

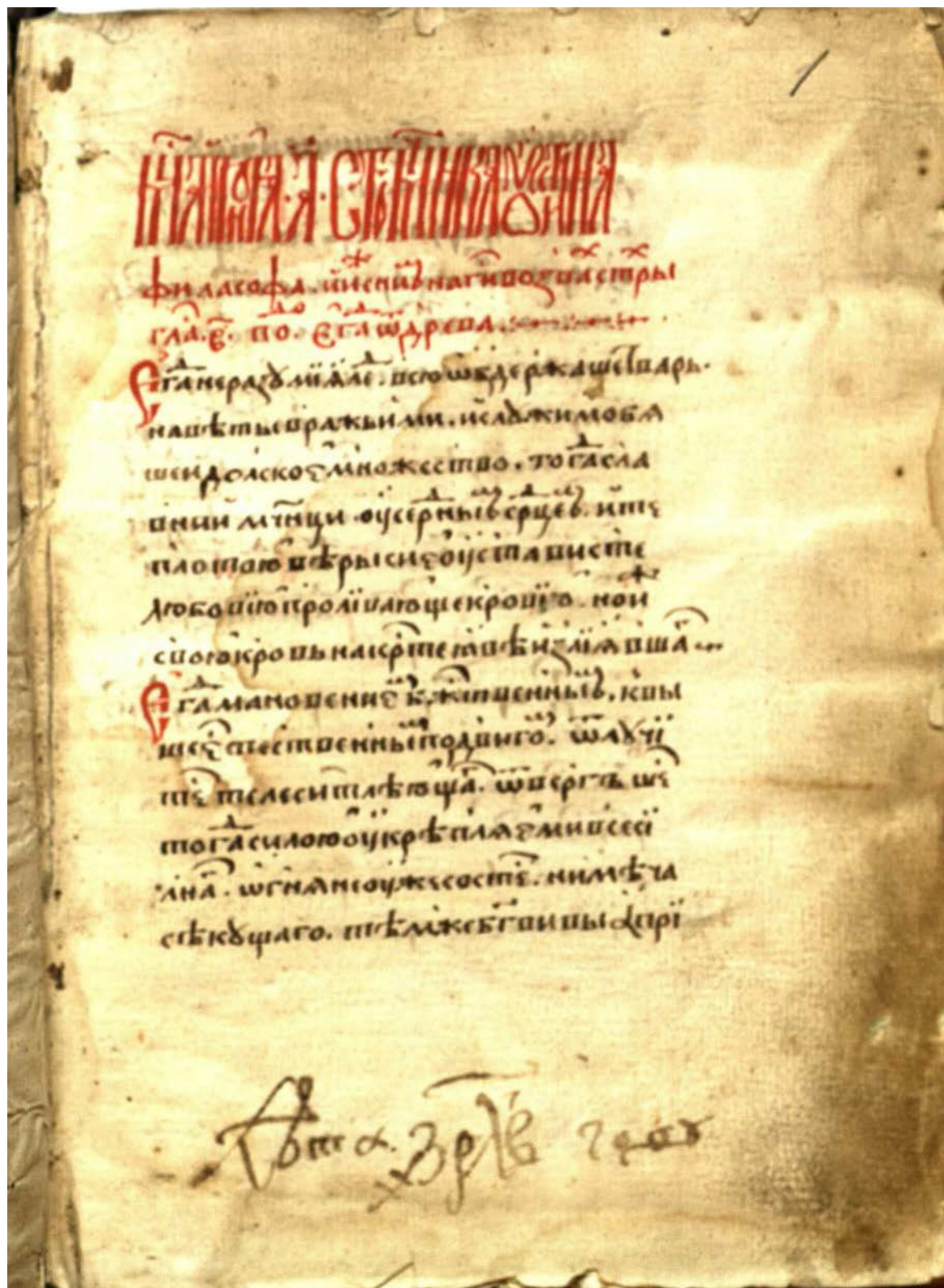
The Ellis Library Pre-Nikonian Menaion: A Book History

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The beginning of the Menaion

Table of Contents

Description

Contents

Audiences

Russia around 1623

Codicology and Paleography

Catalog entry

External features

 Binding

 Paste-downs

 Material

 Foliation

 Collation

 Script

 Rubrication

Text

 Contents

 Marginalia

 Colophon

 Mystery

Provenance**Bibliography**

Book History

Menaion for June.

Description.

The Menaion for the month of June (Ellis, Vault, uncatalogued).

Manuscript on paper 15.3 x 20.7 cm, 4to in 8s, 228 leaves; all quires intact.

