

Once Again about the Iconography of Bulgarian Rulers  
Prince Boris (Knyaz Boris) and King Simeon (Tsar Simeon)  
—9th–10th Century

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**Emperor's triple function as King, Priest and Prophet**

AS is well known, Eusebius of Caesarea (III–IV century) was the scholar to lay the theological foundations of the doctrine of the Empire and the Christian Emperor, i.e. the idea of the 'divine monarchy' as a prerequisite of the unity of an empire. It was not by chance that he was also known as the first political theologian of Christianity (Farina, 1966, 257; 2003, 197–304). Cardinal notion of his political theology is that the empire and the Christian emperor are *εἰκόν* (image)—*mimesis* (imitation) of the Kingdom of the Father in Heaven and His Word, i.e. the Lord created the Empire on earth as the image of His Empire in heaven. In fact, in this context, the Church and the Empire cannot but be concurrent due to the fact that they are both the 'image' of the same divine Christian community. Together they form the Christian community, i.e. the Christian Empire which can have only one leader—the Christian Emperor. However, the reason that determines the priority of the power of the Emperor over the Church, rather than identify the church with the empire, is that the emperor is the Viceroy of the Lord, the Viceroy of the Word—Christ on earth, i.e. being the Viceroy of the Word of Christ, he is above the Church and, respectively, above the Empire as a whole. It is not by chance that the Christian Community on earth is represented as the Kingdom of God identical with the Empire and the City of God is identical with the Church. The Emperor exercises the aggregate powers due to his triple function of King, Priest and Prophet. And he is vested with these powers because he is the Viceroy of God, of the Word—Christ, being a king priest and a prophet. This close relation between the State and the Church (often defined as a symphony between the two powers) is most strongly manifest in the period when the two powers have the same objectives, what we observe in Bulgaria in the end of the 9th century and the beginning of the 10th century. A brilliant example of this unity of the objectives of the two powers is the Bulgarian Royal iconography regarding—Prince (Knyaz) Boris and Tsar Simeon.

## Images of Two Rulers in Russian Copies

The images of the two Bulgarian rulers are not among those most often found in the manuscripts which have reached our days and those relating to the ecclesiastical elite up to the 15th century are virtually non-existent, or we know nothing of them. Royal iconography in Ancient Bulgarian art, which is generally in direct relation to the Byzantine tradition (Grabar, 1936, 166–296; Guzelev, 1968), became widely spread in the period of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom (1185–1396). From this period come the most preserved portraits of Bulgarian kings famous—in the *Manasses Chronicle* of 1344/45 and the *London Gospel* of 1356 (Velmans, 1968, 93–148). The case in point is the introductory miniature of King Ivan Alexander with the Chronicler Constantine Manasses and the portrait with his sons in the end of the *Chronicle*, as well as the miniature of the royal family in the *London Gospel*. These miniatures have been the subject of scientific research and discussed at length for almost two centuries and they are also of a much later time than the period in which we try to study the cult of the sovereign as compared to the cult of the religious leader.

So, the earliest preserved portraits of Bulgarian, respectively Slavonic kings come from IX–X century. They are found only in the preserved to our days later Russian copies (XI–XII century) produced after the model of Bulgarian manuscripts. The word goes about the image of Knyaz Boris-Michaïl in the so called *Didactic Gospel* (*Homiliary*) (Moscow, GIM, Syn. 262) and of Tsar Simeon in the *Miscellany of Hippolytus* (Moscow, GIM, Chudov. 12) (Ivanova-Mavrodinova, 1968, 80–120; idem, 1976, 111–114; Popova, 1975, 28, ill. 9).

In the so called *Didactic Gospel* of XI–XII century (Syn. 262) according to the latest dating of its production (Uhanova, 2009, 117–156) Knyaz Boris is portrayed in full length and in a frontal pose against a gold background in a semicircular decorated arch supported via two columns. In his right hand he has a cross and his left hand is on his chest with open palm addressed to the public. He wears a crown on his head with a nimbus around it. The tunic and the cloak are of interwoven with gold brocade, trimmed with pearls. The crown is of the type worn at the time by Byzantine kings, i.e. the so-called ‘stemma’ with soft bottom and a precious stone in the middle. The cloak is purple. On both sides of his head we can read ‘St. Boris.’ The miniature is published in a *Miscellany* remarkable for the exquisitely simple graphic illumination—the initials are of double contour and tinted in purple colour. There is no headpiece on leaf 2 of the manuscript and it does not contain other



**Fig. 1** Miniature of Knyaz Boris in the so called Didactic Gospel (Homiliary)

miniatures, which is an argument in favour of the theory that the miniatures of the Bulgarian sovereign come from the Old Bulgarian model to be inserted in the Russian Miscellany produced later. Its iconography is related to his greatest merit, which is the conversion of the Bulgarian people, i.e. he ruled in the period when Bulgaria became a part of the great Christian family of Europe.

