian saint, could offer legitimacy to a new cult.[362] The earliest evidence for the veneration of Isidor is a 1487 liturgical calendar (*mesiatseslov*).[363] He was not mentioned in Metropolitan Makarii's 1547

[359] *ПСРЛ, Т. VIII, Продолжение летописи по Воскресенскому списку*, Saint Petersburg 1859, 108. S.A. LEVINA, Летопись Воскресенская, *СККДР (XIV–XVI, 2)*, 39–42.

[360] O.V. Gladkova has published extensively on Isidor of Rostov, though her numerous articles often overlap in content. Here is a selection, in chronological order: GLADKOVA, Агиографический канон, op. cit., 81–88; GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 167–210: This includes an edition and translation of the text; O.V. GLADKOVA, Житие Исидора Твердислова, ростовского юродивого в ярославских и московских древлехранилищах: к истории текста, *История и культура Ростовской земли. 2002*, Rostov 2003, https://www.rostmuseum.ru/museum/biblioteka/istoriya-i-kultura-rostovskoy-zemli/materialy-konferentsii-2002g-rostov-2003/gladkova-o-v-moskva-zhitie-isidora-tverdislova-rostovskogo-yurodivogo-v-yaroslavskikh-i-moskovskikh-drevlekhranilishchakh-k-istorii-teksta/ (retrieved September 2023); O.V. GLADKOVA, Странность юродивого («западная тема» и агиографический канон в Житии Исидора Твердислова), *О славяно-русской агиографии. Очерки*, Moscow 2008, 69–82.

[361] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 167; GLADKOVA, Житие Исидора, op. cit.: The seventeenth-century saint and archbishop Dmitrii of Rostov, who compiled a liturgical calendar, thought Isidor Tverdislov had died in 1492; M.D. KAGAN, Житие Исидора Твердислова, *СККДР (XIV–XVI, 1)*, 280–4: A late nineteenth-century manuscript gives 1419 as the date of Isidor's arrival to Rostov and 1484 as his death.

[362] It is also likely that Isidor of Rostov's date of death was not known anyway.

[363] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 172; O.V. GLADKOVA, К истории текста Жития Св. Исидора Твердислова, *Древняя Русь. Вопросы медиевистики* 3 (61), Moscow 2015, 32; KAGAN, Житие Исидора, *СККДР (XIV–XVI, 1)*, op. cit., 283; E.V. GOLOD, Рукописная традиция Жития Исидора Твердислова и почитание святого в конце XV – начале XVI вв., *IX конф. молодых учёных «Вопросы славяно-русского рукописного наследия» (к 75-летию отдела древнерусской литературы)*, Saint Petersburg 2008, http://odrl.pushkinskijdom.ru/Default.aspx?tabid=7828 (retrieved September 2023). The liturgical calendar in РГБ. Ф.304/I №761 (entry for Isidor on fol. 279 r) is often taken as a *terminus ante quem* for the first redaction of Isidor's *zhitie*, though it is, in my view, unwise to assume that hagiography necessarily and systematically preceded liturgical veneration. However, this might have been true in Isidor's case, since the *sluzhba* and *zhitie* overlap on two miracles (involving a merchant and a presbyter) likely to

encyclical, though his *zhitie* was included in (then Archbishop) Makarii's Great Menology, suggesting earlier veneration.

The *Life of Isidor* was a popular text. Currently known in over eighty manuscripts,[364] its earliest copies date back to the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.[365] The most recent scholarly literature on the *Life of Isidor* has identified six full redactions of the text, and one short.[366] Based on seventeen copies of the text,[367] Gladkova proposed a division into seven groups:[368] (1) core version (main *zhitie*, including three miracles); (2) core plus two posthumous miracles; (3) core plus *stikh*; (4) core plus two posthumous miracles and *stikh*; (5) core plus *stikh* and introduction; (6) full version (including all of the above); (7) short *prolog* version.[369] The text's title in Gladkova's edition used below is '**мца маіа. д҃и. житїе и подвизенїе и ѿ части чюде . бл҃женна исидора юродиваго х҃а ра . нарицаемаго**

have been first recorded in a *zhitie*. The 1487 manuscript, it should be noted, records the day of Isidor's feast on the 14 May but does not, as far as I can tell, give the text of his *sluzhba*, the earliest copies of which are from the sixteenth century.

[364] GLADKOVA, К истории текста, op. cit., 31: Golod listed over 120 copies.

[365] Исидор, *ПЭ Том XXVII*, op. cit., 169: The earliest manuscripts are: ГИМ. Чуд. № 333, 1489–1505; ГАЯО. Кол. рукописей. Оп. 1. № 446 (196), 1500–1508; РГАДА. Ф. 196. Оп. 1. № 637, 1488–1509; Оп. 3. № 134 (fragment), 1488–1509; РНБ. Тит. № 2039, early sixteenth century.

[366] GLADKOVA, К истории текста, op. cit., 31: Gladkova also notes other scholars' hypotheses, namely those of Isidorova, who proposed a division into four redactions based on the 14 copies she analysed; and Golod, who proposed a division into two groups of texts, based on the 53 copies she analysed.

[367] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 168: Gladkova based herself on copies ranging from the late fifteenth to the late eighteenth century. The earliest complete manuscript, ГАЯО, 1, 446 (196) with watermarks dating to 1500–1508, contains the fullest version of the text (6), though the Mazurinskii fragment could have been produced at a slightly earlier date.

[368] GLADKOVA, К истории текста, op. cit., 32: The chronology between (2) and (3), and (4) and (5) is uncertain.

[369] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 168–9; KAGAN, Житие Исидора, *СККДР (XIV–XVI, 1)*, op. cit., 281: The short *prolog* version (without preface, *pokhvala* or miracles) probably dates to the seventeenth century.

твердислова. ростовска чю творца' and in the edition of Makarii's Great Menology it is '14 Мая. В той же день. Паметь святаго Сидора, уродиваго Христа ради, нарицаемаго Твердислова, Ростовскаго чюдотворца'.[370] Aside from the Great Menology version, whose text omits the rhetorical introduction but is otherwise very similar to (6), there are, to my knowledge two scholarly editions of the text and one translation into modern Russian.[371]

A full *zhitie* of Isidor existed by the first decade of the sixteenth century and has often been hailed as the first *Life* of a Russian *iurodivyi*, and a model for subsequent texts, though it might be more accurate to say that it is the first *Life* of a Russian urban *iurodivyi* known to us and structured in a roughly 'canonical' way.[372] The text is anonymous and lacking in historical references, leading to speculation on the hagiographer's identity and Isidor's biography.[373] However, regardless of the identity and origin of its first author, the core *zhitie*

[370] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 180: *month of May. 14.* zhitie *and feats and in part miracle of the blessed Isidor,* iurodivyi *for Christ's sake, named Tverdislov, the Rostov wonderworker*. *Память святого Сидора, юродивого... по прозвищу Твердислов...*, *БЛДР 12*, 242: *14 May. On the same day. Memory of saint Sidor,* iurodivyi *for Christ's sake, named Tverdislov, the Rostov wonderworker*.

[371] Chronologically: *Житие Исидора Твердислова, Ростовского юродивого*, O.V. Gladkova (trans.), in: O.V. Gladkova (ed.), *Слово Древней Руси*, Moscow 2000, 377–387: Translation into modern Russian; *О редакциях Жития св. Исидора Твердислова: Текст*, Z.N. Isidorova (ed.), *Опыты по источниковедению. Древнерусская книжность* 4, Saint Petersburg 2001, 101–110: I have not been able to consult this text; GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 167–210.

[372] GLADKOVA, К истории текста, op. cit., 31; KAGAN, Житие Исидора, op. cit., 281; GLADKOVA, Агиографический канон, op. cit., 88; ГОЛОД, Рукописная традиция, op. cit.; S.V. GORODILIN, Между «немечьскою землею» и Ростовом: исторические реалии в Житии Исидора Твердислова, *Slověne* 7/2, 2018, 415. The reasons for disqualifying the likely earlier *Life of Mikhail of Klopsko* are unsaid and unclear to me: is it because Mikhail was a monastic *iurodivyi*? is it because the first two versions of his *zhitie* are lacking in 'canonical' structure?

[373] GOLOD, Рукописная традиция, op. cit.; GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 170–1: Scholars tend to agree the hagiographer was not a contemporary of the saint. The lack of Rostov-specific details has also been attributed to the hagiographer's supposed intention to cater for a pan-Russian readership, or to his being foreign to Rostov. GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 172; GLADKOVA, Странность юродивого, op. cit., 71; A.N. VESELOVSKII, Тристан и Изольда, *Журнал министерства народного просвещения* 248, 1886, 275: Based on folk tale motifs, some scholars have suggested the hagiographer was from Novgorod. I do not think the evidence is strong enough to support this case. GORODILIN, Между «немечьскою землею» и Ростовом, op. cit., 423–430; GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 206:

of Isidor was almost certainly expanded by more than one person,[374] the first posthumous miracle ending in a conclusive tone and the last two posthumous miracles standing out like an independent whole, added by a different hand.[375]

Barsukov listed two fifteenth-/sixteenth-century copies of the *sluzhba* for Isidor, eight sixteenth-century, and two sixteenth-/seventeenth-century.[376] As stated above, the liturgy mentions two miracles – involving respectively a merchant and a presbyter – that also appear in the *Life*. Because hagiography has a stronger narrative component than liturgy, it is likely, though not certain, that these two episodes migrated from the *zhitie* to the *sluzhba*.[377] Aside from the *sluzhba*, Barsukov also listed four fifteenth- and sixteenth-century manuscripts where the encomium (*pokhvala*) to Isidor circulated by itself.[378] Isidor's name appears in liturgical calendars (*ustavy*) starting from the first decades of the sixteenth century, which suggests the growth of his popularity beyond Rostov.[379] In 1563, Ivan IV mentioned Isidor as an established Russian saint in a letter to Metropolitan Makarii: the tsar attributed his

These interpretations are more sceptical of the Novgorod hagiographer theory. Gladkova proposes the Scriptures or the *Life of St Nicholas* as inspiration for the sea miracle.

[374] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 172: Gladkova suggests as many as four authors and two redactors, though she does not justify this claim.

[375] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 171, 191–3.

[376] BARSUKOV, *Источники*, op. cit., col. 233. Of these, I have looked at РГБ Ф.304/I №618 and №630.

[377] Because the *sluzhba* does not mention any other miracles, it could have been written with reference to an early version of the *Life* that included fewer miracle stories. However, the evidence currently available does not allow for the relative chronology of *zhitie* and *sluzhba* to be anything other than highly hypothetical.

[378] BARSUKOV, *Источники*, op. cit., col. 233.

[379] Исидор, *ПЭ Том XXVII*, op. cit., 171.

successful conquest of Smolensk to the patronage and intercession of a number of Russian saints, including Isidor.[380]

Maksim of Moscow

Most sources that date the death of Maksim of Moscow place it in the 1430s, though there is disagreement on the exact year.[381] Maksim was celebrated annually on the 11 November, supposedly the anniversary of his death, but also on the on the anniversary of the discovery of his relics, the 13 August, which conveniently coincided with the feast day of the homonymous Maximos, the seventh-century Confessor. Metropolitan Makarii's 1547 encyclical decreed that Maksim was to be celebrated as a local saint in Moscow on the 13 August.[382] In some liturgical calendars, Maksim's feast day can also be found under the 21 January, which was another feast day for St Maximos.[383]

The earliest evidence for the cult of Maksim is in late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century liturgical calendars, including one owned by the grand-princely *d'iak* Danilo Mamyrev, which would suggest the recognition of Maksim as a saint among the political elite of Moscow.[384] One such calendar included a brief biographical notice about Maksim on the anniversary of his death: this short narrative text, titled 'Passing of saint Maksim the holy

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[380] Quoted above on page 78.

[381] BARSUKOV, *Источники*, op. cit., col. 347; IVANOV, *Holy Fools*, op. cit., 261: Some chronicles give 1435 as the year of Maksim's death. A.G. MEL'NIK, Становление культа юродивого Максима Московского, *Ярославский педагогический вестник* 2 (Т. I, Гуманитарные науки), 2014, 14: The earliest chronicle evidence for Maksim's death, the *Vladimirskii letopisets*, places it in November 6942 (1433).

[382] *Акты, собранные*, op. cit., 203.

[383] For example, in the sixteenth-century manuscript: РГБ. Ф.256 № 397 fol. 358 v – 359 r.

[384] Максим, *ПЭ Том XLII*, op. cit., 740; MEL'NIK, Становление культа юродивого Максима, op. cit., 14: The earliest manuscripts include the late fifteenth-century ГИМ Епарх. №309, fol. 89 v and 106 v; a 1504 *trebnik* from the Novgorod Lisitskii monastery; and a late fifteenth- or early sixteenth-century Jerusalem *ustav*.

fool for Christ's sake, the new wonderworker of Moscow' (*Prestavlenie sviatago Maksima khrista radi ourodivago moskovskago novago chiudotvortsa*) is the closest we have to a *zhitie* of Maksim.[385] The earliest preserved liturgical texts celebrating Maksim date to the first half of the sixteenth century, and include a *tropar'* and *kondak* from a 1522 *ustav* (liturgical calendar) owned by Bishop Aleksei of Vologda and Perm'.[386] Additionally, Barsukov lists four sixteenth-century copies of the *sluzhba* for Maksim, and two late sixteenth-/early seventeenth-century.[387]

Two 1520s chronicles bear witness to the cult of Maksim. The sixteenth/century *Vladimirskii letopisets*,[388] recorded Maksim's death under the entry for 6942 (1433), and the Nikon chronicle, written in the late 1520s in the entourage of Metropolitan Daniil of Moscow, mentioned a healing miracle by St Maksim under the year 1501.[389]

Nikolai Kochanov of Novgorod

There is a high degree of uncertainty surrounding Nikolai of Novgorod's life, though the most frequently offered date for his death is 1392 (6000).[390] His feast day was on the 27

[385] РГБ. Ф.256 № 397 fol. 358 v – 359 r. IVANOV, *Holy Fools*, op. cit., 261–2: There might have been a (now lost) *zhitie* of Maksim. Preserved in a seventeenth-/eighteenth-century manuscript, the 1698 Tale about the translation of Maksim's relics mentions that 'many speak of the saint's life and of his miracles, of which a long book has been written, but I do not know how it disappeared from the church, or who took it from earlier priests for copying.' On this topic, see also MEL'NIK, Становление культа юродивого Максима, op. cit., 15; BARSUKOV, *Источники*, op. cit., col. 348; KLIUCHEVSKII, *Древнерусские жития*, op. cit., 245–6.

[386] These short liturgical texts have been published in MEL'NIK, Становление культа юродивого Максима, op. cit., 14.

[387] BARSUKOV, *Источники*, op. cit., col. 349.

[388] YA.S. LUR'E, Летописец Владимирский, *СККДР (XIV–XVI, 2)*, 17–18.

[389] MEL'NIK, Становление культа юродивого Максима, op. cit., 14–15.

[390] Николай, *ПЭ Том L*, op. cit., 274: It has been argued that this date could have been the result of a copying mistake.

July, though he is not mentioned in Metropolitan Makarii's 1547 encyclical. Despite the scanty and predominantly late evidence for his cult, his feast day is recorded in a monastic liturgical calendar from the St Iosif Volokolamsk monastery as early as 1518–19.[391] The latter manuscript is the earliest evidence for the cult of Nikolai, though a *sluzhba* for him and accompanying encomium (*pokhval'noe slovo*), as well as two miracle stories and further calendar entries, can be found in later sixteenth-century manuscripts. It was on the basis of these shorter texts that a so-called *zhitie* was compiled, of which Barsukov lists two sixteenth-century copies. More sixteenth-century copies of the *sluzhba* are now known than those listed by Barsukov, who only acknowledged one late sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century copy.[392]

Chronicles do not register Nikolai's presence in Novgorod during his life, though Novgorod II mentions the erection of a church – dedicated to St Pantaleon, whose feast day Nikolai shared – over his tomb in 1554 (7062).[393] Nikolai is, moreover, frequently mentioned in the literature along his supposed contemporary, the *iurodivyi* Fedor of Novgorod. Though

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[391] A.G. MEL'NIK, Русские святые, почитавшиеся в Иосифо-Волоколамском монастыре в конце XV—XVI в., *Исторические, философские, политические и юридические науки, культурология и искусствоведение. Вопросы теории и практики* 8(58), Ч. III, 2015, 138: Maksim of Moscow also appears in this calendar.

[392] BARSUKOV, *Источники*, op. cit., col. 400: The late sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century *sluzhba* mentioned by Barsukov, РГБ. Ф.304/I №624, along with a seventeenth-century copy of Nikolai's two miracles and encomium, РГБ Ф.310 №344, are, unfortunately, the only two manuscripts I have been able to consult. These have the following headings: **мца іюлѧ въ кѕ̄ преставленіе блаженнаго ха ра оуроваго николы кочанова**; *the month of July on the 27 day passing of the blessed* iurodivyi *for Christ's sake Nikola Kochanov* (Ф.304/I №624, fol. 509 r) and **мца іюлѧ въ кѕ̄ день чюдѡ пребл̃женнаго николы, нарицаемагѡ кочанова**; *the month of July on the 27 day miracle of the most blessed Nikola, called Kochanov* (Ф.310 №344, fol. 1 r). Николай, *ПЭ Том L*, op. cit., 274–5: The sixteenth-century manuscripts I have not been able to access are the mid-sixteenth century РНБ Погод. № 851, fol. 111 r – 116 v; the late sixteenth-century БАН 13.3.32. fol. 164 r – 177 v; the mid-sixteenth century РНБ Соф. № 419, fol. 152 r – 166 r; and the 1560s БАН Арханг. Д. 159 fol. 422 r – 431 r.

[393] *ПСРЛ, Т. XXX, Владимирский летописец. Новгородская II (Архивская летопись)*, Moscow 1965, 182. See also V.V. MAIKOV, *Книга писцовая по Новгороду Великому конца XVI в.*, Saint Petersburg 1911, 19–20: This source mentions monastic cells of Mikula Kochanov.

narratively interesting, the famous story about the two *iurodivye* fighting each other – an allegory for internal strife in Novgorod politics – is attested at the earliest in the *Life of Fedor*, a late eighteenth- or early nineteenth-century manuscript, and not in any of the earliest sources for Nikolai.[394]

Prokopii of Ustiug

Prokopii of Ustiug was an almost entirely legendary figure, for which even the vaguest life dates – second half of the thirteenth to early fourteenth century? – are completely uncertain.[395] The most frequently mentioned date for his death, 1303, is obviously arrived at by adding a millennium to the fourth-century martyr Procopius of Scythopolis's death, whose feast day Prokopii shared.[396] Prokopii was recognised, alongside Ioann, as a regional saint of Ustiug in Metropolitan Makarii's 1547 encyclical, which nevertheless failed to indicate the date of his feast day, as it did for the other saints.[397]

The cult of Prokopii is first attested in two tales (*povesti*), one about his tomb's miracles, the other about the miracles worked by an icon of him and Varlaam of Khutyn'.[398] Both texts were transmitted together with the *Life of Ioann of Ustiug*. The manuscripts'

[394] Николай, *ПЭ Том L*, op. cit., 275; BARSUKOV, *Источники*, op. cit., col. 588: Barsukov mentions a seventeenth-century reference to the tomb of the 'blessed Fedor', though I have not been able to trace this manuscript.

[395] A.N. VLASOV, Прокопий, *ПЭ Т. 55*, 345.

[396] VLASOV, *Устюжская литература*, op. cit., 29: Prokopii supposedly met Varlaam Khutynskii (d.1193), but if this was the case, he could hardly have died in 1303. Vlasov suggested that the day and year of Prokopii's death were simply arrived at by adding a millennium to the date of the martyr Procopius's death (8 July 303). VLASOV, Прокопий, *ПЭ Т. 55*, op. cit., 348: This was also the feast day of a wonderworking icon of the Annunciation kept in the Ustiug Dormition cathedral.

[397] *Акты, собранные*, op. cit., 204. Prokopii and Ioann had different feast days.

[398] VLASOV, Прокопий, *ПЭ Т. 55*, op. cit., 345.

oldest copy, РГБ Ф.178 №1365, bears a watermark from 1564,[399] which, accounting for import and distribution, might reasonably place the texts in the 1560s or 1570s. Their compiler and author has been identified as the son of Hegumen Dionisii of the Sol'vychegodsk Boris and Gleb monastery.[400]

The cycle's first text,[401] a Tale about the miracles of Prokopii and encomium to him[402] was likely a compilation of earlier sources, including notes taken by priests at Prokopii's main shrine in the Dormition cathedral of Ustiug, and a popular legend about the saint. The text's earliest version was structured as follows: introduction; narrative about a fire cloud that descended upon Ustiug and was dispelled by Prokopii's prayers to a miraculous icon of the Virgin; notice about the construction of the saint's church; nineteen posthumous miracles (of which two were new stories added by the son of Dionisii), arranged in chronological order; and encomium.[403] The fire cloud legend is considered to be the oldest text about Prokopii: it can be found independently in the manuscript tradition, and might have

[399] VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 548.

[400] *Idem*, 470–71; VLASOV, *Устюжская литература*, op. cit., 26: This author might have been the same as a slightly later editor, who called himself Pavel (Паоулъ), though this is highly uncertain.

[401] VLASOV, Прокопий, *ПЭ Т. 55*, op. cit., 345, 347: The histories of the texts about Prokopii are complex, and Vlasov is, in my mind, not always clear about them. He calls the Tale about Prokopii's miracles a *zhitie*, even though he recognises that a true *zhitie* was only written for Prokopii around the mid-seventeenth century. It is, therefore, unclear to me what he means by listing over thirty copies, from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, of Prokopii's *zhitie*. It is also frustrating that he does not publish the earliest version of the Tale about Prokopii's miracles, choosing instead to agglomerate it with later, seventeenth-century versions that are closer to a *zhitie*. I have therefore not been able to use his edition of this text in my analysis, neither have I managed to get access to its earliest manuscript, РГБ. Ф.178 №1365. VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 548–50: Discussion of the manuscripts used in the edition of what Vlasov calls the *Life of Prokopii*.

[402] VLASOV, *Устюжская литература*, op. cit., 19: РГБ. Ф.178 №1365, fol. 1 r – 36 v.

[403] *Idem*, 20–2.

circulated before the mid-sixteenth century.[404] The story, however, gave no biographical information about Prokopii, merely describing him as living on the porch of the Dormition church, not taking food or clothes from charitable people, and having a prophetic gift.[405]

The Tale about Prokopii's icon's miracles[406] was written between 1548 and 1552–3,[407] and was less widely disseminated than either the Tale about the miracles of Prokopii, or the *Life of Ioann*. It is composed of story fragments loosely connected in theme: introduction; miracle account from the church of Prokopii; tale about painting the icon of Prokopii; miracle account from 1548; encomium to the icon followed by another thirteen miracle stories; miracle from the icon of the Saviour, Prokopii, and Varlaam of Khutyn'; encomium to Prokopii; miracle from the icon of Prokopii in 1550; further miracles from this icon; miracles from the icon of the Saviour, Prokopii, and Varlaam in 1552; and encomium to Prokopii and Varlaam.[408]

Though the earliest texts celebrating Prokopii are fragmentary in nature, his cult seems more embedded in local culture than that of Ioann, for whom the son of Dionisii felt it was necessary to write a *zhitie*. The fact that he did not find it indispensable to write one for Prokopii, and that a more literary, if not more factual, *zhitie* was only composed for him in

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[404] *Idem*, 21–3; VLASOV, Прокопий, *ПЭ Т. 55*, op. cit., 346: Vlasov has suggested the 1530s as a possible time for the original composition of the fire cloud story. He has also observed that the oldest copy of the fire cloud story, РГБ. Ф.178 №1817, features an older way of tracing letters, which could place it in the fifteenth century.

[405] VLASOV, Прокопий, *ПЭ Т. 55*, op. cit., 348.

[406] VLASOV, *Устюжская литература*, op. cit., 19: РГБ Ф.178 №1365, fol. 37 r – 174 r: Full title according to Vlasov: *Сказание о чудесах от иконы Прокопия и иконы Спаса, Прокопия и Варлаама Хутынского в Борисоглебском монастыре; Слово похвальное Прокопию и Варлааму* / *Tale about the miracles from the icon of Prokopii and the icon of the Saviour, Prokopii, and Varlaam of Khutyn' in the Boris and Gleb monastery. Encomium to Prokopii and Varlaam*.

[407] VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 474.

[408] VLASOV, *Устюжская литература*, op. cit., 24–5.

the mid-seventeenth century,[409] is a good counterexample to the frequent assumption that where there is no *zhitie*, there is no cult: Prokopii was venerated for at least a century before becoming the subject of more than fragmentary miracle tales.

Liturgical celebration, on the other hand, was essential to a cult. Barsukov listed five sixteenth-century manuscripts of the *sluzhba* for Prokopii.[410] One of its earliest copies, РГБ. Ф.304/I №619, from the Trinity St Sergii monastery bears a close resemblance to the *sluzhba* for Isidor of Rostov, with which it shares a *tropar'* and *kanon*. Prokopii was celebrated in major monastic houses far beyond Ustiug, and his name can be found in a 1559 *sinodik* (commemoration of the dead) from Novgorod, as well as in *sviattsy* and *obikhodniki* (structuring the liturgy at a given monastery) from the main Russian foundations, including the St Iosif Volokolamsk, Chudov, Solovki, and Spaso-Priluki monasteries. Moreover, the second story in the Tale about Prokopii's miracles suggests that liturgical texts for him were in circulation by the 1530s: in 1536–7, it reported, an ill boyar from Moscow offered abundant alms to Prokopii's shrine in Ustiug and was sent an icon of the saint, holy water, and the texts of Prokopii's *kanon* and *stikhir*.[411]

Finally, the sixteenth-century Ustiug chronicle recorded the construction of a church for Prokopii in 1495 (7003), the same year Ioann, another *iurodivyi* of Ustiug, died.[412]

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[409] VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 510; VLASOV, *Устюжская литература*, op. cit., 30: the *Life of Prokopii* has been dated to the 1640s–50s.

[410] BARSUKOV, *Источники*, op. cit., col. 464.

[411] VLASOV, Прокопий, *ПЭ Т. 55*, op. cit., 350.

[412] *ПСРЛ, Т. XXXVII, Устюжские и вологодские летописи XVI—XVIII вв.*, Leningrad 1982, 51; VLASOV, Прокопий, *ПЭ Т. 55*, op. cit., 349: Vlasov contests this date (1495). He suggests 7020 (1512) for Ioann's death and after 1515 for Prokopii's first church. The (factually untrustworthy) seventeenth-century *Life of Prokopii* also mentions that a certain pious Ioann from Moscow commissioned a chapel and *zhitie* for Prokopii in 1458, but ecclesiastical authorities had the chapel taken down, and it was only after 1471, when

Ioann of Ustiug

Ioann of Ustiug may have died in 1494,[413] and was celebrated on the 29 May, the supposed anniversary of his death. Metropolitan Makarii's 1547 encyclical recognised him, along with Prokopii, as a regional saint in Ustiug, though it did not specify either's feast day.[414]

If it is sometimes difficult to dissociate the cult of Ioann from that – older and more widespread – of Prokopii,[415] the written traces of the former are much easier to outline. The *Life of Ioann* and encomium to him (*Zhitie Ioanna i pokhvala emu*)[416] was explicitly dated by its author, the son of Hegumen Dionisii, to 1554. The texts' oldest manuscript, РГБ Ф.178 №1365, bears a watermark from 1564,[417] which might reasonably date the texts to the 1560s or 1570s.

Barsukov listed a single late sixteenth-/early seventeenth-century copy of the *sluzhba* for Ioann, though Vlasov references a few sixteenth-century manuscripts.[418]

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victorious soldiers returned from Nizhnii Novgorod attributing their success to Prokopii, that a church was built for him.

[413] Иоанн, *ПЭ Том XXIII*, op. cit., 350.

[414] *Акты, собранные*, op. cit., 204.

[415] I have not found representations of Ioann without Prokopii prior to the seventeenth century.

[416] VLASOV, *Устюжская литература*, op. cit., 19: РГБ. Ф.178 №1365, fol. 175 r – 198 r.

[417] VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 288, 548; Иоанн, *ПЭ Том XXIII*, op. cit., 350: The text's two oldest copies are: РГБ. Ф.178 №1365; ОИДР. № 304. See the previous discussion on the texts about Prokopii for information on the son of Dionisii.

[418] VLASOV, Иоанн, *ПЭ*, op. cit., 351: ГИМ. Цар. № 563, late sixteenth century, Stroganov family gift to the Annunciation cathedral in Sol'vychegodsk in 1592; РГБ Ф.178 № 1826 (fol. 106 r – 178 r), second half of the sixteenth century; РГБ. Ф.178 № 1365, sixteenth century. Vlasov argues the liturgy for Ioann was modelled on that for Symeon of Emesa. Unfortunately, none of these manuscripts have been digitalised, and I have therefore not been able to consult the *sluzhba* for Ioann.

Galaktion of Beloozero

Very little is known about Galaktion. He may have been born in the mid-fifteenth century and died in 1506 in the Ferapontov monastery, where he lived. His feast day is the 12 January, the same as his monastic mentor's,[419] though it is unclear whether Galaktion was venerated in the sixteenth century. The *iurodivyi* is known to us through a vignette in the mid-sixteenth century *Life of Martinian of Beloozero*,[420] the monastic founder whose disciple he was, and through the 1560s *Stepennaia kniga*. The latter recorded a prophecy Galaktion made following Vasilii III's unsuccessful attempt to take Kazan' in 1506: the holy fool predicted that Kazan' would only fall to his (then unborn) son Ivan IV.[421]

Vasilii of Moscow

Vasilii of Moscow may have been born in the 1460s and died in the 1550s.[422] His feast day is the 2 August, and the earliest evidence for him is in the Book of Degrees, or *Stepennaia kniga*, a chronicle whose first redaction dates from 1563.[423] In Degrees XVI and XVII, the Book reported two prophecies Vasilii made during his lifetime, one about the 1521

[419] Галактион, *ПЭ Том X*, 289; Мартиниан, *ПЭ Том XLIV*, 183.

[420] Галактион, *ПЭ Том X*, op. cit., 289: The earliest copy of the *Life of Martinian*'s first redaction is the late sixteenth-/early seventeenth-century РГБ. Ф.113 № 564 fol. 223 r – 248 r; and the earliest copy of the second redaction is the 1560s РНБ. Соф. № 467 fol. 49 r – 98 r. See also: *Житие Мартиниана Белозерского*, *БЛДР 13*, 208–261, 777–782: The text in this edition is РНБ. Соф. № 467.

[421] *Ibid*.

[422] Василий Блаженный, *ПЭ Том VII*, op. cit., 124: These dates would mean an unusual longevity for Vasilii. 1557 is not the only possible date for his death: Erusalimskii also proposes 1552. Sources tend to agree that he died in the 1550s.

[423] *Idem*, 123: Because he died in the 1550s, he could not have been included in Metropolitan Makarii's 1547 encyclical.

Polish-Tatar invasion of Moscow, and one about the Moscow fire of 1547.[424] The circulation and recording of stories about him within a decade or so of Vasilii's death attests to his popularity, at least in Moscow.

It was, however, only after 1589, following Vasilii's public recognition as a saint, that Patriarch Iov commissioned a *zhitie* to commemorate him. The earliest copy of the *Life of Vasilii*, written in a highly ornamented style but lacking in realia, was included in a late sixteenth-century menology (*Chet'i Minei*).[425] The text followed a vague biography of Vasilii with an encomium (*pokhvala*), twenty-four miracle stories, and the two prophecy tales borrowed from the *Stepennaia kniga*. The miracles, most likely recorded by shrine attendants at the Pokrov cathedral where Vasilii was translated, took place between 1588 and 1591.[426]

The Solovki monastery chronicle recorded additional posthumous miracles worked by Vasilii's tomb.[427] The English traveller Giles Fletcher was intrigued by holy fools, the respect shown to them in Russia, and the popularity of Vasilii's cult in Moscow.[428]

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[424] *Степенная книга царского родословия по древнейшим спискам: Тексты и комментарий. Т. 2. Степени XI-XVII*, N.N. Pokrovskii and G.D. Lenhoff (eds.), Moscow 2008, 306–7, 353–6.

[425] Василий Блаженный, *ПЭ Том VII*, op. cit., 123–4: ГИМ. Чуд. № 317 fol. 60 r – 99 r. There are two other redactions of the *Life of Vasilii*, both seventeenth-century. Vasilii's *zhitie* became a popular text from the seventeenth century onward, and new material was often added to it. BARSUKOV, *Источники*, op. cit., col. 91: Barsukov lists a single late sixteenth-/early seventeenth-century manuscript of the *zhitie*. This is not surprising, as the text might not have been written before 1591, the date at which the last recorded miracle took place.

[426] Василий Блаженный, *ПЭ Том VII*, op. cit., 126: The first six miracles were most likely written before August 1588 and are found separately from the *zhitie* in one of the earliest manuscripts mentioning Vasilii, the late sixteenth-century ГИМ. Увар. № 1797 (Царск. № 520).

[427] *Ibid.*; M.N. TIKHOMIROV, *Русское летописание*, Moscow 1979, 192–3, 201.

[428] BERRY – CRUMMEY, *Rude and Barbarous Kingdom*, op. cit., 219.

An encomium for Vasilii, transmitted in manuscripts alongside his *zhitie*, was based on the liturgy for Isidor of Rostov. By the late sixteenth century, there were two different *sluzhby* for Vasilii, one of which was written before his public recognition as a saint in August 1588, suggesting a popular cult prior to his official endorsement by the Church. An earlier *kanon* for Vasilii was written by a Solovki monk, Misail, before 1587.[429] Barsukov listed six sixteenth-century manuscripts of Vasilii's *sluzhba*, and three late sixteenth-/early seventeenth-century,[430] which is remarkable for a saint who had died in the 1550s. The ceremonial recognition of Vasilii as a new wonderworker in 1588 was politically motivated: its aim was to impress Patriarch Jeremiah of Constantinople and encourage him to bless Moscow as an independent patriarchate during his stay there. A member of Jeremiah's ambassy, Arsenios Elassonos, was asked to write a Greek liturgical service for Vasilii by a certain monk who had been healed by the saint.[431]

Nikolai of Pskov

Nikolai of Pskov, or Mikula as he was known in the local dialect, might have died in 1576. His feast day is currently the 28 February, the supposed anniversary of his death,[432] though he has also been listed in calendars under the 6 December, the same day as his more famous homonym, St Nicholas of Myra, the Wonderworker.[433] Nikolai is atypical in that there is no evidence for his veneration before the modern period – no *sluzhba*, no *zhitie* –

[429] Василий Блаженный, *ПЭ Том VII*, op. cit., 127: РГБ. МДА № 99 (412).

[430] BARSUKOV, *Источники*, op. cit., col. 91–92.

[431] PH.A. DĒMĒTRAKOPOULOS, *'Αρσένιος Ἐλασσόνος (1550-1626), Βίος καί ἔργο. Συμβολή στη μελέτη των μεταβυζαντινών λ,ογίων τής 'Ανατολής*, Athens 1984, 131. Demetrakopoulos publishes the text of the service in pages 181–95.

[432] Николай, *ПЭ Том L*, op. cit., 289.

[433] *Сводный иконописный подлинник XVIII века по списку Г. Филимонова*, Moscow 1874, 27, 40–41.

though judging by the number of secular sources he appeared in, he was quite a notable figure in the late sixteenth century at least.

Nothing is known about the life of Nikolai, except for one episode, recorded in several travellers' accounts and chronicles. This is the story of how, when Ivan IV had razed Novgorod and murdered its people in 1570, he came to Pskov, where Nikolai the *iurodivyi* scared him with his prophecies to such a degree that the tsar left the city and its inhabitants unharmed. Foreign members of Ivan's private *oprichnina* army, as well as two Englishmen who spent time in Muscovy, recorded slightly different versions of the stories that evidently circulated about this incident. The accounts can be ordered chronologically as follows: the Livonian noblemen Johann Taube and Elert Kruse, writing in 1572;[434] the ex-court translator Heinrich von Staden, writing in 1578–79;[435] the Englishman Giles Fletcher, who published his account in England in 1591;[436] and another Englishman, Jerome Horsey, who composed his account over three decades, c.1588–c.1621.[437]

The two earliest chronicle accounts of the episode are considerably harder to date, and were probably written in the seventeenth century, if based on earlier stories. According to Nasonov, responsible for their most recent edition, all Pskov chronicles, divided into branches I, II, and III, go back to a single protograph.[438] The confrontation between Ivan IV

[434] A. BENOIT, Johann Taube and Elert Kruse: A Broken Window on Ivan IV's Oprichnina, *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 54, 2020, 373–4.

[435] T. ESPER (ed.), *The Land and Government of Muscovy: A Sixteenth-Century Account*, Stanford 1967, 27–8.

[436] BERRY – CRUMMEY, *Rude and Barbarous Kingdom*, op. cit., 219–20.

[437] *Idem*, 268–9.

[438] A.N. NASONOV, *Псковские летописи, I*, Moscow Leningrad 1941, LXIII: Nasonov draws a useful stemma.

and Nikolai is included in Pskov I and III,[439] though it is, in both cases, part of late continuations. For Pskov I, this is the *Obolenskii* copy, dated to the first half of the seventeenth century.[440] In Pskov III, the episode appears in the second *Arkhivskii* copy, which follows the *Stroevskii* copy (ending in 1567), and continues it up to 1649–50. Nasonov dates this continuation (*okonchanie Arkhivskogo 2-ogo spiska*) to the mid-seventeenth century.[441] Both chronicle narratives of the Nikolai episode, therefore, could have been written down anytime after the event in 1570 and before 1650. An additional account can be found in the mid-seventeenth century *Piskarevskii letopisets*, which incorporated northern Russian material despite its Moscow-based perspective.[442]

Nikolai's career as a protector of Pskov did not end after his confrontation with Ivan. In 1581, just over a decade after the tsar's punitive expedition against the region, Pskov was besieged by Polish-Lithuanian King Stefan Báthory. The *Tale of the coming of Stephen Báthory to the town of Pskov* (*Povest' o prikhozhdenii Stefana Batoriya na grad Pskov*), composed by the icon painter Vasilii shortly after he witnessed the events,[443] mentioned Nikolai as one of the saints to whom the besieged inhabitants prayed in despair.[444] Based on

[439] V.I. OKHOTNIKOVA, Летописи Псковские, *СККДР (XIV–XVI, 2)*, 29: The episode is logically absent from Pskov II, compiled in 1486 and known in a single late fifteenth-century copy.

[440] NASONOV, *Псковские летописи, I*, op. cit., XLVII, XLIX: This copy follows Novgorod V up to 1447, then the Pskov chronicles, and adds an end of its own (*okonchanie Obolenskogo spiska*).

[441] *Idem*, XXXVII: Though they might have informed a discussion of chronicle narratives of the Mikula episode, I have, unfortunately, not found studies on the contexts in which either seventeenth-century continuation was produced.

[442] YA.G. SOLODKIN, Пискаревский летописец, *СККДР (XVII, 2)*, 269–74.

[443] *Повесть о прихождении Стефана Батория на град Псков*, *БЛДР 13*, 606, 825: Vasilii signed the text using cryptography.

[444] *Ibid.*, op. cit., 578–580.

this epic *povest'*, the Pskov Caves *paterik*, edited from the 1520s until the end of the seventeenth century,[445] focused on the monastery's role as the city's spiritual defender and recorded a vision revealed to a certain Dorofei, a monk and blacksmith, who saw the Virgin walking on a great column of light connecting the Pskov Caves monastery to the city, and behind her a number of saints including the locals Vsevolod and Dovmont of Pskov, and 'the blessed Mikula'.[446]

Despite the absence of hagiographical or liturgical works dedicated to him, suggesting a lack of official backing of his cult, Nikolai is briefly mentioned in the *vita* of a local hermit, Nikandr (1507?–1581). The text's oldest redaction – end of the sixteenth/beginning of the seventeenth century – mentions that, in one of his rare visits to the town of Pskov, Nikandr ran into Nikolai, who foresaw the recluse's ascetic future.[447]

[445] *Повесть о псково-печерском*, op. cit., 814: The history of this text has, so far, not been studied in detail, and the number of redactions in existence is unclear.

[446] *Idem*, 490: *и по них ста позади, яко полусажени, блаженный Микула, иже уродивый бяше былъ во Псковѣ* / *and after them at the back, about half a* sazhen, *the blessed Mikula, who was a* iurodivyi *in Pskov.*

[447] *Житие Никандра Псковского, БЛДР 13*, 620; M.D. KAGAN – M.A. OKHOTINA, Житие Никандра Псковского, *СККДР (XVII, 1)*, 371: Kagan and Okhotina date this text to the first half of the seventeenth century.

	Presumed dates of life	Feast day	Earliest evidence of cult	*Zhitie*	*Sluzhba*	Chronicles	Travellers	Status in 1547 encyclical
Mikhail of Klopsko	1390s/ 1400s – 1471 (1456?)	11 January	*zhitie*, 1470s	3 redactions (E) (1470s, 1490s, 1537), 68 copies (9 first redaction, 6 second redaction, 52 third redaction)	6 sixteenth-century copies	Novgorod III; *Voskresenskaia letopis'*	No	Pan-Russian saint
Isidor of Rostov	d.1474 (?)	14 May (same as Isidore of Chios)	1487 liturgical calendar	6 full redactions (E) + 1 short, first full redaction by early sixteenth century, over 120 copies	2 fifteenth-/sixteenth-century copies, 8 sixteenth-century, 2 sixteenth-/seventeenth-century	No [but mentioned in 1563 letter from Ivan IV to Metropolitan Makarii]	No	No [but *zhitie* included in Great Menology]
Maksim of Moscow	d.1430s (?)	11 November, 13 August (same as Maximos the Confessor), (21 January)	late fifteenth-century liturgical calendar (ГИМ Епарх. №309, fol. 89 v and 106 v)	No	4 sixteenth-century copies, 2 late sixteenth-/early seventeenth-century	*Vladimirskii letopisets*; Nikon chronicle	No	Moscow saint

Nikolai of Novgorod	d.1392 (?)	27 July	1518/19 liturgical calendar	at least 2 sixteenth-century copies (U)	at least 4 sixteenth-century copies	Novgorod II (tomb)	No	No
Prokopii of Ustiug	second half of the thirteenth – early fourteenth century (?)	8 July (same as Procopius of Scythopolis)	mid-sixteenth century tale about miracles, tale about miracles of icon (РГБ Ф.178 №1365)	30 copies, sixteenth-century version unedited (?) (U/E)	5 sixteenth-century copies	Ustiug chronicle (church)	No	Ustiug saint
Ioann of Ustiug	d.1494 (?)	29 May	1554 *zhitie*	2 sixteenth-century copies (E)	3 sixteenth-century copies	Ustiug chronicle (death)	No	Ustiug saint
Galaktion of Beloozero	mid-fifteenth century – d.1506 (?)	12 January (same as Martinian of Beloozero)	1560s *Life of Martinian of Beloozero* and *Stepennaia kniga*	No [but mentioned in *Life of Martinian*]	No	*Stepennaia kniga*	No	No
Vasilii of Moscow	1460s – 1550s (?)	2 August	1560s *Stepennaia kniga*	1 sixteenth-century, 1 late sixteenth-/early seventeenth-century (E)	6 sixteenth-century, 3 late sixteenth-/early seventeenth-century	*Stepennaia kniga*; Solovki chronicle (*Solovetskii letopisets*)	Fletcher	No [but high-profile public recognition ceremony in 1588]

Nikolai of Pskov	d.1576 (?)	(6 December)	1572 Taube & Kruse account	No [but mentioned in *Life of Nikandr*]	No	Pskov I; Pskov III; *Piskarevskii letopisets*; [+ *Povest' o prikhozhdenii Stefana Batoriya na grad Pskov'*]	Taube & Kruse; von Staden; Fletcher; Horsey	No

Table. Textual Evidence Summary.

(E) = edited

(U) = unedited

III.2.b *Iurodivye* in Chronicles

Though *iurodivye* became legendary characters, they were often based on historical figures whose memory lived on in communities after their death and was sometimes recorded in local chronicles. Though mainly produced in churches or cathedrals by members of the clergy, chronicles narrated any events that impacted a lay community, including the presence of a perceived *iurodivyi* in their midst. Saints, dead or alive, were believed to influence earthly events: in the 1563 letter to Metropolitan Makarii quoted above, Ivan IV attributed his capture of Smolensk to Russian wonderworkers, including various Rostov saints (among them Isidor), Novgorod saints, monastic saints (among them Mikhail of Klopsko), and older princely saints such as Vladimir or Boris and Gleb. [448]

If they sometimes mention *iurodivye*, chronicles are rarely the first piece of evidence for them,[449] as they are often preserved in later manuscripts. Eight of the nine *iurodivye* mentioned in this Part III appear in chronicles, however briefly, attesting to their visibility in urban communities, where chronicles were often written. Entries about them were either short and factual, for example about their arrival to a certain city on a given year, or longer and narrative, recording an event they may have been involved in that significantly impacted a community. Whereas the first kind of entry tends to be quite neutral and not necessarily specific to their being a *iurodivyi*, the second kind usually involves more characterisation.

[448] MEL'NIK, *История почитания*, op. cit., 131; ROMANENKO, «Соборы русских святых», op. cit., 175. *Акты исторические*, op. cit., 320. See also page 78 above.

[449] Vasilii of Moscow in the *Stepennaia kniga* is an exception.