Written in Church Slavonic in a single hand on a medium weight paper. Original ms. side notes, contemporary ms. record of date, scribe name and place. Light water stains, occasional spots of wax, a few edges a little frayed, tiny ink holes in two leaves, small worm trail at gutter in lower blank margins of one gathering. A very good clean copy with its original wide margins.

Bound in high quality Russian morocco over thick wooden boards. Metal bosses and centerpieces lost, remains of original brass clasps.

Contents

The Menaion (from Greek, μην, "month", Church Slavonic *minea*) is the name of several liturgical books in the Orthodox (Greek, Russian, Romanian, Georgian, Serbian, etc.) Church.

The Christian calendar comprises two series of offices. There are movable feasts, falling on the days of the ecclesiastical year dependent on Easter (which is determined by the Jewish, i.e. Lunar calendar); and immovable, set to certain days of the month by the solar calendar, such as the feasts of our Lord: His Nativity (Christmas) Transfiguration, Theophany (Epiphany); of the Blessed Virgin, and of the saints. The offices for these "fixed" feasts are contained in the menaia (pl. for menaion). In the Roman breviary it corresponds to the *Proprium Sanctorum*.

A menaion, one for every month, contains the offices for immovable feasts, according to the liturgical calendar of the Orthodox Church.

Audiences

The Menaia are used by clergy for daily services. This particular menaion is of specific interest because it antedates the extensive reform by Nikon (1605-1681), the seventh Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia, c.1654, revising all service books according to the Greek liturgical tradition, a fateful event that led to a deep schism in the Russian Church.

After this reform many of the pre-existing copies were discarded or burned as redundant.

All Russian service books antedating 1623, whether printed or written, are extremely rare and valuable.

Russia around 1623

By the time our Menaion was written, Russia lived in peace. The Time of Trouble that started soon after the death of the last descendant of the first Russian royal dynasty in 1598 with crop failure, terrible famine, apocalyptically bad weather, riots, war with Poland and Sweden, and bloody strife for power among some aristocratic families, was over.

In October 1612, Moscow was liberated from the last Polish occupants. In January 1613, representatives of all Russian lands and peoples of many ethnicities and all strata gathered in Moscow to choose a new Tsar. It was a truly all-national referendum. After heated debates the first Romanov was elected to the Russian throne.



The announcement was made on February 7, 1613, that Mikhail Romanov (1596-1645) was the new Russian Tsar. Peace accords were reached with Poland and Sweden, and though Russia had lost access to the Baltics, all Russian cities taken by Sweden were returned. In 1621, the first Russian newspaper “«Вестовые письма» (The Messenger) started, followed by the army reorganization, and the establishment of the new ironworks and arms producing plants near Tula. In 1623, the twenty-seven-year-old Tsar was still without a consort, still mourning his first beloved bride, who was rejected on his mother’s insistence. But within three years he would be happily married, again contrary to his mother’s will, but with the approval of his father, Patriarch Philaret, and had ten children. He died at 49, apparently from dropsy. The reign of the first Tsar of the House of the Romanovs was remembered in the Russian history as a peaceful time.

His only surviving son Prince Alexei (1629-1676) acceded to the throne when he was sixteen.



Within a month after his father’s death he lost his mother. His tutor, a nobleman by the name of Morozov, became a regent and counselor. Tsar Alexei, called “the Serenest” by later generations, established, among other things, the first Russian court theater. The plays were mostly German, dedicated to Biblical and historical events, and run terribly long, but ballet performances were also staged. Probably the most poignant event of his relatively peaceful reign, besides retaking Kiev from Poland after centuries of occupation and joining parts of the Ukraine to Russia, was the reform of the church by Patriarch Nikon, and the following schism. Tsar Alexei was twenty-four when he first met a monk named Nikon, who impressed him with his towering figure, commanding voice, straight talk, fearless nature, substantial education, and bold ideas. The Tsar supported the promoting of this monk first to the rank of archimandrite, then to the Metropolitan of Novgorod, and later to the Patriarch. A son of a Mordovian peasant thus ascended to the highest position in the Russian Church.



Patriarch Nikon

Portraits, Coats of Arms and Official Seals in the Great State Book of 1672. St. Petersburg: 1903

Nikon started with the corrections of the service books. He put together a committee of learned clergy, consulted reputable Greek ecclesiastical scholars, and invited them to Moscow. After finding support among multiple Russian influential churchmen, he finally, in 1654, summoned a Council of the Church to make a decision concerning the books.

