

*P. I. Gaydenko*

## **About bishopric monasteries and eparchs' rights to Kievan Rus monasteries**

Одним из важнейших институтов древнерусской церковной организации и древнерусского государства были монастыри. При том, что в историографии деятельность монашеских общин восточнославянского общества уже неоднократно становилась предметом специального научного исследования, многие стороны жизни древнерусского иночества остаются ещё не вполне выясненными. К числу таких областей вполне могут быть отнесены вопросы отношения монашества и епископата, а также деятельность епископских обителей.

Жизнь древнерусских монастырей обладала не только своими особенностями, но и во многом повторяла ситуацию в Византии. В империи ромеев противоречия между епископатом и монастырями также существовали. Однако на Руси клубок этих внутрицерковных конфликтов был сложнее, поскольку здесь не существовало развитого внутреннего письменного права, не менее остро стоял вопрос и о комплексе канонических норм. В сложившихся условиях широкой автономии древнерусского иночества епископат был вынужден предпринимать усилия по созданию собственных обителей.

В представленной статье предпринята попытка обозначить ряд особенностей в принципах организации и деятельности древнерусских епископских монастырей.

Ключевые слова: Киевская Русь; Древнерусская церковь; каноническое право Древней Руси; древнерусские монастыри; епископские монастыри Древней Руси; церковно-государственные отношения Древней Руси; внутрицерковные отношения в Древней Руси

The problem of the relationship between ancient monasteries and monks and the episcopate is not new and has many a time drawn the attention of researchers of ancient Russian Church. The reason for such attention were various conflicts that regularly arose between monks and Old Russian archpastors on a variety of aspects and, first of all, on hierarchal intervention into internal affairs of religious communities. The presence of such conflicts can be seen in the chronicles and hagiographical reports about the life of

Kiev Monastery of the Caves<sup>1</sup> or on the basis of the will of Anthony the Roman who forbade outsiders, including bishops, to interfere in electing a new hegumen<sup>2</sup>. An equally negative characterization of episcopal invasion into the affairs of a convent is seen in the spell inscribed on the Cross of Saint Euphrosyne of Polotsk (Гайденко, Москалёва, Фомина 2013: 108-109). All this suggests that under the circumstances in 11-12<sup>th</sup> centuries, the hierarchs' intention to declare their authority and cover with episcopal omophorion those who have taken monastic vows, was sometimes perceived by contemporaries as something alien and violating the norms of monastic autonomy. In general, the above contradictions had arisen in the past, including at the dawn of Christianity. Moreover, they were not overcome in Byzantium either<sup>3</sup>.

If in Byzantium the problem of episcopal power over monasteries was accounted for mainly by economic factors, as well as the contradictions between the empire's canonical and legal norms relating to the monastic community as a voluntary associations or boards<sup>4</sup>, in Russia the tangle of issues was more complicated and contained threads of other difficulties.

The main reasons that for a long time complicated the situation of ancient Russian episcopate, included its utmost detachment not only from the life of the most part of its potential flock but from the clergy entrusted to it. The contents of the Questions of Kirik, of the canonical responses of metropolitans George and John make it clear that the most part of ancient Russian eparchs

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<sup>1</sup> A clear rebuke to bishops is contained in the Life of Theodosius of the Kiev Caves, that ridicules the bishops' inability to resist the wisdom of Theodosius of the Kiev Caves (ЖФП 1978: 382, 383). Equally reproachful sounds the chronicle of the "metropolitan untruth" in relation to Kiev Caves hegumen Polycarp (ПСРЛ. Т. 1: стр. 354).

<sup>2</sup> Actually, this prohibition most likely became essential after Anthony's death, when his successor Andrey was the hegumen (СЖПАР 2005: 269).

<sup>3</sup> For further information please refer to M.A.Morozov's paper (Морозов 2005: 106-121).

<sup>4</sup> For further information please refer to M.A.Morozov's paper (Морозов 2010: 77-87).

were very distanced from the Christian communities in their districts and almost did not personally interfere in the internal life of pastors under their control, not to mention the flock<sup>5</sup>. Such state of affairs resulted in a substantial freedom of behavior and action, including that in the monastic environment. The commensalities of monk and nuns, that became the subject of the metropolitan's special attention, as well as other specific aspects of monastic behavior, convincingly show that the inner life of monasteries, as well as the monks' behavior on the whole were hardly controlled by the episcopate (КОМИ 1880: стрб. 14, 16-17; НС 2004: 254).