Short entries about *iurodivye* usually marked their death, or the posthumous construction of a church over their tomb. The sixteenth-century *Vladimirskii letopisets*, for example, recorded the death of Maksim of Moscow in an entry for 6942 (1434):

> 'Того же лѣта мѣсяца ноября 12 день преставися рабъ божии Максимъ, иже Христа ради уродивыи, положен бысть у Бориса и Глѣба на Варварьскои улици за Торгом, а погребен бысть нѣким мужем благовѣрным Феодором Кочкина.'[450]
>
> 'That same year on the 12 of November passed away the servant of God Maksim, the *iurodivyi* for Christ's sake, he was laid [to rest] at [the church of] Boris and Gleb on the Varvarskaia street behind the market, and he was buried by some pious man Fedor Kochkin.'

The sixteenth-century Ustiug chronicle included a version of the Tale of Bygone Years (*Povest' Vremennykh Let*), which it continued up to 1517,[451] and noted the death of Ioann of Ustiug the same year as a church for his predecessor Prokopii was built: 'В лето 7003 [1495]. Маия в 29 день на Устюге преставись блаженныи Иван Христа ради юродивыи. Того же лета постави церковь на Устюге во имя Прокопия Христа ради юродиваго.'[452] Similarly, the sixteenth-century Novgorod II chronicle recorded the building of a church dedicated to Nikolai Kochanov by Archbishop Pimin and the 'Novgorodian men'.[453]

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[450] *ПСРЛ, Т. XXX*, op. cit., 133.

[451] *ПСРЛ, Т. XXXVII*, op. cit., 3–4: The oldest copy of the Ustiug chronicle is in an early seventeenth-century manuscript.

[452] *Idem*, 51: *In the year 1495 on the 29 May in Ustiug passed away the blessed Ivan,* iurodivyi *for Christ's sake. In that same year, a church was built in Ustiug dedicated to Prokopii, the* iurodivyi *for Christ's sake.*

[453] *ПСРЛ, Т. XXX*, op. cit., 182: Saint Pantaleon and Nikolai of Novgorod shared a feast day, the 27 July. MAIKOV, *Книга писцовая*, op. cit., iii, 19–20: A late sixteenth-century *pistsovaia kniga* (town record) mentions the church of Saint Pantaleon and eight elder cells of Mikula Kochanov, established there by a decree of [70]69.

Occasionally, *iurodivye* were mentioned by chronicles as healers for their communities, which suggested their veneration, though it did not distinguish them from other saints. The 1520s Nikon chronicle recorded the miraculous healing of a man's leg by Maksim's tomb in Moscow: 'Въ лѣто 7009 [1501]. [...] Того же лѣта у гроба святаго Максима уродиваго Христа ради Богъ простилъ человѣка, имущаго ногу прикорчену, Априля въ 23.'[454] Likewise, the late sixteenth-century Solovki monastery chronicle recorded miracles worked by Vasilii around the time of his public recognition:

> 'В лето 7096. Августа в 2 день ... явися новый великий чюдотворец Василей Нагой и простил три души, две девицы да нищего старца, и от того дни у чюдотворцова гроба великие чюдеса и прощение многим людем.'[455]
>
> 'In the year 7096. On the 2 August … the great new wonderworker Vasilii the Naked appeared and pardoned three souls, two maidens and a poor old man, and from that day [there were] great miracles and the pardoning of many people by the wonderworker's grave.'

Iurodivye were mentioned in similarly neutral ways across the different chronicles quoted above. The most frequent labels for them were 'holy fool for Christ's sake' (*iurodivyi Khrista radi*) and 'blessed [one]' (*blazhennyi*).[456] The latter term is closely associated with *iurodivye*, though not exclusively. A translation of the Greek μακάριος, it frequently accompanies first names of *iurodivye* (e.g., *blazhennyi Vasilii*) in contemporary Russian, as it did in the sixteenth century, though it can also be used as an epithet for other saints or unrecognised virtuous people, meaning 'he who has acquired, or who lives by, scriptural blessings'. It can also be used as an epithet for any kind of saint (bishop, martyr, monk, etc)

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[454] *ПСРЛ, Т. XII, Летописный сборник, именуемый Патриаршею или Никоновскою летописью*, Saint Petersburg 1901, 253: *In the year 7009 [1501]. ... In that same year by the grave of Maksim the holy fool for Christ's sake, God pardoned a man who had a crooked leg on April 23.*

[455] TIKHOMIROV, *Русское летописание*, op. cit., 192–3, 201.

[456] Servant (or slave) of God (*rab bozhii*) is not unusual either. In the Solovki chronicle quoted above, Vasilii, who had a special place among *iurodivye*, was called a great new wonderworker (*novyi velikii chudotvorets*).

when speaking of the time in life before they fulfilled their religious vocation (e.g., before they were ordained, martyred, etc).[457] Perhaps it was the term's relative vagueness that made it a good fit for describing *iurodivye*, who were non-ordained laymen living in the world, not martyrs in a literal way, and often not officially recognised by the Church for a long time. The passages quoted above, however, show that by the time these chronicles were written, *iurodivye* were a recognisable figure in the collective imagination, a feature of urban environments that did not require an explanation.

Not all chronicles were as neutral or generic in mentioning *iurodivye*: several highlighted their ability to make prophecies about major events, whether political or, occasionally, natural. The seventeenth-century Novgorod III chronicle recorded the arrival of Mikhail of Klopsko to Novgorod in 1408 and offered a succinct blurb about him:

> 'Въ лѣто 6916. Пріиде преподобный Михаилъ Клопскій, сродникъ великихъ князей Московскихъ, въ Великій Новградъ, съ Москвы, и пророчество его Іонѣ быти архіепископомъ и о взятіи Великаго Новаграда и Пскова.'[458]
>
> 'In the year 6916. The venerable Mikhail of Klopsko, relative of the grand princes of Moscow, arrived to the Great Novgorod from Moscow, and [it was] his prophecy [that] Iona would become archbishop and about the capture of Novgorod the Great and Pskov [by Moscow].'

Though much later, this source likely reflects the fifteenth- or sixteenth-century *Life of Iona of Novgorod*, discussed below,[459] which gives more detail on the encounter between the *iurodivyi* and the future archbishop.

The *Stepennaia kniga*, composed in the 1560s in Moscow and edited to tell a coherent pan-Russian story centred around the now dominant capital, featured *iurodivye* and their

[457] Блаженный, *ПЭ Том V*, 352.

[458] *ПСРЛ, Т. III*, op. cit.: 235.

[459] See the discussion from page 199 below.

prophecies, and intertwined them with the history of the Russian state. The first prophecy recorded by the *Stepennaia kniga* was made during the reign of Vasilii III by Galaktion, a monk of Ferapontov monastery who may have died in 1506. The *Stepennaia kniga* devoted a long passage to the description of his feat of extreme humility, probably with the intention of supporting the legitimacy of his prophecy. Galaktion was introduced as 'нѣкии инокъ именемъ Галактионъ, родомъ белозерѣць'[460] and described as the hardest-working monk: he had no concern for food or clothing, did not care to have his own cell, and slept on the floor whenever he could not share the cell of another monk. Galaktion's extreme asceticism was equated with holy foolery by the *Stepennaia kniga*, which also brought up one of the most famous hagiographical motifs of *iurodstvo,* nakedness, among an otherwise unremarkable description of monastic asceticism: 'Многажды алча и наготуя пребываше, ничто же не прошаше ни отъ кого же. И таковымъ образомъ, я[ко] [ю]родъ вменяшеся.'[461] Unlike the earliest Christian holy fools, though, Galaktion was respected by his brethren, and even considered a saint: 'Его же вси тогда яко свята имѣяху.'[462]

When told that Vasilii III had failed to take Kazan', Galaktion said:

> 'Не толико сего будеть, но многажды иматъ подвизатися великии князь Василии и на Казаньское царство, и ничто же успѣетъ. Нѣкогда же послѣди богодатныи его сынъ, тои, одолѣвъ, и обладаетъ Казаньскимъ царствиемъ.'
>
> 'Not only is this to be, but the grand prince Vasilii will exert himself many times against the kingdom of Kazan' and not achieve anything. Sometime, the God-given son who will succeed him, will surpass him, and capture the kingdom of Kazan'.'

[460] *Степенная книга, Т. 2,* op. cit., 288: *a certain monk, called Galaktion, from Beloozero*.

[461] *Ibid.*: *He was often hungry and remained naked, not asking for anything from anyone. And in that way, he was deemed to be a holy fool.* Probably a reference to Matthew 25:35–36.

[462] *Ibid.*: *He was considered a saint by all, then.*

Because Vasilii III was childless for another twenty-four years after the prophecy, the monks assumed Galaktion had been wrong. Long after Galaktion's death, however, Ivan IV was born and indeed conquered Kazan' when he was twenty-three years old.[463] Though the *Life of Martinian* unambiguously described his *iurodstvovanie* (holy fooling), the *Stepennaia kniga* introduced Galaktion as a monk and only called him an 'urod' once, focusing rather on his practices of extreme humility and asceticism. The prophecy is presented almost as a result of these, as if a lifestyle like Galaktion's had the power to bring one closer to divine spheres of understanding; and conversely, the fact that the prophecy did, in the end, prove itself to be true, validated an ascetic life like Galaktion's.

Later in the same chronicle, closer to the birth of Ivan IV, the prophecy made twenty-four years earlier by Galaktion, referred to as a 'certain saintly monk' ('нѣкоторыи инокъ святъ'), was brought up again, and a new prophecy was added to it by another *iurodivyi*, about whom nothing is known other than his name, Domentii. The latter was consulted by the great princess about her soon-to-be born baby:

> 'яко бысть близъ рожения, и тогда боголюбивая мати его, великая княгини, воспроси нѣкоего мужа уродива, именемъ Домептия, глаголя: «Что имамъ родити?» Он же, яко уродьствуя, глаголаше: «Титъ, широкии умъ».'[464]
>
> 'as the birth was approaching, then his God-loving mother, the grand princess, asked some holy fool man, called Domentii, saying: "What will I give birth to?" And he, in a holy fool manner, said: "Titus, a broad mind."'

Though laconic, this passage is interesting in suggesting that members of the ruling dynasty associated themselves with *iurodivye* and consulted them on matters as important as dynastic continuation.

[463] *Idem,* 289.

[464] *Idem,* 345.

In Degree XVI, the *Stepennaia kniga* recorded two instances where Vasilii of Moscow was credited with foreseeing the future. The first preceded a Polish-Tatar attack on Moscow by a few days. The *Stepennaia kniga* reported that God revealed terrible visions and signs to the virtuous, including the 'righteous Vasilii the Naked' ('праведному нагоходцу Василию'). One night, as Vasilii was in tearful silent prayer before the doors of the Virgin's cathedral church, a loud noise was heard from inside, and as the doors opened, the wonderworking icon of the Virgin of Vladimir moved from her place and announced that she wanted to leave town with the Russian priests. A fire then suddenly took over the church, flames coming out of the windows, and just as suddenly disappeared. [465]

In the above episode, Vasilii was little more than a witness to the miracle of the Virgin of Vladimir. However, in Degree XVII, where the chronicle gave an account of the great fire that destroyed a significant part of Moscow in July 1547, Vasilii was described in greater detail. He was, the *Stepennaia kniga* reported, informed of the impending catastrophe one day in advance:

> 'о нем же откровено бысть преже единаго дни преподобному Василию, иже Христа ради уродивому, нагоходцю, иже самоволнѣ обнаженому телеснаго одѣяния. И не имѣяше бо на телеси своемъ ни единаго рубищя и стыдѣния не имуще, яко же первозданныи преже преступления, душевною же добротою неизреченно одѣяну ему ... сице проходя съ беззлобиемъ богомудростное уродство, въздръжанием же и наготою томя себе. Лѣте убо солнечнымъ зноемъ изгараше ... и яко бесплотенъ, нестерьпимыи мразъ яко теплоту вменяя, и о телеси не радяше, его же ни огнь ни врежаше, Божия бо благодать грѣяше его.'[466]
>
> '[things] were revealed about it [the fire] one day in advance to the venerable Vasilii, the *iurodivyi* for Christ's sake, who walked naked, and by his voluntary choice was free from bodily clothing. For on his body, he did not even have a rag and he had no shame, like the first [man] created [Adam] before the fall, being clad in spiritual

[465] *Idem*, 307.

[466] *Idem*, 353–4.

> goodness … he lived in this divinely wise holy foolery with meekness and tortured himself with restraint and nakedness. For in the summer he was burnt by sunrays … and as if he were bodiless, he took the unbearable frost like warmth, and neglected his body; he could not be harmed by fire, for he was warmed by the grace of God.'

Though the *Stepennaia kniga* did not specify how Vasilii was informed of the fire, it implied that, as a result of his extreme asceticism and purity of soul, he enjoyed an unusual proximity with the divine world that granted him special powers: 'Такову благодать приятъ отъ Бога великихъ чюдодѣянии'.[467] In being an ascetic, Vasilii was similar to Galaktion, if more radical in his choice to live in the world and be naked.[468] In the description of Vasilii, the *topos* of indifference to burning heat and freezing cold that became systematically associated with *iurodstvo*[469] made him a more stereotypical *iurodivyi* than Galaktion, as did his undeniably transgressive nakedness, which every text about Vasilii finds it necessary to justify or compensate for by focussing on his ascetic endurance.

Though they were remarkably informed about worldly events, neither Galaktion nor Vasilii altered their course. The latter could have proactively warned the inhabitants of Moscow of the impending attack or fire. It is almost as though the *Stepennaia kniga* used Galaktion and Vasilii as literary devices to anchor the history of the Muscovite state in a heavenly framework: *iurodivye* perceived the working of divine providence in human affairs but knew not to interfere with it. Their role was not to protect the city but to show its inhabitants that their lives were indeed governed by God's will. The characterisation of Vasilii is, moreover, reminiscent of Andrew of Constantinople, whose *Life* featured long

[467] *Idem*, 354: *And from God he received such grace to work great miracles.*

[468] Nakedness is mentioned *en passant* with reference to Galaktion, but it is a central part of almost any description of Vasilii, known as 'the Naked'.

[469] This *topos* probably found its way to the chronicle from the *zhitie* or *sluzhba* of a previous *iurodivyi*, like Isidor.

visionary episodes, and who, like Vasilii, roamed the city at night, praying silently and tearfully in empty churches, whose doors miraculously opened for him:[470] 'егда в нощехъ таино хождаше по святымъ церквамъ на молитву, ему же и сама церковная врата отверзахуся'.[471] There may also be an element of Isidor, or Mikhail, or St Nicholas – all responsible for miracles at sea – in Vasilii, who, the chronicle reported, was seen walking on water in foreign lands: 'Мнози же иноземнии гостие повѣдаху, яко своима очима видѣша его, по морю ходяща, яко по суху'.[472]

The *Stepennaia kniga* did not refrain from using the word *iurodivyi* and its cognates (e.g., *iurodstvovat'*, to act like a holy fool), and though it did not care to define these terms, it did describe two such men in much greater detail than any other chronicle. Its characterisation presented *iurodivye* predominantly as prophets, strange ascetic men, who acted as the spiritual eyes of their communities, and were respected for their gift.

Finally, two chronicles, one early and one mid-seventeenth century, reflect stories that circulated in the late sixteenth century about another *iurodivyi*, Nikolai of Pskov. Bearing in mind that these might reflect slightly later understandings of *iurodstvo*, I will introduce them here as a point of comparison with the next subsection, where foreign accounts of Nikolai of Pskov can be found. Known locally as Mikula, Nikolai scared Ivan IV away as the latter prepared to loot Pskov and take revenge on its inhabitants. Versions of this narrative,

[470] RYDÉN, *Life of St Andrew, Vol. II,* op. cit.: *he stretched out his right hand and made the sign of the cross over the doors, and at once they opened automatically.*

[471] *Степенная книга, Т. 2*, op. cit., 354: *when at night he would wander secretly around the holy churches, praying, and the church gates themselves would open for him.*

[472] *Ibid.*: *many foreign guests said that, with their very eyes, they had seen him [Vasilii] walk on the sea as if on dry [land].*

differing in detail, are found in the early seventeenth-century Pskov I,[473] and the mid-seventeenth-century *Piskarevskii letopisets*.[474]

According to Pskov I, Nikolai, referred to as Nikola Sallos,[475] was, together with Prince Iurii Tokmakov, inspired by God to ask every household in Pskov to set up a table with bread and salt on a clean cloth in front of their door, a submissive welcome intended to appease the tsar, who greeted Nikolai personally:

> ‘прииде благословитися ко блаженному Николе, иже христа ради похаб ся творя; блаженныи же поучивъ его много ужасными словесы, еже престати от велия кровопролития и не дерзнути еже грабити святыя божия церкви ...’[476]
>
> ‘he came for a blessing to the blessed Nikola, who acted as a *pokhab* [i.e. aggressive madman, holy fool] for Christ’s sake; the blessed one instructed him with many terrible words, to stop the great blood-spilling and not to dare loot the holy churches of God …’

When Ivan ordered the Trinity cathedral bell to be removed, his horse collapsed, which the tsar interpreted as a result of Nikolai’s threats, and a good reason to run away. The chronicle depicted Nikolai as a recognised holy man and important local figure, who, on a level with its prince, had a say in the town’s policy in the context of a possible attack, and who the tsar himself went to pay his respects to. Nikolai is called a *blazhennyi* (blessed one), *ugodnik* (pleasing to God), and even *sviatoi* (saintly, or saint), as well as *Khrista radi pokhab*, a term roughly equivalent to *iurodivyi*, but with more aggressive connotations.

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[473] NASONOV, *Псковские летописи, I*, op. cit., XLVII, XLIX: This copy (*Obolenskii*) follows Novgorod V up to 1447, then the Pskov chronicles, then adds an end of its own (*okonchanie Obolenskogo spiska*).

[474] SOLODKIN, Пискаревский летописец, *СККДР (XVII, 2)*, op. cit.: 269–74.

[475] This epithet, though misspelt, suggests that whoever wrote it made a link between Nikolai of Pskov and Byzantine holy fools, known as *saloi* (sg. *salos*).

[476] NASONOV, *Псковские летописи, I*, op. cit., 116.

Compiled in the mid-seventeenth century, the *Piskarevskii letopisets* incorporated northern Russian material despite its Moscow-centric perspective.[477] A succinct but informative paragraph relates how, in 1570, Ivan IV punished the people of Novgorod by 'sword, fire, and water' and looted churches. In Pskov, he executed Hegumen Kornilii and a cellarer of the Caves monastery before Nikolai sent him away, predicting his horse's sudden death.

> 'И прииде к Никуле уродивому. И рече ему Никуда: "Не замай, милухне, нас и не пробудет ти за нас! Поеди, милухне, ранее от нас опять. Не на чом ти бежати!" И в то время паде головной аргамак. И князь велики поеде вскоре и немного зла сотвори.'[478]
>
> 'And he came to Nikula the *iurodivyi*. And Nikula told him: "Do not touch us, sweetie, and nothing will happen to you! Go back as soon as possible, sweetie, away from us. You've got nothing to run away on!" And at that moment [Ivan's] main steed collapsed. And the grand prince left immediately and only caused little damage.'

Here, as in Pskov I, the tsar paid his personal respects to Nikolai and was threatened by him, the legitimacy of these threats being once again confirmed by Ivan's main steed collapsing. Labelled a *iurodivyi*, Nikolai addressed the tsar with a transgressive form of familiarity, calling him *milukhne*, or sweetie.[479] In both chronicles, the encounter between the *iurodivyi* and the tsar was presented as a conversation between equals; if anything, Ivan was shown as the weakest party, and Nikolai as the party that had direct backing from God.

Nikolai's reputation as a patron and protector of the city of Pskov was also reflected in a late sixteenth-century historiographically inclined Tale about the siege of Pskov by

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[477] SOLODKIN, Пискаревский летописец, *СККДР (XVII, 2)*, op. cit., 269–74.

[478] *ПСРЛ, Т. XXXIV, Пискаревский летописец*, Moscow 1978, 191.

[479] Both the direct speech in the text and the familiar form of address are reminiscent of foreign accounts of this episode, especially those of Taube and Kruse, and Fletcher, where Nikolai addresses the tsar as Ivashka, or Johnny.

Polish-Lithuanian armies and their king, Stefan Báthory, in 1581. The *Tale of the arrival of Stephen Báthory to the town of Pskov*, composed by the icon painter Vasilii shortly after he witnessed the events,[480] mentioned Nikolai of Pskov among the local saints whom the inhabitants called upon to save them from the invaders: 'Такоже великого заступника псковскаго, князя Гаврила-Всеволода, с ним же князя Доманта и Микулу, иже Христа ради уродивого, в сердцех своих на помощь приимших…'[481] There is no characterisation of Nikolai aside from this brief mention.[482]

When they did not simply mention *iurodivye en passant*, chronicles depicted them primarily as prophets, or visionaries, who, often through their ascetic exertion, were in touch with the divine order of things. But if for Galaktion, Domentii, and Vasilii this meant nothing more than a witness role, for Nikolai, it meant intervening in mortal affairs, and possibly using his power to influence their outcome. If Vasilii watched the city burn, Nikolai, who was far more aggressive and frightening than his Moscow counterpart, saved Pskov from a potential bloodbath.

III.2.c *Iurodstvo*: Western Perspectives

Four non-Russian accounts describe the encounter between Nikolai of Pskov and Tsar Ivan IV in 1570, at least three of which were written before the end of the sixteenth century. The earliest was a report on Ivan IV's *oprichnina*, written in 1572 by two Livonian

[480] *Повесть о прихождении*, op. cit., 606, 825.

[481] *Ibid.*, 578–80: *And so taking for help in their hearts the great Pskovian intercessor, Prince Gavriil-Vsevolod, and with him Prince Domant and Mikula, the* iurodivyi *for Christ's sake …*

[482] *Повесть о псково-печерском*, op. cit., 476–533, 814–18: Another text, the Pskov Caves *paterik*, narrated this same episode, based on this earlier *povest'*. The history of this text has, so far, not been studied in detail, and the number of redactions in existence is unclear.

noblemen, Johann Taube and Elert Kruse, captured by the Muscovite army in 1558 and 1560 respectively. Having become close advisers and diplomatic envoys to Ivan IV during the Livonian war, they fled back to Lithuania after the siege of Revel in 1571.[483] They described the interaction between Nikolai and the tsar in the following way:

> 'As he [Ivan IV] had already strangled many thousand people there and turned the rest into beggars, a poor man named Nikola, whom every Pskovite esteemed and honored as a holy prophet, was sent to the Great Prince and declared that the tsar must come to him. The Great Prince did not refuse. When he arrived at his house, this prophet or diabolical mask screamed from a window: "Ivashka, Ivashka (which is Johankj, Johankj in German), until when will you spill Christian blood without guilt? Think about it and leave at this moment or a great disaster will descend upon you." As a result of this warning, intimidation or threat, the powerful tyrant, who wanted to devour the entire world, was defeated and left without delay, as if he was driven away by an enemy. Therefore, the devilish, mortal and powerless beggar scared with his words alone the tsar who ran away with several thousand soldiers, a smaller force, leaving his riches and all the loot behind.'[484]

It is likely that Taube and Kruse did not know the word *iurodivyi*, which they do not use. Their translation of the concept of a holy fool, which they were probably not familiar with either, is interesting. They were, first of all, very sceptical of it and made a point of distancing themselves from local belief in this 'devilish, mortal and powerless beggar'. They nevertheless recognised that Nikolai was held to be a saintly man by his community, to the point where he was chosen as their representative to the tsar, rather than a member of clergy or local government. In this version of the story, Nikolai was also poor, though it is not specified whether this was a voluntary condition. More importantly, he was a prophet or clairvoyant, whose predictions or curses were taken seriously by the tsar himself. Similarly to the later *Piskarevskii letopisets*, Nikolai was depicted as an equal to the tsar, whom he

[483] BENOIT, Johann Taube, op. cit., 329–32, 332–6: Their eyewitness account of the *oprichnina* discredited Ivan IV and was probably intended to clear their reputation after years of Muscovite service.

[484] *Idem*, op. cit., 373–4.

addressed in direct speech by the nickname 'Ivashka'. Taube and Kruse did not mention any ascetic credentials Nikolai might have had, and focused rather on his aggressivity, reporting on his screaming and threatening, and calling him 'devilish' and 'diabolical'.

Another member of Ivan IV's *oprichnina*, the German adventurer Heinrich von Staden, wrote about the campaign against Novgorod and Pskov in the plan for the conquest of Muscovy he composed in 1578–79 and tried to sell to various European monarchs.[485] His version of the interaction between Nikolai and Ivan was less detailed than that by Taube and Kruse:

> 'The Grand Prince had half of this city [Pskov] plundered until he came to the house of Mikula. This Mikula is a fine fellow and lives alone in his house in the city of Pskov without wife or children. He has many animals … He is rich because of them, and he prophesies the future for the Russians. The Grand Prince went to his house. Mikula said to the Grand Prince, "It is enough. Return home!" The Grand Prince obeyed this Mikula and left Pskov for Aleksandrova Sloboda with all the money and property and many large bells.'[486]

In this version, Nikolai was wealthy, not poor, and explicitly celibate. Like his equivalent in Taube and Kruse, however, he 'prophesies the future for the Russians', and behaved like an equal to the tsar, who obeyed him, though Nikolai was not characterised as particularly violent or frightening in von Staden's account, which is lacking the collapsing horse element.[487] The interaction with the tsar in this account is less obviously threatening, or influenced by prophecy, and more commanding.

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[485] ESPER, *The Land and Government*, op. cit., ix–xiv.

[486] *Idem*, 27–8.

[487] It is worth noting that both von Staden and Taube and Kruse claimed to be eyewitnesses of the events described in their respective accounts, though it is unlikely that they were directly present at this scene, if or however it happened.

A decade after von Staden composed his plan, the Englishman Giles Fletcher travelled to Russia as Queen Elizabeth's diplomat, responsible for negotiating favourable conditions for the Russia Company. Between his arrival in summer 1588 and his departure in spring 1589, Fletcher amassed a considerable volume of observations that he compiled in a report presented to the Queen on his return, expanded and published in 1591.[488] From a scholarly background – an Etonian who started his career as a Classics lecturer in Cambridge –, Fletcher had a facility with languages, learning some Russian during his travels, and an inquisitive mind.[489]

> 'There was another [holy man] of great account at Pskov, called Nikola of Pskov, that did much good when this emperor's father [Fedor's father, i.e., Ivan IV] came to sack the town upon suspicion of their revolting and rebellion against him. The emperor, after he had saluted the eremite at his lodging, sent him a reward. And the holy man to requite the emperor sent him a piece of raw flesh, being then their Lent time, which the emperor seeing, bid one to tell him that he marveled that the holy man would offer him flesh to eat in the Lent when it was forbidden by order of Holy Church. "And doth Ivashka (which is as much to say, as Jack) think," quoth Nikola, "that it is unlawful to eat a piece of beast's flesh in Lent and not to eat up so much man's flesh as he hath done already?" So threatening the emperor with a prophecy of some hard adventure to come upon him except he left murdering of his people and departed the town, he saved a great many men's lives at that time.'[490]

Fletcher's Nikolai is closest to Taube and Kruse's account: Nikolai and Ivan met at the holy fool's lodgings; Nikolai had a strong enough reputation ('of great account') as a local holy man for the tsar to seek him out ('saluted the eremite at his lodging') and offer him a 'reward'; Nikolai addressed the tsar by his diminutive, 'Ivashka', thereby placing himself as the monarch's equal, or superior; Nikolai had the gift of 'prophecy'; and finally, he was 'threatening'. Fletcher introduced a new element to the story by adding the raw flesh

[488] BERRY – CRUMMEY, *Rude and Barbarous Kingdom*, op. cit., 90–3.

[489] *Idem*, 88, 93.

[490] *Idem*, 219–20.

motif, which, on the one hand, gave Nikolai an even stronger aura of transgression, meat being forbidden by the Church during Lent and sending it to the God-anointed tsar nearing sacrilege. And, on the other hand, it contributed to the image of the *iurodivyi* as someone who spoke in riddles and could see beyond appearances.

On his way back to England, Giles Fletcher was given custody of the author of a fourth account. Jerome Horsey, an Englishman and disreputable businessman who lived in Russia from 1573 to his expulsion in 1589, composed his *Travels*, 'a puzzling patchwork of sharp insights and glaring errors',[491] over three decades (c.1589-c.1621).[492] In a confused chronology of the 1570 campaign, he described the confrontation between Ivan and Nikolai, whom he claimed, most likely spuriously, to have personally seen:

> '… there [in Pskov] met him [Ivan IV] an impostor or magician, which they held to be their oracle, a holy man named Nikola Sviatoi, who, by his bold imprecations and exorcisms, railings, and threats, terming him the emperor bloodsucker, the devourer and eater of Christian flesh, and swore by his angel that he should not escape death of a present thunderbolt if he or any of his army did touch a hair in displeasure of the least child's head in that city … therefore to get him thence before the fiery cloud, God's wrath, were raised, hanging over his head as he might behold, being in a very great and dark storm at that instant. These words made the emperor to tremble, so as he desired prayers for his deliverance and forgiveness of his cruel thoughts. I saw this impostor or magician, a foul creature, went naked both in winter and summer; he endured both extreme frost and heat, did many strange things through the magical illusions of the devil, much followed, feared, and reverenced, both of prince and people.'[493]

Though Horsey might have completed his account in the seventeenth century, he gathered the information for his *Travels* before being expelled from Russia in 1589. His

[491] *Idem*, 253, 260, and 256.

[492] *Idem*, 249–60: He ran unofficial diplomatic errands for England and Russia, set up his own (illegal) private enterprises in competition with those of the Russia Company, and was dragged by his unscrupulous behaviour into long lawsuits in England.

[493] *Idem*, 268–9.

characterisation of Nikolai was evidently sensationalist and sounds like an exaggeration of earlier accounts. His attitude toward Nikolai was sceptical like Taube and Kruse's, and though acknowledging his local recognition as a holy man ('Sviatoi', 'much followed, feared, and reverenced') and protector of Pskov, Horsey called him an 'impostor', 'magician', and 'oracle'. He makes it clear, however, that Nikolai was respected by society ('prince and people'), and that his 'words' were taken seriously. Horsey's is, in fact, the most extreme characterisation of Nikolai as an aggressive and frightening figure: he insulted the tsar, made death 'threats', and apparently conjured a 'very great and dark storm', complete with a 'thunderbolt', which made the fierce Ivan IV 'tremble' and run away.

Horsey's description of Nikolai's appearance, though probably embellished and dramatised by him, is interesting in that it conforms to *iurodstvo* stereotypes known from other sources. The nakedness in winter and summer and the endurance of 'extreme frost and heat' were typical attributes for *iurodivye*, especially since Vasilii. The repulsiveness ('foul creature'), however, is an innovation as descriptions of Vasilii emphasised purity rather than dirt. This characterisation of *iurodivye* as physically repugnant could be complementary with the element of aggression, and their ability to work 'strange things through the magical illusions of the devil'. It could, of course, also be Horsey's invention.

The four accounts have different ways of referring to Nikolai, possibly to do, at least partly, with some of them being translations into English: 'poor man', 'holy prophet', 'diabolical mask', 'devilish, mortal and powerless beggar' (Taube and Kruse); 'fine fellow' (Staden); 'the eremite', 'holy man' (Fletcher); 'an impostor or magician', 'oracle', 'holy man', 'foul creature' (Horsey). The fact that he is not called a *iurodivyi* could be due to Nikolai not being perceived as such, or to the concept not being easily translatable into the languages these accounts were written in – that is, if their authors were at all aware of

iurodivye. Fletcher's account is, in fact, the only one to unambiguously identify Nikolai as a holy fool and to associate him with a wider tradition of *iurodstvo*, though the words holy fool or *iurodivyi* are never used by him. He described *iurodivye* in general terms, looking for western cultural points of reference:

> '… they have certain eremites (whom they call holy men) that are like to those gymnosophists for their life and behavior, though far unlike for their knowledge and learning. They use to go stark naked save a clout about their middle, with their hair hanging long and wildly about their shoulders, and many of them with an iron collar or chain about their necks or middle, even in the very extremity of winter. These they take as prophets and men of great holiness, giving them a liberty to speak what they list without any controlment, though it be of the very highest himself. So that if he reprove any openly in what sort soever, they answer nothing but that it is *po grekham*, that is, for their sins. And if any of them take some piece of sale ware from any man's shop as he passeth by to give where he list, he thinketh himself much beloved of God and much beholding to the holy man for taking it in that sort. Of this kind there are not many because it is a very hard and cold profession to go naked in Russia, specially in winter.'[494]

Though asceticism was by far not a main element in Nikolai's characterisation in any of the foreign accounts, elsewhere Fletcher emphasised the ascetic side of *iurodstvo*, including all-year-round nakedness and the wearing of metal chains, the latter being a rare feature in texts from this period. Though clearly impressed by the physical exploits of *iurodivye*, Fletcher was less admiring of their learning, or lack thereof, which he expected from men with a religious vocation.[495] According to Fletcher's description, *iurodivye* had a striking and perhaps even frightening appearance, being naked, unkempt and long-haired. The use of the term 'eremites' could suggest that they kept to themselves even while living in cities. And Fletcher was clear, if judgmental, about them being respected across society,

[494] BERRY – CRUMMEY, *Rude and Barbarous Kingdom*, op. cit., 218–9.

[495] *Idem*, 218: In the preceding passage he commented on the ignorance of monks.

both during life and after death.[496] Importantly, Fletcher is the first source I know of to explicitly state that *iurodivye* were immune to certain social rules, and that they were given the 'liberty to speak what they list without any controlment, though it be of the very highest himself', which is coherent with the stories about Nikolai and Ivan.

Fletcher went on to mention a holy fool that might be identified as Ioann Bol'shoi Kolpak of Moscow, who was known for wearing chains,[497] and according to Fletcher was a vocal political commentator:

> 'Among other at this time they have one at Moscow that walketh naked about the streets and inveigheth commonly against the state and government, especially against the Godunovs that are thought at this time to be great oppressors of that commonwealth.'

He also mentioned Vasilii, who 'died not many years ago' and used to 'reprove the old emperor [Ivan IV] for all his cruelty and oppressions done towards his people.'[498] After the story about Nikolai of Pskov, Fletcher concluded on the *iurodivyi*'s role as representative of the people, but also on the theoretical nature of his political immunity:

> 'This maketh the people to like very well of them, because they are as pasquils to note their great men's faults that no man else dare speak of. Yet it falleth out sometime that for this rude liberty which they take upon them after a countefeit manner by imitation of prophets, they are made away in secret, as was one or two of them in the last emperor's time for being over bold in speaking against his government.'[499]

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[496] *Idem*, 219: He records a scandal about clergy being found fabricating miracles by Vasilii's tomb.

[497] Ioann supposedly died on the 3 July 1589, so Fletcher could, in theory, have seen him. Chains identified as Ioann's are currently preserved in the Pokrov, or St Vasilii, cathedral in Moscow (part of the ГИМ, or State Historical Museum).

[498] BERRY – CRUMMEY, *Rude and Barbarous Kingdom*, op. cit., 219.

[499] *Idem*, 220.

Given the high probability that none of the foreigners were eyewitnesses to the encounter between Nikolai and Ivan, we can wonder whose perspective they represent. Most of them expressed personal scepticism about a culture that worshipped strange, apparently uneducated men claiming to know the future. But beyond this scepticism, the accounts seem to relay oral tales[500] about Nikolai and, in Fletcher's case, about *iurodivye* in general. It is not unreasonable to assume that they all recorded popular understandings of eccentric holy men, if not necessarily unanimous understandings of *iurodstvo*. Significantly, though, most of these accounts characterised *iurodivye* as repulsive, frightening, and aggressive, on top of ascribing them the role of political moderation of, or even opposition to, the absolute monarch. This characterisation, found in a couple of Russian chronicles and in foreign accounts, differs significantly from the depiction of *iurodivye* in most other sources from this period, whose ecclesiastical point of view tended to accentuate the extreme but harmless asceticism of *iurodivye*.

III.2.d Liturgical *Iurodivye*

Texts for liturgical performance were imported or translated from Greek after the Christianisation of Rus' at the end of the tenth century. Translating and adopting texts, however, was a continuous process. In the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century, monastic houses in Rus', under Athonite influence, were starting to favour the new Jerusalem *ustav* (*typikon*) over the Studios rule that had been used since the late eleventh century to organise liturgical life. Contemporary to this transition between liturgical frameworks was the adoption of new Athonite liturgical texts dedicated to specific, primarily

[500] The fact that two out of three accounts have passages where Nikolai addresses the tsar in direct speech, and two out of these three passages call the tsar 'Ivashka' would suggest similar sources with a taste for the liveliness of direct speech.

South Slavic, saints. In the 1430s, Pakhomii Logofet the Serb (d. after 1484) arrived to Rus' from Athos and became a major liturgical author, his output of *sluzhby* and *kanony* outweighing that of all his contemporaries taken together. He composed liturgical texts for established as well as new Rus' saints, and his style, including the use of acrostic writing, had a strong influence in sixteenth-century liturgical writing.[501]

From the time of Pakhomii, it became normal for hagiographers to be hymnographers too. Towards the last quarter of the fifteenth century, possibly in connection with the *de facto* autocephalous status of the Russian Orthodox Church after 1448, a calendar or *mineia* for new miracle workers was compiled. This trend was intensified in the sixteenth century, when the commission of a Great Menology by the future Metropolitan Makarii and the mid-century conciliar recognition of new Russian saints encouraged the production and reworking of liturgical texts to commemorate them. However, if some hymnographical works were innovative in their form and style, like those of Markell, most were imitative and unremarkable.[502]

Cynthia Vakareliyska has noted that holy fools were not prevalent in East Slavic, including Rus', calendars from the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries, though these calendars did include some Byzantine holy fools, unlike their Bulgarian counterparts.[503] Against the background of growing hymnographical production in the fifteenth century, there was a noticeable impulse towards the liturgical commemoration of recently recognised

[501] Гимнография, *ПЭ Том XI*, 499.

[502] *Idem*, 500.

[503] VAKARELIYSKA, The absence, op. cit., 231–2, 239–40: Vakareliyska attributed this difference to the fact that Bulgarian, on the one hand, and Serbian / East Slavic calendars, on the other, were based on different Byzantine calendars: the Constantinople Typikon for the former, and monastic *typika* (whether Neo-Sabaite / Jerusalem or Studite) for the latter.

iurodivye. *Sluzhby*, often anonymous, were written to mark the main *iurodivyi* cults – Isidor, Mikhail, Maksim, Prokopii, Ioann, Nikolai Kochanov, and Vasilii – and a generic *sluzhba* for *iurodivye* was composed.[504] Within the liturgy, *iurodivye* were celebrated in *kanony*, a liturgical form inherited from Byzantium, though in the Rus' context it quickly lost its rigid metric structure and, in the sixteenth century, its sung performance. *Kanony* were usually composed of songs (sg. *pesn'* or ᾠδή), numbered from 1 to 9 with the second song frequently omitted, the first song being called *irmos* and the following *tropar'*, frequently dedicated to the Virgin. *Kanony* sometimes contained acrostic messages that were not performed but could be spelled out by putting together the first letter of every *tropar'* (including or not the *irmos* and *tropar'* dedicated to the Virgin).[505]

Liturgies were written with a specific performative context in mind, and were built around the idea of intercession, which implied a dialogue between the faithful and the saint(s) they were celebrating: by commemorating them, the faithful expected the saint to pray for them and keep granting them healings. This interaction and the rhetorical addressing of the saint it entailed meant that, unlike most hagiographies, liturgies were not primarily narrative-driven, though references to narrative episodes could occasionally find their way into them. Importantly too, even when a *sluzhba* was intended to mark a saint's feast day, not every section of it would be about them, and a significant proportion of the text would still address the Virgin.

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[504] Гимнография, *ПЭ Том XI*, op. cit., 500: I have, unfortunately, not been able to find this *sluzhba*, and the *ПЭ* does not reference any manuscripts for it. I searched for it in general menologies (общие минеи) that contain liturgical texts for categories of saints (not individually named). An example of this is РГБ. Ф.98 №432, with a convenient table of contents on folio 1, but no *sluzhba* for *iurodivye*. It would be important to find such a text, as it would give us an idea of how *iurodivye* were perceived generically in a liturgical context.

[505] Канон, *ПЭ Том XXX*, op. cit., 204–5.

Despite their sheer volume and central role in daily religious practices, liturgical texts are mostly unedited and poorly studied.[506] This short section on the characterisation of *iurodivye* in sixteenth-century liturgical texts barely scratches the surface of the corpus of liturgical texts. The material presented here comes almost exclusively from the digitalised manuscript collection of the Trinity St Sergii *lavra*, a major monastery with a close connection to Moscow, and whose liturgical compilations no doubt reflect a particular point of view on the commemoration of saints. Even within this collection, time constraints would not allow for a detailed study of every manuscript containing a *sluzhba* for a *iurodivyi*. Instead, the analysis below offers an overview of some sixteenth-century manuscripts, and aims to define, roughly, the liturgical understanding(s) of *iurodstvo* in the sixteenth century.

Though sample size was small, patterns emerged, which further studies might wish to explore, if only to prove my intuitions wrong. *Sluzhby* for *iurodivye* are similar to each other, which scholars have attributed to subsequent texts using the *sluzhba* to Isidor as a model.[507] Sometimes whole passages are repeated, the most obvious example being a replica of the miracle about the merchant Isidor saved from drowning in the *sluzhba* to Mikhail of Klopsko, and to a lesser extent in that to Prokopii of Ustiug.[508] My general, absolutely unsystematic impression, is that the *sluzhba* to Prokopii is the most similar to that of Isidor,

[506] GRIFFIN, *The Liturgical Past*, op. cit., 234, 240, 30: Griffin has emphasised the central role of liturgy in saint-making and community building, and argued that the control of liturgical narratives was a powerful tool that promoted social and political cohesiveness.

[507] This is assuming, as many people do, that Isidor was first. Mikhail, in fact, could have been first. One argument for considering Isidor as an influential textual model would be the fact that Maksim was called a second Tverdislov.

[508] This episode appears in the *sluzhba* to Isidor (Ф.304/I №630, 257 r – v), and that to Mikhail (Ф.304/I №622, 164 r). Similar passages appear in the *sluzhba* to Prokopii (Ф.304/I №619, 266 v) and the earliest evidence for Vasilii, the *Stepennaia kniga* (*Степенная книга, Т. 2*, op. cit., 635–6): Both saints are described as helpers for those travelling by sea. Though the intention may have been to associate all subsequent *iurodivye* with Isidor, there is a strong chance that this motif was, in fact, imported from the hugely popular miracles of St Nicholas. See Николай, *ПЭ Том L*, op. cit., 123–6.

and that to Vasilii the most different, though Isidor is the only holy fool not to be frequently referred to as a *iurod* / *ourod* in his *sluzhba*. Nevertheless, the basic characterisation of *iurodivye* in their liturgical commemorations is mostly consistent across texts, with minor adjustments made to fit individual circumstances, e.g., monastic life for Mikhail, nakedness for Vasilii, foreign origin for Isidor and Prokopii. Because mine is not a systematic study of *sluzhby* for *iurodivye,* but rather a general inquiry into the ways they were depicted in these texts, I thought it best to present material thematically, drawing primarily on the texts' similarities. I hope this section, limited as it is, contributes to showing how rich and complex liturgical source material is.

As saints, *iurodivye* were first and foremost intercessors. This is especially obvious in *sluzhby*, through which the faithful asked the saint to pray for their souls. Throughout the texts, and especially at the end of each section – e.g., *kanon*, *pesn'* – there are supplications for intercession in favour of those celebrating the saints' feasts: '**его моли избавитисѧ бѣ҃ рабѡ҃ ти бг҃омр҃е прокопие**'[509]; '**и на поминаи празн҃оующ҃и пам҃ ѧ҃ твою всечт҃ноую**';[510] '**его же моли исидоре досточюдне сп҃ти и просвѣтити дш҃а наша**'.[511] These supplications could also be extended to include entire regions, suggesting each *iurodivyi* had a special attachment to the places they had known in their earthly life, and whose heavenly patrons they became after death. If this was not yet conceptualised as a *sobor* of regional

[509] РГБ. Ф.304/I №619, fol. 262 v (Prokopii): *pray the Lord that your servants, o divinely wise Prokopii, may be free from misfortune*.

[510] РГБ. Ф.304/I №622, fol. 62 v (Maksim): *and remember us, who are celebrating your honourable memory*.

[511] РГБ. Ф.304/I №630, fol. 240 r (Isidor): *pray, o wonderworthy Isidor, for Him to save and enlighten our souls.*

patron saints celebrated together annually, as in the modern sense,[512] there certainly was a strong sense of the Russian heavenly intercessors' territorial attachment in this period: Prokopii was attached to Ustiug ('**града же нашего ꙗко оустюго застоупникъ**'[513]); Mikhail to the Trinity monastery ('**и ꙗви ꙗкѡ рѣка wбилно всю wбитѣ̑ напаꙗѧ**'[514]); Isidor to Rostov ('**просѝ испроситι оу хр̃а бг̃а нашего градоу твоемѫ непоколѣблемоу и безмѧтежноу пребыти ѿ совѣ̑ вражїѝ и поганьскаго нашествїа кн̃зѣ̑ нашѝ̑ державы и побѣды на врагы**'[515]); Maksim to Moscow ('**максиме преблаженне роуское оутвержењe москѡ̑скыи свѣтиниче**'[516]); Vasilii to Moscow ('**вселив же въ гра̑ москвѣ подаваѧ и всѣ̑ на̑ исцѣлењe**'[517]); and Nikolai to Novgorod ('**великιи новъгра̑ имѣѧ моцιи твоѫ ꙗко неистощимое съкрwвище**'[518]). Vasilii's *sluzhba*, moreover, is especially concerned not only with the protection of Moscow, but of Orthodoxy in general:

[512] See the discussion of this topic from page 76 above.