The Council decided that the books should be revised in accordance with the Greek sources. The second Council in 1656 confirmed the decision of the previous and anathematized the dissenters. The Synod also stated that the old books that were copied or printed prior to that decision should be taken away and burned. This was met with great resistance. Most strong and vocal opponents, such as the famous Archpriest Avvakum, were exiled, and some later burned at stake. From that time on, a deep schism afflicted the Russian Church: the so-called “Old Believers” separated themselves from what they called “the Nikonians”. This fateful split coincided with a great plague raging in Moscow for six months.

Codicology and Paleography

1. **Present shelf-mark:** the book is not catalogued, shelf-marks are absent.

2. External features

- a. **Binding:** wooden boards (most popular among Russian binders were pine, poplar, oak). Thickness of wood 13 mm. Spine lined in a coarse blue cloth, traditional for Byzantine binding, with narrow strips of leather at the headband and tailband, and pronouncedly extended on the outer face of the board. They form raised turn-in endbands, creating characteristic Byzantine “cheeks”. (Spine edge of boards is rounded on the outer face). Spine is rounded. Bound in high quality *safyan* (goat skin morocco), dyed in rich brown and glazed. Metal bosses (*zhukovina*) lost; two original brass clasps remain. Four sewing stations evenly spaced apart.



- b. Paste-downs. No fly-leaves. No marks of previous ownership.

c. **Material:** Paper.

The Russian word for “paper” comes not from papyrus, as in a number of other Indo-European languages, but, most probably, from the Greek Βουβύξ, which means “cotton”, Latin “*charta bombycina*”, Italian *bambagia*, and Russian “*бумага*” (bumaga), though some scholars think that the word could come from the Tatar “bumug”, also meaning “cotton”. Until the 14th century most Russian manuscripts were on parchment. Later, it appears that the Hanseatic League merchants may have introduced, through trade with Novgorod, Italian paper to Russia. For a long time paper from Western Europe was imported through the White Sea port of Archangel.

It is obvious that the demand for paper as a cheap writing material depended on the level of literacy. Dr. Uchastkina claims that at the beginning of the sixteenth century 80 percent of the landowners in Northern Russia, 75-96 percent of merchants, and about 15 percent of peasants were literate.

The custom’s books of the port of Archangel show that in 1585 English merchants brought 400 reams (a ream = 500 sheets) of French paper, and in 1588 6,000 reams. Later, in 1621, 1,990 reams and in 1635 more than 9,000 reams of writing paper were recorded in the port books as brought in by 47 ships.

Russian archival documents state that in 1639 two Dutch merchants Andrei van Rynge and Samoil Debreuver were to supply 10,000 reams of paper to the Tsar’s Office of the Large Palace.

Several early attempts to produce Russian paper were not successful, or could not satisfy the demand, until Peter the First made paper manufacture an industrial production.

In the first part of the 17th century, French and Dutch paper dominated the Russian market.

Our Menaion is on medium weight, cream-colored quality paper which reveals small portions of water marks, which are so far we were unable to identify. Horizontal chain-lines run in 2.4 cm distance from each other.

- d. **Foliation:** The ms. contains 29 gatherings, 228 leaves. All gatherings contain 4 bifolia (8 leaves), except the first and last quire, which have 7 and 5 leaves respectively; apparently, first blank leaf of the first quire is used as paste-down, and two blank leaves at the end – one is cut out, the other is used as paste-down. All quires are numbered in Church Slavonic numbers, apparently by the scribe.
Leaf numbering made in a different ink, by a different (19th cent.?) hand in Arabic numerals at the top right corner.

- e. **Collation** 1{7} 2-28{8} 29 {5}

<u>Quire</u>	<u>Church Slavonic numeral</u>	<u>Arabic numeral</u>
I	α	7 v
II	β	8 r-15v
III	Γ	16r-23v
IV	Δ	24r-31v
V	E	32r-39v
.....		
XXIX	KΘ	224r-228v+1blank cut
	out+1paste down	