The cultural and socio-political realities of Byzantium and Rus also significantly differed. This means that the use of the imperial laws and canons in the territories of newly enlightened barbarians, and this is how Rus was regarded in the Empire of Romans<sup>6</sup>, did not seem possible. It's enough to note that the Byzantine system of church punishments in Rus for a long time remained ineffective and it was only used in exceptional cases and only in relation to the episcopate<sup>7</sup>. It is these circumstances that can account for the fact that in the Eastern Slavic society the episcopal court did not apply regular penances to those who have sinned but fines which were more familiar and understandable to the local population (УКЯ 1976: 85-91; Щапов 1972: 302-305; Щапов 1989: 36). The cultural differences that existed between Rus and Byzantium could not but affect the behavior and customs of the local monks that brought into the life of the institution the experience and preferences of the social environment from which this or that monk originated.

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<sup>5</sup>More details on bishops' detachment from clergy life in Novgorod and Kirik the Novgorodian's duties see the work of T. Fomina and P. Gaidenko (Гайденко, Фомина 2012: 83-92).

<sup>6</sup>More details on Greek-Byzantine concept of barbarism and on the Byzantians' attitude to Rus see S. Ivanov (Иванов 2003: 19-21, 169-172, 209-223).

<sup>7</sup>More details on ecclesiastical courts of the clergy and episcopate punishments see the work of V. Filippov and P. Gaidenko (Гайденко, Филиппов 2011: 106-111).

An equally challenging problem was the polyphony of jurisdictions represented in Rus: Constantinople, Roman, and Irish. In addition, part of the clergy was actually removed from under the bishopric omophorion and was under the jurisdiction of the princes, and even of the nobility. Finally, many monasteries had the broad powers of canonical autonomy, and the hierarchal power was next to none in relation to wandering monasticism. Thus, we can say that the power of the episcopate over much of the clergy remained purely nominal.

Apparently, church hierarchs neither were capable of controlling the religious activity of the Latin missionaries supported in the prince and boyar environment. Regular receptions of papal legates and missionaries at the court of the Grand Princes<sup>8</sup> can well be considered not so much in the context of ecclesiastical tolerance as in the specific notions of the canonical structure of the church, that dwelt in the minds of the princely family (Костромин 2015: 62-

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<sup>8</sup>Missions serving the interests of papacy or German missions, as well as Latin missionaries and envoys vested with dignity, are evidenced by a wealth of Latin and Old Russian sources: the failing mission of bishop Adalbert (60s of 10<sup>th</sup> c.), pope's mission (1000), Bruno of Querfurt's mission to the Pechenegs (1007), the presence of Kolberg bishop Reinbern in Turov during the reign of Svyatopolk the Accursed (1016); French mission headed by bishops Roger of Chalon and Gautier de Meaux to Yaroslav the Wise's court; legation of bishop Burchard to Svyatoslav Yaroslavich (about 1075), finally, the arrival in 1203 of the pope's legate to Roman Mstyslavych's court (ПСРЛ. Т. 2: стб. 189-190; ПСРЛ. Т. 9: 68; Татищев 2005: 463-464; Бруно 2010: 55-62; Титмар 2010: 84; Адемар 2010: 88; Ламперт 2010: 120-121; ChSP 1863). At the same time, the presence of bishop Reinbern in Turov can hardly be regarded as something quite out of the ordinary. A similar canonical situation that, in fact, arose for entirely different political and canonical reasons, could be seen in the former Albanian and Bulgarian lands of the Byzantine Empire in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Whereupon, Reinbern's service in Turov could hardly include a corresponding titular. Most likely, his position in the lands of Prince Svyatopolk was different and was analogous to bishop Clement of Ohrid's service among Bulgarians, where it was carried out not on the area but on the ethnic basis (Мучай, Джуери, Ристани, Пентковский 2014: 15-17, 27-28).