[513] РГБ. Ф.304/I №619, fol. 257 r (Prokopii): *as a patron of our town of Ustiug*. See a similar mention on fol. 263 r.

[514] РГБ. Ф.304/I №622, fol. 167 v (Mikhail): *and appear like a river watering the whole [monastic] house*.

[515] РГБ. Ф.304/I №630 fol. 241 v – 242 r (Isidor): *we ask you to ask Christ our God for your town to remain unshaken and serene from inimical designs and pagan invasion, and for our prince [to have] power and victory over the enemies*. See also an equivalent passage in Ф.304/I №618, fol. 3 v, and the same passage in the *sluzhba* to Prokopii, РГБ. Ф.304/I №619, fol. 256 r.

[516] РГБ. Ф.304/I №622, fol. 58 v (Maksim): *o most-blessed Maksim, Russian strengthening, Muscovite luminaire*.

[517] РГБ. Ф.304/I №624, fol. 633 r (Vasilii): *settling in the town of Moscow and giving us all healing*.

[518] РГБ. Ф.304/I №624, fol. 516 v (Nikolai): *Novgorod the Great has your relics like an inexhaustible treasure*. See similar passages at fol. 510 v, 511 r, 512 v, 513 r.

‘мл҃мсѧ за ц҃рѧ православнаго и цр҃цоу и чада и҃ и за всѧ кн҃зи правовѣрныѧ и за всѧ лю҃д языка росискаго избавити град҃ нш҃емѫ’.[519]

Another side of the function of *iurodivye* as intercessors was, of course, the ability of their relics to work healing miracles. Tombs were often compared to sources of healing: ‘чюдесемъ источни҃ рака твоа гависѧ максиме бл҃а҃не’;[520] ‘чюдесе и҃сточни҃ неисчерпа҃ѣ вѣрою притѣкающи҃м къ стомоу ти гробоу прокопие’.[521] Miracle cults came to play a central role in communities by offering a mixture of ‘medical care’ and emotional comfort: ‘сиротамъ и wбидемы҃ застоупника. болнымъ врача безм҃ѣздна. ... печалнымъ оутешеніе. нед҃ѫжнымъ исцѣленїе’.[522] The occurrence of miracles was interpreted as a divine blessing on a certain town or region, but like intercession more generally, could be extended to a ‘national’ level: ‘рѣкоу иже землю роу҃скоую многы҃ чюдесь веселѧща теченіе҃м’.[523]

[519] РГБ. Ф.304/I №624, fol. 623 r (Vasilii): *praying for the orthodox tsar and the tsaritsa and their children and for all the pious princes and for all the people of the Russian language to keep our town*. This *sluzhba* is clearly focused on Moscow as the centre of Orthodoxy and presents Vasilii as a dynastic saint. The *sluzhba* for Mikhail also has a strong Moscow focus, see РГБ. Ф.304/I №622, fol. 153 v, 154 r, 155 r, and 157 v.

[520] РГБ. Ф.304/I №622, fol. 63 r (Maksim): *your coffin revealed itself to be a source of miracles, o blessed Maksim.*

[521] РГБ. Ф.304/I №619, fol. 258 r (Prokopii): *inexhaustible source of miracles for those who rush to your holy grave, Prokopii*. For more references to miracles, see: РГБ. Ф.304/I №619, fol. 260 v (Prokopii); РГБ. Ф.304/I №622, fol. 156 v, 160 v (Mikhail); РГБ. Ф.304/I №624, fol. 511 r, 516 v, 519 v, (Nikolai); РГБ. Ф.304/I №624, fol. 623 r, 626 v (Vasilii).

[522] РГБ. Ф.304/I №618, fol. 1 v (Isidor): *intercessor to the orphans and the harmed, reward-less doctor to the sick ... comfort to the sorrowful, healing to the sick.*

[523] РГБ. Ф.304/I №630 fol. 240 r (Isidor): *river, who cheered the Russian land with its current of many miracles.*

If they were primarily conceived of as intercessors and wonderworkers in their *sluzhby*, it was their ascetic exploits in life that granted *iurodivye* a place in heaven from which they could intercede. The miraculous preservation of their body, usually noticed at their funeral, foreshadowed posthumous miracles and was usually interpreted as a direct consequence of a *iurodivyi*'s ascetic preservation of bodily purity during their lifetime: '**како на многа лѣта землею покровено нетлѣнно твое тѣло во гробѣ лежаще сблюдается**'.[524] There were several components to a *iurodivyi*'s ascetic feat, one of them being their tendency to be underdressed, or indeed naked, in a harsh climate: '**худѡ ризноую имѣѧ и тѧгѿ̑тѣ вара дн҃евнаго понеслъ еси**';[525] '**наготою теленою и терпѣнїемъ ѡбнажилъ еси вражїе ковáйствїе ... слн҃чныи варъ и ноу̑ныа великїа стоудени и мраза и ѡгнѧ не чюѩше**'.[526] Nakedness was central to the characterisation of Vasilii, who in his *Life* and *sluzhba* was frequently called 'the Naked'.[527] Rejecting clothing was a powerful visual symbol for the radical rejection of the world chosen by *iurodivye*. It encompassed, on the one hand, the rejection of physical comfort and material wealth: '**мира краснаа всѧ ѿвръглъ еси ничт҃же же на телеси своем҃ ношаше ѿ тлѣнныхъ одѣѧнїи**

[524] РГБ. Ф.304/I №618 fol. 11 v (Isidor), РГБ Ф.304/I №630 fol. 254 r: *how over many years your body covered by the earth, lying in the grave, is preserved uncorrupted*.

[525] РГБ. Ф.304/I №624, fol. 511 v (Nikolai): *you bore the meanness of your rags and the burden of the boiling day*.

[526] РГБ. Ф.304/I №622, fol. 58 v (Maksim): *you bared the hostile treachery [of the devil] with bodily nakedness and endurance … not feeling the heat of the sun, and the great violence of the cold and frost and fire*. See also the notice about his death, РГБ. Ф.256 №397 358 v – 359 r.

[527] РГБ. Ф.304/I №624, fol. 621 v (Vasilii).

наготою телесною хви работаа'.[528] On the other hand, the naked body's potential for subversiveness was turned on its head to signify the *iurodivyi*'s taming of corporeal senses: 'не оуѣ҆висѧ посредѣ женъ ѻ҃нажде҃'.[529] Depending on the hagiographer's imagination, the powerful image of nakedness could originate metaphors: according to their respective *sluzhby*, Vasilii was dressed in virtue as if it were bright clothes, and Prokopii wore his virtue as if it were a costly purple mantle.[530]

Beyond the endurance of extreme temperatures, the asceticism of *iurodivye* as described in their *sluzhby* also involved leading a strict but secret monastic, even eremitical, lifestyle. Like the naked body, residing in the streets of a city was a source of potential temptation and a gateway to sin. It was all the more impressive, therefore, that Vasilii lived in the city as he would have in the desert, isolated among people: 'въ градѣ ако в пѫстыни живѧше'.[531] It was frequent for *iurodivye* to show off their madman persona around town in the daytime, and spend the night in prayers and spiritual exercises: 'дреманїѧ вежема не далъ еси ... нѣ҃ покои своемоу тѣлоу ... бо҃у присно прѣ҆стоа во всеноштемъ

[528] *Ibid.*: *he rejected all the enjoyable things of the world, not wearing on his body any perishable clothing, working for Christ through his bodily nakedness*. See passages on the same theme on fol. 623 v, 629 v, 630 r, 632 v.

[529] РГБ. Ф.304/I №622, fol. 62 v (Maksim): *you were not harmed by being naked among women*. This could have been inspired by the episode in the *Life of Symeon of Emesa* where he goes to the women's bath, see KRUEGER, *Symeon,* op. cit., 154.

[530] РГБ. Ф.304/I №624, fol. 625 v (Vasilii); РГБ. Ф.304/I №619, fol. 266 r (Prokopii).

[531] РГБ. Ф.304/I №624, fol. 627 v (Vasilii): *living in the city as in the wilderness*. See a similar passage in РГБ. Ф.304/I №630, 248 r (Isidor): *ꙗко в домоу во истинноу на мѣстѣ поустѣ посреди безоумны чл҃къ вселивсѧ вѣ҃мре.* / *o divinely wise [Isidor], you settled among mad people as in a true house in an empty place [i.e., wilderness]*.

славословїи'.[532] The *iurodivyi*'s body was, in fact, seen as a tool for the attainment of spiritual knowledge. Ascetic practices could involve praying and fasting ('постꙋ̑ и мл҃твами'[533]), and removed the *iurodivyi* from the physical world and opened up a sphere of higher understanding: 'пл҃оское оудержалъ еси желанїе пребогате и оумъ възвысилъ еси на нбныа'.[534] Their physical asceticism and resulting corporeal purity led *iurodivye* to be compared to angels ('анг҃лъ земныї и нб҃ныї члв҃къ'),[535] and bodiless entities, whereas the more violent side of their asceticism – involving beatings from ignorant contemporaries 'посреди безоумны҂ї члк҃ъ вселивсѧ бг҃мр҃е всѧко wзлобленїе претерпѣвыа' –[536] led to comparisons with martyrs or the long-suffering Job ('древнимъ правн҃їкꙋ̑ ишвоу ... оуп҃одбивыисѧ терпѣнїемъ').[537]

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[532] РГБ. Ф.304/I №618, 9 v (Isidor): *you did not allow your eyelids to doze … nor did you give any rest to your body, … standing constantly before God in all-night glorification*. The same topic also appears in the *sluzhba* to Maksim, РГБ. Ф.256 №397, fol. 358 v – 359 r: *въ дн҃и пш оулица҆ хожаше поха сѧ Творѧ. в нщи бе сна пребываше г҃ов҃ и бг҃ов҃ моля* / *Walking during the day, acting like a* pokhab, *at night remaining without sleep praying to the Lord*.

[533] РГБ. Ф.304/I №624, fol. 509 v – 510 r (Nikolai): *with fasting and prayers*. РГБ. Ф.304/I №622, fol. 159 r (Mikhail): Mikhail only had bread and water, with restraint.

[534] РГБ. Ф.304/I №619, fol. 264 r (Prokopii): *you held back your corporeal desire, o most-rich [one], and you elevated your mind to the heavens*. Other instances of the asceticism theme include РГБ. Ф.304/I №624, fol. 626 v, 627 r (Vasilii), РГБ. Ф.304/I №622, fol. 155 v, 156 v (Mikhail), РГБ. Ф.304/I №624, fol. 517 v (Nikolai).

[535] РГБ. Ф.304/I №618, fol. 13 r (Isidor): *earthly angel and heavenly man*.

[536] РГБ. Ф.304/I №630 fol. 248 r: *having settled among mad people, divinely wise [Isidor], you endured every kind of offense*. Equivalent passage in РГБ. Ф.304/I №618 fol. 7 v (Isidor).

[537] РГБ. Ф.304/I №618 fol. 13 v (Isidor): *hail, [you who] resembled the ancient Job in suffering*. Similarly, in the *sluzhba* to Mikhail, РГБ. Ф.304/I №622, fol. 159 r (Mikhail): *скоби и бѣды терпѣвъ пороугаиа и поношеиа и досажѐиа мч҃ници бо в малѣ времени х҃а ради пострадаша* / *enduring sorrows and misfortunes, suffering the insults and vilifications and bothers of martyrdom for a short time for Christ's sake*.

If physical restraint and asceticism might have been a characteristic common to most types of sanctity, the asceticism of *iurodivye* had specific, easily recognisable markers, especially their (semi-)nakedness and the beatings endured. The wisdom *iurodivye* attained through the taming of their mortal senses was often contrasted with worldly wisdom, which they left behind: '**всѧ прелестнаа иже в мирѣ мѫ̑дованїа wставль**'.[538]. The opposition of divine and earthly wisdom can be traced back to the scriptural justification of *iurodstvo*,[539] and recurred in *sluzhby*: '**премѫ̑дростїю ѿцѣтъ wч҃е чт҃ноую мѫ̑дость wставль боуыствомъ преминоулъ еси и оутаеннаа ѿ̀ премѫ̑дыхъ и разоумны҂ трческ҃и҃ бл҃говоленїе прїѧ еси**'.[540] Though they seemed insane to their contemporaries, it was the clear mind (cognates of *um* / ум) or divine understanding of *iurodivye* that singled them out: Vasilii was '**крѣпостїю оума непоколеби҃мь**',[541] Mikhail had a '**целомѫ̑деныи оумъ**', Prokopii had '**на высотоу въстече вы̑разоумиа**, Nikolai was a '**прѧ̑раго разѹма ѧвленіе**'.[542] True wisdom, as opposed to sinful worldly knowledge, was sometimes associated with light: '**мѫ̑дростїю оукрашаѧсѧ и рѧ̑умѣ̀ просвѣщаѧ**'.[543] The ability to

[538] РГБ. Ф.304/I №630 fol. 239 r (Isidor): *you abandoned all the temptations of worldly wisdom*.

[539] For example, 1 Corinthians 1:27–28: 'But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise'.

[540] РГБ. Ф.304/I №622, fol. 63 r (Maksim): *wrapped in the greatest wisdom, father, you abandoned honest [earthly?] wisdom, distanced yourself with rowdy holy foolery [*buistvo*] and, unbeknownst to wise and understanding men, you took the Trinitarian grace*. This passage is somewhat obscure! My interpretation is that it is opposing earthly and divine wisdoms, but confusingly using the same, or similar, terms to describe both.

[541] РГБ. Ф.304/I №624, fol. 625 r (Vasilii): *unshakeable in strength of mind*.

[542] РГБ. Ф.304/I №622, fol. 160 v (Mikhail): *a wholly wise mind*; РГБ. Ф.304/I №619, fol. 258 r (Prokopii): *you rushed to the heights of divine understanding*; РГБ. Ф.304/I №624, fol. 510 r, 517 r (Nikolai): *a revelation of the wisest understanding*.

[543] РГБ. Ф.304/I №619, fol. 265 v (Prokopii): *adorning himself with wisdom and radiating understanding*.

see things unknowable to common mortals was perhaps an extension of the *iurodivyi*'s divine wisdom. Maksim, for example, saw the Trinity praying for people's sins as Andrew of Constantinople had seen the Virgin 'with his spiritual eyes'.[544] Nikolai, on the other hand, had a vision of Christ in his sleep: 'въ снѣ ха видѣлъ еси на вѣсы тѧ оукрѣпляюща и вѣнець тобѣ подающа и съ ефиѡпⷭ̃ братисѧ повѣлюща'.[545] Occasionally, spiritual vision expressed itself in the gift of prophecy, though this ability did not feature prominently in any *sluzhba* other than that of Mikhail: 'даръ прозрѣниа не ѿ чл̃къ ни чл̃кⷭ̃ но ѿ вышняго промысла прiеⷬ';[546] 'оуподобисѧ бг̃огласнымъ древнимъ прр̃комъ сказавъ безвѣстнаа и танаа'[547]

In Isidor's case, the elements of wisdom, vision, and light are closely related to another theme, which dominated his *sluzhba*: Isidor's foreign origin. Born and raised in the Latin faith, Isidor rejected the ways of the (heretical) homeland he left behind and adopted Orthodoxy: 'возненавидѣлъ еси ѿ̈ческое безбожiе и възлюбилъ еси истинноую вѣроу хр̃ѣж града же ростова достигъ и в нⷬ̃ ч̃тⷬ̃ и непорочнⷬ̃ житiемь гв̃и оугодилъ еси'.[548] Isidor's faith journey is often described as a transition from blindness, or spiritual darkness,

[544] РГБ. Ф.304/I №622, 62 r (Maksim): *духовныма очима.*

[545] РГБ. Ф.304/I №624, fol. 514 r (Nikolai): *you saw Christ in your sleep, strengthening you against the demons and giving you a crown and teaching you to fight the Ethiopians*.

[546] РГБ. Ф.304/I №630, fol. 239 r (Isidor): *receiving the gift of clear-sightedness not from man nor through man but by higher design*.

[547] РГБ. Ф.304/I №622, fol. 162 r (Mikhail): *speaking that which is unknown and hidden, he was like the ancient prophets with divine voices*. Other mentions to Mikhail's prophetic gift can be found on fol. 164 v, 165 v – 166 r, and 169 v.

[548] РГБ. Ф.304/I №630, fol. fol. 246 r – v (Isidor): *you hated the godlessness of your fatherland and loved the true faith of Christ. You reached the town of Rostov, and there you pleased the Lord with an honourable and pure life*. There are other mentions to this topic on fol. 247 r – v, 238 v, and 250 r.

to the light of the true faith: ‘ѿ тмы ко свѣтоу бг҃оразоумїа приѓекълъ еси’; ‘рад҃уисѧ пресвѣтлаа звѣзда ѿ запада вос҃іавшіа и къ востокоу пришедыи’; ‘ѿ тмы невидѣнїа къ свѣтоу бг҃оразоумїа и ѿческѹю соуем҃дреноую вѣроу избѣжати потщѧ’.[549] Prokopii, whose *sluzhba* seems based on that for Isidor, had similar, though more infrequent, such passages in his liturgy: ‘свѣтоу҃ разоумныи҃ ѿ бг҃а просвѣщенъ бы҃ и възненавидѣлъ еси ѿческое бе҃божїе и възлюбилъ еси истинноую вѣ хв҃оу’.[550] If the conversion of Isidor – and, apparently, Prokopii – is particularly associated with a transition towards the light, brightness is, more generally, a frequently recurring theme in the characterisation of *iurodivye* in their *sluzhby*: ‘житїе твое, ꙗко слн҃це, въ ср҃дца вѣрныхъ восиа, зарѧ чюдес҃ испоущаѧ’;[551] ‘просвѣщаѧ соущаа въ тмѣ греховнѣи ѡче’;[552] ‘бж҃твеными блистанїи роускоую землю просвѣщающа’.[553]

The theme of strangeness, or foreignness, was otherwise closely associated with following Christ, and imitating Him. Other *iurodivye*, though they did not share Isidor’s, and perhaps Prokopii’s, western roots, were still characterised as foreigners, or strangers – yet another factor that isolated them within an urban environment and brought them closer to

[549] РГБ. Ф.304/I №618, fol. 2 r (Isidor): *you ran from darkness to the light of Godly understanding*; РГБ. Ф.304/I №630, fol. 256 r (Isidor): *hail, most-bright star shining from the west and arriving to the east*; РГБ. Ф.304/I №630, fol. 239 v: *from the darkness of blindness to the light of divine understanding, you endeavoured to escape the falsely wise (superstitious) faith of your fatherland*.

[550] РГБ. Ф.304/I №619, fol. 257 r (Prokopii): *you were enlightened with bright understanding from God, and hated your godless fatherland and loved the true faith*.

[551] РГБ. Ф.304/I №618, fol. 5 v (Isidor): *your life, like a sun, shining in the hearts of the faithful, letting out a ray of miracles.*

[552] РГБ. Ф.304/I №622, 57 v (Maksim): *being enlightened in the darkness of sin, father*.

[553] РГБ. Ф.304/I №622, fol. 154 v (Mikhail): *with divine shining enlightening the Russian land*.

Christ. This act of renunciation involved leaving any material wealth behind: '**бг҃атьствѡ̃ и славоу, ꙗко несоущаа презрѣлъ еси**'.[554] But it also entailed cutting off human relationships in favour of one's relationship with the divine: '**страненъ показасѧ ѿ всѣ̃ сро̑никъ и знаемы᷍**';[555] '**всѧ wстави ха ра̑д᷍ wц᷍а и мт᷍рь женоу и чада и сро̑ствіѧ**'.[556] Though there was suffering, on top of strangeness, associated with following Christ – Mikhail metaphorically picked up his cross, '**и кр̑тъ свои вземъ посл̑ѣдовалъ еси хоу᷍**'[557] – imitating the Saviour was primarily an act of meekness: '**хва смиренїа ревнителѧ**'.[558] This aligns with the characterisation of *iurodivye* as 'men of God', '**чл̑че бӝїи**',[559] possibly referencing the popular *Life of Alexios*, the Man of God, who abandoned his wealthy life to become a destitute wandering stranger.[560] Indeed, though Christ was their ultimate model, *iurodivye* also drew inspiration from other saints, some of them *iurodivye* too: Maksim followed Andrew of Constantinople and Isidor of Rostov, Prokopii followed the righteous Job, Nikolai Kochanov followed Andrew of Constantinople, Mikhail followed St John the

[554] РГБ. Ф.304/I №618, fol. 2 v (Isidor): *you despised wealth and glory as if did not exist.*

[555] РГБ. Ф.304/I №624, fol. 625 v (Vasilii): *you acted like a stranger to all your relatives and acquaintances*.

[556] РГБ. Ф.304/I №624, fol. 632 r (Vasilii): *you left everything for Christ's sake, father and mother, wife and children and relatives*. This is an unusual *topos* I have not encountered in other *sluzhby*.

[557] РГБ. Ф.304/I №622, fol. 155 v (Mikhail): *and having taken up your own cross, you followed Christ*.

[558] РГБ. Ф.304/I №630, fol. 241 r (Isidor): *imitator of Christ's humility*.

[559] РГБ. Ф.304/I №630 fol. 249 v (Isidor); РГБ. Ф.304/I №622, 58 r (Maksim).

[560] *Житие Алексия Человека Божия*, *БЛДР 2*, 244–253, 534–535: This text had been known in Rus' since the eleventh century.

Baptist,[561] and Vasilii followed the hermits Saints Macarius, Onuphrius, Paul of Thebes, and the *iurodivye* Maksim of Moscow and Prokopii of Ustiug.[562]

Finally, and though *sluzhby* for *iurodivye* often mentioned other *iurodivye* as models for their protagonists, they varied wildly in their degree of insistence on the feat, or *podvig*, of *iurodstvo*. In the *sluzhby* for Isidor, Prokopii, or Vasilii, for example, the saints are almost never referred to as *iurodivye*.[563] In the *sluzhby* for Maksim, Mikhail, and Nikolai Kochanov, on the other hand, there is a heavy emphasis on the specifics of life as a *iurodivyi*: '**на земли х҃а ради волею в боуиство прелоужисѧ мира сего красоты ѡ҃нюдъ възненавид҃ѣ. плѡ҃скаа играніа оувѧдивъ постомъ и жаж҃ею и на земли леганїемъ и ѡ҃ зноѧ и стоудени ѡ҃ дождѧ и сн҇ѣгоу и ѡ҃ прочаа въздоушныа тѧгости никогда҃ оуклонисѧ**'.[564]

Sluzhby for *iurodivye*, then, emphasised their role as intercessors and their spiritual path as one of renunciation. The physical baring of their flesh was a visible symbol of all they had left behind – including physical comfort, wealth, human relationships, and their

[561] РГБ. Ф.256 №397, fol. 358 v – 359 r (Maksim); РГБ. Ф.304/I №624, fol. 516 v (Nikolai); РГБ. Ф.304/I №618, fol. 13 v (Isidor); РГБ. Ф.304/I №619, fol. 263 v (Prokopii); РГБ. Ф.304/I №622, fol. 159 r (Mikhail).

[562] РГБ. Ф.304/I №624, fol. 629 r, 632 v (Vasilii): It is debatable whether the text means Prokopii of Ustiug or Procopius of Scythopolis. The first occurrence in the text mentions Prokopii 'The Great', which could mean the fourth-century martyr. But being mentioned after Maksim – presumably the *iurodivyi* – would suggest this was the Ustiug saint.

[563] Here are some examples of the infrequent usage of *iurodstvo* cognates: РГБ. Ф.304/I №624, fol. 621 r, 633 r (Vasilii), in the red titles; РГБ. Ф.304/I №619, fol. 263 v (Prokopii): **оуростьвеное є по апл҃ѣ житьство изьбравъ҆** / *you chose a life of* iurodstvo *following the apostle [Paul]*; РГБ Ф.304/I №630 fol. 256 v (Isidor): **боуиствено и юрьственое же по апл҃оу жительство изьбравыи** / *hail, [you who] chose a violent and foolish way of life, following the apostle [Paul]*.

[564] РГБ. Ф.304/I №622, fol. 156 r – v (Mikhail): *out of your freewill you devoted yourself to aggressive holy foolery [*buistvo*] on earth for Christ's sake, completely hating the beauty of this world, taming the games of the body with fasting and thirsting and lying on the ground and never turning away from the heat and the cold of the rain and snow and from other atmospheric burdens*. See other references to life as a *iurodivyi* in fol. 159 r, 161 v, 165 v, 166 r, 166 v; and РГБ. Ф.304/I №624, fol. 512 v, 514 v, 516 r, 516 v (Nikolai).

very mind – on their journey to follow Christ. Though concerns with corporeal purity and asceticism were common to all the *sluzhby* above, characterising *iurodivye* primarily as extreme renunciates, they differed in their emphasis on the specific *podvig* (feat) of *iurodstvo* and its attributes, like prophecy-making. There is apparently no chronological logic to this pattern, as 'less foolish' *iurodivye* (Isidor, Prokopii, Vasilii) and 'more foolish' *iurodivye* (Maksim, Mikhail, Nikolai) spanned the entire period. Still, when compared with chronicles or foreigners' accounts, *sluzhby* put much greater emphasis on the asceticism of *iurodstvo*, which was consistent with the depiction of *iurodivye* in their hagiographies.

III.2.e Hagiographical *Iurodivye*

Sluzhby as a genre are far more homogeneous than what scholars tend to label as *zhitiia*. The latter varied far more in length, structure, language, and content. The fact that they were written by and for different people in different contexts resulted – contrary to the reputation of medieval literature as standardised and derivative – in texts with unique features, despite their use of the same hagiographic *topoi*, e.g., saints being described as precociously virtuous children, earthly angels, ascetic martyrs, sources of light and salvation, etc. If a similar structure and recurring rhetorical themes made *sluzhby* relatively easy to analyse as a group, *zhitiia* will be dealt with individually so that their distinctive features can stand out by comparison with each other.

If the number of *zhitiia* composed in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to record and commemorate the lives of *iurodivye* is significant, the latter's occasional presence, as secondary characters, in the *zhitiia* of other saints is just as telling of the space they occupied in the collective imagination. Before moving on to the more detailed characterisation of holy fools in their own *zhitiia*, this section will present the ways in which three *iurodivye* –

Mikhail of Novgorod, Galaktion of Beloozero, and Nikolai of Pskov – were sketched in the *Lives* of other saints.

Composed in the late fifteenth century, around the same time as the first two versions of the *Life of Mikhail of Klopsko*, the *Tale about Iona, the Archbishop of Novgorod* (*Povest' ob Ione, Arkhiepiskope Novgorodskom*) has been preserved in sixteenth-century manuscripts.[565] The text told the story of Ivan, the future Iona, from the time he was a serious child, uninterested in other children's frivolous games.[566] The *Tale about Iona* described an encounter between the young Ivan and Mikhail the *iurodivyi*, who had just arrived to Novgorod, in a scene reminiscent of the cruelty of children towards Andrew of Constantinople.[567]

> 'Единою же честному Михаилу, уродивому мирови, Богови же премудрому, въ градѣ первое шествие творящу, дѣтищу же сему стоящу на мѣстѣ укромнѣ, и мнозѣмъ съученикомъ его играющим. И блаженнаго Михаила узрѣвше, уродствено грядуща по улицы, вси дѣтие игры своя оставльше, аки на чюдо к Михаилови притекоша, смѣющеся о нем и рукающеся ему, измѣтаемая из домовъ сметиа на главу безумнѣ възметаху и камение по ногах метаху ему, не знаему ему сущу тогда.'[568]
>
> 'Once when the honourable Mikhail, a holy fool to the world and most wise in the eyes of God, first walked into town, this young child [Ivan] was standing in an isolated place, and many of his fellow students were playing. And having seen the blessed Mikhail walking as a holy fool on the street, all the children left their games and ran to Mikhail as if to a wonder, laughing at him and making fun of him, in their

[565] *Повесть об Ионе, Архиепископе Новгородском, БЛДР 7*, 516: The manuscript used for this edition is РНБ. Софийское собр., № 1424, late sixteenth or early seventeenth century.

[566] The *topos* of the saint as a precocious child, pious and wise far beyond their years, is not unusual – or new, it was a prominent feature of the *Life of Fedosii of Kyiv* – and also appeared in the *Life of Ioann of Ustiug*, see page 217.

[567] RYDÉN, *Life of St Andrew, Vol. II*, op. cit., 93: *... the boys of the city, beating, dragging and slapping him without mercy, put a rope around his neck and dragged him along in full view of everybody, making ink from charcoal which they smeared on his face.*

[568] *Повесть об Ионе, БЛДР 7*, op. cit., 236.

> madness tossing rubbish which had been cleared from the houses at his head, and throwing stones at his feet, for he was still unknown then.'

The passage highlighted Mikhail's wisdom – he was премудрый, most wise, in the eyes of God – and the children's ignorance and madness in their failure to recognise a true servant of God. It also implied that there was something distinctive in Mikhail's appearance that drew attention to him as he walked down the street 'like a holy fool' (уродствено) and made him stand out like a wonder (чюдо, also meaning miracle). Unperturbed by the young hooligans, Mikhail quickly singled out Ivan:

> 'Дневному свѣту уже оскудѣвающу и вечеру бывающу, но обаче внутрениа пресвѣтлы очеса Михаилови бываху. Притекъ бо взятъ отрочища сего за власы, и подъемъ его вышши себе, въпиаше ему: «Иване, — тако бо от святаго крещениа имя дѣтищу — учи книгы прилѣжно, имаши бо великому граду сему архиепископъ быти». И, обиемъ его, отиде. ... Тако и блаженный Михайло Иону сего дѣтска обьем, пророческимъ духомъ глаголаше ему внимати учению святых книгъ, именемъ нарицая, егоже николи не знааше, Иваномъ, тому приглашая. Духовныма бо очима яко настоящая смотря, по мнозѣх лѣтех хотящаа ему быти, увидѣвъ божественым откровением пронареченное ему от Бога святительство ... Тѣмъ же не сматряше телесныма очима сиротьства и убожества и худости отрочищу, но яко съвѣт Господень разуменъ ему, и сердечныма очима зря лежащее на немъ благословение'[569]

> 'Even though it was evening and daylight was becoming scarce, still Mikhail had his bright inner gaze. Coming up to him, he seized this child [Ivan] by the hair, and raising him up higher than himself, cried to him: "Ivan – such was the child's baptismal name – study the books with zeal, because you are to be this great town's archbishop. And, having embraced him, he walked away … In this way did the blessed Mikhailo embrace this child Iona, telling him with prophetic spirit to pay attention to the teachings of the holy books, and calling him by name – Ivan – when he did not know him previously. Seeing with his spiritual eyes, as if it were the present, what would only happen to him after many years, [Mikhail] saw, through divine revelation, the priesthood that had been intended for him by God … Not looking with his bodily eyes at the boy's orphanhood, poverty, and misery, but, since God's light was understood by him, he saw with his heart's gaze the blessing which lay on him [Ivan].'

[569] *Idem*, 236.

Though the passage above depicted Mikhail as a somewhat frightening character, who picked up an unknown child by the hair and shouted at him, the text was more concerned with conveying Mikhail's spiritual gift, pointing out his ability to recognise in near darkness a boy as someone who would, decades later, become the archbishop of Novgorod, and to call him by name. The text anchored the *iurodivyi* Mikhail in scriptural tradition: it likened the blessing of Ivan by Mikhail to the blessing of a humble child by Christ before the apostles in Matthew 18:1–5; associated Mikhail with the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah; and quoted Matthew (5:8) on the pure of heart who can see God.

Very little else was said about Mikhail. The text commented on it being almost as if he had been sent to Novgorod for the sole purpose of identifying the city's future archbishop – which, from the point of view of the *iurodivyi* as a legitimising literary device, is true. A few words were said about Mikhail's background, though none about his lifestyle, ascetic or otherwise. The text claimed him to be a foreigner like Andrew of Constantinople or Isidor of Rostov, in direct contradiction with the *Life of Mikhail*, which described him as a relative of the grand princes of Moscow:[570] 'Преподобный Михайло от далняа земля новопришед и иного отчества сый странствуя прииде в незнаемъ град ему, аще и величества ради своего вселеннѣй всей отдавна вѣдомъ град ...'[571]

Galaktion, another monastic holy fool, was blessed on the path of *iurodstvo* by his mentor Martinian, who served as hegumen of the Ferapontov and Trinity St Sergii monasteries and died in the former in 1483. The mid-sixteenth-century *Life of Martinian*

[570] See page 281. Mikhail's belonging to the grand-princely line was also brought up by the archpriest Maksim in his description of seventeenth-century Novgorod shrines: ZABELIN, Описаніе, op. cit., 54.

[571] *Повесть об Ионе, БЛДР 7*, op. cit., 236: *The venerable Mikhailo being a new arrival from faraway regions and from a different fatherland, in his wandering came to a town unknown to him, though thanks to its greatness it had long been known to the whole world.*

recorded that: ‘И сиа от него извѣстно увидѣшя, яко блаженным Мартинианомъ разсудися и благословенъ бысть от него на чюдное сие и блаженное дѣлание.’[572]

Galaktion was known for his clear spiritual vision. In his later years, he read the wavering mind of a discouraged disciple who was considering leaving the monastery,[573] and predicted his own death and that, shortly thereafter, of his confident Savva.[574] In an earlier episode, Galaktion also predicted that a recently built refectory would not stand long. Not only did Galaktion foresee the fire that consumed it, but, having crossed himself for divine protection, he also saved from the flames a precious item indispensable to the monastery’s financial survival. When people started trying to remove the bells for fear that they burn, the *iurodivyi* defended them with an axe, knowing they would not be consumed by the flames:

> ‘Он же приснопамятный, притекъ, отрину человѣкы и з сѣчивомъ, глаголя: «Сему не горѣть», — и ста у звонилницы. Огнь же отнюдь не прикоснуся емъ, а и близъ сущи. И збысться проречение брата оного, поистиннѣ дивнаго.’[575]
>
> ‘But he, of eternal memory, ran towards them and drove them away with an axe, saying “This is not to burn”, and stayed by the bell tower. The fire did not touch a hair on his head, though it drew close. And the prophecy of that brother [Galaktion], who was truly amazing, was fulfilled.’

Galaktion carried his mentor Martinian to church in the latter’s old age, and the text described him as an exceptionally humble and ascetically inclined monk: ‘Въ вся же службы готовъ з братиею, и тщаливъ зѣло, покоа же телеснаго весма не требоваше, и

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[572] *Житие Мартиниана,* op. cit., 236: *And this we learned from him that it was the blessed Martinian who considered it and blessed him on that wondrous and blessed deed [of* iurodstvo*]*. The manuscript used for this edition was РНБ, Софийское собр., № 467, 1560s, see page 777.

[573] *Idem,* 238: *Аз же, слышахъ от старца, и удивихся проразумѣнию его, вся бо ми умышлениа сердца моего пред лицем моим постави* / *And I, hearing [this] from the elder [Galaktion], was amazed by his understanding, as he had exposed all the considerations of my heart before me [lit. before my face].*

[574] *Idem,* 238.

[575] *Idem,* 236.

на съборном пѣнии паче всѣх обрѣташеся.'[576] Though the text does not explicitly state it, it is implied that, by leading such a life of pure service and devotion, it had been given to Galaktion to see things that his brethren could never guess.[577]

Nikolai of Pskov made a cameo appearance in the *Life of Nikandr the Hermit*, in a similar, if more inconspicuous, role to Mikhail of Klopsko in the *Life of Iona*. Nikandr (1507?–1581) led a reclusive life in the wilderness, and his late sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century *zhitie*[578] was a compilation of stories circulating long before the examination and official recognition of his relics in 1687. Before taking vows, Nikandr was approached on the street in Pskov by Nikolai, whom the text did not introduce, though it invested him with a prophetic gift:

> 'прииде к нему Никула, блаженный псковский, и ят его за руку, и начат глаголати ему, яко похабся творя, и прорече ему впредь страсти пустынныя. Никон же проразумѣвъ реченное ему и соблюдаше в себѣ вся глаголы реченныя. И потом збысться реченное ему.'[579]
>
> 'the blessed Nikula of Pskov came up to him, took him by the hand, and started talking to him, acting like a *pokhab*, and predicted to him the future hardship of wilderness. Nikon, understanding what he was being told, kept in himself all the words spoken [by Nikolai]. And later what had been spoken to him came to be.'

The three texts made it clear that they were talking about an урод / уродивый, and used other derivatives from the same root, on top of more generic terms like *blazhennyi*, and in Mikhail's case *prepodobnyi*. These characters were holy fools to the world (Mikhail:

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[576] *Idem*, 236: *He was ready to take up any kind of service with his brethren, he was extremely zealous, did not need any bodily rest, and always showed up first for singing in church.*

[577] His characterisation in the *Life of Martinian* is consistent with that in the *Stepennaia kniga*, see page 168 and forward.

[578] *Житие Никандра*, op. cit., 827: This edition was based on РГАДА, ф.181, собр. МГАМИД, №145/212, seventeenth century.

[579] *Idem*, 620.

‘уродивому мирови’) or blessed holy fools (Galaktion: ‘Блаженный же юрод’). Though the texts did not explain what *iurodstvo* was, they implied that it involved a performance, a form of pretence: one could walk like a holy fool (Mikhail: ‘уродствено грядуща по улицы’), speak like a holy fool (Galaktion: ‘яко юродъ, такожде глагола’), and act like a holy fool (Nikolai: ‘яко похабся творя’).

The three texts also align in the ways they characterised and used their *iurodivye*. In all cases, their role was to legitimise the saint whose *zhitie* it was, either by foreseeing their future deeds (Ivan as archbishop, Nikon as a hermit), or by presenting them as spiritual mentors (Martinian) to extraordinary disciples. The implication was that by being close to a *iurodivyi*, one could draw closer to God. Moreover, there was a strangeness, and a threatening quality to *iurodivye* as they appeared in these texts. They commanded attention and could be aggressive in their interactions with other people: Nikolai, called a *pokhab*, grabbed Nikon’s hand on the street, Galaktion defended his monastery’s bells with an axe, and Mikhail lifted an unknown boy by the hair to scream at him. This characterisation of holy fools as awe-inspiring and potentially dangerous did not usually find its way into their own *zhitiia*,[580] though it coincided with the way Nikolai of Pskov was depicted in foreign accounts.

The *zhitiia* of Mikhail of Klopsko and Isidor of Rostov, composed in the last decades of the fifteenth century, are the two earliest preserved hagiographies of Russian holy fools. Their form and content, however, have little in common, and their respective presentations of Mikhail and Isidor could lead to two different understandings of *iurodstvo*.

[580] The *Life of Mikhail of Klopsko* is an exception.

The first redaction of the *Life of Mikhail* was a collection of short vignettes narrating the *iurodivyi*'s interactions with the Trinity monastery's visitors and inmates. The text did not attempt to conform to the traditional structure of a *zhitie*. It was, instead, formally divided into four miracles, each with a heading, though there are several other episodes without headings. Mikhail was almost always referred to by name, and was not called a *iurodivyi* beyond the text's title and subtitle ('Прихожение Михайлово. Чюдо 1-е, иже уродиваго Христа ради, еже есть на Клопско на Веряжи'[581]). Another unusual feature is the predominance of direct speech, through which Mikhail was indirectly characterised. There is, in fact, no physical description of Mikhail beyond him being referred to as a *starets* (elder) at the start of the text, making him perhaps middle-aged. Moreover, his relationship with his body, usually central to *sluzhby* and *zhitiia* of *iurodivye*, was almost not mentioned, and appeared in a single sentence, as an afterthought after the story of his death: 'И до преставления его житья в монастырѣ 50 лѣтъ да 6 месяць. А не требовалъ ни постели, ничего, а келъю топиль наземомъ да коневым калом, а самъ на писку лежалъ.'[582]

Rather unusually too, Mikhail seems to have been educated.[583] When he first appeared in the monastery, he was found copying the Acts of Paul – perhaps a reference to the traditional scriptural justification of holy foolery? – in one of the cells. In the third miracle story, Mikhail was charged with reading from the Book of Job – possibly also a reference to

[581] *Повесть о житии*, *БЛДР 7*, op. cit., 218: *Appearance of Mikhail. First miracle of the holy fool for Christ's sake, from Klopsko which is on the river Veriaga*.

[582] *Idem*, 228: *And up to his passing he lived in the monastery for fifty years and six months. And he did not require anything, not even a bed, and he warmed his cell with dirt and horse manure and slept on the sand.*

[583] Literacy, to my knowledge, is not mentioned with regards to any of the other *iurodivye* of this period.

the frequent comparison of holy fools to Job? – during a monastic meal.[584] In the fourth miracle story (unnumbered), when the river water had dried, Mikhail was found writing in the sand. When the hegumen asked him what was written, Mikhail answered («Чашу спасениа прииму, имя Господне призову. Ту будеть кладязь неисчерпаемый»),[585] after which they both dug and found water. Perhaps Mikhail's literacy was partly due to his alleged princely background, though this is pure speculation.

The *Life of Mikhail* is theatrical in the way it depicts the *iurodivyi*'s interactions with other characters. When he appeared out of the blue, one evening, in one of the cells, the brethren and hegumen, armed with a cross and a censer, first made sure that the intruder, who locked himself in the cell, was not a demon. Then, having broken into the cell, the hegumen asked him questions, which Mikhail repeated back at him:

> 'И Феодосий молви ему: «Кто еси ты, человекъ ли еси или бѣсъ? Что тебѣ имя?» И онъ ему отвѣщаетъ тѣ же рѣчи: «Человекъ ли еси или бѣс? Что тебѣ имя?» И Феодосий спросить его второе и третье. А онъ противъ 3-жды тѣ же рѣчи отвѣщаетъ.'[586]
>
> 'And Feodosii said to him: "Who are you, a man or a demon? What is your name?" And he answered him with the same words: "Who are you, a man or a demon? What is your name?" And Feodosii asked him a second and third [time]. And he in return answered three times those same words.'

Similarly, when he was recognised by Prince Konstantin Dmitrievich, the *iurodivyi* repeated twice the same ambivalent words: 'И онъ противъ молви князю: «Богъ знаетъ!» И

[584] *Повесть о житии*, *БЛДР 7*, op. cit., 220: Prince Konstantin Dmitrievich, who was visiting the monastery to take communion, recognised the *iurodivyi*'s voice and identified him as a relative of his, Mikhail Maksimov. Mikhail had previously refused to tell the monks his name.

[585] *Ibid.*: This is partly a quotation from the Psalms (115:4 in Orthodox psalters, 116:13 in KJV), *I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. Here will be an inexhaustible spring.*

[586] *Idem*, 218.

Феодосий игуменъ ему молвит: «Чему, сынко, имени своего намъ не скажешъ?» И онъ противъ молвит: «Бог знаетъ!»'[587]

Mikhail's quick wit and enigmatic style of communication, together with his ability to see the future – often meddling in local politics in the process – were the main elements of his characterisation in the first redaction of his *zhitie*. The *iurodivyi* behaved as the monastery's public relations department, whether he was dealing with armed robbers, whom he invited to have bread with the monks,[588] or with monastic patrons. Having asked Prince Konstantin Dmitrievich to fund a stone church, Mikhail reassured him by predicting a change in weather that would enable the delivery of an additional shipment of stone: '«Княже, не скорби! Богъ дастъ во утрѣ тишину». И бысть в утрѣ тишина.'[589] Mikhail and his prophetic powers were known even to the archbishop of Novgorod, who asked him (affectionately using the diminutive 'Mikhailushka') to pray for his election to be officially confirmed by the grand prince of Moscow. In response to this, Mikhail, with his usual taste for riddles, took the handkerchief the archbishop was holding and placed it on his head, saying: «Доѣдешъ в Смоленско, и поставят тя владыкою».[590]

Mikhail's – and the monastery's – enemies dropped like flies. When the Novgorod *posadnik* Grigorii Kirillovich tried to curtail the monks' fishing rights by threatening them with corporeal punishment, the holy fool predicted the oppressor's demise instead: « Будеши

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[587] *Idem*, 220: *And he in return said to the prince: "God knows!" And Feodosii the hegumen said to him: "Why, son, did you not tell us your name?" And he in return said: "God knows!"*

[588] *Ibid.*: When one of the robbers fell ill, Mikhail predicted that he would be healed if he took monastic vows: *«Постригися — здравъ будеши!»*; *"Get a tonsure [i.e., take vows] and you will be healed!"*

[589] *Idem*, 222: *"Prince, do not be upset! God will give [us] calm [weather] in the morning." And in the morning there was calm.*

[590] *Idem*, 226: *"You will ride to Smolensk and be confirmed as archbishop."*

без рукъ и без ногъ, мало в водѣ не утонеши!»[591] A paralysed, repenting Grigorii was subsequently healed when he attended liturgy at the monastery. Similarly, an ill-advised archbishop of Novgorod, who tried to tax the Trinity monastery quickly succumbed.[592]

Mikhail's visionary abilities and enigmatic behaviour were clearly aligned with Moscow, and with the dynastic line of Vasilii II, whose main opponent, Prince Dmitrii Shemiaka, died after one of the holy fool's prophecies. When Dmitrii came to the Trinity monastery seeking a blessing from Mikhail, the latter stroked the prince's head and repeated three times «Княже, земля вопиет!». Shemiaka passed away soon thereafter.[593] Later, when a Novgorod *posadnik* complained that Moscow wanted to impose a new prince on Novgorod when they already had one, Mikhail let out an angry tirade in which he predicted the final annexation of Novgorod by Moscow, in detail: «То у вас не князь — грязь! … Да по малѣ времени князь великый опять будетъ, да город возметь, да всю свою волю учинитъ, да Богъ дасть ему».[594]

Strange, enigmatic, and threatening, Mikhail was, nevertheless, depicted as a simple intercessor in one instance. When a Novgorod merchant trading abroad was caught in a storm at sea, he called for Mikhail, who appeared and held the ship, saving it from the weather. For the most part, though, the *iurodivyi* was characterised as a strange man who lived in a monastery and performed prophetic riddles for its elite visitors. Though he expressed strong

[591] *Idem*, 224: *"It is you who will be without arms and without legs, and who will almost drown in the water!"*

[592] *Idem*, 228–30: Relations with the archbishops of Novgorod were not always smooth. Archbishop Evfimii II refused to come out to the monastery to perform burial rites when Hegumen Feodosii passed away (228).