- f. **Script.**

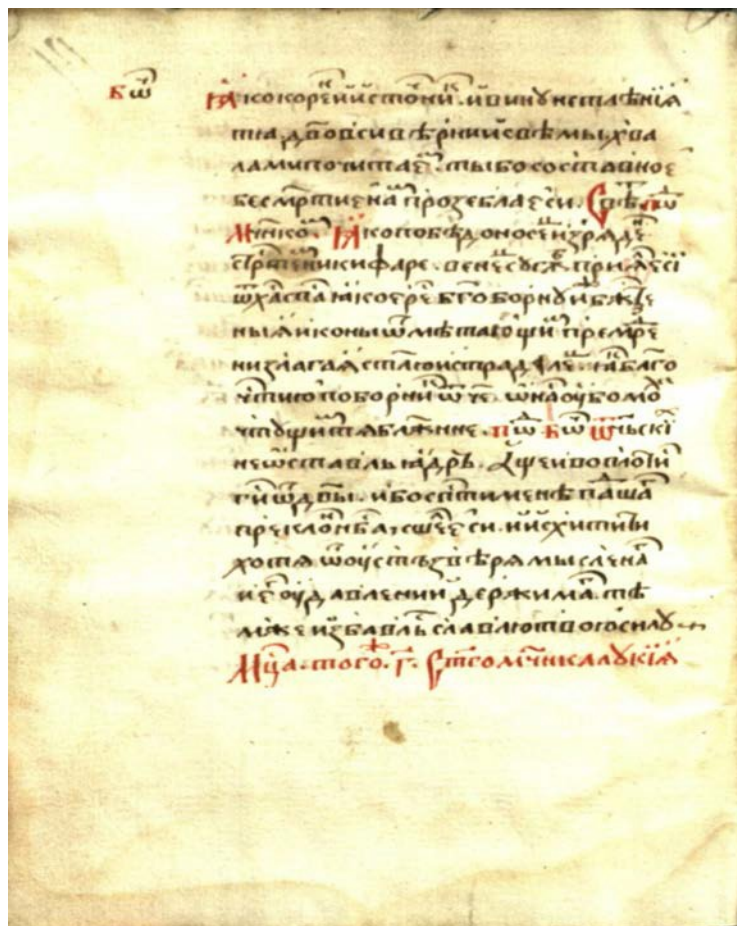
The text is written in elegant Cyrillic *polu-ustav* (semi-uncial, a minuscule) script, in a single hand, with characteristic overwriting, ligatures and abbreviations that are common in Cyrillic as well as Latin manuscripts, motivated mainly by two reasons : to distinguish sacred names and matters from ordinary ones, and to save space. Stresses are absent which is unusual for Slavonic service manuscripts.

Original ms. marginalia; at the foot of the first ten leaves contemporary ms. record of date, origin and scribe. Small dots over the text suggest that it was chanted.

- g. **Rubrication.** Headings for some new days in large ornate red letters, called *viaz'* (an interlaced writing), flourished in Byzantium



since 12th century and adopted by the Russian scribes.



Main text is clearly written in smaller brown iron gall ink. Rubrication for emphasis of sentence beginnings throughout the ms. with the exception of leaf 157r & 158v; 188r-190v. Perhaps the scribe ran out of red ink.

3. Text

а. Contents.

Menaion, June

1June: *Мученика Иустина Философа, и другого мученика Иустина, и иных с ними. Преподобного Дионисия, Глушицкого чудотворца.*
 Martyr Justin the Philosopher, and a second Martyr Justin, and others with them. The Venerable Dionysius, Wonderworker of Glushets.
 (Significant variant reading in text.)

2June: *Святителя Никифора, патриарха Константинополя, исповедника. Великомученика Иоанна Нового.*
 Saint Nicephorus, Patriarch of Constantinople, Confessor.
 Great- Martyr John the New. (Significant variations in text & tone {glas})

3June: *Мученика Лукиллиана и иных с ним.*
 Martyr Lucillian and others with him. In text: *Lukiian vs. Lukilliana.* Significant variant reading in text.

4June: *Святителя Митрофана, патриарха Константинополя.*
 Saint Metrophanes, Patriarch of Constantinople. Significant variant reading in text.

5June: *Священномученика Дорофея, епископа Тирского.*
 Hieromartyr Dorotheus, Bishop of Tyre.

6June: *Преподобного Виссариона чудотворца. Преподобного Илариона Нового.*
 Venerable Besarion, Wonderworker. Venerable Hilarion the New.

7June: *Священномученика Феодота, епископа Анкирского.*
 Hieromartyr Thedotus, Bishop of Ancyra.

8June: *Великомученика Феодора Стратилата.*
 Great-Martyr Theodore the General.

9 June: *Святителя Кирилла, архиепископа Александрийского. Преподобного Кирилла, игумена Белозерского.*

Saint Cyril, Archbishop of Alexandria. Venerable Kirill, Hegumen of Belozersk.

10 June: *Священномученика Тимофея, епископа Прусского.*

Hieromartyr Timothy, Bishop of Prussia.

11 June: *Апостолов Варфоломея и Варнавы.*

Apostles Bartholomew and Barnabas.

12 June: *Преподобного Онуфрия. Преподобного Петра Афонского.*

Преподобного Арсения, Коневского чудотворца.