68). Recognition of the important role of the Roman throne in the Ruriks princely family is evidenced by the mere fact of the recourse of Prince Izyaslav, who was exiled from Kiev, to Pope Gregory VII (ППГ 2010: 111-114; Макарий 1995: 281-282; Воейков 1983: 215, 222; Назаренко 2002: 534-537; Толочко 2003: 54-66). In any event, the antilatin controversy in Russia, formed in a narrow Greek circle,<sup>9</sup> shows stable sympathy for Western Christianity among ancient Russian political elites. Equally representative are the attempts of canonical regulation of the local Christians' attitude to Latin presence. In this regard, very indicative are the categoric prohibition by Metropolitan George to attend foreign worships and Kirik the Novgorodian's and bishop Niphont's disapproval for baptizing children by Latin priests (БК 1880: стб. 60) At the same time, however, bishop Niphont saw nothing reprehensible in borrowing the practice of ordering liturgies from the Irish (БК 1880: стб. 44). Probably, the latter was justified by material benefits.

However, all these examples allow us to conclude that in the eyes of Novgorod and Kiev (including cloisterers) Eastern and Western (European and Irish) rite church services were largely equivalent. There is no reason to believe that the activities of the Irish, South Europeans, Latin priesthood, and monasticism were taken as carrying a threat. Most likely, the local clergy did not take heterodox Christian sanctuaries and temples as territorial claims centers but rather as places for ethnic worship. Moreover, when summing up the canonical situation in Rus, we have to admit that currently available sources do not exemplify any restrictions of the

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<sup>9</sup> The number of antilatin works in the pre-Mongol period of Russian history is small, but all these are quite indicative and reveal numerous problems both in reconstruction of the past and in understanding of the processes of that time: (ПФП 2010: 295-297; Чичуров 2007: 107-132; Мошин 1963: 87-105; ПВМ 2006: 129-139; ПЯМ 2006: 153-170; Павлов 1878; Голубинский 1901: 852-869; Подскальски 1996: 280-303; Бармин 2006; Костромин 2011а: 6-97;. Костромин 2013а; Полянский 2006: 67-73; Мильков 2006: 152; Неборский 2006: 55-59).

<sup>9</sup> «Не достоить в латыньстеи цркви стояти и пеня их слоушати» (НС 2004: 241).

activities of Latin monkhood and clergy in Rus, whose cultural activity is easily traced in the life of Novgorod and Kiev (Мурьянов 2007: 163-176; Кузьмин 2004: 173-203; Симонова 2011; Симонова 2014: 3-72; Костромин 2011b; Костромин 2015: 48-75; Мильков, Симонов 2011: 30-79). Such a tolerant and even neighborly peaceful coexistence of foreign and local churches and hierarchies to a great extent helps to explain why Anastasios of Korsun chose to escape to Poland rather than to adopt a new canonical situation (ПСРЛ. Т. 2: стб. 131). Probably, to Anastasios, such a step, i.e. a departure, seemed to be the most painless way out of the predicament in which he found himself during the struggle between Svyatopolk and Yaroslav. Probably, the intrafamilial conflict and Yaroslav the Wise's victory resulted in strengthening of the Greek clergy in Kiev, which, most likely, was something that the famous Korsun priest feared most of all.

An equally calm and even friendly attitude to Roman episcopate seems to be found among eparchs, too. The respect and the benevolence, free of confrontation, with which Metropolitan John addressed antipope Clement III in his message, have long been noted<sup>10</sup>. It is obvious that southern Russian eparchs looked to Rome with the same hope during and in the first years after the Mongol invasion, declaring their willingness to see the Pope their "father" and "master" (Рубрук, Карпини 1911: 61; Галимов 2015: 95-100).

All the above leads to the conclusion of the highly variegated canonical picture of the church life of pre-Mongol Rus. This means that the relationship between the episcopate and monasteries were formed under the conditions of this polyphony which significantly complicated the activity and life of archpastors.

The question of the scope of rights of the eparchs over monasteries has time and again been risen in historiography. And to a large extent the answer to the problem formulated seems to be giv-

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<sup>10</sup>This departure is reported in the Primary Chronicle (ПСРЛ. Т. 2: стб. 131).

<sup>10</sup>The position set out was most consistently reasoned by К. Костромин: (Костромин 2013b: 17).

en by Byzantine canon law. However, it should be noted that the problem of the scope of Byzantine canonical monuments used in pre-Mongol Russia has not been solved. And the most outstanding remains the question of the Corpus of Canon which could be considered as all-Russian and immutable to comply with<sup>11</sup>. However, did they exist at all?