[593] *Idem*, 226: *"Prince, the earth is crying [for you]!"*

[594] *Idem*, 230: *"Your prince is dirt! ... And after a short while the great prince will return, and take the town [of Novgorod], and do everything as he pleases, and God will help him."*

political leanings – in favour of the Trinity monastery, whose interests aligned with the hegemony of Moscow over Novgorod and its aristocracy –[595] Mikhail was far from Nikolai of Pskov, the defender of the people. Human interactions in the *Life of Mikhail* remained within the elite layer of the population – except, perhaps, for the encounter with the robbers – and there was never a question of defending the people of Novgorod. Mikhail was the patron of an institution, not of a city, and it might have been more important for the monks who wrote his *zhitie* that he represent the interests of their house under the legitimising cover of being a holy man than to conform to what anyone thought a *iurodivyi* should be. In other words, the means – Mikhail's literary character – were subordinated to the ends – the legitimation of monastic wealth, or survival.

The miracle about saving a merchant from drowning at sea is the only thing the *zhitiia* of Mikhail and Isidor have in common. The *Life of Isidor* was considerably more structured than that of Mikhail and attempted to conform to hagiographic standards. It had a rhetorical introduction,[596] covered Isidor's background as much as possible, as well as his life in the city of Rostov, recorded his death and burial by a handful of faithful, and described six miracles, of which four were posthumous. If Mikhail was overwhelmingly referred to by name, Isidor had more varied epithets of sanctity, such as *blazhennyi* (blessed), *pravednik* / *pravednyi* ((the) righteous (one)), *ugodnik* ((the one) pleasing (to God)), or a combination of

[595] See the passage quoted on page 283.

[596] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 180–2: The introduction described the heavenly crowd of saints and angels Isidor had joined in heaven as a result of his pure life on earth. The author addressed an exhortation to God so that He will open his lips and record the miracles he has witnessed. He also quoted Basil the Great for good measure. See also: *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 242: The version of the *Life of Isidor* in the Great Menology cut the rhetorical introduction. This is the version I will be quoting from, though I also give the page numbers from Gladkova's edition.

these, like ‘блⷪженнаго и пр҃внаго исидора свѣтилника всесвѣтлаго’.[597] He was also referred to as an ‘urod’ when the omniscient narrator wanted to convey the perspective of his contemporaries: ‘яко уродъ вменяем ими и безуменъ … въ день убо яко урод хождаше’.[598] Unlike Mikhail, who was always presented from the perspective of others, Isidor was shown in his *zhitie* from his own internal perspective, performing a difficult devotional deed that required great effort and resulted from an act of freewill – similar to those of Andrew of Constantinople and Alexios the Man of God – that the reader got to witness: ‘утаився всѣх и тако исходить из дому своего и мало пришед и ризѣ совлачит ся вкупе же и долу влекущих мудрованый и приемлеть уродственое же Христа ради житие и буйствено, еже мнимо человѣкы, по апостолу глаголющу’.[599]

The deliberate choice of life as a holy fool was only made more extraordinary by the fact that Isidor had been born and raised in the ‘wrong faith’.[600] One of his most prominent characteristics, both in the *zhitie* and *sluzhba*, was his western, purportedly German, origin:

> ‘Сей блаженый, якоже поведають нѣции, от западных странъ, от латыньска языка, от нѣмецькыя же земля рожение имѣа и воспитание, от славных же и богатых; якоже глаголють, от местьрска роду бѣ.’[601]

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[597] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 181: *[of the] blessed and righteous Isidor the all-bright beacon*.

[598] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 184; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 244: *thinking him an* urod *and a madman … for during the day he walked like an* urod.

[599] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 184; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 244: *hiding it from everyone, he left his house, and having gone a little way, he threw away his shirt together with false wisdom [of the world] that drags [you] down and chose a foolish [*urodstvenoe*] life for Christ’s sake, rowdy/crazy, or so people thought, according to the apostle who said…* This passage is followed by a quotation from Paul’s first epistle to the Corinthians 1:27–28, one of the traditional scriptural legitimations of holy foolery.

[600] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 181.

[601] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 183; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 242.

> 'This blessed [man], as some say, was from western countries, from the Latin tongue, having been born and raised in the German land, from glorious and wealthy [people/family], as they say, from a master's line.'

Against this background, the religious insight that led him to seek the only true faith (Orthodoxy) was all the more impressive: 'И возненавидѣвъ богомерскую отческую и латынскую вѣру, возлюби же истинную нашу христьяньскую и православную вѣру …'.[602] This made Isidor a *strannik*, or wanderer, like Andrew of Constantinople and Alexios the Man of God, 'от градъ во градъ прехождааше'.[603]

Isidor's relentless asceticism defined him as much as his foreignness, to the point where we can reasonably wonder whether his hagiographer was not anxious to justify a potentially questionable type of urban religious life.[604] A significant part of Isidor's ascetic trials came in the form of beatings from city dwellers: 'грады проходя, и мѣста, и много досаду блаженый смиренье приемаетъ, и бьение от безумных человѣкъ приемлеть, яко уродъ вменяем ими и безуменъ'.[605] In Rostov too, where he eventually settled, this became part of his routine, leading him to disassociate himself from his mortal body and to share in the meekness of Christ: 'Вси же его мняху яко уродъ и ум погубивша, и много досажение и укорение, и раны воздааху ему. Блаженый же, яко в чюжем телеси, все

[602] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 183; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 242: *And he came to hate the godless Latin faith of his fatherland, and loved instead our true Christian and Orthodox faith…*

[603] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 184; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 244: *moving from town to town.*

[604] Mikhail had lived in a monastery. Isidor's *zhitie* was the first to describe an ascetic life of isolation in a city.

[605] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 184; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 244: *going through towns and places, the blessed one took a lot of vexation and abuse and beatings from crazy people who thought him to be a fool and insane*.

со благодарением терпяше...'[606] If he built himself a makeshift roofless hut in a swamp by the city, it was only so that he could remain invisible as he performed his acts of devotion, and otherwise roamed homeless in the city, enduring the discomforts of weather and sleep deprivation.[607] In a longer description of Isidor's routine, the ascetic aspects – praying all night, enduring physical pain – far outweighed the foolish aspects – taking naps in heaps of rubbish – and were strongly reminiscent of the Life of Andrew of Constantinople:

> 'Въ день убо оскорбляемъ и уничижаемъ многими озлобленьми, нощи же приходящю, и пакы святый во свою ховрастную хижу приходить и всю нощь без сна въ молитвах и сьлезах и колѣнокланяньи пребываше. Утру же приходящу, и паки святый ис хижа исходить и егда от многаго труда и непокоа телеснаго ему пребывати на улици убо града и на сметинии, и на гноищи, или во кущи тѣло свое на землю токмо пометаа, и ту мало сна приимаше ... И егда же мразу, или снѣгу, или дожду бывающу, святый же тѣло и хижу непокровену имяше.'[608]

> 'For during the day he was vexed and humiliated in countless instances of abuse, and when night came, again the saint would come to his stick hut and remain sleepless all night, in prayers and tears and genuflexions. And when the morning came, again the saint would come out of the hut, and he would, with great effort and physical restlessness, remain in the streets of the town, on rubbish heaps or on manure, or he would [stay] in his hut and throw his body on the earth and sleep for a little there … And when there was frost or snow or rain, the saint had his body and hut uncovered.'

As mentioned above, Isidor, like Mikhail, saved a merchant from drowning at sea.[609] In the only other miracle he worked during his life, Isidor made wine disappear from a local prince's feast when the household servants treated him badly – «Отиди, безумней урод,

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[606] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 184–5; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 244: *Everyone thought him to be a freak [*urod*] with a corrupted mind, and gave him a lot of vexation and abuse, and wounds. But the blessed one, as if inside the body of another, endured everything with gratefulness …*

[607] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 184–5; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 244.

[608] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 185; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 244.

[609] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 186–7. On the potential origin of this theme in the miracles of St Nicholas, see footnote 508 page 186.

отиди, отиди, лишенне славы житиа сего человѣческаго, отиди, не стужай ми»[610] – and reappear when the prince apologised to him. Like most saints, including Mikhail of Klopsko, Isidor knew when he was about to die, and prepared himself with prayer and fasting, before lying down with arms crossed on his chest.[611] There was nothing unusual, or particularly holy foolish, about Isidor's posthumous miracles, which included striking a presbyter who dared open his tomb and healing two people.

Voluntary asceticism and renunciation, including leaving his family and faith, was the backbone of Isidor's *zhitie*. If he was a stranger, or *strannik*, he did not engage in riddles or provocations, and though his prophetic gift was mentioned in passing – 'приемлетъ святый от Бога даръ прозорливый, еже чюдеса ему творити'[612] – the text offered no concrete examples of it: Isidor was first and foremost an ascetic.

Prokopii of Ustiug was yet another kind of holy fool. Unfortunately, the earliest version of the *Tale about the miracles of Prokopii of Ustiug* has not been edited, and neither of the manuscripts transmitting the text's sixteenth-century version was accessible to me.[613] Nevertheless, Vlasov published separately one of the earliest versions of a Tale about a fire

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[610] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 188; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 246: *"Go away, crazy fool/freak [*urod*], go away, go away, [you who are] deprived from the glory of this human life, don't annoy me"*.

[611] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 189; *Память святого Сидора,* op. cit., 248.

[612] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 186; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 244: *And the saint received from God the gift of clear-sightedness, which [was] to work miracles.*

[613] VLASOV, *Устюжская литература*, op. cit., 30: The *Life of Prokopii* has been dated to the 1640s–50s. VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 548–50: Vlasov's edition of what he calls the *zhitie* of Prokopii of Ustiug supposedly takes into account at least one of these two sixteenth-century manuscripts, but it is largely based on seventeenth-century manuscripts, since most of this text was written in the mid-seventeenth century.

cloud that descended upon Ustiug, deemed to be the oldest text about Prokopii,[614] on the basis of which the Tale about his miracles was later composed.

The text, entitled simply 'Месяца июля в 8 день святаго праведнаго Прокопия, уродиваго Христа ради Устюжскаго чюдотворца',[615] offered a succinct portrait of Prokopii:

> 'Во граде Устюзе бысть некий муж уродивый Христа ради именем Прокопий и живяше в паперти у святыя церкви Святыя Богородица ... пища же и одежа никако же о том печаашеся, и от приносящих ему никако же приимаше, имеяше же прозор Божия явления.'[616]
>
> 'In the town of Ustiug there was a certain man, a *iurodivyi* for Christ's sake, called Prokopii, who lived on the doorstep of the holy church of the Holy Mother of God … not worrying about food or clothing, and not taking anything from what was brought to him, and who had insight into the revelations of God.'

Voluntary poverty and the ability to see divine matters were the main characteristics of Prokopii, who acted as a collective Christian conscience:

> 'Бысть же на утрие в день неделный по заутрени, егда воздвизают Честныя Кресты и собрашеся вси людие. Блаженный же муж възвести видение, бывшее ему, всем людям, глаголя: «Аще не покаетеся грехов своих и Господа не умолите за беззакonии ваших, то зле погибнет град сей». Они же того не послышавшее глаголанных от него ... Видевшее блаженный он, муж, непослушание люди тех, рыдаася и плачася непрестанно о погибели града того. И приходящее и глаголаху к нему: «Что плачеся, человече, непрестанно?» Он же глаголаше им: «Бдите и молитися, да не внидете в напасть». Они же, яко несмысленна его глаголющи.'[617]
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> 'It was Sunday morning after the morning service, when they raise the True Cross and all people gather. The blessed man [Prokopii] announced to all the people the vision which had appeared to him, saying: "If you do not repent of your sins and if you do not plead with God [to forgive] your iniquities, then this town will meet a

[614] VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 547.

[615] *Idem*, 466: *The month of July, on the 8 day of the saintly and righteous Prokopii, the holy fool for Christ's sake, the Ustiug wonderworker*.

[616] *Ibid*.

[617] *Idem*, 467.

> terrible end." But they did not listen to him and the things he said … The blessed man, seeing the disobedience of those people, wept and cried constantly about the ruin of that town. And people who came up to him said: "Why, man, are you crying constantly?" And he replied to them: "Wait and pray that no calamity will happen to you." But they said he was an imbecile.'

Prokopii's protagonism in the story about the fire cloud ended with the passage quoted above. When the fire cloud did eventually arrive, the town dwellers – Prokopii, presumably, among them – gathered in church, and it was their collective prayer that moved an icon of the Virgin, who cried healing myrrh and interceded for the city.[618] Prokopii, it seems, could see divine powers at work but not influence them. He was likened to a prophet in a quotation from the Proverbs of Solomon (1:24),[619] and was considered mad for calling out his community on their sins, though his strangeness was later revealed as wisdom.

The only other sixteenth-century hagiographic source about Prokopii I have had access to is a tale about an icon of him, a long collection of miracle stories interspersed with encomia to Prokopii and Varalaam of Khutyn'.[620] The text was composed from 1548 and descriptively headed: 'Начало предисловию различных чюдес и преславных знамений, Божиею благостию сотворшихся во святем монастыре святых мученик Бориса и Глеба, еже есть от града ближняго чюдотворца Прокофия'.[621] In it, there was no mention to the *iurodivyi*'s voluntary poverty and prophetic abilities during life. Instead, he appeared as an intercessor in visions to people who were about to be healed and was consistently described

[618] *Idem*, 469.

[619] *Ibid*.

[620] *Idem*, 473, 579: The manuscripts used in the edition are РГБ Ф.178 №1365 sixteenth century, and БАН собр. Чубанова 474, first third of the seventeenth century.

[621] *Idem*, 120: *Beginning of the foreword of the various miracles and most glorious signs of the wonderworker Prokopii, with God's grace happening in the monastery of the holy martyrs Boris and Gleb, which is not far from the closest town*.

as a bright figure with a sceptre in his hand: 'В том часе беснованный видит мужа свята, входяща во церковь, скипетр держаща в руце своей, образ лица его, яко солнце'.[622] In encomiastic passages, Prokopii was always associated with images of brightness or fire: 'В тебе бо есть тайное солнце, пламень до небеси, столп огненный, святая чюдотворная икона…'[623]

If Prokopii was largely a legendary figure, the characterisation of Ioann, his fellow Ustiug *iurodivyi* alongside whom he was often depicted in icons, was a curious blend of hagiographic *topoi* with a more naturalistic portrait of a historical figure's background. The author, whose father was the hegumen of the Boris and Gleb monastery in Sol'vychegodsk, conducted (what we would call) an oral history investigation, interviewing his father,[624] who had served as a priest in the Dormition cathedral of Ustiug, and other locals, moved by the urgency of recording the previous generation's living memory:

> 'Реку: «Иоанн каков бе?» И поведаша ми вся подробну ... Паки поведаша ми отець мой, тогда убо бывшу ему саном свещеньства у соборныя апостольския великия церкви Пречистыя Богородица и Всечестнаго Ея Успения, иже есть на Устюге, и сподоби его Бог видети таковаго светилника и погребати тело блаженнаго Иоанна со прочим чином священства тоя великия церкви ...'[625]
>
> 'I say: "What was Ioann like?" And I was told everything in detail …I was told the most by my father, since he was at that time a priest in the apostolic cathedral church of the Most Pure Mother of God and her Honourable Dormition, which is in Ustiug,

[622] VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 138: *At that moment, the possessed man sees a holy man, walking into the church, holding a sceptre in his hand, the image of his face like the sun*. See also similar visions on pages 136, 141, 144. The sceptre Prokopii held in this vision was probably an interpretation of the three fire irons he was depicted holding on icons, which might have existed before written texts.

[623] VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 128: *In you there is a hidden sun, a flame up to the skies, a column of fire, o holy wonderworking icon…* For similar passages, see also pages 136 and 193. This kind of imagery is very similar to that found in liturgical texts.

[624] If Ioann died, as sources claim, in 1495, and Hegumen Dionisii was still alive in the 1550s when the cycle of texts about Prokopii and Ioann was written, he must have enjoyed a suspicious longevity.

[625] VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 275–6.

> and God granted him to see that beacon of light [Ioann] and bury the body of the blessed Ioann with the other clergy of that great church …'

Whereas a holy fool's background and childhood are usually the time of his life the hagiographer knows the least about, the son of Dionisii recorded surprisingly detailed information about Ioann's origins, from the names of his God-fearing parents, Savva and Anataliia, and brother Irodion, to their moving from an unnamed village near Ustiug to the town of Orlov by the river Iug during Ioann's childhood, after which his father died and his mother became a nun.[626] This framework of names and toponyms brought to life the portrait of Ioann as an unusually pious child. Precociously wise ('во младе теле стар смысл показа'), Ioann did not play with other children.[627] Moreover, he was given to ascetic practices, including fasts and vigils, leading to arguments with his concerned mother, which the hagiographer reported in direct speech:

> 'В среду ж и в пяток ничто ж не вкушаше, а прочия ж дни токмо хлебом и водою питашеся, в нощи же без сна пребываше, моляся Господеви … "Не мози, чадо, на ю неядением плоти своея изнуряти, от многа воздержания да не в язву впадеши, тако ти младу сущу плоти растущии и зветущии, никто же бо також млад сый в ту версту такову жестоку посту касаетися ..."'[628]
>
> 'On Wednesdays and Fridays, he would not eat anything, and on the other days he would only have bread and water, and at night he would remain without sleep, praying to the Lord … "It is not right, child, for you to wear out your body with hunger like that, you might become ill from so much restraint, since you are young and your body is growing and blossoming; no one at such a young age imposes such a severe fast upon themselves …"'

[626] *Idem*, 278–80.

[627] *Idem*, 279: *He showed old sense in a young body*.

[628] *Ibid*.

But neither his mother nor illiteracy could prevent Ioann from acquiring divine wisdom through his ascetic exertion: ‘Чюдный ж благой отрок, аще и книжнаго писания не умеяше, но Божыею благодатию вразумлен бысть.’[629]

Because he was such an unusual and lonesome child, Ioann was perceived as mad from a young age: ‘Видящии ж его мняху, яко ума цела не имееть’.[630] This, along with his choice of asceticism over worldly activities, presaged Ioann’s voluntary decision to become a *iurodivyi* after his father’s death, and with his mother’s approval: ‘Святый ж Иоанн во юродство волею претворися, мира сего возненавидев красоты.’[631] Interestingly, in order to live as a *iurodivyi*, Ioann considered it necessary to move to the more populated city of Ustiug, where he settled in a lodge by the Dormition cathedral. The hagiographer legitimised Ioann’s lifestyle with reference to the Church fathers and to his predecessor Prokopii: ‘Поминаа житие святых отец…’, ‘… истиный праведник по велицем праведнице по блаженнем Прокопии.’[632] The description of Ioann’s routine is also reminiscent of Job and the *vitae* of Andrew of Constantinople, and Isidor of Rostov:

> ‘И оттоле святый начат уродство творити пред человекы, дабы не знали дела его, яже творяше святый, по граду и по улицам рыща груницею. И егда ему не хотяаше ходити и съглядаше места, иде же быше куча гноища, по образу Иева праведнаго.’[633]
>
> ‘And from then on, the saint started acting as a holy fool in front of people, so that they would not know his deeds, which he got up to. He ran and skipped around town

[629] *Idem*, 280: *The wondrous and virtuous boy, though he could not understand the writing of books, was wise through the grace of God*.

[630] *Idem*, 279: *Those who saw him thought he did not have his whole mind*.

[631] *Idem*, 280: *The holy Ioann became a* iurodivyi *by his own freewill, having despised the beauty of this world.*

[632] *Idem*, 281: *remembering the life of the holy fathers…*; *a true righteous [man] following the great righteous [one] the blessed Prokopii*.

[633] *Ibid*.

> and on the streets, and when he did not want to walk, he would spot a place where there was a dung heap, following the example of the righteous Job.'

In the passage above, *iurodstvo* was clearly conceptualised as a performance by the hagiographer, who also made sure to describe Ioann's costume: 'пребываше наг, лишеннен мовит, ни власяницы не имея, нося един плат, рубиа раздранны, им же препоясан по чреслом … А иногда срачицу ношааше зело уруднену, а не омовенну николи ж.'[634] Beyond identifying him as a holy fool and symbolising his rejection of the material world, quasi-nakedness was also an element of Ioann's ascetic feat: 'наг зимою умираа и зное изгараа'.[635] Adding to it, like his predecessors Andrew and Isidor, and like Christ himself, Ioann was beaten up by town dwellers who took him for a possessed madman: 'Неции безумнии несмыслении человеци не у кыа невегласы зряхут на нь, глаголааху: «Се новобешенина». Пхахут его и по шии бьяху бо его и плеваху на нь, и лице его кропяхуть гнушающеся.'[636]

One of Ioann's lifetime miracles was unusual and highlighted his ascetic endurance even further. The episode is told from the point of view of a priest who hid in the Dormition cathedral to watch Ioann. Making sure there was no one around, the *iurodivyi* said a short prayer and lay down on the embers inside the furnace that warmed the cathedral in winter. The hiding priest was awe-struck:

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[634] *Ibid.*: *being naked, without clothes, he did not even own a hair shirt, wearing only a ragged piece of fabric around his loins … And sometimes he wore a very dirty undershirt which was never washed*.

[635] *Ibid.*: *naked, he froze [lit. expired] in winter and burned in summer*.

[636] *Ibid.*: *Some crazy and senseless people, ignorant, looked at him and said: "This is a madman". They kicked him on the neck and beat him and spat on him, and they disdained to look at his face*.

> ‘Мене ж, грешнаго, гроза обыде, видевшу ми таковое страшное и необычное видение, паче ума человеча. Сердцем ужасеся и помысл увяде и вниде трепет в кости моа. Помысли: неразумни, чаах, яко ума цела не иметь.’[637]
>
> ‘And I, a sinner, was as if struck by lightning, seeing such a strange and unusual sight, beyond the human mind. My heart was horrified, and my mind was clouded and my bones were seized with shaking. I thought: he is crazy, I sense, he is not in his right mind.’

When the priest opened the furnace doors to try and ‘save’ him, an angry Ioann made him swear not to tell anyone about what had happened. The priest’s visceral reaction to seeing Ioann crawl into the furnace suggested an awe-inspiring, even frightening, facet of *iurodstvo* that was not present in the characterisation of Isidor.

Some of Ioann’s other miracles showed off his prophetic gift. He guessed that Princess Mar’ia, the *namestnik*’s wife, was ill and remotely healed her even before their servant – who found him on a pile of dung – had time to request his help: ‘Слуга же удивися пророчению святаго, возвратися в дом свой, зреет их же не надеяшеся. И видевшее княгиню здраву молитвами святаго Иоанна.’[638] Ioann also foresaw his own death, and lay down on the earth, having given instructions about his burial place.[639] His body remained beautiful after death (‘лице святаго, яко аггела Божия, и тело плоти его, аки снег’[640]) and, together with a posthumous healing, confirmed Ioann’s worth as a saint.[641]

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[637] *Idem*, 282.

[638] *Idem*, 283: *The servant was surprised by the saint’s prophecy, and went back to his house, not expecting to see them [the prince and princess, both] again. And he saw the princess healthy by the prayers of saint Ioann.*

[639] *Idem*, 284–5.

[640] *Idem*, 285: *the saint’s face, like that of an angel of God, and his body like snow*.

[641] *Idem*, 287: The hagiographer apologised for not recording more posthumous healings, explaining he lived far from Ioann’s shrine in Ustiug.

Though he was still predominantly an ascetic, like Isidor had been, some elements of Ioann's characterisation, especially his lying inside a hot stove and lying on piles of dung, set him slightly apart from less intimidating urban ascetics like Alexios the Man of God. After all, when Ioann crawled out of the stove the priest had opened, he 'looked threateningly at me [the intruder] with his eyes'.[642]

The *zhitie* of Vasilii of Moscow primarily depicted him as an extreme ascetic, though some of its elements gave the *iurodivyi* a more transgressive edge. Commissioned after the grandiose recognition of Vasilii as a saint in 1588, the text evidently borrowed from the *Stepennaia kniga*, the earliest source about the saint, and strove to depict him as a respectable establishment figure by justifying his nakedness at length and only occasionally 'copy pasting' more foolish elements onto an otherwise harmless ascetic. By far the longest sixteenth-century *zhitie* of a *iurodivyi*, the text was written in a then-fashionable, highly ornamented style (*pletenie sloves*), but contained very little concrete information about Vasilii.

Vasilii's generic characterisation as a holy man and miracle worker reflected positively on his imperial patrons. The text highlighted his close connection with the ruling dynasty – Vasilii was held in high esteem by Ivan IV and his wife Anastasiia, and predicted the accession of Fedor I, who became a patron of his cult[643] – and advertised his shrine. The twenty-four miracle stories at the end of the text[644] are a meticulous record of healings that

[642] *Idem*, 282: *воззрев на мя грозно очима*.

[643] I.I. KUZNETSOV, *Святые блаженные Василий и Иоанн, Христа ради московские чудотворцы*, Moscow 1910, 48–9, 51: Vasilii's funeral was, apparently, exceptionally well attended, attracting all the secular and clerical elite of Moscow.

[644] KUZNETSOV, *Святые блаженные*, op. cit., 59–73.

mostly took place at Vasilii's shrine in Moscow, though the text also retold the two prophetic episodes first recorded in the *Stepennaia kniga*, about the 1521 Tartar attack and the 1547 Moscow fire.[645] Vasilii's role as an intercessor was central to his cult, and therefore to his *zhitie*: he was presented as an intercessor for individual people, a patron of the city of Moscow, and a defender of the Russian people and their Orthodox faith.[646]

Vasilii's life as a *iurodivyi* was otherwise primarily presented as one of extreme renunciation. The text regularly enumerated Vasilii's sacrifices: 'ни о чесом же земныхъ печашеся, ни о родителѣх, ни о сродницѣх, ни о друзѣхъ ни о имении ни о славе мира сего'.[647] Probably because the idea of a pious layman living alone on the streets of a large city was not entirely palatable to Muscovite ecclesiastical minds, the text frequently compared Vasilii to renunciates who had settled in the wilderness, implying that the holy fool's feat was even greater: 'в народе живыи безмолствуя, яко в столпѣ пребывая', 'в мирѣ живыи яко в пустыни в народе пребывая яко в кающихся обители'.[648] Vasilii took his rejection of the material world one step further than Ioann by being fully naked. This element of his characterisation was extremely prominent in his *zhitie* and might therefore have been an undeniable element of his popular lore that evidently bothered the hagiographer and required careful justification. Rather than sinful, his nakedness was interpreted as the innocence of Adam before the fall: 'телеснаго одѣяния не имущу. яко первозданныи

[645] *Idem*, 73–5.

[646] *Idem*, 55–6.

[647] *Idem*, 39: *not caring in the least about earthly [things], neither about his parents, nor about relatives, nor about friends, nor about property, nor about the glory of this world*.

[648] *Idem*, 44, 47: *living in silence [without speaking] among people, as on a column [i.e., like a stylite]', 'living in the world as in the wilderness, remained among people as if repenting in a monastery*.

адамъ преже преступления. душевною же добротою неизреченно одѣянну'.[649] Vasilii had surrendered everything, down to his very body, to God: 'жертвеникъ свое тѣло сотвори ... яко агглъ пребывая. еже бѣяше яко бесплотенъ. не срамляяся человѣчьскаго срама.'[650] As with other holy fools, inadequate clothing (or lack thereof) was also a part of the ascetic endurance of physical discomfort: 'и на тѣле своемъ ничтоже одѣяние ношаше ... в толицѣх лѣтех алканием и жаждею изнуряя себе. мраза и зжения солнечнаго николи же оуклоняяся'.[651]

Assimilated to a sun or an eagle, Vasilii inhabited a spiritual world, was always praying inwardly to God, and cut himself off from the sinful world by refusing to speak.[652] Because of his closeness to divine spheres, he was granted awe-inspiring powers. His prophetic gift, illustrated by the two *Stepennaia kniga* episodes in an appendix after the miracle stories, did not feature prominently in the core text of the *zhitie*, which otherwise mentioned Vasilii's ability to resurrect the dead, tame wild beasts, put out fires, walk on water, and control the weather.[653] Such frightening powers, when combined with some of Vasilii's most transgressive behaviours, chief among them his uncompromising nakedness, gave an edge to his otherwise harmless asceticism: 'многащи оубо чревоу его свое потребование. и

[649] *Idem*, 74: *... not having any bodily clothing, like the first-created [man] Adam before the fall, ineffably clothed in spiritual goodness …* This passage might have been quoted from the *Stepennaia kniga*, see the passage quoted on page 170.

[650] *Idem*, 45: *he made an altar of his body … being like an angel, existing as if bodiless, unsoiled by human corruption*.

[651] *Idem*, 47: *… and on his body he wore no clothing … all those years wearing himself out with hunger and thirst, never turning away from frost or the sun's burn …*

[652] *Idem*, 39, 44–7, 54, 56.

[653] *Idem*, 45.

пред народом проходъ твори. оувѣрити мысля, яко оума внѣшнева отстоупивъ. пахабся творя.’[654]

Finally, there is, strictly speaking, no surviving *zhitie* for Nikolai Kochanov, though a combination of two miracle stories with an encomium dedicated to him is sometimes referred to as such.[655] Compared with the texts discussed above, Nikolai is only generically characterised, and one is left with the impression that the hagiographer was merely ticking *topoi* boxes. The second miracle story, lengthy but posthumous, does not add to the characterisation of Nikolai, other than presenting him as a functional intercessor.[656] In the first miracle story, however, Nikolai made all the wine at an aristocratic feast disappear and then reappear, exactly like Isidor, whose *zhitie* was probably the subtext. In this episode, a discerning aristocrat respected Nikolai as a local saintly man and invited him to a feast he was hosting. But when he arrived at the aristocrat’s house, Nikolai, like Isidor, was mistreated by the aristocrat’s servants while their master was away: ‘и нѣцыи же невѣгласи бїахѫ его пѫстьми иніи же пхахѫть егѡ иніи же ρѫгахѫсѧ емоу и неподобнаѧ словеса глаголюще’.[657] Taking this treatment, which he was used to receiving

[654] *Ibid.*: *often his insides would be in need, and he would do his business in front of people, thinking to convince them that he had spoiled his inner mind, acting like a* pokhab. This episode was probably inspired by the *Life of Symeon*. The use of the word *pokhab* – an aggressive holy fool – here is interesting, as it is rarely found in hagiographic sources.

[655] V.M. UNDOL’SKII, *Славяно-русскія рукописи В.М. Ундольскаго, описанные самимъ составителемъ и бывшимъ владѣльцемъ собранія с № 1-го по 579-й с приложеніемъ очерка собранія рукописей В.М. Ундольскаго въ полномъ составѣ*, Moscow 1870, col. 23: I have, unfortunately, not been unable to consult the only sixteenth-century manuscript and have had to use a seventeenth-century copy, Ф.310 №344.

[656] РГБ. Ф.310 №344, fol. 4 v to 7 r: This is an unusual, bizarrely long and convoluted, story among the miracle accounts I have looked at. It deals with oath-swearing and -breaking, with Nikolai acting as a secondary, heavenly guarantor for an earthly guarantor, the priest Ioann, in a money-lending deal involving Nikifor the lender and Isaak the borrower, whose illiteracy prevented him from signing a document acknowledging his debt.

[657] *Idem*, fol. 1 v: *and some ignorant people beat him with fists, others trampled on him, and others swore at him uttering indecent words*.

from random people on the street,[658] as the work of the devil, Nikolai did not blame the servants but welcomed the pain and humiliation: '**и терпѧше ѿ нихъ с радостїю бл҃годарѧ и хвалѧ бг҃а**'.[659] Elsewhere, he was even hailed as a martyr: '**моученицы бо воедино время страсти претерпѣша сей же вовсѧ дни живота своего мѵки терпѧ и оуничиженїе и пхание ѿ мирскїѧ чади пр҃їимаше**'.[660] Nikolai's *podvig* was primarily one of submissive meekness: his existence was compared to that of angels ('**радѵисѧ бл҃женне никола подражателю сн҃ыхъ а҃гглъ**'[661]), and even that of Christ ('**соблюдаѧ хр҃топодобъное житїе**'[662]), whose meek ('**имѣѧ ибо бл҃женныи никола нравъ незлобивъ**'[663]) slave he chose to be ('**рабе хр҃товъ**').[664]

The text showered other textbook characteristics of saints, generally, and *iurodivye*, specifically, on Nikolai: he avoided worldly glory and possessions,[665] was virtuous already as a child,[666] had Andrew of Constantinople for a model,[667] endured the physical discomfort

[658] *Idem*, fol. 1 r.

[659] *Idem*, fol. 1 v: *and he suffered from them with joy, thanking and praising God*.

[660] *Idem*, fol. 10 v: *at the same time enduring the passion of martyrdom, every day he of his life he endured pain and received humiliation and trampling from the children of the world*.

[661] *Idem*, fol. 11 r: *hail you, blessed Nikola, the imitator of holy angels*.

[662] *Idem*, fol. 12 r: *following a Christ-like life*.

[663] *Idem*, fol. 3 r: *for the blessed Nikola had a gentle disposition*.

[664] *Idem*, fol. 3 r: *servant / slave of Christ*.

[665] *Idem*, fol. 4 v: He forbade the aristocrat to tell anyone about the wine miracle. The text also claims he was of noble birth and gave away all his wealth to become a *iurodivyi*, see fols. 3 v, 8 v, 10 r, 10 v.

[666] *Idem*, fol. 8 v.

[667] *Idem*, fol. 11 v.

of extreme weather conditions as well as constant prayers and fasts,[668] and led the life of an itinerant *strannik*.[669] Interestingly, though Nikolai was characterised as a harmless, simple-minded man, the text insisted on his – seemingly innocent and vaguely described – *iurodstvo* performance: he ran around the streets (‘нача ристати по оулицамъ’),[670] acted like a holy fool (‘нача оурodствовати гда ради’, ‘похабъ сѧ творѧше’, ‘оурodомъ сѧ твориѧ’),[671] and apparently made prophecies.[672] Despite its complete lack of specificity,[673] this text is interesting as an example of late sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century tropes of *iurodstvo*. Its collage of *iurodstvo* characteristics from other texts suggests that it had become a more recognisable spiritual path that leaned strongly into the imitation of Christ.

* * *

There is little overlap between the characterisation of *iurodivye* in images, on the one hand, and in texts, on the other. Visual representations of *iurodivye* were highly individualised, to the extent that saints were easily identifiable and difficult to conceive of as a category other than, perhaps, saintly laymen. In texts, on the other hand, Russian *iurodivye* were frequently said to take inspiration from one another, for example following the footsteps of Isidor of Rostov, as well as from older models, like Andrew of

[668] *Idem*, fol. 9 r, 10 r.

[669] *Idem*, fol. 9 v: The text claims he went from place to place, though as far as sources go, including this one, he was always in Novgorod.

[670] *Idem*, fol. 1 v.

[671] *Idem*, fol. 9 v.

[672] *Idem*, fol. 11 v: The example given is the prediction of the birth of an archbishop to his mother, possibly echoing the story about Mikhail and Archbishop Iona of Novgorod, and later in seventeenth-century texts about Prokopii and Stephen of Perm’.

[673] The only distinctive element is the posthumous miracle about oath-swearing.

Constantinople, or the Old Testament figure of Job. Similar models gave them common traits as a category which one would struggle to see in their images.

The main point of overlap between visual and textual characterisations of *iurodstvo*, though far from universal across practitioners, was nakedness or near nakedness, and the asceticism it implied. Yet arguably the most innovative – and, from the Church's point of view, problematic – trait of *iurodstvo* was to do with context, which icons rarely represented. Nakedness was not a problem *per se*. Early Christian hermits wandered about naked in the wilderness and even Mary of Egypt was naked in the Judean desert without it being considered a transgression – it only became an issue once Zosima found her. Likewise, with *iurodivye* the sensitive aspect of their lifestyle was not so much that they were naked, but that they were naked, and purporting to lead a life devoted to God on their own, *in the city*. This was not so much a difficulty for icons, where saints were generally represented out of context, often side by side with other saints whose contexts and lifestyles were different,[674] but it did feature prominently in texts as a characteristic in need of justification and absolution from easy accusations of sinfulness. This, to my mind, is what makes the relationship to the body so central to ecclesiastical texts (*sluzhby* and *zhitiia*) about *iurodivye*: they take care to emphasise the mortification imposed by *iurodivye* on their body, including sleep and food deprivation, the combination of inadequate clothing and unforgiving weather, and the beatings endured at the hands of town dwellers; while also stressing the resulting purity of body and soul, revealed by a *iurodivyi*'s uncorrupted and beautiful flesh after death, and the ability of his tomb to work miracles.

[674] Although see Fig. 21 for an interesting example from a hagiographical icon: Vasilii is depicted naked in the central image, against a background of rocks and bushes reminiscent of the natural habitat of desert hermits, but he is shown wearing a loincloth in the small surrounding scenes from his life, where he interacts with people in predominantly urban environments.

Another aspect of *iurodstvo* that did not find its way into visual representations was the ability of *iurodivye* to see the future, and the frightening aura that often came with that ability. This side of *iurodstvo*, which we might call charismatic, was not, generally speaking, the primary focus of ecclesiastical texts, which tended to emphasise the extreme asceticism and renunciation of *iurodivye*, and was given more attention in chronicles and foreign accounts of *iurodstvo*. A good example of awe-inspiring *iurodstvo* is the confrontation between Nikolai of Pskov and Ivan IV, in its variations across foreign accounts and later Russian chronicles. That this might be termed a more vernacular interpretation of *iurodstvo* is suggested by the facts, on one hand, that though Nikolai was held to be a saintly man, nothing in his description suggested an ascetic lifestyle; and, on the other hand, that the foreign accounts were likely based on oral tales of popular origin.

Yet there is no clearcut separation between 'ecclesiastical' and 'vernacular' *iurodstvo*, and the two overlap to a degree in most sources. Vernacular *iurodstvo* was practically absent from liturgical texts: the *sluzhba* to Mikhail does mention his prophetic gift rather insistently, but otherwise depicts him as an ascetic, a characteristic which almost does not feature in the first version of his *Life*, where he was, uncharacteristically for a *zhitie*, shown as a charismatic, awe-inspiring prophet. A blend of asceticism and prophetic gift was also presented in the *Stepennaia kniga* accounts of Vasilii and Galaktion, where it was implied that it was precisely their ascetic and pious lifestyle which enabled them to see the future. *Zhitiia* tended to lean more into the ascetic side of *iurodstvo*, though the perfectly harmless Isidor contrasted slightly with the mostly harmless Ioann, who lay on hot coals, the mostly harmless Vasilii, who nevertheless defecated in public, and the mostly harmless Nikolai Kochanov, who resembled a watered-down Isidor despite the text's insistence on his *iurodstvo* lifestyle. In the *zhitiia* of other saints, however, *iurodivye* appeared in their

charismatic capacity as aggressive prophets, probably because theirs was not the saintliness at stake in that context, and because the ability to see the future was a useful literary device for the legitimation of sainthood.

It would be an oversight not to point out that Nikolai of Pskov was the only *iurodivyi* who confronted a representative of Moscow-based authority, since Mikhail was antagonistic exclusively to the Novgorod aristocracy. Though both made strong political points, it is important to note that the vernacular understanding of *iurodstvo* was not necessarily, or even (according to the surviving texts) predominantly, associated with the opposition to autocracy, though it easily lent itself to defending political causes of any persuasion. In the behavioural spectrum of *iurodstvo*, Nikolai of Pskov might be placed at the vernacular, charismatic end, together with Mikhail as he appeared in his *zhitie* and the *iurodivye* depicted in the *Lives* of other saints; liturgical characterisations of *iurodstvo*, leaning heavily into their asceticism and purity, would be at the other end, with *zhitiia* at various points in the middle.

IV. OF FOOLS AND MEN:

IURODSTVO POLITICISED

As shown in Part II, where saint-making processes were discussed, cults did not just happen or persist over time without considerable effort. The cult of a saint could be defined as a complex set of repeated actions, usually revolving around a shrine. Such actions were as diverse as praying to the saint, singing liturgy for them, writing down their miracles, or paying for their shrine to be renovated. When these actions stopped, the cult died; if they gathered momentum again, a cult could be reborn.

Whereas Part II explored the ecclesiastical structures involved in recognising saints, this part will shift the focus to the people, or groups of people, whose agency contributed to the creation or development of *iurodivyi* cults. Unfortunately, evidence for their behaviour, predominantly hagiographical, is rarely unambiguous or direct. Texts tend to depict the faithful's interactions with saints, without drawing attention to the people who recorded such interactions, and who paid for them to be recorded or for the shrine where they were recorded to be built. If the faithful who visited and performed acts of devotion at shrines were indispensable to a cult, so were the patrons who commissioned texts and icons, or the clergy who produced those texts and icons and controlled access to relics.

Though it is not always obvious exactly who sponsored a cult or specifically how, most cults represented or fashioned in text had clearly identifiable political affinities: texts were rarely neutral. It seems reasonable to assume that such political affinities were at least partly informed by the patrons who supported the cults. Contrary to the widespread perception of *iurodivye* as defenders of the people against autocracy, because they originated in environments closely associated with Moscow, texts about *iurodivye* in the sixteenth century tended to depict their lives and mystical gifts as favourable to the Moscow-centric Russian state.

In making sense of *iurodstvo* in its political context, this part will look first at the microstructure of cults, including the patterns often observable in the first years of a cult and the management of posthumous miracles, neither of which appears to have been *iurodstvo*-specific. I will then make suggestions as to how these microstructures might fit into broader macrostructures shaped by contemporary geopolitical trends.

IV.1 Early Stages: Burials and First Shrines

It is generally difficult, if not impossible, to determine with accuracy the moment any cult was born. If hagiographical texts often make the transition between the saint's earthly existence and their posthumous veneration by narrating their death and burial, they rarely offer dates for these milestones, or indicate the time that often lapsed between the saint's passing and widespread interest being expressed in their relics and shrine. Descriptions of funerary rites for saints were crucial as the first occasion where the local faithful, who might have individually supported the saint in their lifetime, came together to celebrate the servant of God that had lived in their midst. Burial ceremonies were, in other words, the first ceremonial *adventus*[675] in the history of a saint's cult. Because of the occasion's significance, however, we can suspect that hagiographers inflated the attendance at saints' funerals, rather than reflecting the newborn cult's real popularity. Still, such passages at least give an idea of what the hagiographer considered appropriate celebration of a new saint shortly after their death, and who the hagiographer thought should be involved in this first ceremony of posthumous recognition.

[675] P. BROWN, *The Cult of the Saints: its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity*, Chicago 1981, 98–101.

The burial scene of Ioann of Ustiug is a point in case. The strong attendance, if at least partly a literary device, might also have reflected the saint's popularity in life and a favourable predisposition towards him, no doubt helped by the dearth of local urban saints, and the fact that Ioann was perceived as a follower of Prokopii, who already enjoyed considerable popularity. One important aspect of this description is the coming together of clergy, enumerated at length, attached to the Dormition cathedral, and laypeople:

> 'Тогда собрашась клирици соборныа великия церкви Пречистыа Богородица, иже есть во граде Устюге на площади: попы, священосцы, дьякони, самвидци, вся церковныа и прочии христоимянитии людие гражане, мужие и жены …'[676]
>
> 'Then was assembled the clergy of the great cathedral of the Most-pure Mother of God, which is in the town of Ustiug on the square: priests, candle-bearers, deacons, witnesses, all the clerical and other Christian citizens, men and women …'

There was a performative side to this coming together of the whole town, best represented in the actions the gathered people carried out together, including bearing candles and incense ('со свещами и с фимиамом'), singing psalms ('егда отпеша надгробныя псалмопениа'), and crying ('плачющеся о лишении таковаго светилника'). These collective ritual actions were understood to be the proper celebration of saints ('яко подобает честь святым воздаяти').[677] Finally, the burial scene of Ioann was where confirmation was given of his saintly nature. The saint's body, which he kept pure during life, was miraculously preserved in an uncorrupted state after death: 'Неции ж искуснии видеша лице святаго, яко аггела Божия, и тело плоти его, аки снег'; 'знаменашася у мощми святаго нетленнаго телеси'.[678]

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[676] VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 285.

[677] *Ibid.*: *with candles and incense*; *when they had sung the funerary psalms*; *crying over the loss of such a luminary*; *as is the proper way of honouring saints*.

[678] *Ibid.*: *Some, who were more experienced, saw the saint's face, like an angel of God, and the flesh of his body like snow*; *they crossed themselves by the relics of the holy uncorrupted body*.

Ioann's funeral rites stand in stark contrast with the burial of Isidor of Rostov. If tolerated by the ecclesiastical authority, Isidor's burial was by no means a communal, whole-town celebration. On the contrary, the description conjures up a private ceremony carried out by the saint's limited following. Made aware of Isidor's passing by a sweet smell in the air, some God-fearing men hid the saint's body in the earth: 'Пришедше нѣции богобоязнивии мужие, иже вѣру имуше ко блаженому, сопряташа трудолюбное и честное его тѣло и положиша его во гробѣ...'[679] The initiative is depicted as strictly bottom-up, without the involvement of clergy or any of the rites – incense, candles, psalm-singing – associated with it. Given any hagiographer's interest in inflating the importance of a saint's cult from the very beginning, we might cautiously accept that the cult of Isidor had a modest grassroots start.