Venerable Onuphrius. Venerable Peter of Mt Athos. Venerable Arseniy, Wonderworker of Konevits.

13 June: *Мученица Акилины. Святителя Трифиллия, епископа Левкусии Кипрской.*

Martyr Akiliny. Saint Triphyllios, Bishop of Leukosia on Cyprus.

14 June: *Пророка Елисея. Святителя Мефодия, патриарха Константинополя.*

Prophet Elisha. Saint Methodius, Patriarch of Constantinople.

15 June: *Пророка Амоса. Святителя Ионы, митрополита Московского и всея России.*

Prophet Amos. Saint Jonah, Metropolitan of Moscow and all Russia.

16 June: *Святителя Тихона Амафунсткого, чудотворца.*

Saint Tikhon of Amathus on Cyprus, Wonderworker.

17 June: *Мучеников Мануила, Савела и Исмаила.*

Martyrs Manuel, Sabel and Ismail.

18 June: *Мученика Леонтия.*

Martyr Leontius.

19 June: *Апостола Иуды, брата Господня.*

Apostle Jude, the Brother of the Lord.

20 June: *Священномученика Мефодия, епископа Патарского.*

Hieromartyr Methodius, Bishop of Patara.

21 June: *Мученика Иулиана Тарсийского.*

Martyr Julian of Tarsus.

С

22 June: *Священномученика Евсевия, епископа Самосатского.*

Hieromartyr Eusebius, Bishop of Samosata. **Mistake in the date: instead of KB (22) scribe puts BK**

23 June: *Мученицы Агриппины. Сретение чудотворной*

иконы Пресвятой Богородицы, Владимирской.

Martyr Agrippina. Encounter of the wonder-working Vladimir Icon of the Most-Holy Theotokos.

24 June: *Рождество пророка, Предтечи и Крестителя Господня*

Иоанна.

Nativity of the Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist of the Lord, John.

25 June: *Преподобномученицы Февронии. Благоверных князя*

Петра и княгини Февронии, муромских чудотворцев.

Venerable Martyr Febronia. Right-believing Great Prince Peter and Great Princess Febronia, Wonderworkers of Murom.

26 June: *Преподобного Давида Селунского. Явление Иконы*

Пресвятой Богородицы, Тихвинской.

Venerable David of Thessalonica. Appearance of the Tikhvin Icon of the Theotokos.

27 June: *Преподобного Сампсона странноприимца.*

Venerable Sampson the Hospitable.

28 June: *Возвращение мощей святых Бессребренников Кира и*

Иоанна.

In the standard text: "Translation of the Relics of the Holy and Wonderworking Unmercenaries Cyrus and John." In our text: "Returning of the Relics of the Holy Unmercenaries Cyrus and John"

29 June: *Святых всехвальных Апостолов Петра и Павла.*

In the standard text: Leaders of the Apostles Peter and Paul. In our text: "All praised saint apostles Peter and Paul".

30 June: *Собор двенадцати славных и всехвальных апостолов.*

Synaxis of the Glorious and All-Praised Twelve Apostles.

The text has, sometimes substantial and important, variant readings from the standard Menaion for June. Grammatical mistakes signify that the Menaion was read aloud to the scribe rather than copied from another manuscript.

b.

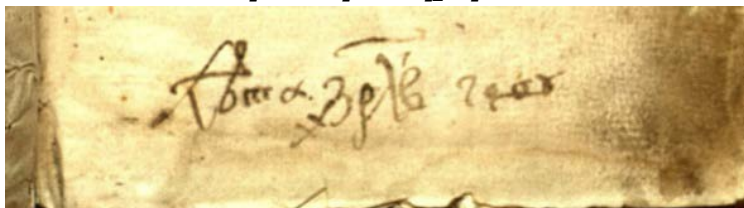
Marginalia.

Marginal notes consist of special short-hand signs marking off a Theotokian troparion (a short poem to the Virgin Mary) at the end of each ode of the canon at matins, or some "stichera" (pl.; sing — sticheron) sung at vespers that day on "Lord, I have cried..." ("Господи, воззвахъ..."). Less frequently it is an indication for a special melody from "Яко добля" ("As one valiant among the martyrs...").

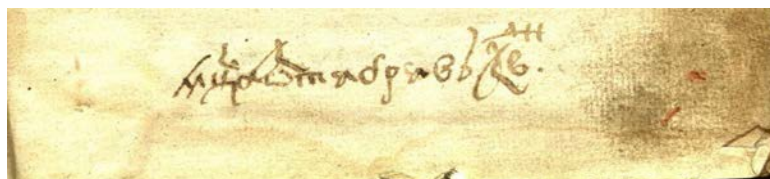
It is found all over the book.