Anyway, Yaroslav the Wise chose to introduce extremely original canonical norms in Russia, which, though concerned the issues of Christian morality, but were implemented based on principles that contradicted Byzantine clerical and state practice that has never known such a removal from the state jurisdiction (the princely Court in Russia) of so many different groups of people only on the basis of their poverty or formal relation to church activities. Byzantine canon law did not certainly know the canonical decrees of the Ecumenical Councils and a similar system of fines. In fact, nothing is known either about any princely decisions authorizing the activities of religious institutions in the Kievan Rus. Consequently, Byzantine canonical rules could be applied in Rus only in so far as they were recognized by church and princes of a certain church and political center. However, this in no way means that episcopate was not familiar with the basic canons. On the contrary, the Byzantians undoubtedly knew the legal aspects of the activities of religious institutions. As for the Old Russian episcopate, Niphont of Novgorod's answers to Kirik, as well as the referral of the authors of this Novgorod "Questions" to the authority of other eparchs, lead to the conclusion that some of Russian hierarchs (of local origin) also had quite a clear understanding of at least the basic church laws. However, the local episcopate, including Niphont, who compared to some of his fellows can be considered an expert in Greek law, were only familiar with the provisions of canonical law in the most general terms. Moreover, it is most likely that Old Russian eparchs had a vague understanding of the "spirit" of these laws. A striking example of this is Niphont's stand on election of Kliment Smolyatich. Then the eparch of Novgorod

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<sup>11</sup> The emergence of a single all-Russian set of canonical rules dates back only to the late 13<sup>th</sup> century (Иванов 1978: 135-208).

in his arguments substituted the canonical norms of metropolitan election and enthronement and holding councils (the majority democratism) with personal rights of the patriarch and local veche norms (absolute unanimity of decision-making) (ПСРЛ. Т. 2: стб. 340-341; Фомина 2014: 199).

Formally, regardless of the historical conditions of appearance of certain norms and the procedure for their application, a bishop had to have two essential rights over monasteries: 1) the right of approval of establishing a cloister and 2) the right of complete authority, supervision, and trial over monks of this or that order. This is how it is set out in the work of protopriest Vladislav Tsyпин (Цыпин 2012: 344-345). In fact, as can be seen from the diverse administrative, legal, and economic disputes that accompanied the entire history of relations between monasteries and cathedras, as well as the legal acts and decisions resulting from these conflicts<sup>12</sup>, all of the above rights of eparchs were limited, and sometimes merely declarative. A similar situation existed in Byzantium, too<sup>13</sup>. Moreover, as stated by protopriest Vladislav Tsyпин, from the scientific point of view, the broad rights of hierarchs over monasteries is merely a historiographical fiction based on an extremely simplified and biased summation of norms from disparate and diachronous documents. As previously noted, sources, on the contrary, evidence significant limitations of episcopal authority in respect of not only major temples, but monastery life as well. Such a situation is quite consistent with historical conditions and Old Russian canonical legal and mental realities (Гайденко, Москалёва, Фомина 2013: 22-54). Besides, the above difficulties hindered the material resources of cathedras. As a result, one of the ways to resolve the

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<sup>12</sup> The examples of such solutions may include the establishment of archimandrite's office in Kiev and the restrictions of episcopal authority, as well as of its material appetites with regard to The Church of St. John the Baptist-on-Opoki and St. George's Monastery in Novgorod.

<sup>13</sup> More details on the ambiguity of episcopal authority over monasteries in Byzantium see works of M. Morozov (Морозов 2006: 362-375; Морозов 2010: 77-87).



contradictions was the foundation of bishopric monasteries in Russia.

Such monasteries existed both in Byzantium and Western Europe. For Russia, however, it was a new experience. In addition, when considering ancient Russian monastic communities, by far not in all cases it is easy to determine which of the monasteries of that time can be classified as *bishopic*. The existing situation is accounted for by not only the content of the sources, but also by the fact that the canonical and legal realities of Byzantium and Rus differed in many ways and sometimes even contradicted each other.