Some accounts of saints' burials give off a more generic impression and are informative mainly in hinting at what was considered appropriate celebration of a recently deceased saint. This is the case of a short notice about Maksim of Moscow, whose hagiography, if it existed, is lost to us: '**проводьше чⷭ҃но сⷭ҃таго тѣло всѣмъ градⷪ҃ со псалмопѣнїемъ, и с ѳїмъѧномⷪ҃**'.[680] More telling is the case of Mikhail of Klopsko, whose burial is mentioned differently in an earlier and a later version of his *Life*. In the earlier, 1470s text written in the Trinity monastery where he spent most of his life, Mikhail's burial was a strictly internal event. It was marked by a miracle, whereby the frozen ground – Mikhail died in January – only gave way to digging in the exact spot where the saint had

[679] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 189–90; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 248: *Some God-fearing men, who had faith in the blessed one, came and hid his hardworking and honourable body and placed it in the grave*.

[680] РГБ. Ф.256 №397 fol. 359 r: *they accompanied the honourable body of the saint around the whole town with psalm singing and incense*.

stood. Beside this miracle, we are told that the monks and the hegumen (‘черньцы и игуменъ’) buried their brother Mikhail honourably (‘честно’).[681] However, in the 1537 version of the *Life of Mikhail*, commissioned by the then-archbishop of Novgorod Makarii who, as metropolitan of Moscow would a decade later recognise Mikhail as a pan-Russian saint, the unfrozen earth miracle, though reiterated, was almost secondary to the hyperbolic description of attendance at the burial. The archbishop himself, the text claims, came along with members of clergy and laypeople so numerous the hagiographer compared them to running streams:

> ‘Возвѣстиша же архіепископу преставленіе святаго, и пріиде архіепископъ со всѣмъ священнымъ соборомъ и всенародное множество течаху, быстринамъ рѣчнымъ подобящеся, слезы же непрестанно ліюще…’[682]
>
> ‘They notified the archbishop about the passing of the saint, and the archbishop came with the entire holy congregation and a multitude of people rushed, like the rapids of a river, with tears flowing unceasingly.’

There are several reasons why the 1470s description is probably closer to historical reality. Firstly, it is unlikely that a text written well over sixty years after the event would be more accurate than one written within a decade. Secondly, on top of being relatively far (20 km) from Novgorod, the Trinity monastery, as evidenced by the earliest version of the Life of Mikhail, had a predominantly antagonistic relationship with its surroundings. The text describes frequent conflicts with local aristocrats and one archbishop, who, upon his attempt to tax the monastery was swiftly struck down by the wrath of God and His servant Mikhail.[683] There is, in the text, scarcely any mention to the monastery’s relationship with local peasants,

[681] *Повесть о житии*, *БЛДР 7*, op. cit., 228: *the monks and the hegumen*; *honourably*.

[682] *Памятники старинной русской литературы*, op. cit., 46.

[683] Archbishop Evfimii I, see a detailed discussion from page 280.

the house being presented as resolutely insular, and it would have been surprising for Mikhail to become the object of spontaneous popular veneration following his death.

It being reasonable to assume that the large-scale public celebration of Mikhail upon his death described in the 1537 version of his *Life* had little, if anything, to do with historical reality, we might then wonder why the new hagiographer added it. Perhaps he – and Archbishop Makarii, who commissioned the new text – felt that prompt, *en masse* recognition of a recently deceased saint by the community and its ecclesiastical leaders was important to the legitimation of a cult. And perhaps this was all the more important given the tensions between Mikhail's pro-Muscovite monastery and its Novgorod independentist surroundings, which might still not have subsided just over half a century later. By composing a scene of public, high-profile consensus around Mikhail after his death, the new hagiographer created a narrative of local spontaneous support for the saint and the pro-Muscovite ideology he represented, thereby justifying the annexation of Novgorod.

Unlike Mikhail, Vasilii of Moscow had enjoyed considerable popularity in his lifetime and counted Ivan IV and his family among his followers. His Life, written after the translation of his relics in 1588, described the ultimate proper burial of a state saint. It brought together the lay and ecclesiastical elites, as well as the people. United before God and His new saint by their participation in the ceremonial feast day, they cried and sang psalms. As a collective public ritual, the description of Vasilii's funeral is reminiscent of Ioann's. The highly ornamented and hyperbolic style of the *Life of Vasilii*, however, together with the fact that he was celebrated as a high-profile state saint, blew his funerary ceremony into even bigger proportions:

> '... цари и князи тѣло несоша блаженнаго на главахъ своихъ. священники хваляще и поюще во псалмѣехъ и пѣснех блаженнаго. народи же со слезами

вопиюще глаголаху о преблаженне василие молися христу богу нашему ... царь и со царицею, радостныя и скорбныя от очию испущая слезы ... и вси граждене течаху великим и скорым шествием видѣти погребение ... преосвященыи макареи митрополитъ со архиепископы. со архимандриты и со игумены. и со священицы и со дияконы. псалмы и пѣсньми. и вся законныя над святымъ соверьшивше и погребоша честно тѣло блаженнаго. и по повелѣнию цареву ... празникъ свѣтло торжествено сотвори.'[684]

'... tsars and princes carried the blessed one's body on their heads, priests praised the blessed one and sang [to him] in psalms and songs. The people with tears wailed, saying, O most blessed Vasilii pray Christ our God … the tsar and the tsaritsa let out joyful and sorrowful tears from their eyes … and all the citizens rushed in a great and prompt procession to see the burial … the most-sanctified Metropolitan Makarii with archbishops, with archimandrites, and with hegumens, and with nuns and with deacons, with psalms and songs and having fulfilled all that is prescribed for [the celebration] of saints, they buried the blessed one's honourable body, and by order of the tsar … created a bright and glorious feast.'

Burial scenes might not always be exact reflections of the status of a holy person at the time of their death. But the funeral of a saint was evidently seen as an important occasion and an obligatory stage in the narrative of a cult. For many texts, it was a turning point between a biographical section, where the saint was presented in isolation, carrying out their virtuous deeds unknown to all; and a section about posthumous miracles, after their saintliness had been revealed and their position in heaven allowed them to intercede for their community. The burial was where veneration structures first emerged and where an individual virtuous life was transferred onto collective ownership. Unanimity was central to the ceremony which, ideally, would involve members of the ecclesiastical elite able to carry out the proper rites, members of the lay elite, and anonymous but indispensable crowds.[685] As argued in Part II, a cult needed both structures of lay and ecclesiastical patronage and popular support to succeed.

[684] KUZNETSOV, *Святые блаженные,* op. cit., 49–50.

[685] BROWN, *The Cult of the Saints*, op. cit., 101.

If descriptions of saints' funerals can be stereotyped and make it difficult to identify who took the initiative to celebrate the saint, mentions to burial sites and the construction of chapels to honour deceased holy persons can sometimes offer more specific information. Tombs and chapels are more verifiable – many saints' remains stay where they were originally buried – and carry meaningful implications. The first is that geographical proximity to centres of lay or ecclesiastical power almost certainly meant that a cult was officially tolerated, if not approved or even actively encouraged. The second implication, about relic ownership, is more subtle. Though it is not always obvious whose initiative the saint's burial was, or who ended up taking responsibility for it, the question of who controlled access to the deceased person's body was crucial.

The moment a saint died, their physical remains, which often emanated a sweet smell, became objects of power. This power was, on the one hand, spiritual: relics became a point of contact with the saint who, in their new heavenly residence, could in turn access even more powerful figures, like Christ or the Virgin, and thereby intercede in favour of the faithful who petitioned to them. Controlling access to the spiritual power of relics, on the other hand, was a source of economic, and potentially political power. To illustrate this point, Eve Levin offers a telling, albeit later, example of the disputed custody of a body perceived as wonderworking. A local saint, Vasilii, was buried in Mangazei, a Siberian town which, in the 1660s, was being economically superseded by the neighbouring Turukhan. At Easter 1670, a monastic priest from Turukhan, Tikhon, claiming that the saint had 'appeared to him to complain about the cramped and decrepit state of his lodgings in Mangazei … packed the saint's remains into a new casket …' and effectively stole them for Turukhan, much to the

frustration of the metropolitan of Tobol'sk, whose approval had not been sought.[686] By residing in a town or monastery, wonderworking relics not only extended spiritual prestige and legitimacy to their surroundings, but they also attracted the faithful seeking cures to their ailments, and their financial tokens of gratefulness to the shrine when healings were obtained.

For *iurodivye*, the question of who controlled access to the relics is especially relevant. Unlike monastic or episcopal saints, whose cults were often directed by their monasteries and successor bishops, *iurodivye* were usually laymen without formal institutional affiliations, which in practice meant that ownership of their cults was open. Except for Mikhail of Klopsko, who was often categorised as a monastic saint and buried by his brethren in the Trinity monastery, all the *iurodivye* mentioned above were buried centrally in the towns where they lived, close to centres of authority. Isidor, regardless of his modest burial, found a resting place a ten-minute walk from the Rostov Kremlin, where the archbishop resided – even allowing for city growth between then and now, and the changing perception of what is 'central', the shrine would probably have been difficult to hide. This, and the wooden chapel built to house the body, could not have gone without the archbishop's approval, as the hagiography recognised:

> 'положиша его во гробѣ на мѣстѣ, идеже преставися. Поставиша же ту и церковь, вземше благословение у епископа, во имя преславнаго Вознесениа Господа нашего Исус Христа.'[687]
>
> 'they placed it [the body] in the grave on the place where he [Isidor] had passed away. And they founded a church there dedicated to the most-holy Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ, having asked for the bishop's blessing.'

[686] LEVIN, From Corpse, op. cit., 98–9.

[687] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 190; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 248.

Perhaps because Rostov had an unusual abundance of local, especially episcopal and monastic saints, the archbishop did not take noticeable interest in the cult of Isidor, and it was Ivan IV who later became a visible patron.[688] But he must at least have consciously tolerated the popular initiative to celebrate Isidor.

Knowing where a saint was buried is even more meaningful when their cult is hard to trace, and specifically when their *zhitie* has either not been written or not been preserved. This is the case for Maksim of Moscow, whose short biographical notice nevertheless informs us that he was buried in central Moscow, by the church of Saints Varvara and Maximos, not far from the Kremlin: '… и положиша на вѣ́вары оулицѣ по́лѣ цр҃кви сп҃ыа мчн҃цы вѣ́рвары. и прп҃ѣ́наго wц҃а максїма исповѣ́дника.'[689] The notice also mentioned the construction of a stone chapel over the relics, supposedly by order of the tsar, suggesting that Maksim's cult was officially part of the Moscow religious landscape, at least for a while: 'посл҃ѣ́ же создана бы црк҃вь прекрасна камена. на҃ мощми сг҃го во има повелѣ́нїем велика́ кн҃зѫ. и всего цр҃ьска́ сонъклита.'[690]

Similarly, if there is little information about the cult of Nikolai of Novgorod, his burial place is well documented. A late sixteenth-century *pistsovaia kniga* records that monks lived in or by the church of St Panteleimon, with whom Nikolai shared a feast day on the 27 July: '… и то мѣсто отошло подъ церковную мѣру Пантолимона Святаго ... И на томъ на

[688] See a more detailed discussion from page 300.

[689] РГБ. Ф.256 №397 fol. 359 r: *and they lay [him] on the Varvara street near the church of the holy martyr Varvara and of the venerable father Maksim the Confessor*.

[690] *Ibid.*: *later a wonderful stone church was built over the relics, dedicated to the saint by order of the great prince and of all the courtly elite*. There is a similar passage in the *Vladimirskii letopisets*, quoted on page 165.

садовомъ мѣсте стоитъ восмь келей Микулы Кочанова старческихъ, пѣтаютца о церквѣ Божие, а поставлены тѣ кельи по государеве грамоте 69-мъ году …'[691] A seventeenth-century copy of the Novgorod II chronicle offers more information on the church's origins:

> 'В лето 7060 втораго. [1554] ... тое же весны месяца июня в 20 вторыи день в пяток в Новегороди на Софиискои стороны на Яковлевои улици заложил церковъ камену архиепископъ Пимин и мужи Новгородци над гробомъ блаженого Николы Кочанова во имя святого великомученика Пантелимона.'[692]
>
> 'In the year 7062 [1554] … in that spring in the month of June on the 22 day on a Friday in Novgorod on the Sophia side on the Iakovlevaia street Archbishop Pimin and the Novgorodian men laid down [the foundations] of a stone church dedicated to the holy great martyr Pantelimon over the grave of the blessed Nikola Kochanov.'

Not only was this church, still in place today, a fifteen-minute walk from St Sophia's cathedral in central Novgorod, but the chronicle stresses the involvement both of the archbishop and the local community ('архиепископъ Пимин и мужи Новгородци'), presumably the aristocratic elite, in building it.

It is unclear why the cult of Nikolai has left few traces, but it could be that Maksim's eventual loss of popularity happened to the benefit of Vasilii, whose status eclipsed that of other saints in Moscow. The case of Nikolai of Pskov, however, is more intriguing. There is reliable evidence that he was buried in the Trinity cathedral, the main shrine in Pskov, where his remains allegedly are to this day. In an account of the 1581 Polish siege of Pskov, a monk witnessed an apparition of the Virgin summoning local saints, among which Nikolai, from their tombs in the Trinity cathedral:

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[691] MAIKOV, *Книга писцовая*, op. cit., 19–20: *and that place went over to the church of saint Pantolimon … And on that garden space stand eight elder cells of Mikula Kochanov, and they are fed by the church of God, and those cells were founded by the sovereign's decree of the sixty-ninth year.*

[692] *ПСРЛ, Т. XXX*, op. cit., 182. Similar passage in Novgorod III: *ПСРЛ, Т. III*, op. cit., 252.

> ‘Посем возва: „Гдѣ избраннии Божии, иже у Святѣи Троицы въ церкви лежаху?” Таже вскорѣ предсташа ту благовѣрнии велицыи князи Владимеръ Киевский, Всеволодъ и Домонтъ Псковстии, и по них ста позади, яко полусажени, блаженный Микула, иже уродивый бяше былъ во Псковѣ, и вси ей поклонишася.’[693]
>
> ‘And then she called out: “Where are God’s chosen ones, who lie in the church of the holy Trinity?” And immediately stood there the pious great prince Vladimir of Kyiv, Vsevolod and Domont of Pskov, and after then stood at the back, about half a *sazhen* [behind], the blessed Mikula, who was a *iurodivyi* in Pskov, and they all bowed to her.’

There is a strong contrast between the prestigious and highly visible burial place of Nikolai, implying that his must have been an officially backed cult, however briefly, and the silence about him in ecclesiastical sources, which will be addressed in IV.4.

According to his wishes, Ioann of Ustiug was buried by the Dormition cathedral in Ustiug, where he had lived: ‘Паки святаго мощи положиша во гроб и погребоша во глубину земли близ соборныа церкви Пречистыя Богородицы и Всечестнаго Ея Успения, иде же святый потрудись, иде же восхотеша тако сотвори.’[694] The bureaucratic authorisations sought by a certain Fedor Tutygin, who had made a vow to God, the Virgin and Ioann, to build a shrine, dedicated to the True Cross, for Ioann a few years later are recorded in exceptional detail:

> ‘повелением наместника града того и другаго тиуна великаго князя и по словеси, и по докладу владычня десятинника, и по совету архимандрита града того, иже есть архистратига Михаила в монастыре, и протопопа з братиею тоя великиа соборныа и апостолскыя церкви Пречистыя Богородицы и Всечестнаго Ея Успения, прежереченный иже Феодор един возгради церковь над мощми блаженнаго Иоанна во имя Происхождения Честнаго и

[693] *Повесть о псково-печерском*, op. cit., 490.

[694] VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 285: *Then they laid the saint’s relics in the grave in the depths of the earth near the cathedral of the Most-pure Mother of God and Her Most-honourable Dormition, where the saint exerted himself, where he wanted [it done] so they did [it].*

> Животворящаго Креста ... Не бе тогда таковыя церкви во граде Устюге, и гробницу постави над мощми блаженнаго ...'[695]
>
> 'by order of the *namestnik* of that town and of the other official of the great prince, and following the words and the report of the archimandrite of that town, who serves in the monastery of St Michael the Archistrategos, and of the archpriest with the brethren of that great and apostolic cathedral of the Most-pure Mother of God and Her Most-honourable Dormition, the aforementioned, a certain Feodor, built a church over the relics of the blessed Ioann, in the name of the Origin of the True and Life-giving Cross … There was no such church in the town of Ustiug at the time, and he put a tomb over the relics of the blessed one …'

Approval was sought from ecclesiastical authorities – an episcopal tax collector, the archimandrite of St Michael's monastery, the Dormition cathedral's leading priest – but also from lay authorities, including two representatives of the grand prince, a *namestnik* and a *tiun*. This could be a result of the distance between Ustiug and the seat of its bishopric in Rostov, but perhaps also a significant indication that the grand prince's executive arm now reached as far as Ustiug.

Ceremonial burials and the construction of shrines where saints could be posthumously revered were the first hurdles any new cult had to overcome. Hagiographical texts recognised the importance of this stage by including it as a transition between the saint's biography and their posthumous miracles. An ideal celebration of a recently deceased saint brought together the entire community, headed by its spiritual leaders, who were responsible for conducting appropriate rites, and sometimes accompanied by representatives of lay authority. It is noteworthy that every *iurodivyi* cult presented here, even that of Nikolai of Pskov at the time of his burial, was met with official approval, and occasionally patronage. Though funeral narratives might have been retrospectively shaped, the *iurodivye* mentioned were all buried in visible shrines near the centre of urban areas – where, for the most part, their remains are

[695] *Idem*, 287.

still said to rest – within a short distance from centres of ecclesiastical or lay authority. These new shrines were often dedicated to more established spiritual authorities – like the True Cross in Ioann's case, St Panteleimon in Nikolai Kochanov's, or the Ascension in Isidor's – though associations with homonymous Christian saints – Maksim of Moscow being buried in the church of Saints Varvara (Barbara) and Maximos the Confessor – was also an option, if not in shrine names, then in visual representations.[696] It is also clear that hagiographers, in their accounts, were aware of the need for burial permission to be granted. In other words, from their very start, even when initiatives were grassroots, the cults of *iurodivye* fit into the existing ecclesiastical frameworks of saint-making: nothing about them suggested dissent.

IV.2 Posthumous Miracles

The fact that a saint had lived in their midst was perceived as a blessing to an entire community who, by performing appropriate funerary celebrations and showing respect to the physical remains, hoped to gain a celestial intercessor. Relics, and to a lesser degree icons, were an important part of the intercession process, as it was through them that the faithful interacted with saints. Whether intercession miracles were an indispensable pre-condition for saint-making or not, they became central to the Russian Orthodox cult of saints. Liturgical commemorations of saints, including *iurodivye*, referred frequently to the bountiful wonders dispensed by their tombs: '**достоинъ съсоудъ чюдесе҃ и по кончинѣ гависѧ всѣ҃ исцѣлєнїе подавал вѣрою притѣкающимъ к рацѣ мощеи твоих҃**'

[696] See, for example, Vasilii of Moscow and Basil the Great in Fig. 19 above.

(Mikhail);[697] ‘истачаеши бо чюдесе йстоčнй неисчерпаѥ вѣрою притѣкающй къ стмоу ти гробоу’ (Prokopii);[698] ‘явисѧ в далнй странѣ чюдодѣиствжа и росискжю землю чюдѥ зарѧми просвѣтилъ еси’ (Vasilii);[699] ‘многа и различна исцѣленїа члкѡ бываχоу всѧки недѹгы ѿ гроба сѷго’ (Maksim).[700] References to miracles in liturgical texts are, in fact, so frequent as to suggest that the primary aim of a *sluzhba* was the transactional securing of intercession, through which healings and the salvation of the soul could be obtained. *Sluzhby* enacted a pact between a saint and a community: we celebrate your memory; you intercede in our favour.

Compared with *sluzhby*, hagiographical texts had a less pragmatically defined function. If *sluzhby* were heaven-bound tools with which to obtain intercession, *zhitiia* were earth-bound vehicles of cult propaganda, and therefore treated miracles in a different way. The *Lives* of *iurodivye* recorded both miracles they worked in their lifetime, and those worked posthumously by their tombs. Though the balance between them varied, greater weight tended to be given to posthumous miracles, since only these constituted incontrovertible proof that the saint, now a permanent resident in heaven, was in a position to put in a word with powerful figures such as Christ or the Virgin. Posthumous miracles usually constituted the last section of a *zhitie*, and though authors sometimes boasted there

[697] РГБ. Ф.304/I №622, fol. 156 v: *[you] showed yourself [to be] a worthy vessel of miracles, giving healing to everyone who rushed with faith to the coffin of your relics*.

[698] РГБ. Ф.304/I №619, fol. 258 r: *for you let miracles flow, inexhaustible source, to those who rush to your holy grave with faith*.

[699] РГБ. Ф.304/I №624, fol. 623 r: *you appeared in faraway countries working miracles and enlightened the Russian land with the dawn of [your] miracles*.

[700] РГБ. Ф.256 №397, fol. 359 r: *many and varied healings of people happen from any illnesses from the grave of the saint.*

were too many to put in writing,[701] the *Lives* of holy fools do not usually record more than a few stories.[702] Reasons for this might vary and are open to speculation, but in the *Life of Ioann* the hagiographer, otherwise remarkably well-informed on his subject, apologised for not reporting more posthumous miracles, explaining he had limited access to information: 'иных чюдес не дерзнух писати, зане живущи ми немалым разстоянием от града Устюга за 60 поприщ и от церкви Всемилостиваго Спаса, и от раки блаженнаго Иоанна…'[703] This invaluable remark suggests, on the one hand, that hagiographers collected material from shrine records, and, on the other hand, that they might not always have had access to the information they needed. In other cases, it is also conceivable that the posthumous miracles of *iurodivye* were not always assiduously recorded.

Despite their modest number, recorded posthumous miracles – usually, but not exclusively, healings – suggest that *iurodivyi* shrines were clerically managed. We rarely 'see' shrine staff in texts, but the Sol'vychegodsk hagiographer's expectation, or knowledge,

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[701] *Памятники старинной русской литературы*, op. cit., 48: *По преставленіи бо сего блаженнаго мужа многа и безчислена чудеса изливаются, отъ нихъже невозможно есть по ряду писати множества ради безчисленнаго, но отъ многихъ малая исповѣмы*. / *For after the passing of this blessed man many and countless miracles flowed, and it is impossible to write about them in order on account of their countless multitude, but we will tell a few from the many*.

[702] In the 1470s and 1537 versions of the *Life of Mikhail of Klopsko*, many of the episodes that make up the body of the text are labelled as miracles, and far outweigh the three posthumous miracles that only appear in the later version. In the *Life of Isidor of Rostov*, there are two lifetime miracles (saving a merchant from drowning, providing drink for a prince's feast) and three posthumous ones, of which two healings. The sweet smell at the time of the saint's death is counted as an additional miracle. In the *Life of Nikolai Kochanov* of Novgorod, the only lifetime miracle echoes Isidor's miracle about an aristocrat's feast and involves the miraculous disappearance and reappearance of drink. The only posthumous miracle attributed to Nikolai is his contribution as guarantor in a money-lending deal. Prokopii's miracles, attributed to his tomb and/or icon, are numerous, and recorded in a dedicated *povest'* that was composed before the narrative account of his life. Ioann of Ustiug worked two miracles in his lifetime (lying unharmed in a hot stove and healing a princess), and a single posthumous healing. Finally, the *Life of Vasilii of Moscow* has a sizeable appendix with twenty-four posthumous miracle stories, though none were recorded during his lifetime, other than the prophecies borrowed from the *Stepennaia kniga*.

[703] VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., p.287: *I dared not write other miracles, as I live at a significant distance from the town of Ustiug, over sixty* poprishchi *[away], and from the church of the All-merciful Saviour, and from the coffin of the blessed Ioann …*

that a miracle record was kept at the main shrine for Ioann of Ustiug is a strong indicator of clerical oversight. There is also good reason to suspect the shrine for Isidor of Rostov was staffed, as the protagonist of his first posthumous miracle is introduced as a priest who served in the Annunciation church, where Isidor was buried: 'Многимъ убо лѣтомъ пришедшимъ иерѣю нѣкоему служащу у святаго Вознесения, идеже лежить святый Сидоръ.'[704] The fact that the priest had to wait until he was alone to commit his deed also suggests, on the one hand, that the shrine was frequented, and on the other, that even priests might not always be convinced of the sanctity of the relics they looked after: 'Уединився убо и вземъ еже на то уготовану ему, приходить ко гробу святаго и начинаетъ копати землю'.[705]

We occasionally catch tantalising glimpses of miracles being reported directly to a priest: 'и содѣянная на нем чюдеса блаженнымъ василием протопопу и всему собору вся по ряду исповѣда'.[706] This suggests that miracle beneficiaries recognised the authority of shrine priests and perhaps felt a sense of duty, in exchange for their miracle, to publicise their story. But if we can guess the presence of shrine staff who kept track of miracles, it is much harder, or indeed impossible, to detect who they answered to. Were they appointed by the local bishop? Were they paid by a patron? By the faithful, like parish priests? The record of miracles of the icon of Prokopii in Sol'vychegodsk is exceptional in showing us a lay patron in action. A *vlastitel'*, identified by the author as an official of Ivan IV,[707] frequently

[704] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 190; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 248: *After many years, a certain priest arrived, who served at the holy Ascension [church], where saint Sidor lies.*

[705] *Idem*, 250: *For, knowing himself alone and picking up the things he had prepared for the effect, he came to the saint's grave and started digging the earth*.

[706] KUZNETSOV, *Святые блаженные*, op. cit., 61: *and he told the miracles which had been worked on him by the blessed Vasilii, all in order, to the archpriest and the whole congregation*.

[707] VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 129, 585. See a fuller discussion from page 309 below.

interacted with miracle beneficiaries: ‘И потом нача ю властитель с тихостию въпрошати о бывшем чюдеси, како здравие получи’.[708] The running of the cult of Prokopii’s icon in Sol’vychegodsk might have been atypical, but it is the only instance, in sixteenth-century texts about *iurodivye*, where we are shown a figure to whom shrine staff were apparently answerable.

If it is difficult for us to ‘see’ shrine staff, we at least know that their records tended to be precise. Healing stories usually started with an introductory statement about the beneficiary, their name, background, geographical origin, details about their illness and the duration they had suffered from it. The degree of precision varied from text to text: Isidor’s second and third posthumous miracles concerned respectively a man from Sol’ (possibly modern-day Nekrasovskoe) who had gone mad from drinking,[709] and a certain Fedor from a village near Rostov with an eye illness;[710] Ioann of Ustiug cured the fever of a certain Polinaria who lived by the Ascension church in Ustiug;[711] and, more vaguely, Mikhail healed ‘some man who lived near the saint’s monastery’.[712] Details – such as names, places of origin, and ailments – made miracles specific, verifiable, and quantifiable. The volume of stories amassed vouched for a shrine and its saint. The two best-documented and -funded miracle cults of *iurodivye*, those of the icon of Prokopii in Sol’vychegodsk and of Vasilii in Moscow, were particularly meticulous in their records: ‘... бе бо некий человек разслаблен

[708] *Idem*, 140: *And then the* vlastitel’ *started asking her quietly about the miracle that happened, how she had received health.*

[709] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 191–2; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 250.

[710] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 192–3; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 250–2.

[711] VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 287.

[712] *Памятники старинной русской литературы*, op. cit., 48: *мужъ некий живяше близь обители святаго*.

именем Иван, четыре лета имый в недузе. Языком не глаголаше, и очима мало видя, и ушима тяшко слыша...'[713] From the beneficiaries' places of origin, we are also given an idea – very rough, when the sample is small – of a cult's geographical spread. If the cults of Isidor, Mikhail, Nikolai, and Prokopii were apparently local, with people travelling relatively short distances to visit the shrines, the cult of Vasilii covered impressive ground. His twenty-four miracles clearly marketed him as a pan-Russian healer who attracted believers from as far as Vologda, Pskov, Rostov, and Kolomna.[714]

Occasionally, hagiographers drew from other *zhitiia*, rather than adapting notes from the relevant shrine. In the 1537 version of the *Life of Mikhail*, one of the saint's miracles is strikingly similar to one worked by Isidor: in their lifetime, both saints saved a man from drowning at sea. Similarly, both Isidor and Nikolai Kochanov made wine appear and disappear at a princely feast.[715] Finally, one of Isidor's posthumous miracles about a man named Fedor is almost word for word Vasilii's tenth miracle, with the beneficiary's name changed and minor omissions or additions.[716] These instances are significant in several ways. Firstly, they reveal the agency of hagiographers in shaping miracle narratives, not only copying out stories from shrine records, but also consulting other hagiographies of the same

[713] VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 129–30: *for there was a certain man named Ivan, who had been ill for four years. He did not speak with his tongue, and with his eyes he could barely see, and with his ears he could hardly hear*. Other miracles include Meleniia, whose eyes were healed (134), an anonymous nun who had been paralysed for four years (136), or a blind man named Trofim from the countryside near Ustiug (139). KUZNETSOV, *Святые блаженные*, op. cit.: Examples from the *Life of Vasilii* include Ivan from Barash whose wife Tatiiana had an eye illness (60), Evdokiia from Pskov who had lost the use of her right hand (63), or Anna from Kolomna who had had a heart disease for seven years (66).

[714] KUZNETSOV, *Святые блаженные*, op. cit.: 62–4, 66.

[715] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 187–9; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 246–8; РГБ. Ф.310 №344, fol. 1 v – 4 r.

[716] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 192–3; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 250–2; KUZNETSOV, *Святые блаженные*, op. cit., 64.

kind of saint. Secondly, they suggest that the *Life of Isidor*, probably the first *zhitie* of a non-monastic Russian *iurodivyi*, was an influential text: later hagiographers of *iurodivye* likely saw it as an authoritative document from which to draw legitimacy for their budding cults.

In a predominantly oral culture, however, written records might not have been the most effective form of advertisement: they depended on physical copies, and someone able to read them out. It is very likely that most shrines instead relied on word of mouth to grow in popularity. Icons probably played an important role in establishing personal relationships between saints and their clients. In the *Lives* of Isidor and Vasilii, the faithful fall before either saint's icon in gratefulness for their healing.[717] In Sol'vychegodsk, Prokopii's icon was explicitly understood as a proxy for the saint himself.[718] Being able to put a face to the force who had interceded for them probably had a significant emotional impact on believers and might have encouraged them to share their miracle experience not only with shrine priests, but also with their fellow town dwellers. Healed respectively by Ioann and Vasilii, Polinaria and Evdokiia eagerly shared their stories: 'иде в дом свой на ногах своих, прославляя чюдо по всему граду'[719]; 'вся исповѣдаетъ збывшаяся на неи. и отиде хваля бога'.[720] People might have felt compelled to share their experiences not only out of gratefulness and relief, but also because proving oneself worthy of a miracle might have

[717] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 193; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 252; KUZNETSOV, *Святые блаженные*, op. cit., 64. This is the miracle, mentioned in the previous footnote, that these two texts share.

[718] VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 175: See the passage quoted on page 93.

[719] *Idem*, 287: *she went home on her own two feet, glorifying the miracle across the whole town*.

[720] KUZNETSOV, *Святые блаженные*, op. cit., 67: *she told what had happened to her, and went away praising God*.

been interpreted as a sign that one was on the right spiritual track, and therefore something to be proud of.

On the other hand, the evidence also gives the impression that, even though most miracles were individual healings, their significance was collective: a neighbour's healing meant that a saint was looking over the community, and that one might receive a healing too, should one ever need it. In this sense, shrines were a kind of community insurance, and there was a collective interest in maintaining good relations with the local saint, which explains why individual miracles often enlisted the efforts of several people. Members of the local community might, for example, carry people with mobility difficulties to the shrine, as in the case of Polinaria, the paralysed woman mentioned above: 'Принесоша ю на носилах к церкви Всемилостиваго Спаса и положиша ю близ раки блаженнаго Иоанна.'[721] Possessed or 'mad' people might also be brought forcibly to their local shrine by well-meaning friends or neighbours, as in the case of the man from Sol' in the *Life of Isidor*: 'связанъ приводимъ бываетъ ко гробу блаженаго Сидора. Онъ же кричяше и нелѣпая словеса глаголаше, очи яко дивы имѣя и всѣх сущихъ с нимъ устрашаше.'[722] In the latter case, the text concludes that those who witnessed the miracle were grateful for it too, and went home happy, thanking God and His intercessor Isidor.[723]

The obtaining of the miracle itself often involved the celebration of clergy-led rituals. In Vasilii of Moscow's tenth posthumous miracle, a certain Loukiian spent a night by the

[721] VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 287: *They brought her on a stretcher to the church of the Most-merciful Saviour and laid her near the blessed Ioann's coffin*.

[722] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 191; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 250: *he was brought tied up to the grave of the blessed Sidor. He shouted and said indecent words, with wild eyes, and frightened everyone who was with him*.

[723] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 191–2; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 250.

saint's tomb. Healing occurred as a priest celebrated the morning service; by the time he performed the *moleben* (prayer of intercession), the man was cured.[724] Community rituals around miracles are especially visible in the stories from Sol'vychegodsk, where miracles would be celebrated with elaborated bell ringing, liturgy, and processions. This is a passage worth quoting at length, for the unique insight it offers into the commemoration of healing miracles by an entire community:

> 'Игумен же и священницы повелевают звонити доволно. И абие стекошася вси граждане на преславное то чудо, славяще Бога ... и святаго чюдотворца Прокофия. По скончании же молебна знаменаша новопросвещеннаго честным крестом и потом знаменаша у образа чюдотворныя иконы святаго чюдотворца Прокофия. Абие начинают божественную литургию совершати. По скончании же литургии во храме чюдотворца Прокофия мнози болнии здравие получиша от образа чюдотворныя иконы ... Игумен же тоя обители и священницы повелевают доволно звонити. И абие стекошася вси граждане, и вси священницы со кресты приидоша во храм святаго чюдотворца Прокофия ... Абие начаша священницы со кресты обходити ограду святых страстотерьпец Бориса и Глеба ...'[725]
>
> 'The hegumen and the nuns ordered [the bells] to be rung sufficiently. And immediately all the citizens rushed over to that most glorious miracle, glorifying God … and the holy wonderworker Prokofii. After the end of the *moleben*, they signed the newly-enlightened man [miracle beneficiary] with the true cross and then made the sign of the cross by the image of saint Prokofii on the wonderworking icon. Immediately they started celebrating the divine liturgy. After the end of the liturgy many afflicted people received health in the chapel of the wonderworking Prokofii from the image on the wonderworking icon … The hegumen of that [monastic] house and the priests ordered [the bells] to be rung sufficiently. And immediately all the citizens rushed over, and all the priests with crosses came to the chapel of the holy wonderworker Prokofii … Soon the priests started to go around the fortifications [of the monastery] of the passion-bearers Boris and Gleb …'

In addition to word of mouth, cults also spread in the form of tokens of power, such as dust gathered from the saint's tomb, or holy water: 'различная исцеления бываху

[724] KUZNETSOV, *Святые блаженные*, op. cit., 64. This is almost the same miracle from the *Life of Isidor*: GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 192–3; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 252.

[725] VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 138–9.

недужнымъ иногда от воды освященыя. иногда же от гроба святаго иже с вѣрою приходящим изимающе персть святаго …'[726] In a different passage, the *Life of Vasilii* compared such tokens of power to precious substances:

> '... и персть оу гроба святаго взимающе, и своя болѣзни яко миромъ помазающе ... молитвами блаженнаго о бозѣ здравие полоучаху. яко злато и биссеръ взимающе персть оу гроба блаженнаго ...'[727]
>
> 'and they take the dust from the saint's grave and apply it on their illnesses like myrrh … through the blessed one's prayers to God they receive health, taking the dust from the saint's grave like gold and pearls.'

Easily transportable, these could also be divided and shared with other people: every new token of power had the potential to become a miniature shrine away from the main shrine.[728] Such practices are detailed in the *Life of Isidor,* which mentions specifically the 'takeaway' of relics:

> 'Мнози же иныя вѣрнии взимають от гроба его часть нѣкую или от покровенья гробнаго … и приносять в домы своя и на болящую зубную болезнь или очною … с вѣрою покладають, и въскорѣ исцѣление приемлють.'[729]
>
> 'Many other of the faithful take some piece of his [Isidor's] grave, or of his shroud … and they take it to their homes and place it with faith on their aching tooth or eye, and soon receive healing.'

Though access to such tokens of power might conceivably have been controlled by clergy, it was in a shrine's best interest to disseminate relics, which might drive new 'customers' to the main source of power at the saint's tomb.

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[726] KUZNETSOV, *Святые блаженные,* op. cit., 65: *various healings happen to the ill, sometimes from the holy water, sometimes from the grave of the saint to those who come with faith and take the saint's dust*.

[727] *Idem*, 51.

[728] BROWN, *The Cult of the Saints*, op. cit., 88–91.

[729] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 191; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 250.

There was, undoubtedly, a transactional aspect to miracle cults: acts of devotion to a saint – pilgrimages, vows, prayers, liturgy – were performed with the expectation that intercession might be offered in return. Conversely, acts of gratitude might follow the granting of intercession: a man healed by Isidor gave thanks to God and praised the saint while touching his icon;[730] people healed at home or on the road by Vasilii often completed the pilgrimage to his shrine to pay their respects to the saint and thank him for their miracle.[731] Acts of devotion were often the currency of miracles, but there are occasional hints at more materialistic transactions. In conversation with an apparition of Vasilii, a poor woman named Afimiia who was blind and had been possessed for twenty-five years confessed she was too embarrassed to travel to the saint's shrine because she had nothing to bring as an offering:

> 'господи отче святыи не имѣю приношения ничто же собою нести. да того ради стыжуся итти. онъ же речи еи жено аще веруѣши не мзды бо ради бываютъ различная дарования. но приходящим с вѣрою...'[732]
>
> 'Lord holy father, I do not have any offerings to bring with myself, and for that reason I am embarrassed of going. But he said to her, Woman, if you believe, it is not because of the material reward that various gifts [i.e., healings] happen, but [they happen] to those who come with faith.'

In one of his later posthumous miracles, Mikhail saved Prince Vasilii of Belozersk from a storm on lake Il'men. Arriving safe and sound at the Trinity monastery, the prince gave thanks to Mikhail by his tomb, shared his story, and offered financial compensation to the monastery which ran the shrine:

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[730] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 193; *Память святого Сидора*, op. cit., 252.

[731] KUZNETSOV, *Святые блаженные*, op. cit.: For example, miracle eight (63), miracle eleven (65), or miracle thirteen (66).

[732] *Idem*, 65.

> ‘ко гробу святого припадаетъ и благодарные тому глаголы приноситъ, и чудо явственно предъ всѣми исповѣдуетъ ... Князь же, свершивъ молебная и давъ игумену и братіи милостыню довольну, отыде во свояси, радуяся и славя Бога’.[733]
>
> ‘he fell before the saint’s grave and offered words of gratefulness, and clearly told the miracle in front of everyone … And the prince, having performed the *moleben* [service of thanksgiving] and having given sufficient alms to the hegumen and brethren, went home rejoicing and glorifying God.’

In a contrasting perspective, Giles Fletcher’s account of a pretence healing could be interpreted as a hint at how necessary miracles were to shrines:

> ‘… a lame man that had his limbs restored (as it was pretended by him) was charged by a woman that was familiar with him (being then fallen out) that he halted but in the daytime and could leap merrily when he came home at night, and that he had intended this matter six years before. Now he is put into a monastery, and there raileth upon the friars that hired him to have this counterfeit miracle practiced upon him.’[734]

That the man may have been hired by monks, and if they were involved in running Vasilii’s shrine, this suggests that miracles were seen as profitable, or at least important to the survival of a cult, or of the institution it was attached to. If most people might not have been in a position to offer much in terms of material compensation for their healing, a reputation for wonderworking could attract more significant aristocratic patronage. Moreover, even if we set aside the potential financial transactions around a cult, miracles were a shrine’s main source of power, capable of attracting believers from afar and making them pledge allegiance to a saint whose earthly presence was controlled by cult management.

Miracles and their power to draw people and funds to cults are especially important when shrines are considered in context. Because cults of saints tend to be studied in isolation, the fact the cults of a same region necessarily competed with each other for attention and

[733] *Памятники старинной русской литературы*, op. cit., 50.

[734] BERRY – CRUMMEY, *Rude and Barbarous Kingdom*, op. cit., 219.

popularity can easily go unnoticed. Yet, most *iurodivyi* cults were urban, and in most cities, there were shrines for multiple saints. The intensity of competition depended on local history. Rostov, one of the oldest ecclesiastical sees in Rus', was dominated by the cult of St Leontii, who had an important role in the region's Christianisation, but also celebrated other saintly bishops and monks, like Isaiia and Avraamii. Ustiug, on the other hand, was in the vicinity of wilderness foundations out of which monastic cults had sprung, but was not saturated with urban cults.[735] Isidor, on the one hand, and Prokopii and Ioann, on the other, had very different circumstances to contend with.

Looking at cults from the perspective of management – how miracles were recorded, sometimes copied or faked, and 'paid' for – and drawing attention to the inevitable competition between shrines might result in an overly commercial conception of the cult of saints. We might be tempted to imagine text-producing elites standing *outside* of cults and setting out to manipulate the gullible population. This would be a misconception. Though some of the evidence above featured monks who engineered pretence miracles and priests who disbelieved saints,[736] I would argue that cults were, generally speaking, a collaboration between clergy and laypeople, who played different roles but inhabited the same cultural world. Clergymen had the skills needed for proper liturgical commemoration, keeping written records, handling relics appropriately, and, by their endorsement, legitimising a cult. The evidence, however, suggests that laypeople had agency in choosing which cults to support and actively participate in. It was through their initiative, which clergy only directed,

[735] VLASOV, *Устюжская литература*, op. cit., 35–8.

[736] These were narrative devices arguing for the saintliness of deceased figures as much as they were recognitions that the belief in any particular saint was not a simple, automatic given.

that shrines could be perceived as communal spaces, and individual healings as blessings for entire communities.

The two sections above have dealt with some of the most basic 'building blocks' of a cult: appropriate burial, construction of a shrine, proper liturgical celebration, miracle records, relic management. These, with minor variations, were common to every *iurodivyi* cult, and indeed to every saint's cult, which prompts the question: did the identity of a saint matter to those who celebrated a cult, or were biographies irrelevant, so long as tombs produced miracles? The healings worked by *iurodivyi* relics have nothing distinctive about them when compared with those of other saints. The faithful might well have conceptualised the heavenly figures dispensing miracles – and depicted on icons – separately from their earthly lives: personal interactions at shrines might have left a deeper impression than hagiographical stories. One interpretation of the dominance of miracles over biographies would be that it did not matter exactly how one achieved the salvation of one's soul – by being a monk, a bishop, a saintly prince, or a *iurodivyi*. A variety of different paths to sanctity was acknowledged, and the choice of any of these was not as important as the result of one's spiritual vocation: the salvation of the soul, unequivocally attested by a miracle-working tomb.

IV.3 Russia in the Sixteenth Century: Background

The microstructures of cults mentioned above contribute to our understanding of what veneration meant on the ground, and the people who were regularly involved in its performance. However, there is little they can tell us about the broader landscape of the cult of saints in this period, and the ways in which it was shaped by contemporary developments.

Despite the controversial elements of the Holy Man, exposed in this thesis's Introduction, Peter Brown was right in his intuition that the cult of saints was inextricably linked to socio-political transformations: it did not, and could not, exist in a political vacuum. Noting how popular miracle cults became between the later fifteenth and the mid-seventeenth centuries in Russia, Paul Bushkovitch interpreted them as an attempt by the Church to replace the declining influence of living monks.[737] Though I would tend to disagree with this interpretation, I am intrigued by the chronological overlap between the thriving both of miracle cults and of *iurodivye* as a phenomenon, and, like Bushkovitch and Brown, I am inclined to look for explanations to these trends in relation to their socio-political backdrop. To be clear, I am not setting out to explain the rise of the cult of saints as a seemingly ubiquitous religious experience from the late fifteenth century in Russia. Neither am I pretending that the history of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Russia can be properly told in a few thousand words. But my hope is that, by sketching a rough contextual picture of a period that has often been labelled of 'state formation', I can highlight political elements that shaped the cults of *iurodivye* and interpret these cults in a new light.

The Christian culture of Rus' was formed and developed in dialogue with Byzantium – a dialogue that Byzantium was probably not aware of most of the time, but that never slipped out of focus for Rus' elites.[738] Interpretations of the Christianisation of Rus' in the late 980s vary, but they generally agree that it was the result of interactions between the Byzantine emperor Basil II, who was struggling to control a revolt fostered by Bardas Focas,

[737] BUSHKOVITCH, *Religion*, op. cit., 101, 108, 128.