- c. **Colophon.** On the leaves 1-10 in a very difficult to decipher cursive runs the following inscription:

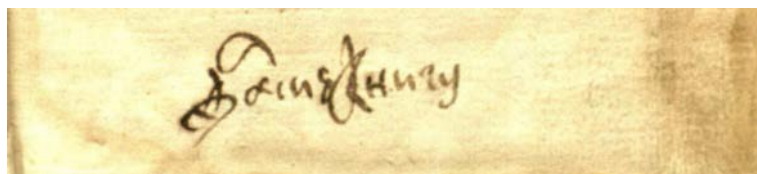
1. *Lieta ZRLB [7132] Gos[po]du*



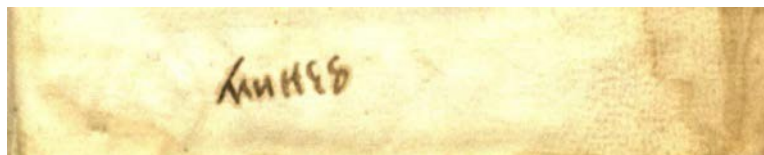
2. m[iesia]tsa O[k]tiabrea v' KB {22} d[ie]n'



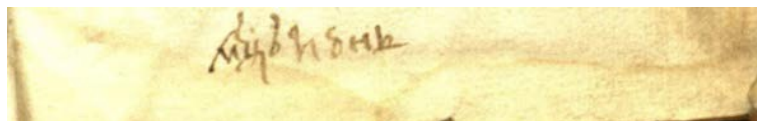
3. {pisah?} siiu Knigu



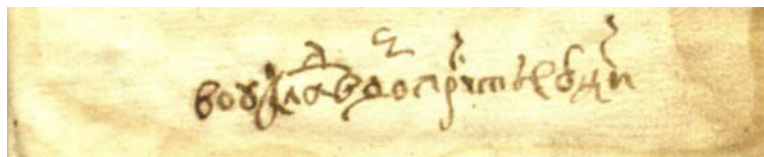
4. mineju



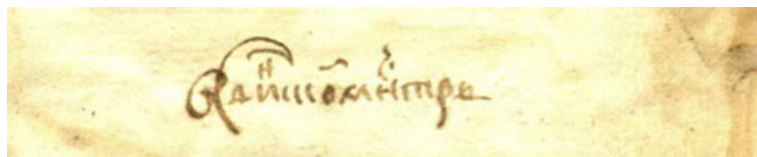
5. m[iesia]ts ijun'



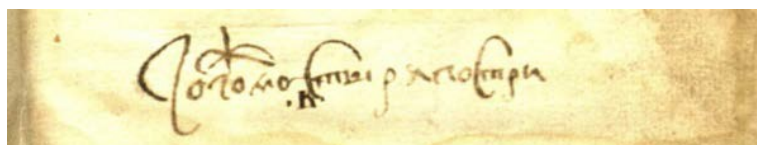
6. vou Slavu o Pr[e]ch[is]tiee B[ogoro]d[is]tsi