In Byzantium, a bishopric monastery meant a monastery established and maintained from the bishop's personal funds. I.e., it was a ktitor monastery with the donator being or considered to be the eparch. Undoubtedly, hierarchs' participation in monastic life brought its own specific features into the monasteries' everyday life and the principles. But in theory, over time, such a monastery could change its status by electing a new ktitor or by declaring its "independence". At the same time, we cannot overlook the so-called eparchial monasteries, which once were given a brief, but a very succinct characteristic by I. Sokolov (Соколов 2003: 292). In fact, these were the monasteries that existed without the bishop's participation, but that paid contributions to him. Actually, they were under the control of the cathedra and recognized over them the full episcopal authority, regardless of to what extent it was justified from the point of view of Byzantine law, and in Rus conditions – from the point of view of local canonical and legal norms as well.

From all appearances, none of the large princely monasteries can be classified as a bishopric or a eparchial monastery. And among the monasteries of Kiev, no monastic community seems to be indisputably falling under the specified features. This probably was explained by the stability of ktitor's power here over local monasteries, that successfully resisted the local metropolitan cathedra, limiting its interference in the internal life of the local monastic communities.

An entirely different situation is seen in Turov, Smolensk, Rostov, and Novgorod. Sources clearly indicate that in all these centers there were monasteries that can be categorized as bishopric or, at least, eparchial monasteries. In most cases, these were the largest and most influential monasteries. Moreover, in Turov and Rostov the monasteries were the bishops' residences<sup>14</sup>. The causes for the appearance and material success of bishop monasteries in provincial political centers are quite clear. The prosperity of these monasteries was most likely provided by not the relentless prayers of their inhabitants but by the economic realities of the time. In most of these centers, except for Novgorod, the local elites did not have enough resources to found and maintain monastic communities to the extent that would allow them to compete with the opportunities that the bishop acquired through his princely tithes. Moreover, the local elites, again with the exception of Novgorod, in Turov, Rostov, and Smolensk were less free from the prince's power control. Even the murder of Andrey Bogolyubsky was not so much the result of the opposition of the elites and the prince's power, as an act of extreme irritation. The massacre of the prince should rather be regarded as the desperate resistance of the local nobility and the squad to the despot. We must not forget that, taking the Vladimir throne, Andrey Yuryevich broke all existing rules of building relations with the squad and nobility<sup>15</sup>. Actually, this was the cause of the tragedy in Bogolyubovo.

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<sup>14</sup> According to the brief Life of kitchener Martin of Turov, the seat of the local eparchs had the urban monastery of Boris and Gleb (CTMM 1995: 583). As for Rostov, the local monastery of Dmitry, at least under bishop Cyril, was regarded by the eparch as the place of his recreation and residence in his old age (ПСРЛ. Т. 1: стб. 452; Дворниченко, Кривошеев, Соколов, Шапошник 2012: 109).

<sup>15</sup> While the obituary of Andrey Bogolyubsky tries to focus on the gentleness, charity, and the temple building activity of the prince (ПСРЛ. Т. 1: стб. 367-369), the personality of this ruler was still rather despotic. The exiling of siblings, authorization of bloody trials and executions headed by bishop Theodore, two fierce campaigns against Kiev and Novgorod, looting of churches and monasteries in Kiev, executions of people in his entourage, as was the case with one of the Kuchko boyars kind sons

A bishopric monastery in Smolensk is reported in the Life of the Reverend Abraham. Judging by the history of foundation of this monastery and by the circumstances of appointment of its first hegumen, who was Abraham, it was not an eparchial, but a bishopric monastery. It is noteworthy that the main temple of the monastery was dedicated to the patron saint of Smolensk hierarch (ЖАС 2005: 52-55).

Equally interesting is the situation in Novgorod. It is here, with the variety and completeness of sources, that we can observe the polyphony of canonical norms and cultural ties. The riches of the city and its elite created in this major political center a kind of competition of not only political, but also church and canonical ideas. One result of such a course of life was the emergence of a large number of various monasteries on the banks of the Volkhov.

There were also bishopric monasteries here. These included the monasteries founded by the future Novgorod eparchs Arkady (1153) and Martiry (1192) (ПСРЛ. Т. 3: 215, 231). Apparently, the cloisters changed their status together with the status of their donors. However, there are no grounds to assert that after the death of Arkady and Martiry the monasteries remained in charge of the cathedra. Most likely, the monastic communities and their households founded by the renowned eparchs continued to maintain their partial autonomy in the future. It is seen especially clearly by the example of the Arkady monastery.