[738] ŠEVČENKO, Russo-Byzantine Relations, op. cit., 93–4: This is a contentious matter, with scholars divided between those who see Byzantine influence in most aspects of Rus' culture, and those who emphasise the unique transformation and radical reinterpretation of Byzantine elements in Rus'. Ševčenko proposed a middle way between these strands.

and Vladimir of Kyiv, whom he asked for military assistance. In exchange, Vladimir asked to marry Basil's sister Anna, and his conversion to Christianity might have been a condition in the marriage's fulfilment.[739] Other factors influenced the conversion: on the one hand, Christianity had been present in the area for over a century, and some members of the Rus' elite, like Vladimir's grandmother Ol'ga, had already converted to it;[740] on the other hand, though Vladimir had eliminated his main political opponents and was therefore freer to decide on matters of public worship, he was also (consequently) faced with his own questionable legitimacy, which public monotheistic ritual – Christian or, as Vladimir apparently considered, Muslim – could help to bolster.[741]

If the conversion of Rus' to Christianity was catalysed by specific political circumstances[742] – Vladimir's desire for legitimacy and Basil's need for military assistance – the consequences of the association of Rus' with Byzantium on a religious level were long-lasting. Rus' received the word of God in Greek, was assigned Greek metropolitans, and for centuries was a province of the Patriarchate of Constantinople.[743] Yet though Greek textual culture was a source of prestige, few monks knew the language well or even at all. Perhaps as a consequence, the Rus' appropriation of Byzantine textual tradition was selective and primarily concerned with the correct translation of scripture, the establishment of a monastic rule, and the adoption of appropriate canons of prayer and preaching – poetry and philosophy

[739] A. POPPE, The Political Background to the Baptism of Rus': Byzantine-Russian Relations between 986-89, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 30, 1976, 197–8.

[740] *Idem*, 243; J. SHEPARD, Rus', in: N. Berend (ed.), *Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy: Scandinavia, Central Europe and Rus' c.900–1200*, Cambridge 2007, 377.

[741] SHEPARD, Rus', op. cit., 380–1, 382, 399.

[742] POPPE, The Political Background, op. cit., 243.

[743] S. FRANKLIN, *Writing, Society and Culture in Early Rus, c.950–1300*, Cambridge 2002, 12.

were not of interest, and there was no significant hermeneutics tradition before the sixteenth century.[744] In fact, for the first half century or so after conversion, there is little evidence of writing being done in Rus'.[745]

The Rus' hagiographic tradition, when it did start, was based on Byzantine models. One of the very first Rus' saints, Feodosii (d. 1074), who had the Stoudite rule copied from the Stoudios monastery in Constantinople and implemented in the Kyiv Caves monastery where he served as hegumen, was celebrated by the monk Nestor of the same monastery in one of the first Rus' hagiographies, based on Greek monastic *vitae* known to him in Slavonic translation.[746] Sean Griffin has argued that it was the liturgy, however, through its repetition and storytelling, that had the greatest impact on the religious culture of Rus', helping churchgoers internalise 'historical models for sin and redemption, and law and grace' but also 'models of the holy king, the saintly soldier, and the divinely protected empire', which had far-reaching political implications.[747]

The physical environment too was shaped by Byzantine influence. The religious buildings of Kyiv were designed to replicate those of Constantinople, and Kyiv's first cathedral, the Tithe Church, was built by architects from Tsar'grad, the imperial city. According to a story from the Kyiv Caves *paterik*, the monastery's Dormition church was built in the 1070s by intervention of the Virgin, who summoned Constantinopolitan

[744] KAHN, *History of Russian Literature*, op. cit., 22–4.

[745] GRIFFIN, *The Liturgical Past*, op. cit., 31.

[746] FEDOTOV, *The Russian Religious Mind, Volume 1*, op. cit., 111–14.

[747] GRIFFIN, *The Liturgical Past*, op. cit., 30, 229–300.

architects there; its frescoes were completed in the 1080s by a team of Greek icon painters.[748] Later in the twelfth century, Prince Andrei Bogoliubskii would attempt to divert legitimacy from Kyiv to his new capital, Vladimir-na-Kliaz'me, by competing with the older capital in replicating Constantinopolitan buildings and establishing religious feast days that linked his polity with Byzantium. In his desire to supersede Kyiv, in 1164 Andrei – unsuccessfully – petitioned the patriarch of Constantinople for a metropolitan see in Vladimir, or at least a bishopric independent from Kyiv.[749] In this contest for legitimacy, the idea of Constantinople mattered more than its reality, though the city was well-documented by travellers from Rus'.[750]

If Ihor Ševčenko argued that Rus' neither adopted an exact copy of Byzantine culture, nor generated a completely original culture,[751] Alexandra Vukovich has outlined, in her response to Donald Ostrowski's *Europe, Byzantium and the "Intellectual Silence" of Rus' Culture*,[752] the pitfalls of using one culture as a yardstick against which to measure another and the unhelpful scholarly stereotypes that might ensue, including, in the case of Rus', that 'the overall culture of Rus is derivative (from Byzantium) and delayed – new to Rus, but old elsewhere, that the Church controlled and stifled cultural production in Rus, and that the

[748] O.E. ETINGOF, Once more on the Blachernae tradition in Old Russia, *Deltion of the Christian Archaeological Society* 39, 2018, 144–6.

[749] ŠEVČENKO, Russo-Byzantine Relations, op. cit., 95–6; SHEPARD, "Constantinople Imaginaire", op. cit., 779–81; L.A. SHCHENNIKOVA, Чудотворная икона «Богоматерь Владимирская» как «Одигитрия евангелиста Луки», in: A.M. Lidov (ed.), *Чудотворная икона в Византии и Древней Руси*, Moscow 1996, 253–5.

[750] G. MAJESKA, *Russian Travelers to Constantinople in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, Dumbarton Oaks studies 19,* Dumbarton Oaks 1984.

[751] ŠEVČENKO, Russo-Byzantine Relations, op. cit., 93–4.

[752] D. OSTROWSKI, *Europe, Byzantium, and the "Intellectual Silence" of Rus' Culture. Beyond Medieval Europe,* ARC Humanities Press 2018.

ultimate yardstick according to which the development of Rus ought to be measured is that of Europe.'[753] Yet for their shared cultural vocabulary, Byzantine and Rus' societies were organised very differently and had distinct self-identities: the Byzantine bureaucratised administration and attachment to Roman-ness contrasted with the mostly unwritten law which governed Rus' society.[754] And though Rus' had no interest in laying claim to Roman identity, it was, from early on, keenly aware of its position in world and Christian history, as demonstrated in Metropolitan Ilarion's eleventh-century *Sermon on Law and Grace*.[755]

The fifteenth century brought about transformations that profoundly impacted Russia's self-perception within the Christian world. If the cultural dialogue with Greekness had never stopped, it was intensified in the second half of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when the so-called 'second South Slav influence' prompted a peak in translation activity from Greek that favoured an archaic, elaborate style and abundant calques from Greek. New works were translated, but so were the Scriptures, and older liturgical texts were purged of scribal mistakes and brought closer to their Greek originals, and therefore closer to the word of God.[756] The reliance on Greek language and textual culture as a gateway to true belief made the events of the first half of the fifteenth century all the more shocking to Rus'. In response to the perceived Ottoman threat to the Christian world, there was a movement towards the recognition of 'the community of culture and the continuity of historical tradition

[753] A. VUKOVICH, The Yardsticks by Which We Measure Rus, *Russian History* 46, 2019, 214–15, 224.

[754] FRANKLIN, *Writing*, op. cit., 13.

[755] SHEPARD, Rus', op. cit., 384.

[756] D. OBOLENSKY, in: J. Shepard (ed.), *The Expansion of Orthodox Europe : Byzantium, the Balkans and Russia*, Routledge 2007, 488–91.

between the Old and the New Rome',[757] which in practice meant a hypothetical union of the eastern and western Churches.

This was the matter discussed in the council that met between 1431 and 1449 first in Basel, then in Ferrara, and finally in Florence. Because Byzantium and the Greek Orthodox Church had been a cultural and religious staple in Rus' for centuries, and because 'Greek' tradition had been defined partly by contrast with 'Latin', Byzantium's rapprochement with the West in the fifteenth century was deeply resented in Rus'. Isidor, a Greek clergyman who had previously been hegumen of the St Demetrios monastery in Constantinople, was appointed as metropolitan of Rus' in 1437. Though this did not initially provoke negative reactions in Muscovy,[758] he acquired the reputation of a traitor after showing himself favourable to the Union of the eastern and western Churches at the Council of Florence in 1438–39. On his return to Moscow in 1441, now a papal legate, Isidor was imprisoned in the Chudov monastery,[759] from where he escaped, and eventually died in Italy, having been named Latin Patriarch of Constantinople in 1458.[760]

Metropolitan Isidor was accompanied to Florence by Bishop Avraamii of Suzdal', a member of whose suite, Simeon, wrote an account of the council. It is difficult to tell, from Muscovite sources, what exactly happened in Florence in the late 1430s. There is conflicting evidence, for example, on whether Isidor bribed the members of his embassy to accept the Union (Greek source), or whether he forced Bishop Avraamii's hand by imprisoning him for

[757] I. ŠEVČENKO, Intellectual Repercussions of the Council of Florence, *Church History* 24/4, 1955, 292–3.

[758] YA.S. LUR'E, Исидор, *СККДР (XIV–XVI, 1)*, 449–50.

[759] J. MARTIN, *Medieval Russia : 980–1584*, Cambridge 1995, 284.

[760] LUR'E, Исидор, *СККДР (XIV–XVI, 1)*, op. cit., 450.

a week and forcing him to sign (Muscovite sources).[761] It has also been suggested, both by Greek contemporary sources and modern scholars, that insufficient knowledge of Greek and theology meant that the members of Isidor's embassy were not able to understand discussions at the council.[762]

However, Simeon did apparently grasp important information, including that the pope rejected the previous seven holy councils, did not call the patriarchs brethren, and everywhere mentioned Latins first and Orthodox last.[763] In his account, Simeon was equally contemptuous of Latin pride ('велика бо бѣ гордость. и боуиство латыньское'[764]) and Greek greed ('греки сребролюбци'[765]). Contemporary Muscovite sources were not, however, unanimously negative about their travels in Western Europe: though an account from the early 1460s, the *Slovo izbrano ot sviatykh pisanii* (*Tale selected from the Holy Scriptures*) was contemptuous of the Union,[766] an anonymous member of Metropolitan Isidor's embassy, and author of the *Khozhdenie vo Florentiiu* (*Journey to Florence*), described with wonder his discovery of foreign monuments, rites and religious confessions, gardens, and local legends,[767] whereas Bishop Avraamii himself wrote an enthusiastic

[761] ŠEVČENKO, Intellectual Repercussions, op. cit., 307.

[762] *Ibid.*; MARTIN, *Medieval Russia*, op. cit., 282.

[763] V.N. MALININ, *Старец Елеазарова монастыря Филофей и его послания*, Kyiv 1901, Приложения 93: See especially Исидоров собор и хожение его, Приложения 89–101.

[764] MALININ, *Старец*, op. cit., Приложения 91: *for great was the Latin pride and rowdiness*.

[765] *Idem*, Приложения 90: *the Greek silver-lovers*.

[766] N.F. DROBLENKOVA, «Слово избрано от святых писаний, еже на латыню», *СККДР (XIV–XVI, 2)*, 401–3.

[767] N.F. DROBLENKOVA, Хождение во Флоренцию, *СККДР (XIV–XVI, 2)*, 486–9.

account of two religious plays he saw in Florence.[768] Still, in the decades that followed, pamphlets about the council became increasingly virulent in their depiction of its 'villains': the Pope, Isidor, Patriarch Joseph of Constantinople, the Byzantine Emperor John VIII.[769]

Adding to this climate of anti-Latin and -Greek hostility, Constantinople fell to the Ottoman army in 1453, and though the reaction in Rus' was not immediate, this event would be interpreted in hindsight as a confirmation that Byzantium had gravely sinned by accepting the Union with the Roman Church, and deserved punishment for it.[770] Impatience with Byzantine ecclesiastical tutelage had been rising since the Union, and Iona of Riazan''s appointment, without Constantinopolitan approval, as metropolitan in 1448 was, in practice, an 'implicit declaration of autocephaly'.[771] It was perceived as such in 1469 by the new patriarch of Constantinople, Dionysos, who called out the grand prince's schismatic action, only to be told in reply that Rus' did not recognise the authority of a patriarch appointed by a Muslim ruler.[772] Though Iona's appointment was not without challenges,[773] he sought legitimacy by heightening the status of the Russian Orthodox Church, promoting the cult of Metropolitan Petr, recognising Metropolitan Aleksei and Sergii of Radonezh as saints, and building the church of the Deposition of Our Lady's Robe in the Moscow Kremlin, thereby

[768] N.F. DROBLENKOVA, Авраамий, *СККДР (XIV–XVI, 1)*, 3–5: The plays were *Rappresentationi della Annunziazione di Nostra Donna* and *Rappresentatione dell' Ascenzione* by Feo Belcari.

[769] ŠEVČENKO, Intellectual Repercussions, op. cit., 308.

[770] MARTIN, *Medieval Russia*, op. cit., 284–5; M. ANGOLD, *The Fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans : Context and Consequences*, Harlow 2012, 128.

[771] S. ROCK, Russian Piety and Orthodox Culture 1380–1589, in: M. Angold (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Christianity, Volume 5: Eastern Christianity*, Cambridge 2006, 272.

[772] ANGOLD, *The Fall*, op. cit., 128.

[773] MARTIN, *Medieval Russia*, op. cit., 284: In 1458, the Uniate prelate Gregory (Gregorios Bulgar) became metropolitan for the Orthodox eparchies of Poland and Lithuania, including Kyiv.

claiming the Virgin, who traditionally had been a patron of Constantinople, as Moscow's heavenly protector.

The most significant implication of the fall of Constantinople for Rus', alongside the emancipation from the Byzantine Church, was the sacralisation of the grand-princely office. As the Slavonic-speaking Hapsburg ambassador, Sigismund von Herberstein, observed on his Russian missions of 1517–8 and 1526, the grand prince was now 'the executor of the divine will'.[774] Simeon of Suzdal''s account of the council of Florence had already stressed the grand prince's role as the ultimate defender of true Orthodoxy: 'зде же на москвѣ оутвердисѧ православїемъ роусскаѧ землѧ. христолюбивым великим кнѓземъ василїемъ васильевичем'.[775] As Michael Angold remarked, 'Accounts of and laments for the fall of Constantinople always end with a prayer for the prosperity of Rus', for they represented the future of Orthodoxy.'[776] The grand prince was a new David,[777] and public ritual – such as the Palm Sunday procession where the grand prince led the patriarch's horse in a re-enactment of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem – stressed his divine authority.[778]

One idea often mentioned in connection with the Russian interpretation of the fall of Constantinople is that of Moscow as the Third Rome. The idea originated in three letters written in the first half of the sixteenth century by Filofei, hegumen of the Pskov Eleazarov

[774] ANGOLD, *The Fall*, op. cit., 138.

[775] MALININ, *Старец*, op. cit., Приложения 90: *here in Muscovy, the Russian land has grown strong through Orthodoxy and the Christ-loving grand prince Vasilii Vasil'evich*. See also MARTIN, *Medieval Russia*, op. cit., 286.

[776] ANGOLD, *The Fall*, op. cit., 139.

[777] *Idem*, 138.

[778] ROCK, Russian Piety, op. cit., 273.

monastery, to Misiur' Munekhin, a great-princely official in Pskov, Vasilii III, and Ivan IV. The letters, whose precise dating and relative chronology is debated, all mention the Third Rome, though not specifically Moscow as the Third Rome.[779] Nevertheless, the idea of Moscow the Third Rome has had 'an irresistible attraction for historians' and is frequently repeated in modern historiography despite the lack of evidence for its popularity in the fifteenth and for most of the sixteenth century.[780] A similar idea, however, is 'overwhelmingly better represented in the source base': that of Moscow as the New Israel. Daniel Rowland has convincingly argued that Old Testament models by far dominated Muscovite historical interpretation, and that, sooner than Rome, Moscow saw itself as an Old Testament kingdom, with the grand prince as a new David or Solomon.[781]

During the sixteenth century, the idea of Russia as a realm led by a God-anointed ruler toward its divine destiny was further developed with the help of clergymen. The texts they produced, such as the 1520s Nikon chronicle, or the 1560s Book of Degrees (*Stepennaia kniga*), crafted narratives of dynastic continuity with Kyivan Rus' and even Rome,[782] teleologically backing Moscow and its present rulers as supreme authorities. As detailed in Part II, Metropolitan Makarii of Moscow had a central role in the development of a Russian Orthodox state ideology.[783] It was probably in his entourage, for example, that fragmentary legends about the icon of Our Lady of Vladimir (Vladimirskaia) – originally brought from

[779] D. OSTROWSKI, *Muscovy and the Mongols : Cross-Cultural Influences on the Steppe Frontier, 1304–1589*, Cambridge 1998, 223, 230: Ostrowski dates the letter to Munekhin to 1523–4, that to Vasilii III to 1524–6, and that to Ivan IV to the 1540s or late 1530s.

[780] D. ROWLAND, Moscow – The Third Rome or the New Israel?, *The Russian Review* 55/4, 1996, 591–614 593, 595; ROCK, Russian Piety, op. cit., 273; ŠEVČENKO, Intellectual Repercussions, op. cit., 309–10.

[781] *Idem*, 591, 595, 607, 612.

[782] MARTIN, *Medieval Russia*, op. cit., 292, 378–9. MADARIAGA, *Ivan*, op. cit., 156.

[783] See a discussion of the role of Metropolitan Makarii from page 50.

Byzantium and then stolen from a monastery near Kyiv by Prince Andrei Bogoliubskii for his new shrine in Vladimir – were pieced together to create a narrative where the Virgin was a divine patron to the princes of Moscow, whose city was, after Jerusalem, Rome, Constantinople, Kyiv, and Vladimir, the new centre of Christianity.[784]

Nowhere was the ideological collaboration of Church and state more obvious than in public coronation ceremonies. Ivan III's desire for domestic and international prestige led him to invest in diplomacy and the construction of public buildings, but also to plan a grandiose coronation rite for his grandson Dmitrii Ivanovich, thereby showing off his power to select and impose a successor to the throne of Moscow.[785] The regalia used in this ceremony invoked ancient Byzantine legitimacy, though the objects' real origins were neither as ancient nor as Byzantine as they were claimed to be:

> 'According to the legend, Vladimir Monomakh (r. 1113–25 in Kiev) received imperial regalia from the Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos (r. 1042–55), his supposed grandfather, as a diplomatic gift. The regalia of Monomakh included the "life-giving cross," a pectoral cross with a piece of the wood from the cross of the Crucifixion; the *barmy*, a counterpart to the Byzantine emperors' shoulder pieces; and the crown, "Monomakh's cap" (*shapka Monomakha*), which was very likely of Tatar origin.'[786]

It was the Church that helped broadcast the legitimising properties of the 'Byzantine' regalia used in the 1498 coronation.[787] Alexandra Vukovich has identified reinvention as the main characteristic of such public ceremonials, whether in Rus' or Byzantium, and argued that they innovated by repurposing elements of Byzantine cultural vocabulary, adapting them to

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[784] D. MILLER, Legends of the Icon of Our Lady of Vladimir: A Study of the Development of Muscovite National Consciousness, *Speculum* 43/4, 1968, 657–8, 667, 669.

[785] VUKOVICH, How Byzantine, op. cit., 39–40, 42.

[786] *Idem*, 48.

[787] *Idem*, 50–1.

present needs and generating tradition through performance.[788] The effect of the 1498 coronation was the product of a delicate balance: the ceremony was 'remote while comprehensible to those whom it was meant to impress, and ancient while entirely constructed from spoliated references, Byzantine or other.'[789]

The 1547 coronation of Ivan IV by Metropolitan Makarii took ceremonial orchestration even further. Known from a large number of manuscripts and produced in the metropolitan's palace in Moscow, the text for the ceremony expanded on the 1498 coronation of Dmitrii Ivanovich, probably drawing additional inspiration from fourteenth-century Byzantine ceremonial transmitted in Archdeacon Ignatii of Smolensk's description of the coronation of Manuel II Palaeologos in 1392.[790] Before the imperial family, aristocrats and clergy crowded into the Kremlin Dormition Cathedral, Makarii blessed the regalia – a cross, a crown, the imperial sceptre, and the *barmy* or shoulder-mantle – and handed it to Ivan, whom he recognised as grand prince of Moscow and whom, at the ceremony's climax, he "anointed and crowned Tsar according to our ancient custom". Makarii stressed that imperial power, symbolised by the sceptre, was granted to Ivan by God: "O Grand Prince Ivan Vasil'evic, God Crowned Tsar of all Russia, accept from God as a gift this sceptre to rule the standards of the great empire of Russia; watch over and protect it [the empire] with all your strength."[791] Like the 1498 ceremony, the 1547 coronation was characterised by

[788] *Idem*, 56–7.

[789] *Idem*, 39.

[790] D. MILLER, The Coronation of Ivan IV of Moscow, *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 15/4, 1967, 559–60, 564–6, 571–2. VUKOVICH, How Byzantine, op. cit., 53–5: Vukovich is more cautious about accepting accounts of the 1392 ceremony as direct models.

[791] MILLER, The Coronation, op. cit., 560–2: The ceremony was complex. Miller offers a detailed description of its sequence and discusses the symbolism of the regalia.

repurposing and originality. The innovative claim to the title of tsar was presented as 'ancient custom', and the princely regalia reused from 1498 were given new imperial significance, projecting the imperial claims of Rus' into a pre-Mongol past.[792]

Though the seventeen-year-old Ivan was at the centre of this public performance, Makarii was just as important, having designed the ceremony and carved out a protagonist role for himself as head of the Church. There were two elevated thrones, one each for Ivan and Makarii, and after anointing the new tsar, the metropolitan gave an address in which he clearly exposed the new imperial ideology and the role of the Church in the tsar's elevation. Using Byzantine and Muscovite texts, Makarii spoke on the co-equal powers of Church and state, the holy character of the tsar's office, and his divine obligation to always respect God's law and God's Church, since paying homage to a priest was paying homage to Christ himself.[793] By the time Makarii died in 1563, he had left Ivan a conceptual framework for his reign, and though clergymen had also written about limits to the tsar's power, in practice the tsar did as he pleased.[794]

As detailed in Part II, by the mid-sixteenth century, the Russian Orthodox Church had become confident enough in its independence to convene its own legislative councils in

[792] MILLER, The Coronation, op. cit., 565–9; USPENSKII, *Царь и патриарх*, op. cit., 13–21: After 1547, anointing the new tsar with myrrh, a Byzantine practice, became standard. Unlike the Constantinopolitan custom, however, this was seen as a sacrament, an exceptional repetition of the baptismal rite. Uspenskii argued that by the sixteenth century, if not from its very conversion to Orthodoxy, Rus' was adopting and reinterpreting practices from an imaginary Byzantium, rather than from any real, contemporary country.

[793] USPENSKII, *Царь и патриарх*, op. cit., 567–8, 561–3: The Byzantine authors used were Deacon Agapetus, writing to emperor Justinian on the divine origin and character of imperial office, and Basil I, writing to Leo the Wise. Makarii also used the writings of Iosif of Volotsk.

[794] MARTIN, *Medieval Russia*, op. cit., 292–3, 380.

collaboration with the tsar and recognise its own native saints.[795] But although the appointment of metropolitans of Moscow had not involved Byzantium since Iona was chosen by his fellow bishops and approved by the grand prince in 1448, it was only in 1589 that the *de facto* independence of the Russian Orthodox Church was publicly celebrated and officially recognised during the visit of Patriarch Jeremiah of Constantinople. This was not, strictly speaking, a necessary act: almost a century and a half after the fall of Constantinople, the title of Patriarch of Constantinople was symbolic at most, and the Byzantine Church had lost whatever effective authority it had over Rus'. The Church in Rus', which had been appointing its own hierarchs for the same century and a half, knew this well. But the creation of the patriarchate of Moscow with the blessing of Jeremiah of Constantinople in 1589 was a valuable occasion for the Russian state to reiterate its superiority over the fallen Latin and Greek Churches,[796] and to publicly display the external signs of its Orthodox purity, among which the wonderworking relics of St Vasilii the Blessed. On the document confirming the creation of the Russian patriarchate, signed by Jeremiah of Constantinople and the Greek prelates in 1589, we find the first official mention to the Russian realm (*tsarstvo*) as the Third Rome, an idea which, from then on, gained currency as a way to enhance the Russian position within Eastern Christianity.[797] Had they been able to read the Slavonic document they were made to sign, the Greek hierarchs might have been opposed to it.[798]

The development of an ecclesiastically backed state ideology did not come out of nowhere. Moscow's expansionist policy, which in the fourteenth century had focussed on

[795] *Idem*, 378. See a more detailed discussion of councils in II.2.

[796] ŠEVČENKO, Intellectual Repercussions, op. cit., 309.

[797] ROWLAND, Moscow – The Third Rome, op. cit., 594–5.

[798] OSTROWSKI, *Muscovy and the Mongols*, op. cit., 239–41.

the commercially promising northeast,[799] accelerated in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The reigns of Vasilii II (1425–1462), Ivan III (1462–1505) and Vasilii III (1505–1533) were marked by the relentless subjugation of formerly independent principalities.[800] This, combined with a shift from horizontal to vertical dynastic succession – i.e., father to son, rather than brother or cousin – meant that during the reign of Ivan III alone, the area under direct grand-princely control tripled.[801] New territorial gains were achieved through a combination of military confrontation and persistent bullying. Rostov, an old ecclesiastical and administrative centre of northeastern Rus', was probably owned in part by Moscow from as early as the fourteenth century, but its autonomy was further eroded when the Rostov princes lost their judicial functions to grand-princely *namestniki* in the 1420s and 1430s.[802] Though the date usually given for the final annexation of Rostov is 1474, its absorption by Moscow was a gradual process that took almost two centuries.[803]

The annexations of Novgorod and Pskov were not as smooth. Both republics, their proximity to a confessional and geopolitical border historically prompted them to look to Lithuania for princely rulers as a form of resistance to Muscovite encroachment. Moscow defeated Novgorod in battle in 1441 and 1456, after which Novgorod agreed, in the treaty of Iazhelbitsy, to pay even higher tribute, to accept grand-princely judicial officials, and not to enter alliances with foreign powers or with enemies of the grand prince. With an elite

[799] MARTIN, *Medieval Russia*, op. cit., 250–2: This was done at the expense of Novgorod, which had traditionally exploited the area for furs.

[800] *Idem*, 275.

[801] *Idem*, 263, 275.

[802] S.V. STREL'NIKOV, *Землевладение в Ростовском крае в XIV – первой трети XVII века*, Saint Petersburg 2009, 7–9, 155, 158, 167.

[803] *Idem*, 165.

divided between those willing to accept Muscovite suzerainty, and those looking to Lithuania for salvation, Novgorod was unable to organise a united front against Moscow, and after two other military defeats in 1471 and 1478, it finally swore allegiance to the grand prince, giving up its *veche* (town assembly) bell, the former symbol of its republican independence.[804] The takeover of Pskov was similarly traumatic. The Pskov chronicle narrates, in a long entry for the year 7018 (1510) subtitled *Vziatie Pskovskoe* (Capture of Pskov), the events leading up to the region's loss of independence. These started with complaints to Vasiliy III about his local representatives (*namestniki*), a dispute that eventually led to the removal and confiscation of the Pskov *veche* bell, the exile of three hundred local families, and the appointment of two new *namestniki*, who, according to the chronicle, abused their authority.[805]

As suggested above in the case of Pskov, annexations[806] by Moscow were routinely followed by a 'rearrangement' of the local elite, which involved mass expropriations and the redistribution of confiscated land to Muscovite servicemen under the *pomest'e* system, through which the grand prince granted land in exchange for military service.[807] Expropriations in Novgorod were particularly aggressive, and included not only the expulsion of private landowners, but also the confiscation of monastic and archepiscopal land.[808] Annexation of a territory was typically preceded by the gradual takeover of local

[804] MARTIN, *Medieval Russia*, op. cit., 276–80.

[805] NASONOV, *Псковские летописи, I*, op. cit., 92–7.

[806] MARTIN, *Medieval Russia*, op. cit., 303: Other annexations included Tver' (1485), Volok (1513) and Smolensk (1514).

[807] *Idem*, 303; STREL'NIKOV, *Землевладение*, op. cit., 167.

[808] MARTIN, *Medieval Russia*, op. cit., 281.

administrative structures by grand-princely officials (*namestniki*), though bureaucratic rearrangement continued after the final loss of independence. Important administrative posts, like that of governor of Pskov, were coveted by aristocrats who competed for them and, when appointed, enjoyed significant regional authority. Filofei, hegumen of the Pskov Eleazorov monastery, complained about power abuse from grand-princely *namestniki*.[809] The chaotic political climate of Ivan IV's minority was especially favourable to this kind of behaviour: in Pskov, Prince Andrei Mikhailovich Shuiskii demanded bribes, free services, and unusually high fines and judicial fees from the population before he was removed from office in 1540.[810]

By the end of his reign, Ivan III's absorption of territories that had either been independent principalities or belonged to members of his family meant that he was the largest landowner in Rus'.[811] Still, he failed, like his father Vasilii II before him and his son Vasilii III after him, to defeat the khan of Kazan'. Instead, he made strategic, if unstable, alliances with the Crimean khans in order to circumvent Kazan' and play an active part in the fur trade.[812] The conquest of Kazan' would only take place in 1552 under Ivan IV, by which point the khanate had become the object of a religious crusade.[813] The victory was celebrated with the construction of the Pokrov-na-rvu cathedral on the Red Square, and featured in several sixteenth-century texts. The longest and most popular account of the

[809] N.N. MASLENNIKOVA, Идеологическая борьба в псковской литературе в период образования Русского централизованного государства, *ТОДРЛ* 8, 1951, 197.

[810] MARTIN, *Medieval Russia*, op. cit., 385: He was later executed by Ivan.

[811] *Idem*, 281.

[812] *Idem*, 352–7.

[813] *Idem*, 374, 379.

Kazan' campaigns, surviving in over two hundred copies, was the *Kazanskaia istoriia* (History of Kazan'), written in 1564–65 by a Russian prisoner who spent almost twenty years in Kazan' as a convert to Islam, before escaping to fight in Ivan IV's army in 1551. The *Kazanskaia istoriia* traced Russo-Tatar relations from the Mongol invasion by Baty in 1237 until Ivan IV's victory in 1552, which the text framed as the legitimate outcome of a centuries-long struggle against the infidels that had enslaved Rus'.[814] The fall of Kazan', and of Astrakhan' shortly thereafter, was doubly significant, first in establishing control over important trade routes and commercial centres, and secondly in hardening the narrative of Russian Orthodox supremacy.

Russian expansion did not stop at Kazan'. Though the Russian forts of Tiumen' and Tobol'sk were only founded in the years after his death, Ivan IV encouraged the Russian colonisation of Siberia during his reign by offering commercial privileges to the Stroganov family, whose members pioneered the exploitation of Siberian natural resources. Starting with Anika (Ioannikii) Fedorovich (c.1497– c.1569), the Stroganovy established themselves in Sol'vychegodsk, a town founded in the late fifteenth century, and whose fate became indissociable from the family's.[815] They effectively obtained a monopoly on the extraction of salt in Russia, building saltworks in Sol'vychegodsk from 1515, and then along the rivers Vychegda, Kama, and Kola.[816]

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[814] *Казанская История*, *БЛДР 10*, 593.

[815] J. HOWARD, Sol'vychegodsk, in: *Grove Art Online*, Oxford 2003, https://doi-org.ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.article.T079688 (retrieved April 2024); A.A. VVEDENSKII, *Дом Строгановых в XVI-XVII веках*, Moscow 1962, 18–19: This study has a strong Soviet ideological bias.

[816] S. KUZNETSOV, Stroganov family, in: *Grove Art Online*, Oxford 2003, https://doi-org.ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.article.T081848 (retrieved April 2024); VVEDENSKII, *Дом Строгановых*, op. cit., 18–19.

However, their relationship with the tsar went far beyond securing privileges in salt trading and copper mining.[817] The Stroganovy were *de facto* administrators and close servicemen of the tsar, with whom they communicated frequently, and whose representatives they often collaborated with. They seem, for example, to have controlled the sale of state-owned bread in Ustiug and been responsible for sending revenues back to Moscow.[818] In 1573 they were ordered to buy sable furs for Ivan IV, which they had difficulty in sourcing, and in October 1574 they were requested to send goose down to Moscow.[819] More importantly, the Stroganovy also fulfilled military functions, protecting the state's and their own commercial interests. In August 1572, Ivan IV ordered Iakov and Grigorii Stroganov to put together a group of armed men and retaliate against the killing of eighty-seven Russian merchants near Kankar and Kergedan by the Cheremis and Bashkir, thereby 'bringing them under the high hand of the tsar'.[820] Late in 1581, Semen and Maksim Stroganov, by order of the tsar, were given armed men by the *voevoda* of Perm' for protection against Vogul raids, and a month later they were allowed to organise an offensive against them. In January 1584, Semen, Maksim and Nikita Stroganov received orders from Ivan IV to prepare fifteen *strugi* (flat-bottomed boats) to send with Prince S.D. Bolkhovskii and his army to Siberia. It was the Stroganovy who called the Cossack Ermak from the Volga region to lead the conquest of Siberia in 1581.[821]

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[817] I.V. KUPTSOV, *Род Строгановых*, Cheliabinsk 2005, 14, 17: A decree from 1556 allowed Anika to dig for copper, and a later decree forbade Englishmen from trading in Sol'vychegodsk.

[818] *Idem*, 14: Two decrees addressed to Anika from 1564 and 1566 dealt with the sale of state-owned bread in Ustiug. The so-called *pashennye krest'iane* were given land for personal use in exchange for cultivating state-owned land and handing over its revenue in kind.

[819] *Idem*, 17–18.

[820] *Idem*, 17: *приводить под высокую руку Царскую*.

[821] *Idem*, 21.

The places where the cults of *iurodivye* developed were subject to fundamental political transformations in the later fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as the grand prince of Moscow, and later tsar of all Russia, established his dominance over towns and regions that had previously had independent, or semi-independent rulers. In some cases, like that of Rostov, a local princely line was replaced by another, grand-princely. Other cases, like those of Novgorod and Pskov, whose former princely rulers, often imported from the West, were subordinated to a republican, or oligarchic, political culture and a sense of identity strongly rooted in ecclesiastical prestige, experienced greater trauma at the hands of Moscow, in military and cultural terms. Yet another case, that of Ustiug, witnessed the rise of Russian autocracy through the growing wealth and influence of a family who was instrumental in the colonisation of Siberia, the Stroganovy. As the section below hopes to show, these variations in the way different regions experienced geopolitical change in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries affected the sponsorship patterns behind the cults of *iurodivye* and shaped them accordingly.

IV.4 *Iurodstvo* Politicised

The cult of a saint usually made two arguments. The first, somewhat circular, was an argument in favour of the deceased person's sanctity: by commemorating them, a community made a continuous argument for their saint's recognition as a legitimate celestial power. The second argument, to do with patronage, was perhaps less visible but just as influential. Cults needed funds to survive: commissioning texts and icons, paying shrine staff, buying candles, renovating churches, etc. If some of these funds might have been sourced from within the local community – e.g., as grateful donations for individual healings – larger donations

probably came from powerful individuals, whose economic power enabled them to shape cults according to their political leanings, making an argument in their own favour. In other words, there was no such thing as a politically neutral cult. Moreover, influential patrons, whether individuals or institutions, were usually in a position of economic and political power. The previous section has hopefully conveyed that powerful individuals or institutions in fifteenth- and, even more so, sixteenth-century Russia were most likely to be aligned with Moscow and the tsar, when they were not directly part of the state's growing administrative and military network. It should, therefore, not come as a surprise that most *iurodivyi* cults for which we have textual evidence from the period in question were aligned with Moscow and its interests.

This study has taken the form of a general survey of *iurodstvo* in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries by deliberate choice, thereby sacrificing in-depth archival research into individual cults. Tracing patronage beyond hagiographical accounts of the burial of a saint and construction of a first shrine for their relics is a difficult task, and one most fruitfully entrusted to archival exploration. While the latter is beyond the practical limits of this study, this section maps out the main discernible patterns in the patronage of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century *iurodstvo*, relying mostly on published sources, including internal textual evidence for the political inclinations of a cult, and material evidence – chapels, icons, embroideries – or records about its commissioning. Though cults tended to be sympathetic to the Muscovite cause, they differed significantly in how they developed locally, and how their immediate context influenced them: one cult did not offer a blueprint for another.

The cult of Mikhail of Klopsko, or of Novgorod, is a particularly enlightening one from the point of view of patronage and its effect on hagiographical narratives. Mikhail's cult was sponsored in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries by two distinct entities, which

originated different versions of his hagiography. The first version was composed in the 1470s in the Trinity monastery, where Mikhail had lived as a *iurodivyi*, and probably drew material from *paterik*-style notes, which resulted in a compilation of loosely assembled episodes, rather than a structured *zhitie*. Though the text cannot be precisely dated, it was in the 1470s too that Novgorod finally lost its independence, which might have signified opportunity for more impoverished, Moscow-leaning houses. In interpreting this text, it is important to keep in mind that the Trinity monastery was a relatively recent – late fourteenth or early fifteenth century – foundation for Novgorod, where there was no shortage of ancient, wealthy monasteries – and originally had no landed endowment. The monastery's animosity towards the boyar class of Novgorod, against which it competed for resources, led its hegumen Feodosii, according to Mikhail's prophecy, to be 'elected' archbishop during the popular anti-boyar protests of 1421, only to be removed by the boyar faction.[822] The paragraph where the episode is mentioned illustrates well the political instability of Novgorod at the time, by naming four archbishops of Novgorod – Ivan, Semion, Feodosii, and Evfimii – in quick succession.

Hostility towards the boyar class explains why, in most episodes of the *Life of Mikhail*, the saint was shown in conflict with various members of the Novgorod elite, conflicts which invariably ended well for the monastery and catastrophically for its opponents. The Novgorod *posadnik* Grigorii Kirillovich once warned the Trinity monks not to encroach on his land:

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[822] *Повесть о житии*, *БЛДР 7*, op. cit., 222, 514: *И сведоша на сѣни Феодосиа, мужа честна, по пророчению Михайлову и по жребию на владычьство. И пожившъ на владычьствѣ три года, и потомъ сведоша его с сѣней, и бояри послаша его в монастырь. / And they led Feodosii, an honest man, to the [archepiscopal] palace, according to Mikhail's prediction and the election to the archepiscopal seat. And having been on the seat for three years, he was then removed from the [archepiscopal] palace, and the boyars sent him to the monastery.*

> «Не пускай ни коней, ни коровъ на жары — то земля моя. Ни по рѣки по Веряжи, ни по болотомъ, ни под дворомъ моимъ не ловити. А почнете ловити, и язъ ловцамъ вашим велю ногы и руки перебити».
>
> "Do not let neither horses, nor cows on the field [*zhara* = wooded area burned by a field] – that is my land. And also do not fish on the river Veriazha, or in the marsh, or by my yard. If you start to fish [there], I will catch your fishermen and have their arms and legs smashed."

To this Mikhail replied that the *posadnik*'s threats would turn against him: «Сам будешь без рук и без ног, и в воде едва не утонешь!»[823] When Grigorii thereafter tried to punish a monk fishing on his land, he became paralysed indeed. Mikhail ordered him not to be received at the Trinity monastery, despite the archbishop's request, and instead sent Grigorii on a humiliating almsgiving tour of Novgorod monasteries for a year, after which he was admitted to a Trinity monastery service and healed.

Archbishops feature prominently in the *Life of Mikhail*. Like the *posadnik* Grigorii, Archbishop Eufimii I threatened the Trinity monastery's livelihood, with equally disastrous consequences. Shortly after Mikhail remarked that Eufimii could not carry any tax extracted from the monastery beyond the grave, the archbishop passed away:

> 'Бысть налога на манастыръ от Еуфимия владыкы от Пръваго: захотѣлъ куны взяти. И взяша конъ воронъ изъ манастыря. И Михайло владыцѣ рече: «Мало поживеши, останется все!» И с тѣхъ мъсть разболися владыка и преставилъся.'[824]
>
> 'Archbishop Eufimii I started putting pressure on the monastery: he wanted to take money. And he took a black horse from the monastery. And Mikhail told the archbishop: "You won't live long, it will all stay behind!" And from that time, the archbishop fell ill and passed away.'

Interactions with Eufimii II were less hostile. As he had predicted the popular 'election' of Feodosii mentioned above, Mikhail foresaw the confirmation of Eufimii II as archbishop by

[823] *Idem*, 224: "*It is you who will be without arms and without legs, and who will almost drown in the water!"*

[824] *Idem*, 228–30.

Moscow. When Eufimii visited the Trinity monastery to 'feed the brethren', he expressed a desire to be confirmed in his role by the grand prince, to which Mikhail answered, enigmatically placing a handkerchief on the archbishop's head, that he would indeed be confirmed in Smolensk, and later on in Moscow: «На Москву тебѣ ехати и добиешь челомъ князю великому и митрополиту».[825] By having Mikhail send the archbishop to Smolensk and Moscow for official confirmations of his appointment, the hagiographer presented the *iurodivyi* as a link between Novgorod and Moscow, almost a representative of the grand prince.

Muscovite sympathies permeate the *Life of Mikhail*. One of the monastery's recurring patrons, Konstantin Dmitrievich, was the brother of Grand Prince Vasilii II. On one of his visits to the Trinity monastery, he recognised Mikhail as a relative, and asked the monks to treat him well: '… князь, услышавъ голосъ его, да посмотрѣ въ очи и позна его. Да молви ему: «А се Михайло, Максимовъ сынъ». ... И князь молвитъ игумену и старцамъ: «Поберегите его — намъ человекъ той своитинъ!».'[826] On another of Konstantin Dmitrievich's visits, Mikhail asked him to fund a new stone church, to which the prince agreed: «... устрой нынечя в домъ церковь каменную Святую Троицу при собѣ, а Богъ тебѣ, чядо, устроить на небесѣхъ каменыа полаты невидимо».[827] Conversely, in his riddle-like fashion Mikhail tried to dissuade Prince Dmitrii Shemiaka from usurping the

[825] *Idem*, 226: *'You will go to Moscow and swear allegiance to the grand prince and the metropolitan.'* Eufimii II, despite his apparent good relations with the monastery, failed to attend to Hegumen Feodosii's funerary rites.

[826] *Idem*, 220: *The prince, hearing his voice, looked him in the eye and recognised him. And he said to him: 'But this is Mikhailo, the son of Maksim'. … And the prince told the hegumen and the elders: 'Look after him – this man is our relative!'* According to footnote eleven in this edition, Mikhail might have been the son of Dmitrii Donskoi's sister.

[827] *Idem*, 222: *'… now build a stone church [dedicated to the] Holy Trinity in the [monastic] house while you are here, and God will build you an invisible palace in the heavens, child.'*

grand-princely throne: 'И рече: «Михайлушко, бѣгаю своей отчинѣ — збили мя с великого княженья!» И Михайла рече: «Всякая власть дается от Бога!»'[828] Prince Dmitrii's death shortly thereafter confirmed Mikhail's prophecy and effectively supported a case of vertical, rather than horizontal succession, a fundamental change of system that would consolidate Muscovite autocracy. Mikhail's most notable expression of support for Muscovite hegemony came towards the end of his *zhitie,* in the form of a reply to the *posadnik* Ivan Vasil'evich Nemir, who declared that Novgorod did not need a Muscovite ruler as it already had Prince Mikhail the Lithuanian. Mikhail's angry monologue deserves to be quoted in full:

> «То у вас не князь — грязь! Разошлите послы к великому князю, добивайте челом. И не уймете князя, будеть с силами к Новугороду, и не будеть вамъ Божия пособия ... и попленить новгородцевъ многых: иных на Москву сведеть, а иных присѣчет, а иных на окупъ даст. И Михайло князь о вас не станет, помочи от него не буде. И послати вамъ преподобнаго отца владыку да посадникы, да добивать челом ему, челобитье примать да и куны изъемлеть. Да по малѣ времени князь великый опять будетъ, да город возметь, да всю свою волю учинитъ, да Богъ дасть ему».[829]
>
> "That prince of yours is dirt! Send ambassadors to the grand prince, swear allegiance [to him]. You will not persuade the [grand] prince, he will come with his army to Novgorod and you will not receive help from God … and he will take many Novgorodians as prisoners: some he will send to Moscow, some he will execute, and others he will ask a ransom for. And Prince Mikhailo will not defend you, there will be no help from him. And you will have to send the venerable father the archbishop, and the *posadnik,* and swear allegiance, and he [the grand prince] will take your oath and demand money from you. And after a short while, the grand prince will come again and take the city, and he will do everything as he pleases, and God will be on his side."

The first version of the *Life of Mikhail* polarised the environment around the Trinity monastery: visitors were either enemies, who tended to threaten the monastery's property

[828] *Idem,* 226.: *And he said: 'Mikhailushko, I am running far from my ancestral lands – I was ousted from the grand princely [throne]!' And Mikhaila said: 'All power comes from God!'*

[829] *Idem,* 230.

and survival, or friends, who supported the monastery. The figure of Mikhail was at the centre of this polarisation, dispensing prophecies in turn favourable or fatal to the people he interacted with. In the fragmented political landscape of fifteenth-century Novgorod, the Trinity monastery's interests naturally clashed with those of the landowning aristocracy, with which it competed for resources, and aligned with those of the Muscovite ruling class and its representative Prince Konstantin Dmitrievich, who sponsored the monastery. Written at the end of the 1470s when Muscovite annexation had become an inescapable reality, the first version of the *Life of Mikhail* provided a narrative that legitimised, through the character of Mikhail, the way the Trinity monastery had navigated a turbulent period of change.