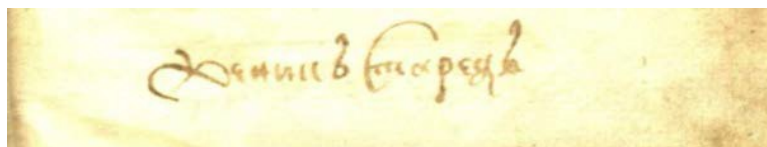
7. v Raiisskom m[o]n[as]t[yl]rie



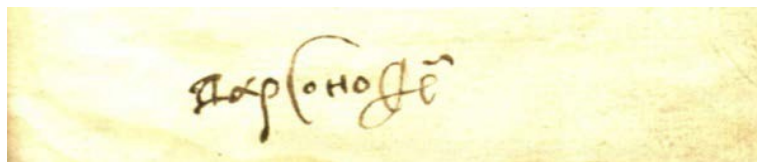
8. togo zh mo[na]styria postri



9. **zhennik” Starets”**



10. **Varsonofej**



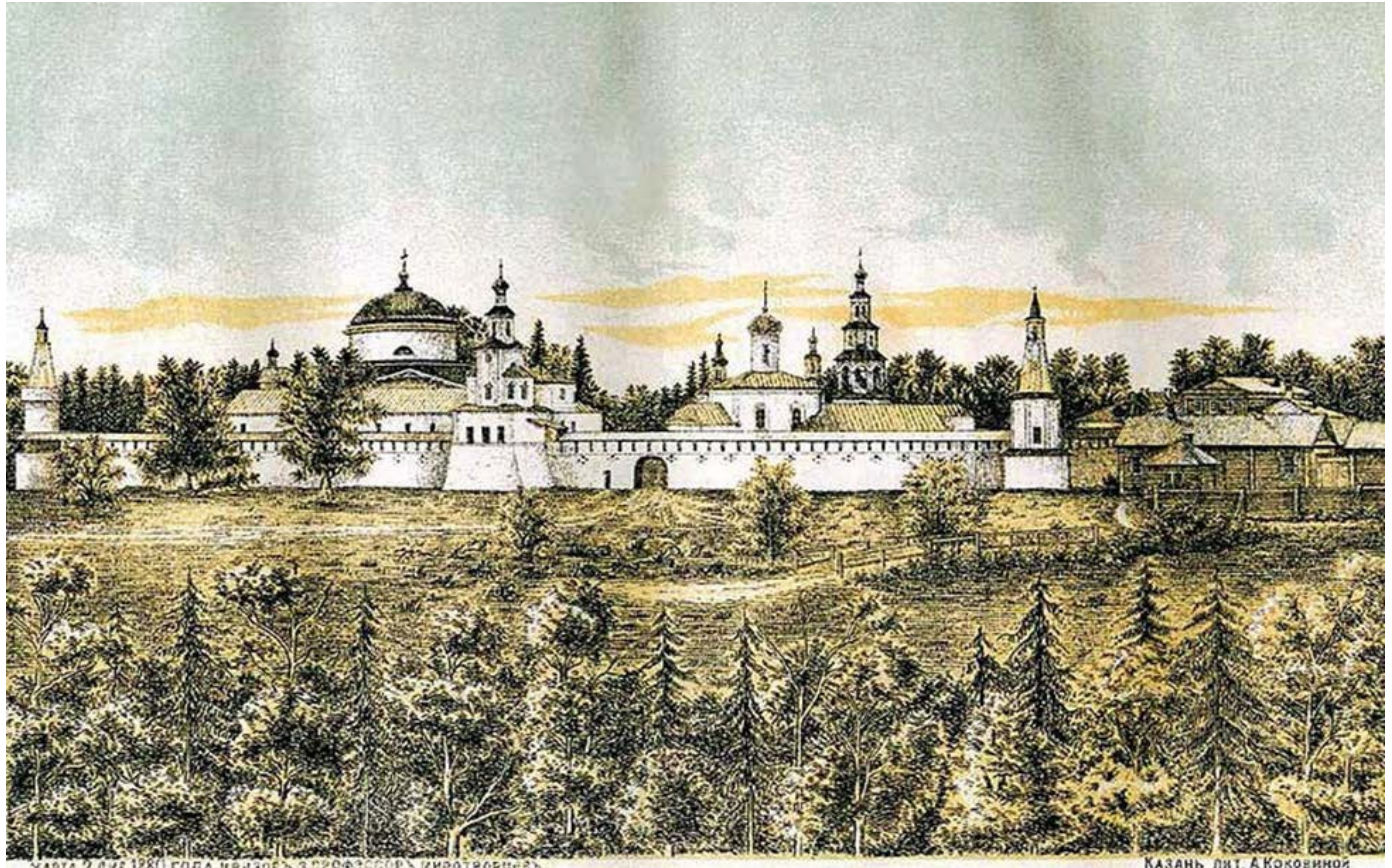
This could be translated as:

1. ***In the year 7132 (1623) of our Lord***
2. ***In the month of October in 22nd day***
3. ***[has finished writing] this book***
4. ***Menaion***
5. ***[for the] month of June***
6. ***For the Glory of the most pure Theotokos {Mother of God}***
7. ***In the Raifa monastery***
8. ***In this same monastery tonsured mo-***
9. ***-nk, Elder***
10. ***Barsonophius***

This inscription clearly indicates not only the name and position of the scribe – Elder Barsonophius, but gives us the place –Raifa monastery, and the date – 1623.