The situation with the so-called “eparchial” monasteries is more difficult. It is obvious that under bishop Niphont, during the first years of his see, the cathedra finally succeeded to make the Novgorodians recognize its right of initiation hegumens in monasteries, which previously had enjoyed autonomy. The first such monastery was that of St. Anthony (1131). Its founder was or-

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of – these are all on the prince of Vladimir’s conscience. The fact that at the critical moment, his closest servant, virtually his entire squad, and all his entourage turned away from him also counts against Andrey (the historiography on this matter see in Krivosheyev (Кривошеев 2003: 64, 104, 201)).

daind to the priesthood and chirotonized to a hegumen, i.e. he became a “pope hegumen” (ПСРЛ. Т. 3: 207; СЖПАР 2005: 265-266). As this practice strengthened, Novgorod archbishops’ power soon spread to most of Novgorod monasteries. Actually, this was the factor that reduced some monastic orders to the level of “eparchial” monasteries. The first of these, probably, was the monastery of Anthony the Roman, that has already been mentioned. The complete resubmission of the monastery to the cathedra occurred probably after Anthony's death. Such course of events is evidenced by not only the prohibition to recognize the hegumen appointed by the bishop, attributed to him (if the candidacy of a new hegumen was not approved by the brethren), but by other circumstances as well (СЖПАР 2005: 269).

The Questions of Kirik, the monk and domestic of Anthony's monastery, includes extremely noteworthy issues regarding the organization of cloisterers’ life, including the tonsuring of the questioner himself (БК 1880: стб. 25-26, 29-30). Taking into account the fact that Kirik was the eparchial secretary chartulary (Гайденок, Фомина 2012: 83-92; Симонов 2015: 102-107), the problems taken by him to the episcopal court lead to the following preliminary conclusion. There is every reason to believe that by the end of Niphont’s ruling part of Novgorod monasteries recognized the bishop's authority and regulated their life with account of the eparch’s opinion. However, resubmission of the monasteries to cathedras can be traced in other centers as well. For example, the expansion of the bishop's influence on the life of the monks can be seen in the epistles of Cyril of Turov (ПК 2009: 41-52; СЧЧ 2009: 53-64) and permanent conflicts between the Caves monastery and the metropolitane. Finally, the grotesque unanimity of Smolensk hegumens in the court, mentioned in the Life of Abraham, who apparently condoned to the eparch (ЖАС 2005: 44, 45), also indicates that they were extremely dependent on the will of the holder of the local Smolensk cathedra.

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All the above allows us to conclude that as the Old Russian church organization strengthened, the bishops' rights over local monasteries extended. However, in Rus the canon law in monastic life regulation never achieved the same level of development of as it was in Byzantium. Nevertheless, the episcopal cathedras were able to not only extend their influence to the monasteries of their districts, but as early as in the second half of the 12<sup>th</sup> – early 13<sup>th</sup> c. they managed to form a network of strong and influential bishopric and "eparchial" monasteries that became agents of bishop authority in monastic environment.

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**Title:** About bishopric monasteries and eparchs' rights to Kievan Rus monasteries.

**Summary:** One of the most important institutions of Old Russian church organization and Old Russian state were the monasteries. Although the activity of monastic orders of Eastern Slavic society has repeatedly been the subject of special scientific historiographic research, many aspects of Old Russian monastic life have not yet been given proper consideration. Such areas may well include the questions of the relationship between monasticism and episcopacy, and the activity of the bishopric (episcopal) mansions.

The life of ancient monasteries did not only have special features, but also in many ways mirrored the situation in Byzantium. In the Empire of Romans (the Eastern Roman Empire), the contradictions between the episcopate and monasteries also existed. However, in Russia, the web of these internal ecclesiastic issues was more complicated since there was no elaborate domestic written law; the question of canonical norms body also loomed large. Under the current conditions of the broad powers of Old Russian monasticism autonomy, the episcopate had to take efforts to found their own monasteries.

The present paper attempts to identify a number of features in the principles of organization and activity of ancient Russian bishopric monasteries.

**Key words:** Kievan Rus; Old Russian church; canon law of Ancient Rus; Old Russian monasteries; episcopal (bishopric) monasteries of Ancient Rus; church and state relations of Ancient Rus; internal church relations in Ancient Rus.

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