In this version of the text, no posthumous miracles were reported, suggesting, on the one hand, that Mikhail's tomb had not become a popular shrine, and on the other, that the character of a living prophet repeatedly broadcasting the righteousness of the Muscovite cause carried more ideological weight than any posthumous healing miracles. From a cynical point of view, the first version of the *Life of Mikhail* embodied the Trinity monastery's pragmatic attitude towards political change: Muscovite patronage and hegemony was the monastery's best chance of survival, and they embraced it wholeheartedly. Conversely, from a Muscovite point of view, it is interesting to observe the grand prince's brother, Konstantin Dmitrievich, creating patronage ties with a Novgorod foundation that, unlike most monasteries in the area, would eagerly receive his advances.

The *Voskresenskaia* chronicle, written in the 1540s,[830] reinforced the association of Mikhail with the grand-princely dynasty by recording the holy fool's prophecy about the birth of Ivan III who would destroy Novgorod, echoing the final monologue quoted above:

[830] LEVINA, Летопись Воскресенская, *СККДР (XIV–XVI, 2)*, op. cit., 39–42.

> ‘Въ лѣто 6948 [1440]. Родися великому князю сынъ Иванъ, генваря 22. О семъ же прорече старець святый, именемь Михаилъ, въ Великомъ Новѣградѣ, въ монастыри на Веряжѣ; пришедшу къ нему архіепископу Еуѳимію, онъ же рече владыцѣ: «днесь, отче, у великого князя на Москвѣ радость ... родися великому князю сынъ Тимофѣй, а дали имя ему Іоанъ, и будетъ наслѣдникъ отцу своему, и разорити имать обычаи нашея земли Новгородскіа, погибель граду нашему будетъ, и многимъ землямъ страшенъ будетъ.»’[831]
>
> ‘In the year 6948 [1440]. A son Ivan was born to the grand prince, on January 22. A saintly elder named Mikhail, in Novgorod the Great in the monastery on the Veriazha, predicted this. When the archbishop Eufimii came to see him, he told the lord [archbishop]: “Today, father, the grand prince in Moscow is joyful … a son, Timofei, was born to the grand prince and he was given the name Ivan, and he will succeed his father, and destroy the customs of our land of Novgorod, and our town will be ruined, and he [Ivan] will be fearsome to many lands.”’

The *Life of Mikhail* started as an argument for the survival of the Trinity monastery and, by implication, for Muscovite supremacy. The text’s audience, probably limited to the monks and their patrons, and its function dictated its form, with meaning conveyed through short, vivid episodes, and little to no emphasis on Mikhail’s ascetic feat. This changed with the text’s third version,[832] commissioned in 1537 by Makarii, then archbishop of Novgorod. Though the content of this third version remained almost exactly the same as the first version’s, the episodes were rearranged in chronological order and framed by a long rhetorical introduction – following the Creation through to the Fall, the Flood, St Andrew’s travels in Slavonic lands, the Christianisation of Rus’ –, an encomium, and four posthumous miracles at the end.[833] This transformation of loosely connected episodes into a standardised

[831] *ПСРЛ, Т. VIII*, op. cit., 108.

[832] Dmitriev, Житие Михаила, *СККДР (XIV–XVI, 1)*, op. cit., 305: The second redaction, produced in the 1490s, elevated the first redaction’s style by diluting the colloquialisms with more complex turns of phrase and quotations from the Scriptures. The text might have been commissioned by Archbishop Gennadii of Novgorod and amplified the first redaction’s pro-Muscovite leaning. I have not had access to this version of the *Life of Mikhail*.

[833] *Памятники старинной русской литературы*, op. cit., 36–7, 47–50.

hagiographical text that respected stylistic conventions hints at a change in the text's function and audience.[834]

As mentioned in Part II, Archbishop Makarii of Novgorod commissioned, in the 1530s and 1540s, the *Velikie Chet'i Minei* or Great Menology, a compilation of ecclesiastical texts, among which hagiographies of Russian saints. His commission, in 1537, of a new version of the *Life of Mikhail* to a Muscovite aristocrat fulfilling military functions in Novgorod[835] suggests that the text's first two versions were not suitable for incorporation in the Great Menology. The new version was a more painstakingly crafted piece of literature that respected structural and stylistic conventions, and magnified the cult of Mikhail by inflating the popular and ecclesiastical attendance at the saint's funeral and adding four posthumous miracles. The new hagiographer also reinforced the text's Moscow-centric affinities, for example by depicting the Novgorod aristocracy as Latinising traitors, thereby implicitly justifying the intervention of Moscow: 'вельможи же града, всѣ старѣйшины отъ наученія дьявола хотяху Латыни приложитися и сихъ кралю повиноватися.'[836]

The cult of Mikhail must be understood against the backdrop of a centuries-old political and economic rivalry between Novgorod and Moscow, which also left ideological traces. In Donald Ostrowski's interpretation, the Third Rome, which scholars have so often interpreted as a Muscovite claim to Orthodox leadership, was in fact, at the time of its formulation by Filofei of Pskov and before the late sixteenth century, an argument for

[834] *Idem*, 37: The 1537 redaction, unlike the first 1470s redaction, was narrated in the first person by an author who expressed standard rhetorical modesty.

[835] *Idem*, 50–1.

[836] *Idem*, 42: *the magnates of that town [Novgorod], all the leaders, taught by the Devil, wanted to join the Latins and obey their king*.

Novgorod's spiritual primacy and independence even as it was ruled by Moscow, and an attempt to restrict the grand prince's authority.[837] That the rivalry between Novgorod and Moscow also played out on an ideological level is demonstrated by the metropolitan of Moscow's appropriation of the legendary white cowl, which had been a symbol of Novgorod's spiritual primacy – in a similar way to the regalia used in the 1498 and 1547 coronations.

The white cowl was said to have been given by Constantine the Great to Pope Sylvester in gratitude for a healing. A subsequent pope, Formosus, then sent the white cowl to Patriarch Philotheus of Constantinople, who in turn was told in a dream to send it to Archbishop Vasilii of Novgorod – not, crucially, to the metropolitan of Moscow. According to the *Tale about the White Cowl*, after Constantine offered Sylvester the cowl, he left Rome and founded Constantinople, considering that it was not proper for spiritual and secular rulers to reside in the same city. This was a thinly veiled message for Moscow to leave Novgorod alone and respect its spiritual primacy in Rus', even as Moscow boycotted the highly influential see by refusing to appoint an archbishop between 1509 and 1526, and banishing Archbishop Pimen in 1570. Not only were Novgorod's ideological manifestations about the Third Rome and the white cowl unsuccessful in practice, they were also appropriated by Moscow, which used them for its own benefit: as mentioned above, Moscow proclaimed itself the Third Rome in 1589 and in 1564 a council voted in favour of metropolitans of Moscow wearing the white cowl.[838]

[837] OSTROWSKI, *Muscovy and the Mongols*, op. cit., 222.

[838] *Idem*, 234–7.

Like the Third Rome and the white cowl, the *Life of Mikhail* in its successive versions is a 'cultural artifact of the sixteenth-century clash between Novgorod and Moscow'[839] If the practical impact of Archbishop and then Metropolitan Makarii's Great Menology may be debated, the digging up, commissioning, and compiling of texts on such a scale made obvious his intention to unify the Russian religious landscape under the Muscovite aegis, driving spiritual legitimacy away from Novgorod. Mikhail of Klopsko was an ideal fit for this project: he belonged, in legend at least, to the Muscovite dynastic line, had chosen Novgorod as his spiritual home, and was openly favourable to the Muscovite annexation of Novgorod. Given his prophetic status and his evident proximity to God, he was the living embodiment of Muscovite hegemony divinely sanctioned. In other words, by appropriating the cult of Mikhail, Makarii extracted him from his original, specific context – the patron of an obscure monastery in the outskirts of Novgorod – and exhibited him as the missing link between Novgorod and Moscow, the heavenly legitimation of the absorption of the former by the latter. The appropriation by Makarii of Mikhail as a symbolic figure was made even more obvious by the metropolitan's decision to recognise Mikhail as a pan-Russian saint in 1547, an honour otherwise bestowed exclusively on leaders of the Church or towering figures of monasticism.[840] The only *iurodivyi* to receive this honour, Mikhail was likely not the most prominent cult of a *iurodivyi* by the mid-sixteenth century, which suggests that his pan-Russian status was granted on an ideological basis, rather than as a response to his popularity.

[839] *Idem*, 243.

[840] *Акты, собранные*, op. cit., 203: The recurring pan-Russian saints are Metropolitan Iona, Ioann Archbishop Novgorod, Pafnutii of Borovsk, Nikon the disciple of Sergii of Radonezh, Hegumen Makarii of Kaliazin, Mikhail of Klopsko, Savvatii and Zosima of the Solovki monastery, Pavel of Obnora, Dionisii of Glushitsa, and Hegumen Aleksandr of Svir'.

If the ideological argument made by Makarii through Mikhail is clear, its practical effects are open to debate. Though Mikhail appeared in liturgical calendars and was depicted in sixteenth-century icons as a monastic saint, his tomb does not seem to have become a popular miracle shrine.[841] This could be because it was not located in an urban centre. But it is also likely that his cult had little to offer the faithful of either Moscow or Novgorod. For Moscow, if he was known there at all, his was a distant shrine with no particular wonderworking reputation. For Novgorod, he was probably an unwelcome reminder of the long and traumatic period over which the region suffered military attacks from Moscow and eventually lost its independence, while its ruling elite was murdered or exiled. A saint, whose main function was to justify violence, was unlikely to become popular with those upon whom it was inflicted. The case of Mikhail is a reminder that a cult could receive generous and influential patronage and still not 'make it'. Few people were better placed than Makarii, as archbishop of Novgorod and later metropolitan of Moscow, to promote a cult. Yet it seems there was not much Mikhail could offer the faithful of either Novgorod or Moscow.

If Mikhail's case illustrates how a cult, despite being persistently sponsored, would not thrive unless it secured popular support, the case of Nikolai, or in the local dialect Mikula, of Pskov demonstrates the opposite: a popular holy man would not become the object of a thriving and durable cult unless it was backed by the ecclesiastical authorities. Nikolai of Pskov is highly unusual among sixteenth-century *iurodivye* because he is known to us through predominantly non-ecclesiastical sources. Intriguingly too, he became famous for a single episode, beyond which we have no information about him. This episode, mentioned above, took place during Ivan IV's campaign, on the grounds of treason, against

[841] The *sluzhba* to Mikhail does mention posthumous miracles worked by his tomb in the Trinity monastery, but it is hard to tell whether this is simply conforming to the standard intercessional framework of a *sluzhba*.

Novgorod and Pskov. Having ravaged Novgorod, the tsar left the Volga '… so full of dead bodies that the river itself at this place had the color of blood, and the bodies piled up and stopped at the bridge.'[842] But when he arrived to Pskov in February 1570, Ivan was met by Nikolai, a local saintly man, who cursed the tsar and so terrified him that the army retreated, leaving the population unharmed. This story is found, with minor variations to the same plot, in four accounts by foreign *oprichniki* and travellers to Muscovy, and three chronicles. There is no mention of Nikolai in any contemporary hagiography or liturgy, save for a brief cameo appearance in the *Life of Nikandr*.

The silence of ecclesiastical sources is even stranger given the subtle but undeniable evidence for his popularity both before and after the event in 1570. Every account of the episode presented Nikolai as a saintly man with a local reputation as a prophet prior to the incident: 'a poor man named Nikola, whom every Pskovite esteemed and honored as a holy prophet' (Taube and Kruse);[843] 'he prophesies the future for the Russians' (von Staden);[844] 'The emperor, after he had saluted the eremite at his lodging, sent him a reward. And the holy man to requite the emperor sent him a piece of raw flesh…' (Fletcher);[845] '… there [in Pskov] met him [Ivan IV] an impostor or magician, which they held to be their oracle, a holy man named Nikola Sviatoi' (Horsey).[846] We also know that Nikolai was given a burial place of honour in the Trinity cathedral, close to the tombs of local princely saints, which could

[842] BENOIT, Johann Taube, op. cit., 373.

[843] *Idem*, 373–4.

[844] ESPER, *The Land and Government*, op. cit., 27–8.

[845] BERRY – CRUMMEY, *Rude and Barbarous Kingdom*, op. cit., 219–20.

[846] *Idem*, 268–9.

hardly have happened without the collaboration of local clergy. Moreover, two sources, the *Tale about the coming of Stephen Báthory to Pskov* and the Pskov Caves *paterik*, mention the defenders of Pskov calling upon Nikolai as a patron saint, among others, during the Polish invasion of 1581.[847] The *paterik* also reported an apparition of the Virgin and saints, among which Nikolai, above the town at the time of the siege. Finally, Nikolai made a cameo appearance in the *Life of Nikandr the Hermit*, blessing the protagonist on his chosen ascetic path, which suggests the hagiographer, probably a member of the clergy, held Nikolai as a legitimate spiritual authority.[848]

Pskov, even more so than Novgorod, was an area of geopolitical tension. A political and confessional border with Catholic Poland-Lithuania and Livonia, it alternated between truces, as in 1481 and 1493, and militarised outbursts throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, culminating in the Livonian War (1558–1583), which left a catastrophic mark on Ivan IV's reign.[849] In response to the border's volatility, the *d'iak*, or grand-princely administrator, of Pskov Mikhail Grigor'evich Munekhin had the impressive Gremiachaia tower built in 1525.[850] Not far from the contested town of Iur'ev (Dorpat), roughly 50 kilometres west of Pskov, stood the Pskov Caves (Pskov Pechery) monastery, whose strategic position attracted Muscovite interest. Munekhin endowed the foundation with land and funds, signed its statute, expanded and fortified it, and was buried on site, having turned

[847] *Повесть о прихождении*, op. cit., 578–80.

[848] *Житие Никандра*, op. cit., 620.

[849] MARTIN, *Medieval Russia*, op. cit., 343–4.

[850] R.P. DMITRIEVA, Мунехин Михаил Григорьевич, *СККДР (XIV–XVI, 2)*, 120–2: The tower is, to this day, a major example of sixteenth-century Muscovite military architecture.

a modest house into a powerful 'outpost of Muscovite Orthodoxy'.[851] Grand-princely patronage of the monastery continued throughout the sixteenth century,[852] by the end of which the foundation boasted major stone fortifications, abundant artillery provisions, and an impressive library.[853] An inventory drawn up in 1586 listed costly gifts by Ivan IV, including a silver *kiot* (icon case) for a wonderworking Dormition icon and an inscribed silver *kovsh* (vessel).[854] In the same inventory, a series of items snatched or produced across the shifting border[855] bear witness to the contested bishopric of Dorpat (Iur'ev) as a point of heightened conflict, where military skirmishes were aggravated by the Pskov Caves missionary activity among Finnish and Lettish tribes.[856]

With the hardening of anti-Latin sentiment and Russian Orthodox identity, the western border became associated with the temptation of treason, famously illustrated by Andrei Kurbskii, a close advisor of Ivan IV who defected to Lithuania.[857] It was on suspicion of

[851] N.E. ANDREYEV, The Pskov-Pechery Monastery in the 16th Century, *The Slavonic and East European Review* 32/79, 1954, 319–20, 323; DMITRIEVA, Мунехин, op. cit., 120–1.

[852] ANDREYEV, The Pskov-Pechery, op. cit., 323–4.

[853] *Псковскій Печерскій монастырь въ 1586 г.*, Saint Petersburg 1904, 1–2, 10–11. See also P. KAEGBEIN, The Library of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery Restituted, *Journal of Baltic Studies* 22/1, Spring 1991, 73–76: The library was restored to the monastery in 1990 after half a century in the University of Tartu and is especially rich in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century manuscripts.

[854] *Псковскій Печерскій монастырь*, op. cit., 2–7.

[855] *Псковскій Печерскій монастырь*, op. cit., 5, 6, 14: Including a processional icon of the Nativity brought in 7089 (1581) from Topino, a Trinity icon taken from Sagirovskoe, an icon painted by the Pechery hegumen Kornilii in Topino, holy vessels sent from the German towns of Iur'ev and Vilnius, and a bell 'taken from the Lithuanian people'.

[856] N.P. ANDREYEV, Was the Pskov-Pechery Monastery a Citadel of the Non-Possessors?, *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 17/4, 1969, 482.

[857] R.G. SKRYNNIKOV, Курбский и его письма в Псково-Печерский монастырь, *ТОДРЛ* 18, 1962, 99–116: This chronology is debated, but Skrynnikov puts forward convincing arguments.

treason, too, that Ivan led an army into Novgorod and Pskov in 1570. Though we cannot hope to prove the reasons for the lack of a cult, the most likely explanation for the absence of Nikolai of Pskov from ecclesiastical sources in the late sixteenth century and beyond is that, although popular, he was a highly inconvenient patron saint. Pskov was under the direct jurisdiction of the archbishop of Novgorod, which meant that local monasteries in Pskov and their hegumens *de facto* exercised ecclesiastical authority on the ground: there was no local bishop to oversee them, and visits from the archbishop were infrequent. The Pskov Caves monastery in particular, as a military and confessional outpost, performed a delicate balancing act: dependent on Moscow-based munificence and the volatile goodwill of Ivan IV as a patron, it also had to manage local hostility towards Moscow. Details in the accounts of Ivan IV's visit to Pskov in 1570 suggest that the tsar was specifically angry at the clergy, and that the political position of the local Church was unstable:[858]

> 'He vented his frenzied brutality on the monks, some of whom he cut to pieces while drowning others. He pillaged the monasteries and removed their bells.'[859] (Schlichting)
>
> 'Then the Grand Prince moved into Great Novgorod, into the bishop's palace, and took everything belonging to the bishop. He took the largest bells and everything he wanted from the churches … had monks tortured, and many of them were killed. There are three hundred monasteries inside and outside the city and not one of them was spared.'[860] (Staden)
>
> '... а церковную казну по обителемъ и по церквам, иконы, и кресты, и пелены, и сосуды, и книги, и колоколы, поима с собою.'[861] (Pskov I)

[858] P. GONNEAU, *Novgorod : histoire et archéologie d'une république russe médiévale (970-1478)*, Paris 2021, 124–5: Gonneau pointed out the extreme violence of Ivan's retaliation against Novgorod, and his particular anger at the Church.

[859] H. GRAHAM, "A Brief Account of the Character and Brutal Rule of Vasil'yevich, Tyrant of Muscovy" (Albert Schlichting on Ivan Groznyy), *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 9/2, 1975, 239.

[860] ESPER, *The Land and Government*, op. cit., 26.

[861] NASONOV, *Псковские летописи, I*, op. cit., 116.

> '… and the church treasury in monasteries and churches, icons, and crosses, and cloths, and vessels, and books, and bells, he took with him.' (Pskov I)
>
> '[in Novgorod] … и множество много людеи на правежи побиено бысть иноческаго и священническаго чина, и инокинь и всѣех православных христианъ ... и святыя обители и церкви божия и села запустѣша.'[862] (Pskov III)
>
> '[in Novgorod] and a huge multitude of people were tried and killed from monastic and priestly ranks, and nuns and all Orthodox Christians … and the holy [monastic] houses and churches of God and villages were deserted.' (Pskov III)
>
> '[in Novgorod] велел … грабити всякое сокровище и божество: образы и книги, и колокола, и всякое церьковное строение.'[863] (*Piskarevskii letopisets*)
>
> '… he ordered that any treasury and holy object should be looted: icons and books, and bells, and any church building.' (*Piskarevskii letopisets*)

If the local Church in Pskov was indeed targeted by Ivan IV in 1570, it is not difficult to understand why clergy would refrain from backing the cult of a saint whose main known feat was the humiliation of the tsar. Saving Pskov from the unbridled rage of Ivan IV catapulted Nikolai into local stardom, a status the clergy of Pskov could hardly repress in the immediate aftermath of 1570. But if it was acceptable for Nikolai to play a role in defending the city a decade later against Catholic invaders, he might have been considered too controversial, even after Ivan's death in 1584, to be officially endorsed beyond remaining buried in the Trinity cathedral. Pskov was not, after all, lacking in politically safer, well-established cults such as those of Princes Gavriila and Dovmont, or newer ones, such as that of the hermit Nikandr, who was eccentric but neutral.[864]

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[862] A.N. NASONOV, *Псковские летописи, II*, Moscow Leningrad 1955, 261.

[863] *ПСРЛ, Т. XXXIV*, op. cit., 191.

[864] GONNEAU, *Novgorod*, op. cit., 78–80: Prince Vsevolod, Gavriil in baptism, was ousted from Novgorod in 1136 but well-received and taken as a ruler in Pskov, Novgorod's regional rival. His relics were translated to the Trinity cathedral in 1192, and unsuccessfully claimed by Novgorod. Dovmont (Daumontas) sought refuge from Lithuanian dynastic strife in Pskov, where he arrived in 1265. Baptised as Timofei, he enjoyed a long and successful rule between 1266 and 1299, and was buried as a patriotic hero in the Trinity cathedral, where his clothing and sword were also preserved.

The comparison between Mikhail of Novgorod and Nikolai of Pskov is interesting partly because of the similarities between the two: though rivals, both cities were republics (or oligarchies), who traditionally turned west to Poland-Lithuania for princely rulers. Because of this, they acquired a reputation as potential traitors, and their gradual loss of independence and eventual annexation by Moscow was, in both cases, traumatic. In Novgorod as in Pskov, *iurodivyi* figures helped provide a narrative for this period of dramatic change, but whereas Mikhail told the story from a Moscow-centric point of view, legitimising grand-princely authority over Novgorod, Nikolai defended the people of Pskov against the excesses of autocracy and became so popular locally that over a decade later his legend was still being transmitted to foreign travellers like Giles Fletcher. Ironically though, if autocracy generated the figure of Nikolai as a defender of the oppressed, it also exerted pressure on local ecclesiastical structures so that, despite Nikolai's overwhelming popularity,[865] he never became the object of a visible, or organised, cult. Giles Fletcher, who was made aware of the political voice of *iurodivye*, would not have been surprised:

> 'Yet it falleth out sometime that for this rude liberty which they take upon them after a counterfeit manner by imitation of prophets, they are made away in secret, as was

[865] Василий Блаженный, *ПЭ Том VII*, op. cit., 125: The episode of Nikolai of Pskov standing up to Ivan IV had a long afterlife. A late version of the *Life of Vasilii of Moscow* – the Sheparev copy, dated to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries – reproduced the episode with Vasilii playing the role of Nikolai. Vasilii died in the 1550s and could not have interacted with Ivan in 1570. P.I. IAKUSHKIN, *Сочинения П. И. Якушкина с его биографией и товарищескими о нем воспоминаниями*, Petersburg 1884, 242: Travelling around Russia to collect folk songs and tales in the nineteenth century, Iakushkin heard the tale about Ivan and Mikula from a proud local. This has been translated in M. PERRIE, *The image of Ivan the Terrible in Russian Folklore*, Cambridge 1987, 169–72. *Сводный иконописный подлинник*, op. cit., 27, 40–41: An eighteenth-century icon painting guide describes Nikolai visually, though I do not know of any pre-modern representations of him. Nowadays, Nikolai, whose relics are said to still be in the Trinity cathedral of Pskov, is commemorated on the 28 February, the supposed date of his death. See, for example, Православие.Ru, Православный Календарь, https://days.pravoslavie.ru/Images/im43.htm (retrieved August 2022); I found a single mention to a record of his miracles, supposedly lost in the eighteenth century: Троицкий собор города Пскова, https://soborpskov.ru/shrines/nikolay-salos/ (retrieved August 2022).

> one or two of them in the last emperor's time for being over bold in speaking against his government.'[866]

The texts about Mikhail and Nikolai were shaped by the specific time and place where they arose, and offered, each in its own way, a heavenly framework for political change, either legitimising or rejecting it. The cult of Isidor of Rostov likewise arose in a specific climate, one of anti-Latin sentiment that resulted partly from the growing cultural proximity between Rostov and Moscow. In Rostov, as in Novgorod and Pskov, Muscovite annexation caused significant disruptions to settlement and landownership patterns. While 'foreign' monasteries, like the Trinity St Sergii *lavra* acquired land in the region,[867] texts produced by local monasteries, like the 1470s–80s *Povest' o Petre, tsareviche ordynskom* (*Tale about Petr, the Horde prince*), expressed heightened concern with landownership;[868] or, like the 1520s[869] *Povest' o Borisoglebskom monastyre* (*Tale about the Boris and Gleb monastery*), indicated how their monastery dexterously shifted away from the patronage of Rostov aristocrats to the grand prince's.[870] If resettlement was perhaps not executed as violently as

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[866] BERRY – CRUMMEY, *Rude and Barbarous Kingdom*, op. cit., 220.

[867] STREL'NIKOV, *Землевладение*, op. cit., 168.

[868] *Повесть о Петре, Царевиче Ордынском*, *БЛДР 9*, 78–80: *И рече ему князь: "… Приими, Петре, малое се земли нашея вътчины противу дома святых апостолъ от езера сего. Азъ тебе грамоты испишу … А грамоты суть на се: да не отъимают тех земель мои дѣти и мои внуци у твоих дѣтей и внуковъ по нас"* / *And the prince said to him: '… Take, Petr, a bit of our patrimony land in front of the church of the holy apostles by this lake. I will write you a deed … And the deeds are for the following: so that these lands will not be taken away from your children and grandchildren by my children and grandchildren after us.'*

[869] I.U. BUDOVNITS, *Монастыри на Руси и борьба с ними крестьян в XIV–XVI веках (по «житиям святых»)*, Moscow 1966, 146.

[870] *Повесть о Борисоглебском монастыре, коликих лет и како бысть его начало*, *Ярославские епархиальные ведомости* 3, Часть неофициальная, 1873, 18, 20: *Изъ Ростовскыа области многыа вельможа преставленныя начаша кластись и за душа своя отчины своя давати, села и деревни и пожни* / *From the Rostov region, many dying grandees started placing themselves [under the protection of the monastery?] and giving away their patrimonies and villages and hamlets and meadows for their souls.*; *… князь великый Василей Васильевичъ всея Русіи и благородная мати его великіа княгине Софья въ*

in Novgorod or Pskov, many Rostov landowners left the region, especially in the 1320s–40s and 1470s–80s,[871] and those who stayed had to enter service agreements – where land was granted in exchange for military service – either with the archepiscopal *dom*, or with the grand prince.[872]

One of the oldest bishoprics in Rus', the see of Rostov had already been a source of legitimacy for Prince Andrei Bogoliubskii when in the 1160s, failing to obtain an independent see from the patriarch of Constantinople for his new capital in Vladimir, the prince settled for the next best solution: transferring the residence of the bishop of Rostov to Vladimir.[873] In the following centuries, Rostov remained attractive to the grand princes of Moscow as an ancient ecclesiastical and administrative centre.[874] This, along with the fact that Rostov, unlike Novgorod and Pskov, which were republics, had its own princely line and therefore a political culture not unlike Moscow's, led to a tangible rapprochement between the two, whereby Moscow absorbed ecclesiastical prestige by association with Rostov, and Rostov benefitted from grand-princely patronage and protagonism.

The brilliant career of Vassian Rylo, bishop of Rostov between 1468 and 1481, illustrates this fruitful collaboration. Vassian was hegumen of the Trinity St Sergii *lavra*,

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обитель сію начаша вѣру велію имѣти и подаваша многыя жалованныя грамоты потребныа монастырю, и оттолѣ началъ князь великый Василей Васильевичъ звати своимъ монастыремъ / *… the Grand prince Vasilii Vasil'evich of all Rus' and his noble mother the Grand princess Sof'ia started having great faith in this [monastic] house and gave many privilege deeds necessary to the monastery, and from then the Grand prince Vasilii Vasil'evich started calling it his monastery.*

[871] STREL'NIKOV, *Землевладение*, op. cit., 167.

[872] *Idem*, 167–8.

[873] SHCHENNIKOVA, Чудотворная икона, op. cit., 255.

[874] STREL'NIKOV, *Землевладение*, op. cit., 167.

whose landholdings he significatively augmented, and had a close relationship with Vasilii II, who entrusted him the delicate diplomatic mission of preserving the Lithuanian metropolitanate's loyalty to Moscow rather than Rome. As bishop of Rostov, Vassian sought to extend his jurisdiction to and extract tithes from the St Kirill Beloozero monastery, thereby clashing with the metropolitan of Moscow. He also enhanced the ecclesiastical prestige of Rostov by promoting the cults of local saints. Under him, the long version of the *Life of Leontii* was composed, Avraamii received Church-wide recognition, and Isaia was made a saint, his relics translated and his *zhitie* commissioned. During this time, Vassian also advised Ivan III in his dealings with the Golden Horde and participated in virtually every important event of Muscovite political and ecclesiastical life of the 1470s and early 1480s, such as the election of Gerontii as metropolitan of Moscow, or the baptism of the future Vasilii III.[875]

If Mongol attacks, such as the raid by Emir Edigey in 1408, were still a concern in the earlier part of the fifteenth century, demonising the Latin faith would soon take precedence over othering Muslim Tatars. As mentioned above, the Byzantine metropolitan of Rus', Isidor, was perceived as a demonic traitor for signing the Union of Florence with the Greek and Latin Churches, and the subsequent fall of Constantinople was interpreted as a confirmation that the only legitimate Church was henceforth Russian Orthodox. The cult of Isidor of Rostov seems, and probably was, tailor-made for this context. Though Isidor's *zhitie* does not offer much concrete information, it is categorical in characterising its protagonist as originally western:

> 'Сей блаженый, якоже поведають нѣции, от западных странъ, от латыньска языка, от нѣмецькыя же земля рожение имѣа и воспитание, от славных же и

[875] IA.S. LUR'E, Вассиан Рыло, *СККДР (XIV–XVI, 1)*, 123–4; Вассиан I, *ПЭ Том VII*, 261.

> богатых; якоже глаголють, от местьрска роду бѣ. И возненавидѣвъ богомерскую отческую и латынскую вѣру, возлюби же истинную нашу христьяньскую и православную вѣру ...'[876]
>
> 'This blessed [man], as some say, [was] from the western countries, from the Latin tongue, from the German land. His birth and education was from the glorious and the wealthy; they even say he had the lineage of a master. And he started hating his fatherland's vile Latin faith and loving our true Christian and Orthodox faith.'

Though foreignness is a recurring *topos* in the characterisation of *iurodivye*,[877] the insistence on Isidor's Latin origins carries more weight than the conventional image of the wanderer for Christ. Scholars have suggested that the historical figure on which the literary Isidor was based might indeed have come from the West,[878] though whether he did or not matters significantly less than the fact that he was perceived and venerated as a Latin convert to Orthodoxy. This was all the more powerful given the name coincidence with the Greek metropolitan of Rus'. In Rostov minds, a 'bad Isidor' (of Kyiv), who sold the true faith to the Latins in Florence, might have been unfavourably compared with a 'good Isidor' (of Rostov), born in the West but seeking in Russia the enlightenment of *iurodstvo*, an exclusively Orthodox form of sanctity that embodied the Eastern Church's unique humility.

The *Life of Isidor* insists on the protagonist's virtuous conversion. In the encomium, or *pokhvala*, towards the end of the *zhitie*, the hagiographer again picks up the opening theme quoted above: 'от запада восиявши и к востоку пришедый, иже древле погубленое

[876] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 183.

[877] RYDÉN, *Life of St Andrew, Vol. II*, op. cit., 12–13: Andrew of Constantinople was said to be a Scythian.

[878] KAGAN, Житие Исидора, *СККДР (XIV–XVI, 1)*, op. cit., 281; GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 167, 204; GLADKOVA, Странность юродивого, op. cit., 69; GORODILIN, Между «немечьскою землею» и Ростовом, op. cit., 432–4, 438–40: Gorodilin argued that Isidor was from a Russian-speaking community settled in north-western Germanic lands.

отечество наслѣдовавый’.[879] The liturgy for Isidor brings up the topic of his Latin origins even more frequently:

> ‘ѿ тмы ко свѣтоу вѣразоумїа прiѣклъ еси. невозвратно хр҃оу посьледоуа. вдалнмѣ страны ѿ своего wчьства шествии сн҃ори …’[880]
>
> ‘you ran from darkness to the light of divine understanding, following Christ definitively, having made a pilgrimage from your fatherland to faraway countries …’
>
> ‘ѿ нечт҃ıа во бл҃гочт҃ıе пришедьї, и свѣтомъ разоумнымъ ѿ б҃а просвѣщенъ бывъ, возненавидѣлъ еси wч҃ьское безбо҃е и возлюбилъ еси истинную вѣр҃ѕ хв҃оу’[881]
>
> ‘you came from wickedness to piety, and were enlightened by God’s light of understanding. You came to hate your native godlessness and to love the true faith of Christ.’

The text of Isidor's *sluzhba* is so insistent in its condemnation of the Latin faith and its praise of Isidor for having seen the light of Orthodoxy despite having been born to darkness, that it almost reads like a tract against the Union of Florence. In other words, to be understood, it must be read in the context of the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century ideological developments that conceptualised Muscovy and then Russia as an outpost and defender of the one true faith.

It is unclear whether the *Life of Isidor* was commissioned directly by the archbishop of Rostov, though its canonical form – introduction, biography, burial, posthumous miracles, encomium – and rhetorical style would suggest its author was affiliated with the Church and familiar with its literary conventions. If we are to believe the text, at the time of Isidor’s

[879] GLADKOVA, Древнерусский святой, op. cit., 194: *shining from the West and having come to the East, finding your long-lost fatherland*.

[880] РГБ. Ф.304/I №618, fol. 2 r.

[881] *Idem*, fol. 6 r. See also fol. 2 v, 9 r, 10 v, 13 r.

death the bishop of Rostov allowed for his body to be buried and a chapel to be built above it, though he did not, as far as we know, directly participate in the commemorations. Likewise, it seems Vassian Rylo was more interested in episcopal and monastic saints, probably for their institutional prestige, which enhanced his own post.

Isidor did, however, later find a faithful patron in Ivan IV. Even before he included the city in his *oprichnina* from 1569,[882] the tsar visited Rostov frequently, and developed a close relationship with Isidor, to whom, among other saints, he attributed two military miracles in 1563 and 1571.[883] He replaced Isidor's wooden shrine with a new stone church dedicated to the Ascension in 1565–66, and devoted a side chapel to the *iurodivyi*.[884] In 1571, Ivan also commissioned an embroidered shroud for the saint's tomb, though it was only completed fourteen years later (Fig. 12 above).[885] An inscription on a stone slab in the Ascension church, preserved up to the twentieth century, recorded Ivan IV's devotion to Isidor:

> 'Лета 7074 державою и повелением благочестивого царя государя великого князя Ивана Васильевича всея Руси, его царскою казною, поставлена церковь сия Вознесения Господне, в ней же Исидор чудотворец, при епископе Никандре ростовском, а делал церковь великого князя мастер Андрей Малой.'[886]
>
> 'On the year 7074 [1565–66], by the power and command of the pious tsar sovereign the grand prince Ivan Vasil'evich of all Rus', by his royal treasury, was erected this church of the Ascension of the Lord, where Isidor the miracle-worker [lies], in the time of the bishop Nikandr of Rostov, and the church was made by the master of the grand prince Andrei Maloi.'

[882] STREL'NIKOV, *Землевладение*, op. cit., 94.

[883] A.G. MEL'NIK, "Город юродивых", *Юродивые в русской культуре: Сборник научных статей. Труды Государственного Исторического музея. Вып. 197*., Moscow 2013, 141–3.

[884] A.G. MEL'NIK, *Исследования памятников архитектуры Ростова Великого,* Rostov 1992, 25–6.

[885] MEL'NIK, "Город юродивых", op. cit., 143; PUTSKO, Шитые покровы, op. cit., 213–14.

[886] MEL'NIK, *Исследования памятников*, op. cit., 25.

Though Isidor might have been a relatively marginal saint in Rostov, where the cult of saints was somewhat saturated with prestigious bishops and monks, he certainly had the approval of the archepiscopal *dvor*. It is unclear where his *zhitie* and *sluzhba* were written and by whom, but the two texts are strikingly similar in their characterisation of Isidor as a virtuous convert to Orthodoxy, who left everything behind, including his native culture, to become a *iurodivyi* in Rus'. A couple of posthumous healings suggest that Isidor's might have been a functional miracle cult: perhaps his layman status made him more approachable than the shrines of more prestigious ecclesiastical saints.[887]

Whatever the case, it is clear that the texts about him were at least partly motivated by the same anti-Latin sentiment that fuelled the description of Metropolitan Isidor in the *Voskresenskaia* chronicle, the New Israel/Jerusalem ideology, or the description of the pope in Simeon of Suzdal''s account of the council of Florence. Isidor's conversion from Catholicism to Orthodoxy was posthumously sanctioned by his wonderworking tomb: yet another proof that only true Orthodoxy led to the salvation of the soul. The *Life of Isidor*, then, made a strong confessional argument, and it is perhaps not surprising that Ivan IV – the God-anointed Russian Orthodox tsar who spent a considerable part of his reign fighting the Livonian War against a coalition of Catholics – would sympathise with him.

As Mikhail of Klopsko had predicted the birth of Ivan III and his destruction of Novgorod, Galaktion of Beloozero, an inmate of the Ferapontov monastery, predicted the birth of Ivan IV and his destruction of Kazan' after one of Vasilii III's unsuccessful campaigns against the khanate:

[887] GORODILIN, Между «немечьскою землею» и Ростовом, op. cit., 440–2.

> ‘Не толико сего будетъ, но многажьды подвизатися будетъ великій князь Василій и на Казаньское царство и ничьто же успѣетъ. Нѣкогда же послѣди богодатный его сынъ, той одолѣвъ, и обладаетъ Казанскимъ царствіемъ.’[888]
>
> ‘Not only this is to be, but the great prince Vasilii will exert himself many times against the kingdom of Kazan’ and not achieve anything. Sometime, the God-given son who will succeed him, will surpass him, and capture the kingdom of Kazan’.’

The *Stepennaia kniga*, where this prophecy was recorded, presented a teleological history of Rus’ with the hegemony of Moscow as a divinely predestined outcome. The pious *iurodivyi* Galaktion was part of this agenda: his vision, resulting from his ascetic closeness with the divine, was used as a legitimising framework for the Moscow-based dynasty. That he foresaw, so long in advance, the taking of Kazan’ by Ivan IV implied that this was a just, spiritually sanctioned war, as implied by the *Kazanskaia istoriia*. Maksim of Moscow, about whom little is known, was also associated, in the short notice about his death, with the ruling dynasty and its heavenly mission:

> ‘в нщщ҃й бе҃ сна пребываше гс҃ѵ вг҃ѵ молм҃. и прч҃теи вц҃ы, и всѣ҃ сп҃ымъ. ѡ бл҃гостоѩнїи сп҃ы҃ бжїихъ цр҃кв҃. и о бл҃говѣрнѡ҃ великѡ҃ кн҃зи. и ѡ вое҃ его и ѡ хр҃тыанѣ҃ еже ѡ҃бавитисѧ им ѿ врагъ видимы҃, и невидимы҃.’[889]
>
> ‘At night remaining without sleep praying to the Lord God and to the most-pure Mother of God, and to all the saints for the wellbeing of the holy churches of God, and for the pious grand prince, and for his army and for the Christians to rid themselves of enemies seen and unseen.’

Though all the *iurodivye* mentioned above – except for Nikolai of Pskov – were shown in the evidence preserved about them as favourable to Moscow, none had a cult more indissociable from the state than Vasilii the Blessed. Like Galaktion, Vasilii appeared in the *Stepennaia kniga*, where he predicted the 1521 Tatar attack and the 1547 fire, both

[888] *Степенная книга, Т. 2,* op. cit., 584.

[889] РГБ. Ф.256 №397, fol. 359 r.

calamitous events that shook Moscow.[890] Though neither episode associated Vasilii directly with the grand-princely dynasty, the sheer presence of a saintly man in the city now presented as the universal centre of Orthodoxy could only reflect positively on its rulers, even as they were punished for their sins, by suffering invasion or a fire. The fact alone that the two prophecies, probably based on living memory,[891] were included in the ideological narrative that was the *Stepennaia kniga* suggests the Moscow elite deliberately associated itself with *iurodivye*, through which God's actions on earth were announced. In the earliest version of the *Life of Vasilii*, written towards the end of the sixteenth century, Ivan IV and his family visited the saint on his deathbed, and Vasilii predicted that Fedor would be tsar:

> '…болѣзнию обиятъ бывъ и лежаще на одрѣ ... благовѣрныи царь ... с своею благочестивыю царицею великою княгинею настасѣю и своими богом дарованными чады. съ благовѣрнымъ царевичем иваномъ. и со благовѣрнымъ царевичемъ феодоромъ приидоша посѣщати блаженнаго. и благословение от него прияша. блаженныи же близъ смерти конечно дыша. царевичу феодору пророчески глаголаше. вся по родителехъ твоихъ твоя будет и наслѣдникъ будеши родителемъ своимъ.'[892]
>
> '[Vasilii] being taken by illness and lying on the bed … the pious tsar … with his devout tsaritsa the grand princess Nastasiia and their God-given children, with the pious tsarevich Ivan and the pious tsarevich Feodor, came to visit the blessed one and receive his blessing. The blessed one was close to death and breathing his last breath. He spoke prophetically to the tsarevich Feodor: Everything that is your ancestors' will be yours, and you will be the heir to your ancestors.'

[890] *Степенная книга, Т. 2*, op. cit., 306–7, 353–6.

[891] Vasilii died in the 1550s, the *Stepennaia kniga* is from the 1560s. N. CHALLIS – H. DEWEY, Basil the Blessed, Holy Fool of Moscow, *Russian History* 14, 1/4 (*Ivan the Terrible: A Quarcentenary Celebration of His Death*), 1987, 56: Challis and Dewey argued that one reason for Vasilii's popularity was his being in the right place at the right time.

[892] KUZNETSOV, *Святые блаженные*, op. cit., 48.

Though chronological issues cast doubt on the historicity of this scene,[893] the choice to retrospectively include it in the *Life of Vasilii* in the late 1580s or 1590s must have been motivated at least in part by a desire to legitimise the reign of Fedor, whose extreme piety could also be seen as political weakness. The association of Ivan IV with Vasilii, as shown by a later passage, was certainly intended to reflect well on the tsar, who discerned a saint in the *iurodivyi* without even needing the confirmation of posthumous miracles: 'блаженъ еси царю іиванне во иноцѣх иона, яко святаго и богоблаженнаго василия преставление видѣ, и благословение от него прия и велию вѣру и любовь к нему при живктѣ [sic]. (держа)'[894]

Perhaps Vasilii's deathbed prophecy, along with Fedor's reputation as a pious tsar, explains his fondness for the *iurodivyi* with whom it is said he shared a simple mind. It was during his reign that Patriarch Jeremiah of Constantinople witnessed the translation of Vasilii's wonderworking relics and blessed Russia as an independent patriarchate. The *Life of Vasilii* mentions the translation in 1588, and the lavish gifts from Fedor and his wife Irina to the saint's tomb:

> '... и в тридесятъ первое лѣто по преставленіи своемъ досточудныи василие ... христолюбивыи ж царь феодоръ ... созда церковь і изрядно оукраси благолѣпиемъ. яко солнечных лучь блещащихся над гробомъ ж святаго идѣ же лежатъ мощи его пресвѣтлоцѣлителныя. раку оукраси багры царьскими. свѣщьники и кандилы в честь святаго гробъ его святыи просвѣщати постави, благородная же царица ирина теплою истинною вѣрою раку блаженнаго покровы драгими оукраси.'[895]

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[893] CHALLIS – DEWEY, Basil the Blessed, op. cit., 54: The tsarevichi Ivan and Fedor were born respectively in 1554 and 1557. The episode is only possible if we accept that Vasilii died in 1557 and not earlier, as some sources suggest.

[894] KUZNETSOV, *Святые блаженные*, op. cit., 52: *blessed art thou, tsar Ivan, in tonsure Iona, for seeing the passing away of the saintly and God-blessed Vasilii, and for taking a blessing from him, and having great faith in and love for him during his life*.

[895] *Idem*, 51: See Fig. 18 above.

> ‘and in the thirty-first year after your passing, wonderworthy Vasilii … the Christ-loving tsar Feodor … created a church and greatly decorated [it] with splendour, as if sunrays were shining over the saint’s grave where his most-brightly healing relics lie. He decorated the coffin with imperial purple, and placed candles and lamps in the saint’s honour to light his holy grave. The noble tsaritsa Irina, on the other hand, with her warm and true faith, covered the blessed one’s coffin with precious shrouds.’

It is unclear why Jeremiah is not mentioned, though the text refers to the chapel dedicated to Vasilii that Fedor added to the Pokrov cathedral, originally built by his father Ivan IV to celebrate his conquest of Kazan’ in 1552.[896] The 1588 commemoration of Vasilii was witnessed by Giles Fletcher, who had been sent to Russia to secure trading privileges which were evidently not a priority on the Russian agenda: he was not officially greeted on his arrival, had to wait almost a month for his first audience with the tsar, had the queen’s gifts returned to him as insufficient, and was made to wait indefinitely while more important guests – Patriarch Jeremiah and a Hapsburg ambassador – were entertained.[897] Fletcher noted Vasilii’s translation and ‘canonisation’ in 1588, as well as the imperial family’s support for the cult:

> ‘His body they have translated of late into a sumptuous church near the emperor's house in Moscow and have canonized him for a saint. Many miracles he doth there (for so the friars make the people to believe), and many offerings are made unto him not only by the people but by the chief nobility and the emperor and empress themselves, which visit that church with great devotion.’[898]

The unambiguous prioritising of ideological performance – the celebration of St Vasilii and creation of the patriarchate of Moscow by the patriarch of Constantinople – over trade matters, however small, is telling. Though irrelevant in practical terms, the patriarch of Constantinople’s blessing still carried considerable ideological weight, and his presence

[896] CHALLIS – DEWEY, Basil the Blessed, op. cit., 47

[897] BERRY – CRUMMEY, *Rude and Barbarous Kingdom*, op. cit., 90–1.