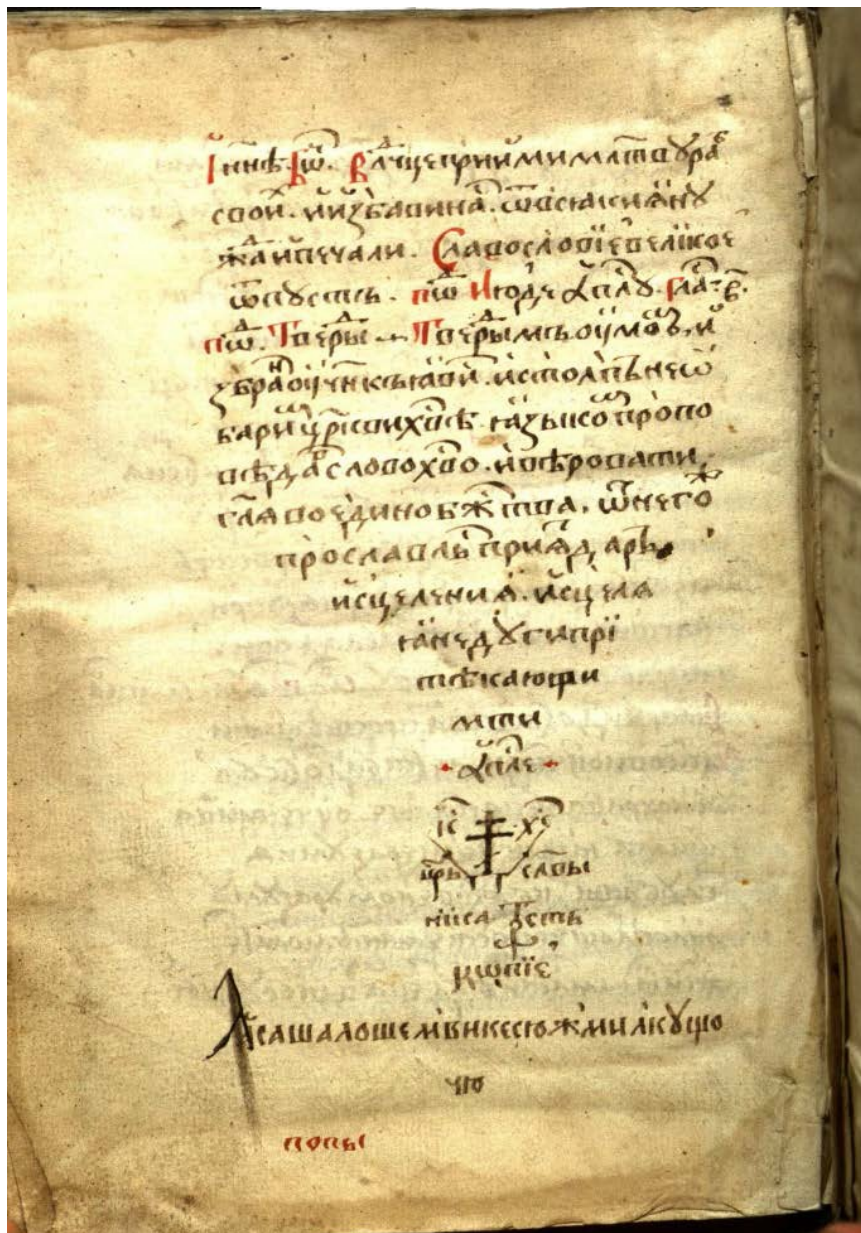
In October 13, 1552, the twenty-two year old Russian Tsar Ivan IV took over Kazan, about 450 miles east of Moscow, the capital of the Tartar khanate, all that was left from the disintegrated Golden Horde, the western portion of the Genghis Khan Empire. Soon after that Christian churches and monasteries appeared in and around the city of Kazan.

The Raifa monastery dedicated to the Mother of God was established in 1613 by hieromonk Philaret. This secluded, beautiful place on the lake *Sumka* in about 28 miles from Kazan was surrounded by deep woods populated by wild animals.



The monastery grew and became well known until the Bolsheviks took over, and in the 1920s turned the monastery into the concentration camp. In 1930 all remaining hieromonks were executed by shooting, churches and cathedrals were desecrated and turned into mechanical shops. In the 1990s the monastery was returned to the Church and restored.

Mystery



At the very end of the manuscript, at the bottom of the last page, there is a mysterious inscription in Cyrillic characters.

The language is not Slavonic, and resists deciphering.

Any service book in the seventeenth century was regarded as a venerable, even sacred thing, thus the smallest mistake or a slip of the pen was considered a

sin. It was customary for a scribe to finish a manuscript with a humble request to readers to correct mistakes if found. However it is only a conjecture. So far a language of this final inscription has remained an enigma for these researchers, who would be grateful for any clue.

Provenance

Acquired in 2012 from the “Sokol Books” antiquarian book store, London, 239a Fulham Road London SW3 6HY.

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