[898] *Idem*, 219.

in Moscow in 1588 was set up as a staged transmission of Orthodox legitimacy from one dying Church to its thriving successor. The cult of Vasilii, who had been known to enjoy the active support of Ivan IV, was now publicly endorsed by the state in what could be seen as the culmination of the ideological collaboration between Church and state over the course of the sixteenth century. A 'homegrown' saint, Vasilii, or his tomb, was the wonderworking proof that the Russian Orthodox Church was blessed by God. As if to reinforce the recognition of Vasilii, a Russian monk healed by his relics asked a member of Jeremiah's embassy, Arsenios, bishop of Elasson, to compose a liturgical commemoration of Vasilii in Greek, the language in which the word of God had originally been transmitted to Rus'.[899]

Though Vasilii was incorporated into the ideological narrative of the Russian state, Fletcher, who described *iurodivye* primarily as a form of opposition to, or regulation of, autocracy, hinted at the saint's political ambiguity: 'Another [*iurodivyi*] there was that died not many years ago, whom they called Vasilii, that would take upon him to reprove the old emperor for all his cruelty and oppressions done towards his people.'[900] This tantalising glimpse into a different, non-institutionalised side of *iurodstvo* finds expression in a subsequent version of the *Life of Vasilii*, which includes episodes where the saint tells off Ivan IV for daydreaming in church or for threatening to destroy Pskov in 1570.[901] Though these legends may have circulated earlier, this version of the text was not written before the

[899] DĒMĒTRAKOPOULOS, *'Αρσένιος Έλασσόνος*, op. cit., 131.

[900] BERRY – CRUMMEY, *Rude and Barbarous Kingdom*, op. cit., 219.

[901] CHALLIS – DEWEY, Basil the Blessed, op. cit., 51, 55.

mid-seventeenth century,[902] and there is little the available evidence can tell us about this less official side of *iurodstvo*.

We do know, however, that the imperial family were not Vasilii's exclusive patrons. Towards the end of the narrative about Vasilii's miracles in his *zhitie*, the text mentions a boyar called Gavrilo Lodyzhenskii, who suffered from regular fits that made him unconscious, which was interpreted as demonic possession.[903] The *zhitie* records his first-person account of a vision of Vasilii – naked, holding a cross – he had during one of these fits, after which he was healed. Grateful for his restored health, Gavrilo had a church built in his town of Likhvin, which became a secondary, local centre for the cult of Vasilii:

> 'и созда церковь во имя святаго василия. в неи же прославитися святому его имени. еже празнуемъ память святаго, августа въ вторыи день ... и снидеся множество народа от области града лихвина. и ото иных градовъ и изселъ [sic] и из деревен мужь и женъ. и множество одръжимыя всякими различными недоуги и бысть исцеление от образа блаженнаго еже во церкви тои поставил, боголюбивыи онъ моужь...'[904]
>
> 'and he founded a church in the name of saint Vasilii, in which his saintly name is glorified and his memory day celebrated on the second of August … and a multitude of people from the region of the town of Likhvin gathered and from other towns and villages and from the countryside, men and women, a multitude beset by all sorts of different illnesses, and there was healing by the image of the blessed one which this God-loving man placed in that church.'

This fascinating glimpse into a secondary shrine for Vasilii suggests that, though most of the time we only have evidence for a main shrine and its wealthiest patron, there may have been other – smaller, unaccounted for – shrines set up around a wonderworking icon of a saint, rather than their tomb, and probably less ideologically tainted. In other words, not every

[902] Василий Блаженный, *ПЭ Том VII*, op. cit., 125.

[903] KUZNETSOV, *Святые блаженные*, op. cit., 70.

[904] *Ibid*.

patron of a saint's cult had the means or inclination to commission texts on top of funding shrines, though the cults they sponsored might have enjoyed a reliable local following despite their lack of political ambition.

The cult of Prokopii of Ustiug offers another example of a secondary shrine, which, according to the surviving evidence, superseded the first. To complicate matters further, it is difficult to disentangle the cults of Prokopii and Ioann of Ustiug. We do not know much about the cult of Ioann, though his *zhitie* includes the most informative biographical account of its kind in this period. The anonymous author – the son of Dionisii, the hegumen of the Boris and Gleb monastery in Sol'vychegodsk, and former priest in the Ustiug Dormition cathedral – gave plenty of detail, including proper nouns and toponyms, about the saint's family, childhood, and youth, though he deplored that distance from Ioann's shrine had limited his access to records of posthumous miracles, of which he only reports one. The son of Dionisii composed the *Life of Ioann* alongside texts about Prokopii, including miracle accounts from his tomb in Ustiug and icon in Sol'vychegodsk, and apparently conceived of all the texts about the Ustiug *iurodivye* as a cycle.[905]

The Ustiug cults are intriguing in that, even though both Prokopii and Ioann were buried in the Dormition cathedral of Ustiug[906] and their tombs there worked miracles, there is no direct evidence from Ustiug itself about them: their abundant documentation – no other *iurodivyi* cult from this period is as well-documented as the cults of Prokopii and Ioann – comes exclusively from the neighbouring town of Sol'vychegodsk. Our anonymous author,

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[905] VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 288: *В лето 7062 (1554) списано бысть дивно сие житие великаго чюдотворца Иоанна ... Вся яже бо суть в книзе сеи не без свидетелство святых божественных писаний*. / *In the year 7062 (1554) this wondrous* zhitie *of the great wonderworker Ioann was written ... For everything which is in this book is not without witness from the holy divine scriptures*.

[906] *Idem*, 42, 285.

the son of Dionisii, reported on the posthumous miracles worked by the tombs of Prokopii (nineteen miracles) and Ioann (a single miracle) in Ustiug,[907] and thanks to him we also know that the yearly festival of Prokopii was an important event for which people from Sol'vychegodsk would perform a hundred-kilometre pilgrimage by boat to Ustiug: 'Обычеи бо людем того предела Соли Вычегоцкие, на всяк год ездити во град Устюг на памет праздничную блаженнаго Прокофия. И приспе день плыти их.'[908] In Sol'vychegodsk, Prokopii's feast day was also the occasion for a market. This apparently involved taking Prokopii's icon out onto the marketplace, which was the setting for the icon's first miracle: 'И сию предиреченную икону поставиша на торгу житейстем';[909] 'На утрее же день неделный, светающу солнцу, бе бо памет святаго чюдотворца Прокофия. Сшедшеся множество людии на торг житейский.'[910]

It is, nevertheless, curious that all the surviving evidence about the shrine of Prokopii in Ustiug comes from Sol'vychegodsk. We can only guess that the conditions there were more favourable to text production and preservation. Part of the explanation could be in a recurring figure of the *Tale about the icon of Prokopii and Varlaam*.[911] The text starts by situating the stories in time (1548) and demonstrates awareness of Ustiug as a region under the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Rostov and, more broadly, as subject to the tsar, Ivan

[907] *Idem*, 548, 550: Vlasov edited nineteen miracles according to a late seventeenth-century text thought to reflect an earlier, 1640s or 1650s version.

[908] *Idem*, 129: *For it was customary for the people of that area of Sol' Vychegodskie to go every year to the town of Ustiug to celebrate the memory of the blessed Prokofii. And the day came for them to sail …* Sol'vychegodsk is about 100 kilometres from Ustiug, but sailing south along the Vychegda and then the Northern Dvina must have made for a reasonably swift journey.

[909] *Idem*, 129: *And they placed this aforementioned icon on the market square*.

[910] *Idem*, 131, 585: *On the next day it was Sunday, the sun was shining, for it was the memory day of saint Prokopii the wonderworker. A multitude of people gathered on the market square …*

[911] Prokopii is very much the protagonist of this text, Varlaam is almost never mentioned.

IV. It continues by mentioning the local administrator of Sol'vychegodsk – 'при сидении властителя Соли Вычегоцкие Владимера Ивановича Ларионова' –[912] which Vlasov suggests may have been the son of Ivan Petrovich Larionov, a boyar and equerry of Ivan IV.[913] Vladimir Ivanovich Larionov is frequently mentioned as the *vlastitel'* of Sol'vychegodsk, to whom the people reported miracles, and who actively inquired about them:

> 'Бе бо вечер приближися, а нощ приспе, того ради не поведаша чюдеси властителю того предела ... Скоро шедше, поведаша властителю того предела про славное чюдо ...'[914]
>
> 'For evening approached, and night arrived, and for that reason they did not report the miracle to the master of that area … Quickly they went and told the master of that area about the glorious miracle …'
>
> 'И потом нача властитель с тихостию вопрошати о преславном чюдеси. Черноризца же ту стоя, все сказа от истинныи о бывшем чюдеси. Слышав же то от нея властитель и прослезися.'[915]
>
> 'And then the master started quietly asking about the most glorious miracle. The nun, standing there, told everything truthfully about the miracle that happened. Hearing this from her, the master was brought to tears.'
>
> 'И потом нача ю властитель с тихостию въпрошати о бывшем чюдеси, како здравие получи.'[916]
>
> 'And then the master started asking her quietly about the miracle that happened, how she received health.'

It is unclear whether it was the *vlastitel'* who commissioned the texts from the son of Dionisii, or whether he wrote them under the influence of his father, the hegumen whose

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[912] VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 129: *during the time of the master [*vlastitel'*] of Sol'vychegodsk Vladimir Ivanovich Larionov*.

[913] *Idem*, 585: Vlasov notes that Vladimir Ivanovich Larionov may have been a *namestnik* in Sol'vychegodsk around the years 1546–1548.

[914] *Idem*, 131–2.

[915] *Idem*, 137.

[916] *Idem*, 140.

monastery housed the icon. But both the Tale about the icon's miracles and the *Life of Ioann* suggest that the chapel dedicated to Prokopii in the Boris and Gleb monastery was built at the initiative of Vladimir Ivanovich Larionov: 'И по сем чюдеси создаша церковь во имя его святому в лето 7056 (1548) году благословением того же игумена и всем причтом церковным, и повелением того же града властителя.'[917]

Though it is unclear how it relates to the authority of the *vlastitel'*, there is good reason to suspect that the Stroganov family, and in particular the enterprising Anika, might also have had a role in shaping the cult of Prokopii in Sol'vychegodsk. The Stroganovy started by buying several saltworks in the area,[918] and ended up owning (and building) most of Sol'vychegodsk, from the mid-sixteenth century building a mansion with a forty-six-metre tower (completed 1565), warehouses, mills, stables, forges, and kitchens.[919] The Annunciation cathedral (built 1560–1579)[920] in the Boris and Gleb monastery became their family resting place.[921] In the monumental fresco programme commissioned for the cathedral (consecrated 1584), Prokopii and Ioann were given a place of honour.[922] It has also

[917] *Idem*, 277: Mentioned in the *Life of Ioann*: *And after this miracle they built a church in the name of the saint in the year 7056 (1548) with the blessing of that same hegumen and of all the shrine clergy, and by order of the master of that town*. There is another mention of the erection of this church on page 134 of this edition.

[918] KUPTSOV, *Род Строгановых*, op. cit., 14–15.

[919] HOWARD, Sol'vychegodsk, *Grove Art Online*, op. cit.

[920] *Ibid*.

[921] V.M. SOROKATYI, Образ Прокопия Устюжского в иконе, in: S.V. Zavadskaia (ed.), *Житие св. прав. Прокопия, Христа ради юродивого, Устюжского чудотворца*, Moscow 2003, 130. KUPTSOV, *Род Строгановых*, op. cit., 14: Anika and many of his children and grandchildren were buried in the Annunciation cathedral. PREOBRAZHENSKII, Монументальная живопись, op. cit., 156: Anika commissioned the Annunciation cathedral, consecrated in 1584. It became the main shrine in Sol'vychegodsk.

[922] PREOBRAZHENSKII, Монументальная живопись, op. cit., 204–5, 156: The monumental fresco programme was only finished around the turn of the century.

been suggested that the wonderworking icon of Prokopii and Varlaam, about which the son of Dionisii wrote, was a copy from an icon of the Ustiug Dormition cathedral commissioned by Anika Stroganov[923] to the presbyter Terentii, who was a skilled icon painter from that town.[924] It would, therefore, not be surprising if the Stroganov family had also commissioned a text about the icon and helped finance the church built to house it.

Wonderworking icons were traditionally popular in the Ustiug region, and so were texts about them, often included in church chronicles.[925] The oldest text about Prokopii recorded how an Annunciation icon drove away a fire cloud and then exuded healing myrrh, and an Odigitria (Hodegetria) from the Dormition cathedral in Ustiug allegedly drove away the Novgorodians in 1398.[926] Wonderworking icons helped consolidate and spread the cults of Prokopii and Ioann,[927] and icons in general helped create an image of the Stroganov family that was not only commercially successful, hugely wealthy, and politically influential, but also artistically refined. Sol'vychegodsk under the Stroganovy became a prestigious icon painting centre, and eventually exported masters to the Moscow court.[928] It is conceivable, if not directly demonstrable from the available evidence, that the Stroganovy saw an

[923] SOROKATYI, Образ Прокопия, op. cit., 129–30.

[924] VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 127.

[925] VLASOV, *Устюжская литература*, op. cit., 65–6, 116.

[926] *Idem*, 70.

[927] *Idem*, 90.

[928] *Idem*, 66. J. HOWARD – S. KUZNETSOV, Stroganov school, in: *Grove Art Online*, Oxford 2003, https://doi-org.ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.article.T081854 (retrieved April 2024): *Stylistically the Stroganov icons are marked by their florid colour, apparently derived from the Novgorod school, although they differ from the latter through their highly refined graphic qualities*. From the late sixteenth century, embroidered icons were also produced. The golden age of the Stroganov school has been placed between 1580 and 1620.

opportunity to raise their cultural profile both in the cult of Prokopii, who was probably venerated from the mid-fifteenth century,[929] and in the local fondness for icons. By sponsoring icon production and veneration, on the one hand they made themselves popular locally as the patrons of miracle cults; and on the other hand, they could show off their artistic accomplishment at the court in Moscow.

The cult of Prokopii (and Ioann) in Sol'vychegodsk probably benefited from an unusual combination of support from the *vlastitel'*, or *namestnik* of Ivan IV, the hegumen and monks of the Boris and Gleb monastery, and the fabulously wealthy Stroganov family. The latter had the means and inclination to fund a secondary cult of Prokopii – and the more modest cult of Ioann – which they centred around wonderworking icons and documented in such detail that the (presumably) main cult of Prokopii in Ustiug, where his relics were, was eclipsed. However, the Sol'vychegodsk cult would probably not have grown to the extent it did without the backing of the town's inhabitants and those of surrounding areas. To the *vlastitel'* and the Stroganovy, the wonderworking *iurodivye* might have been external manifestations, or even heavenly legitimations, of success – of the expanding Russian empire, of an enterprising family. To the people of Sol'vychegodsk, and probably also of Ustiug, their *iurodivye* were a source of pride, and a symbol of self-awareness for a region that was fast developing and becoming conscious of its position within the Russian empire:

> 'Иоанн — небопарный орел ... всю Русскую землю просвещающее. Там же, отцы и братие, хвалятся кая страна и град и весь о своих чюдотворцех. Устюг бо град и со окрестными его веси хвалится о своих чюдотворцех, о блаженнем Прокопии и о праведнем Иоанне!'[930]
>
> 'Ioann [is] a soaring eagle ... enlightening the Russian land. For there [i.e., in the Russian land], fathers and brethren, every country and town and part of the

[929] VLASOV, *Устюжская литература*, op. cit., 17.

[930] VLASOV, *Житийные повести*, op. cit., 286.

> countryside praises its wonderworkers. The town of Ustiug and its surrounding villages praise their wonderworkers, the blessed Prokopii and the righteous Ioann.'

More interesting still, the son of Dionisii – who seemed to think Ustiug was far away, never mind Moscow – was aware of the Muscovite rhetoric about the transmission of the true Christian faith from Jerusalem to Russia, which now carried the torch of Orthodoxy:

> 'Днесь убо ясно сказуем чюдеса святаго, тако бо во Иерусалимских странах в святых местех. Не токмо бо тамо творит Бог чюдеса, но и в нашей стране руския земли в предисловущем граде Соли Вычегодцкие творит Бог преславныя чюдеса Своими угодники. Сия же прослави и прояви Бог последнему роду православным християном ... Ныне веселится святая ограда новый Иерусалим, видев присещение таковаго чюдотворца блаженнаго Прокопия ...'[931]
>
> 'For today we tell clearly of the miracles of the saint, [that happened] as they happen in the lands of Jerusalem in the holy places. Not only does God work miracles there, but also in our Russian country and in the aforementioned town of Sol'vychegodsk does God work miracles through those pleasing to Him. These God made glorious and revealed to the last line of orthodox Christians … Now the holy enclosure of the new Jerusalem rejoices, seeing the visit of such a wonderworker, the blessed Prokopii …'

* * *

The analysis in Part IV has, in part, argued that *iurodivye* in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries meant different things to different groups of people: intercessors for some, they were sources of prestige and legitimacy for others. But they also meant different things within the same group of people: popular intercessors, they were also legendary prophets about whom oral tales circulated; harmless ascetics celebrated liturgically in similar ways to other saints, they were also a legitimising framework for the ruling dynasty.

However, before concluding on the conceptual and practical flexibility of *iurodstvo* as a phenomenon in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, some words of caution on the

[931] *Idem*, 176–7.

evidence available to us are necessary. As pointed out in the Introduction, we are studying a primarily non-written culture through written texts. We base our interpretations of a predominantly illiterate society on the texts recorded by the few who did write. Though obvious, this point has particularly dramatic consequences for the study of *iurodstvo*, a phenomenon which apparently blended elements of ecclesiastical and vernacular culture. As repeated many times throughout this thesis, the majority of the evidence about *iurodivye* in this period is related to their veneration as saints within an ecclesiastical framework, and though it occasionally offers glimpses of their stranger and more charismatic traits, it predominantly treats them as extreme ascetics and miracle-working intercessors. It is entirely possible, however, that the charismatic side of *iurodstvo*, with its potential for subversion and political disruption, was more prominent than the sources available to us make it to be – Giles Fletcher suggests as much.

The second word of caution touches on the point made above about the secondary shrines for *iurodivye* that may be evading our attention because they either had no means or no inclination to write texts about their cults. The section above, about the politicisation of *iurodstvo*, could give the impression that every cult of a *iurodivyi* had a political narrative woven into it. This was likely not the case, as suggested by the secondary shrines of Vasilii and Prokopii. There are no extant texts from the secondary shrine of Vasilii in Likhvin, known only through the main *Life of Vasilii*, though it appears to have been a popular local shrine with an annual festival. Conversely, there are no extant texts from the primary shrine of Prokopii in Ustiug, though miracles at his secondary shrine in Sol'vychegodsk were meticulously recorded. It seems plausible that neither Vasilii's secondary shrine in Likhvin nor Prokopii's primary shrine in Ustiug had the means or inclination to document themselves, and spread these documents, with the same effort and energy the promoters of

Vasilii's primary shrine and Prokopii's secondary shrine must have had. In other words, people in a position of political and economic power were more likely to invest in commissioning and shaping texts about the cults they sponsored: this is the bulk of the evidence we, modern historians, see. Smaller but reasonably popular local shrines probably existed, but the fact that they left little to no evidence for their existence means they will mostly remain under our radar.

V. CONCLUSIONS

In recontextualising fifteenth- and sixteenth-century *iurodstvo*, this thesis has sought to reassess it as a historical phenomenon. In doing so, it has also contributed to unmake the myth of *iurodstvo* as a continuous monolithic phenomenon across the ages and an emblem of Russian cultural exceptionalism. Rather than taking away from the uniqueness of *iurodstvo*, rooting it in a specific historical context has, to my mind, made it more interesting – hopefully also more accurate.

I have argued that the understandings of *iurodstvo* and cults of *iurodivye* in this period were shaped by their context in two main ways. The first is to do with the far-reaching consequences of Muscovite hegemony and the consolidation of a Russian autocratic state. Different cities and regions had different histories and relationships with Moscow, and these inevitably shaped the cult of local saints and the narratives they embodied. The second contextual influence on *iurodstvo* was the popularity of the cult of saints, and miracle cults especially, in this period. Primarily venerated as intercessors, *iurodivye* benefitted from the increased visibility brought about by this development in religious culture.

A brief aside on the positioning of *iurodstvo* within the cult of saints is necessary here. This thesis has tried to convey that local cults competed with each other for attention and resources, and that *iurodivye* were often the most humble intercessors among the miracle-workers of a region. Still, by taking *iurodstvo* as its main focus, this study is necessarily short-sighted, and I can only insist here that *iurodivye* were a minority category of saints despite their rapid multiplication. Paul Bushkovitch's narrative of monastic decline notwithstanding,[932] monastic saints were still the dominant category in Makarii's recognition

[932] BUSHKOVITCH, *Religion and Society*, op. cit., 7.

of new miracle-workers in 1547.[933] Pierre Gonneau noted how, in numbers at least, monastic saints dominated the Russian religious landscape until the end of the sixteenth century, and argued that monastic foundations filled institutional gaps in the Russian Church, with its huge dioceses and loose parish structure, shifting saint-making northeast and away from cities.[934] In one exceptional case, Ustiug, a city under the jurisdiction of Rostov (over six hundred kilometres away), *iurodivye* did fill an institutional gap; but cults of *iurodivye* otherwise emerged in urban centres where older ecclesiastical cults prevailed.

The two contextual influences on *iurodstvo* – the parallel developments of the Russian autocratic state and cult of saints – mentioned above were closely connected. The multiplication of miracle cults occurred at a time when the Russian Orthodox Church was actively laying claim to spiritual authority over the – by the end of the sixteenth century, vast – Russian lands. If direct control over its regions, old and recently conquered, was far beyond the institutional, administrative, and technological capabilities of the Church at this time, conciliar initiatives in collaboration with the tsar in the mid-sixteenth century and the compilation of Metropolitan Makarii's Great Menology clearly expressed a desire to keep up with and influence religious practices across the Russian lands. Documenting cults and

[933] *Акты, собранные*, op. cit., 203–4: Monastic saints recognised in 1547 were eight out of a total of twenty saints, i.e., forty percent, and all of these were to receive pan-Russian veneration. These were the venerable (*prepodobnye*) Pafnutii of Borovsk, Nikon of Radonezh, Hegumen Makarii of Kaliazin, Mikhail of Klopsko, Savvatii and Zosima of the Solovki monastery, Pavel of Obnora, Dionisii of Glushitsa, and Hegumen Aleksandr of Svir'. Other than Mikhail of Klopsko, counted as a monastic pan-Russian saint, the *iurodivye* recognised were Maksim of Moscow and Prokopii and Ioann of Ustiug, who were all to receive local veneration. See a discussion of this document from page 60 above.

[934] P. GONNEAU, Monachisme et diffusion de la foi dans la Russie moscovite (XIVe-XVIe siècle), *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, LI/2, 1996, 465–6, 471–3: Gonneau counted forty new saints (of which twenty-two monastic) between 1530 and 1565 and sixteen new saints (of which twelve monastic) between 1565 and 1600.

offering them an official stamp of approval was a way of monitoring and asserting authority over them.

Yet saint-making in this period was not monopolised by the Church. Part II argued that making and maintaining saints was a continuous process that resulted from the collaboration of clergy and laity. Cults often emerged from grassroots devotion, but a durable cult required the clerical ability to perform proper rites, and often the resources of well-to-do laymen to maintain shrines and commission devotional texts and images: without the joint support of these three groups, a cult was unlikely to thrive. Text production was itself a fluid, collaborative process, with narratives circulating between written texts – liturgical, hagiographical, historiographical – but also across oral and written forms.[935] The faithful learned about local saints by listening to their liturgy, but they in turn influenced written narratives by sharing widely the healing miracles they experienced, not least with the shrine priests who recorded them, and by being the bearers of legends about local saints that often permeated their hagiographies.

If the full liturgy for a saint might only be performed on their annual feast day, we are informed by the miracles of Isidor, Vasilii, and Prokopii that parts of the liturgy for a saint might be sung more frequently to induce or express thanks for healing miracles.[936] The *iurodivye* believers learned about during the liturgy were extreme ascetics, whose extraordinary exertion in life had granted them an eternal place in heaven. When they appeared to the faithful in visions, *iurodivye* were described in the same terms used in their

[935] See the discussion of Karen Barber's work on page 25.

[936] See, for example, the passage quoted on page 252.

sluzhby, as emanating light – not foolish in any recognisable way.[937] In ecclesiastical contexts, then, *iurodivye* were venerated much like any other saint. Their cults functioned like social glue, bringing communities together. The fact that they had lived among those who celebrated them must have added a sacral dimension to urban spaces, and it is clear from miracle accounts that even individual healings had a collective significance in revealing a saint's protective gaze over a town or region. Descriptions of the funerals of *iurodivye* likewise projected the image, at least, of communities united in celebrating their holy men, and accounts of saints' annual festivals, such as those of Likhvin or Sol'vychegodsk, suggest that these occasions drew together inhabitants of urban and rural areas.[938]

Yet the fact that *iurodivye* existed in the popular imagination outside of their ecclesiastical characterisation as ascetics set them apart from other saints. The charismatic understanding of *iurodstvo* teased out in Part III emphasised aggressiveness and the ability to foresee the future over asceticism. That this may have been a more vernacular understanding of *iurodstvo* is suggested by the nature of the evidence it featured most prominently in. Foreign accounts of Nikolai of Pskov's confrontation with Ivan IV and, in Fletcher's case, of *iurodstvo* more generally, were probably the most directly influenced by oral tales circulating about *iurodivye*. Though probably vernacular in origin, charismatic *iurodstvo* was prevalent enough not to be ignored by ecclesiastical texts, some of which, like the (in many regards exceptional) first version of the *Life of Mikhail of Klopsko*, leaned heavily into it. Since we are studying a primarily non-written culture through its written texts, most of them produced by or in close association with the Church, we have no way of

[937] See a description of a vision of Prokopii on pages 215–16.

[938] See the passage quoted on page 307.

telling whether charismatic *iurodstvo* prevailed over its ascetic counterpart, or whether they were understood as part of a single phenomenon.

In fact, it was probably the malleability of *iurodivye* that drew influential sponsors to their cults. On the one hand, as saintly laymen, *iurodivye* had no institutional affiliations. If the cults of monastic or episcopal saints might be coopted by their respective foundations or episcopal successors, there was no official institutional competition over the appropriation of *iurodivye* as saints. On the other hand, the variety of ways – between extreme ascetic and aggressive prophet – in which *iurodstvo* could be understood opened up narrative possibilities the cults of other saints might not easily offer. Most cults of *iurodivye* examined in this thesis were sponsored by groups of people whose wealth and influence depended on Russian autocracy. The Church, the grand-princely line, the Stroganov family all wove, with varying degrees of subtlety, their political ambitions, and in some cases ideology, into the cults they sponsored. Given their patrons, it is not a surprise that most cults of *iurodivye* in this period should be favourable to Moscow.

Funding a miracle-working shrine and organising public ritual around it was one way to acquire prestige; shaping textual narratives was another. These two strategies were combined in the most obviously political cult of a *iurodivyi* in this period, that of Vasilii. Not only was the public translation of his relics associated with the founding of the Moscow patriarchate, but the state-sponsored texts about him – the *Stepennaia kniga* and his *zhitie* – associated Vasilii with the ruling dynasty. His earthly life spent in Moscow sacralised the city as Andrew had Constantinople, and Ivan IV's devotion to him in his lifetime, as well as his deathbed prophecy that Fedor would be tsar, legitimised a dynasty that claimed to be divinely anointed.

Other cults made sightly more modest claims: Mikhail of Klopsko in favour of Muscovite hegemony and the transfer of spiritual authority from Novgorod to Moscow; Isidor of Rostov against the Latin faith and in favour of Russia as the ultimate defender of Orthodoxy; Prokopii and Ioann of Ustiug in favour of the relevance of Sol'vychegodsk (and Ustiug) and of the house of Stroganov in the emerging Russian empire. We can wonder how far these claims were made by the elite for the elite, lay and ecclesiastical. One thing is clear: the prophetic, or charismatic, side of *iurodstvo*, which sources sometimes presented as a consequence of its ascetic side,[939] was a powerful source of legitimation. The prophecies of *iurodivye* not only backed the ruling dynasty,[940] but they also legitimised the cults of other saints, like Nikandr of Pskov or Iona of Novgorod. There is, of course, one remarkable instance where charismatic *iurodstvo* was used against Moscow. The legends about Nikolai of Pskov and his humiliation of Ivan IV use the same divine legitimation device as establishment narratives about *iurodstvo*, only this time God's favour was shown to be with the people of Pskov. That his popularity was eventually hushed by the local Church is indicative of the sixteenth century's political climate. In the seventeenth century, dissident Old Believers would not be blind to the political potential of charismatic *iurodstvo*. That, however, is a different context and, probably, a transformed *iurodstvo*.

[939] This was the case especially for the monk Galaktion and for Vasilii, both depicted in the *Stepennaia kniga*.

[940] Mikhail predicted the birth of Ivan III and his destruction of Novgorod, Galaktion predicted the birth of Ivan IV and his conquest of Kazan', Vasilii predicted the accession of Fedor.

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https://www.hrono.ru/proekty/ostu/russia_eng/east_eur1598en.png (retrieved August 2024).

Figure 1. St Andrew the Fool.[941] **96**

Twelfth century; fresco, 44 x 130 cm; Hermitage of St Neophytos, Cyprus.

https://www.doaks.org/research/byzantine/project-grants/images/Kakoulli-Fischer_Neophytos%2011-12_Page_05_Image_0001.jpg (retrieved June 2023).

I. KAKOULLI – C. FISCHER, The Techniques and Materials of the Wall Paintings at the Enkleistra of St. Neophytos (Phase II), *Dumbarton Oaks*, https://www.doaks.org/research/byzantine/project-grants/kakoulli-fischer-2011-2012 (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 2. Pokrov. **97**

1399; wood, tempera, 151 x 126 cm; Zverin monastery, Novgorod; Новгородский государственный объединенный музей-заповедник [Novgorod State Integrated Museum-Reserve] (item no. 11170), Novgorod, Russia.

https://www.icon-art.info/hires.php?lng=ru&type=1&id=559 (retrieved June 2023).

[941] Whenever possible, I give a figure's approximate date, material, size, place of origin, current location, and image source. If the place of origin and current location coincide, they are not repeated. I have tried to give Russian museum names in English as they are found online, though there are often several possibilities for a single museum as most do not have an official page in English.

Figure 3. Pokrov. **97**

Mid-sixteenth century; wood, levkas, tempera, 77 x 60 cm; Vologda (?); Государственная Третьяковская галерея [Tretyakov Gallery] (item no. 13477), Moscow, Russia.

A.V. RYNDINA (ed.), *1000-летие русской художественной культуры*, Moscow 1988, item 132 on page 108, description on page 352.

Figure 4. Pokrov. **99**

First third of the sixteenth century; wood, levkas, tempera, 76 x 55 cm; Obonezh'e (region east of Lake Onega); collection of E.A. Terletskii, Russia.

https://www.icon-art.info/hires.php?lng=ru&type=1&id=6955 (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 5. Pokrov. **99**

Early sixteenth century; 69.5 x 52.3 x 2.6 cm; Novgorod region; Нижегородский государственный художественный музей [Nizhny Novgorod State Art Museum] (item no. 148), collection of G.M. Prianishnikov in Gorodets, Nizhnii Novgorod, Russia.

https://www.icon-art.info/hires.php?lng=ru&type=1&id=7052 (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 6. St Andrew of Constantinople. **100**

Early sixteenth century; 132 x 101 x 3.2 cm; Moscow; Государственный Русский музей [State Russian Museum] (item no. ДРЖ 2099), collection of N.P. Likhachev (item no. Лих.III-11), Saint Petersburg, Russia.

https://www.icon-art.info/hires.php?lng=ru&type=1&id=499 (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 7. St John the Baptist (from iconostasis Deesis row). **102**

Fifteenth century; 115 x 41 cm; Tver' region (?); Государственная Третьяковская галерея [Tretyakov Gallery] (item no. 15054), Moscow, Russia.

G.V. POPOV, *Тверская икона XIII–XVII веков*, Saint Petersburg 1993, item 75, description page 256.

Figure 8. St John the Baptist. **102**

c.1570; wood, pavoloka (fabric), levkas, tempera, 135 x 97.5 cm; Iaroslavl'; Ярославский музей-заповедник [Yaroslavl Museum-Preserve] (item no. яхм/и-234), Iaroslavl', Russia.

A.V. RYNDINA (ed.), *1000-летие русской художественной культуры*, Moscow 1988, item 106 on page 86, description on pages 345–6.

Figure 9. Saints Catherine, Jacob, and Mary of Egypt. **103**

Late sixteenth or early seventeenth century; wood, tempera, 89 x 66 cm; Novgorod region; Государственная Третьяковская галерея [Tretyakov Gallery] (item no. ДР 468), Moscow, Russia.

https://www.icon-art.info/hires.php?lng=ru&type=1&id=6342 (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 10. The hermits Macarius of Egypt, Onuphrius the Great, and Peter the Athonite (other side: The Holy Spirit descending on the Apostles) **103**

Late fifteenth or early sixteenth century; 24 x 19.5 cm; Novgorod; Государственная Третьяковская галерея [Tretyakov Gallery] (item no. ДР 468), Moscow, Russia.

https://www.icon-art.info/hires.php?lng=ru&type=1&id=584 (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 11. Saints Maksim of Moscow, Sergii of Radonezh, and Isaia, Leontii, Ignatii, Avraamii, and Isidor of Rostov. **107**

Mid-sixteenth century; wood, tempera, 71 x 66 cm; Rostov region; Государственный музей-заповедник «Ростовский Кремль» [State Museum-Preserve "Rostov Kremlin"] (item no. И-517), Rostov, Russia.

https://www.icon-art.info/hires.php?lng=ru&type=1&id=6044 (retrieved June 2023).

Detail of Maksim of Moscow: A.S. PREOBRAZHENSKII, Иконография Василия Блаженного: некоторые аспекты изучения, in: E.M. Iukhimenko, *Юродивые в русской культуре*, Moscow 2013, 55.

Figure 12. St Isidor of Rostov. **108**

1571–1585; damask, silk and gold thread, 176 x 66 cm; Moscow, workshop of Tsaritsa Irina Godunova; Государственный музей-заповедник «Ростовский Кремль» [State Museum-Preserve "Rostov Kremlin"], Rostov, Russia.

https://icons.pstgu.ru/needlework/1190 (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 13. Saints Nicholas the Wonderworker, Petr the Horde tsarevich, and Avraamii and Isidor of Rostov (St Aleksii Metropolitan of Moscow, left margin). **108**

Mid-sixteenth century; wood (?); Rostov; Государственный музей-заповедник «Ростовский Кремль» [State Museum-Preserve "Rostov Kremlin"], Rostov, Russia.

https://www.pravenc.ru/data/2011/12/21/1234978010/i400.jpg (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 14. St Maksim of Moscow. **110**

1547–1551; fresco (?); Annunciation cathedral, Moscow Kremlin, Russia.

https://www.pravenc.ru/data/2020/06/21/1236347852/i400.jpg (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 15. Tomb of St Maksim of Moscow working a posthumous miracle. **110**

1570s; manuscript, ink (?); Moscow; Illustrated Chronicle of Ivan the Terrible, volume 8, Российская национальная библиотека [National Library of Russia] (РНБ. F.IV.232. fol. 601), Saint Petersburg, Russia.

https://www.pravenc.ru/data/2020/06/21/1236347427/i400.jpg (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 16. Saints Prokopii and Ioann of Ustiug before the Virgin and Child. **112**

1600; fresco (?); Annunciation cathedral, Sol'vychegodsk, Russia.

https://www.pravenc.ru/data/2010/09/29/1234251735/i400.jpg (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 17. Saints Prokopii and Ioann of Ustiug before Christ. **112**

1611; manuscript, ink (?), 27.5 x 22.6 cm; Sol'vychegodsk; Сольвычегодский музей-заповедник [Solvychegodsky Museum-Reserve] (item no. СМ-204-Ж). Sol'vychegodsk, Russia.

https://www.icon-art.info/hires.php?lng=ru&type=1&id=8690 (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 18. St Vasilii of Moscow. **115**

1589; fabric (atlas), silver, gold and silk thread, 250 x 117 cm; Moscow; Собор Покрова Пресвятой Богородицы на Рву (Храм Василия Блаженного) [Pokrov cathedral (St Basil's cathedral)], Moscow, Russia.

https://www.icon-art.info/hires.php?lng=ru&type=1&id=5229 (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 19. Saints Vasilii of Moscow and Basil the Great. **115**

Late sixteenth century; fabric, thread (?), 250 x 117 cm; (?); Государственный Русский музей [State Russian Museum], Saint Petersburg, Russia.

A.S. PREOBRAZHENSKII, Иконография Василия Блаженного: некоторые аспекты изучения, in: E.M. Iukhimenko, *Юродивые в русской культуре*, Moscow 2013, 61.

Figure 20. St Vasilii of Moscow before the Virgin and Child. **116**

Late sixteenth century;107.5 x 27.3 x 4 cm; Sol'vychegodsk; Сольвычегодский музей-заповедник [Solvychegodsky Museum-Reserve] (item no. СМ-246-Ж), Sol'vychegodsk, Russia.

https://www.icon-art.info/hires.php?lng=ru&type=1&id=8676 (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 21. St Vasilii of Moscow with scenes from his life. **116**

Late sixteenth or early seventeenth century; fabric, thread (?), 250 x 117 cm; Moscow (?); Государственный исторический музей, Храм Василия Блаженного [State Historical Museum, St Basil's cathedral], Moscow, Russia.

A.S. PREOBRAZHENSKII, Иконография Василия Блаженного: некоторые аспекты изучения, in: E.M. Iukhimenko, *Юродивые в русской культуре*, Moscow 2013, 56.

Figure 22. Saints Varlaam of Khutyn', Mikhail of Klopsko, and Dmitrii of Priluki (?). **118**

Second half of the sixteenth century; canvas, 25 x 20.2 cm; Suzdal'; Владимиро-Суздальский историко-художественный и архитектурный музей-заповедник [State Vladimir-Suzdal Historical, Architectural and Art Museum-Reserve], Vladimir, Russia (item no. B-6300/118).

https://www.icon-art.info/hires.php?lng=ru&type=1&id=7228 (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 23. St Mikhail of Klopsko. **119**

Middle to second half of the sixteenth century; fresco (?); Trinity (formerly Pokrov) cathedral, Aleksandrov, Russia.

https://www.pravenc.ru/data/2020/06/21/1236349158/i400.jpg (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 24. St Mikhail of Klopsko. **119**

1572; fresco, (?); St Sophia cathedral, Novgorod.

https://www.pravenc.ru/data/2020/06/21/1236349075/i400.jpg (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 25. St Prokopii of Ustiug. **121**

First half of the sixteenth century; wood, pavoloka (fabric), levkas, tempera, 49 x 39 cm; Ustiug; Государственная Третьяковская галерея [Tretyakov Gallery] (item no. 13884), Moscow, Russia.

A.V. RYNDINA (ed.), *1000-летие русской художественной культуры*, Moscow 1988, item 121 on page 99, description on page 349.

Figure 26. Saints Prokopii of Ustiug and Varalaam of Khutyn' before Christ. **121**

Mid-sixteenth century (1544?); 75 x 48 cm; (?); Архангельский музей изобразительных искусств [Arkhangelsk Regional Museum of Fine Arts] (item no. 847-држ), Arkhangel'sk, Russia.

https://www.icon-art.info/hires.php?lng=ru&type=1&id=7870 (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 27. St Prokopii of Ustiug before the Virgin and Child. **122**

End of the sixteenth century; wood, pavoloka (fabric), levkas, tempera, gold, 107.4 x 36 x 3.8 cm; Annunciation cathedral, Sol'vychegodsk (?); Сольвычегодский музей-заповедник [Solvychegodsky Museum-Reserve] (item no. СМ-247-Ж), Sol'vychegodsk, Russia.

https://www.icon-art.info/hires.php?lng=ru&type=1&id=8677 (retrieved June 2023).

M.S. TRUBACHEVA (ed.), *Иконы строгановских вотчин XVI–XVII веков : По материалам реставрационных работ ВХНРЦ имени академика И. Э. Грабаря*, Moscow 2003, item 18 on page 129, description on page 37.

Figure 28. St Prokopii of Ustiug with 24 vignettes from his Life. **122**

1602; wood, levkas, tempera, 161 x 128 cm; St Prokopii cathedral, Ustiug; Великоустюгский государственный историко-архитектурный и художественный музей-заповедник [Veliky Ustyug State Historical-Architectural & Art Museum Reserve] (item no. 16268/3), Ustiug, Russia.

https://www.icon-art.info/hires.php?lng=ru&type=1&id=8449 (retrieved June 2023).

M.S. TRUBACHEVA (ed.), *Иконы строгановских вотчин XVI–XVII веков : По материалам реставрационных работ ВХНРЦ имени академика И. Э. Грабаря*, Moscow 2003, item 50 on page 167, description on page 63–4.

Figure 29. Saints Nikolai Kochanov, Nicholas, and Matrona of Kargopol'. **124**

c.1554; собрание русских икон при поддержке Фонда ап. Андрея Первозванного [collection of Russian icons of the Fund of St Andrew the First-Called], Russia.

https://www.pravenc.ru/data/2020/06/22/1236354027/i400.jpg (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 30. Menology icon for July (detail: Nikolai Kochanov of Novgorod). **124**

End of the sixteenth century; Церковно-археологический кабинет Московской Духовной Академии [Church-Archaeological Cabinet of the Moscow Theological Academy] (item no. 3858?), Sergiev Posad, Russia.

Detail: https://www.pravenc.ru/data/2020/06/22/1236353891/i400.jpg (retrieved June 2023).

Overview: http://acmus.ru/data/collection/icons/00003858.jpg (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 31. Sophia the Holy Wisdom of Christ (detail: Nikolai Kochanov). **125**

1550s–1560s; silk, 41 x 33 cm; Novgorod; Вологодский государственный историко-архитектурный и художественный музей-заповедник [Vologda State Historical and Architectural Art Museum-Reserve], Vologda, Russia.

Detail: A.V. SILKIN, Пелена «София Премудрость Божия» из собрания Вологодского музея-заповедника. К вопросу атрибуции и датировки, in: S.F. Vigasina (ed.), *VI Грабаревские чтения: Международная научная конференция, 16–17 октября 2003 г*, Moscow 2005, 69.

Overview: https://icons.pstgu.ru/img/base/origin/00023429.jpg (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 32. Ioann of Moscow (Big Cap). **126**

1600; fresco, Annunciation cathedral, Sol'vychegodsk, Russia.

https://www.pravenc.ru/data/2010/09/29/1234251750/i400.jpg (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 33. Selected saints. **129**

Sixteenth century; wood, pavoloka, tempera, 47 x 38 x 2.8 cm; Kargopol'; Государственный Русский музей [State Russian Museum] (item no. ДРЖ-2755), Saint Petersburg, Russia.

https://www.icon-art.info/hires.php?lng=ru&type=1&id=4651 (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 34. Saints Basil the Great, Vasilii and Maksim of Moscow, and Prokopii of Ustiug. **130**

Last quarter of the sixteenth century; wood, tempera, silver, basma (tint), gilding, filigree enamel, 42 x 18 cm; Pokrov monastery cathedral, Suzdal'; Владимиро-Суздальский историко-художественный и архитектурный музей-заповедник [State Vladimir-Suzdal Historical, Architectural and Art Museum-Reserve] (item no. B-6300/30 1-2), Vladimir, Russia.

https://www.icon-art.info/hires.php?lng=ru&type=1&id=7190 (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 35. Moving Church (Pokhodnaia Tserkov'). **132**

1588–1590; 63.5 x 98 cm; Pskov' / Tver'; Тверская областная картинная галерея [Tver Regional Art Gallery] (item no. Ж-1239), Tver', Russia.

https://www.icon-art.info/hires.php?lng=ru&type=1&id=2495 (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 36. Hexameron (Shestodnev). **132**

Early sixteenth century; 110 x 91 cm; Vologda (?), workshop of Dionisii; Государственная Третьяковская галерея [Tretyakov Gallery] (item no. 12058), Moscow, Russia.

https://www.icon-art.info/hires.php?lng=ru&type=1&id=519 (retrieved June 2023).

Figure 37. Vladimir Mother of God (triptych). **133**

1603; wood, pavoloka (fabric), levkas, tempera, silver, basma (tint), gold, silver, filigree, precious stones, pearl, enamel, 41 x 73 cm; church of the Praise to the Mother

of God, Perm’ region, commissioned by Nikita Grigor’evich Stroganov; Пермская государственная художественная галерея [Perm State Art Gallery] (item no. ДМ—4), Perm’ Russia.

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Ф.304/I №619. Трефолог русским святым [Calendar of Russian saints], *sluzhba* for Prokopii of Ustiug fol. 254 v – 266 v, https://lib-fond.ru/lib-rgb/304-i/f-304i-619/ (retrieved April 2024).

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Ф.304/I №624. Трефолог русским святым [Calendar of Russian saints], *sluzhba* for Nikolai Kochanov of Novgorod 509 r – 520 r, *sluzhba* for Vasilii of Moscow 621 r – 633 r, https://lib-fond.ru/lib-rgb/304-i/f-304i-624/ (retrieved April 2024).

Ф.304/I №630. Службы и жития ростовских святых [*Sluzhby* and *zhitiia* of Rostov saints], *sluzhba* for Isidor of Rostov fol. 238 v – 261 v (followed by his *zhitie*), https://lib-fond.ru/lib-rgb/304-i/f-304i-630/#image-255 (retrieved April 2024).

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