In the Miscellany of Hippolytus (Chud. 12) the miniature of Tsar Simeon has been badly damaged. The son of Knyaz Boris, Tsar Simeon, is portrayed in a bi-level conical arch in full length and in frontal pose with a model of a single dome church of gold in his left hand. The cloak, the shoes and the crown are of red colour and the nimbus is of gold. The face is beardless. According to the opinion of a number of researchers (e.g. see Ivanova-Mavrodinova, 1976, 114) this is the model of the Round Church (the so-called Golden Church)—one of the emblematic buildings in the capital city of the First Bulgarian Kingdom—Preslav donated by Tsar Simeon. The decorative design of the Tsar Simeon's garment resembles the white-clay tiles of the floor and wall ornamentation preserved in Preslav (which is one of the arguments



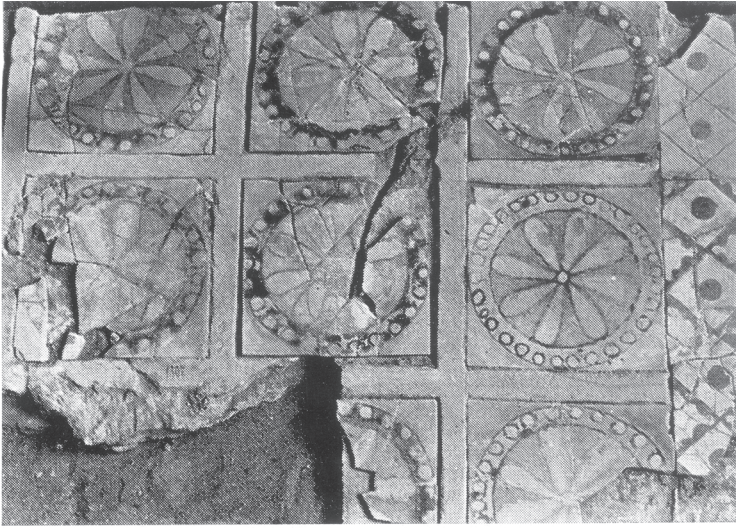
**Fig. 2** The miniature of Tsar Simeon in the Miscellany of Hippolytus and graphic restoration

supporting the theory that the miniature portrays Tsar Simeon), as well as similar motifs observed in the garments of Byzantine Emperors, very much like oriental fabrics (Ivanova-Mavrodinova, 1976, 111).

### **Golden Age of Bulgarian Culture under Boris and Simeon**

What are the two Bulgarian monarchs famous for, as it is in their time and through their efforts that the first model of the Slavonic Christian state was created and the relation ‘religious-secular power’ codified inspired by the relations between the sovereign and the church leader of the Byzantine Empire?

Khan and Knyaz Boris (unknown–May 2, 907) ruled over the Bulgarian State from 852 to 889. In his time the Bulgarian people were converted to Christianity (864) and the Bulgarian Independent (Autocephalic) Church was established, the Ancient Bulgarian language and alphabet were adopted in religious services, and the first Slavonic Bulgarian literary centers were set-up (KME, A–3, I, 1985, 222–233). This was also the time of intensive construction of Christian churches. For instance, in a Bulgarian apocryphal chronicle of IX century we read: “Boris has engirdled the entire territory of Bulgaria under his rule with seven cathedral churches.” This was also the King to receive in his



**Fig. 3** Flooring from the Tuzlalaka Monastery in Preslav

capital city the disciples of Cyril and Methodius—Clement, Naum and Angelarii—after their unsuccessful attempt at conversion of the Slavonic population and banishment from Great Moravia (after 885) which marked the beginning of their cultural mission in Bulgaria thus salvaging the Slavonic alphabet created by Cyril and Methodius. Another group of disciples of Cyril and Methodius and a number of clergymen, led by Constantine of Preslav, arrived in Pliska (the first capital of the First Bulgarian State) via Constantinople. The rule of Knyaz Boris was also remarkable for the creation of two literary centers: in the area of Kutmichevitsa with center Ohrid in Southeastern Bulgaria and in the capital city of Pliska. In the course of seven years Clement trained successfully 3500 students and launched intensive enlightening initiatives. Relying on the strong support of Knyaz Boris, he built the St. Panteleimon Monastery and one more church which was later turned into archbishop's residence. It is also known that in Pliska, and later in Preslav, the activities of Naum and his disciples, as well as of the disciples of Clement, who became the first bishop in Bulgarian language (893) laid the foundations of the Golden Age of Bulgarian literature. In 889 Boris abdicated the throne and retired into the monastery close to the great basilica. Then his son Vladimir Rasate came to the throne and he made an attempt at reinstatement of paganism. This necessitated the restoration of Knyaz Boris to the throne in 893 and it resulted in the complete establishment of Christianity in Bulgaria as the religion of the

state. In the same year, at the Preslav Synod (Convention), attended by representatives of the secular aristocracy, the high clergy and the people, his son Simeon, who renounced the monastic vows he had been dedicated to and had been preparing for ever since his studies in Constantinople, was proclaimed Knyaz of all Bulgarians. Then the capital city was moved to Great Preslav and Knyaz Boris retired to the monastery again.

Tsar Simeon (appr. 863–864—27.05.927) was Knyaz of the Bulgarians from 893 to 913, and Tsar of the Bulgarians from 913 to 927 (KME, II–C, III, 2003, 591–600). According to Bishop Liutprand of Cremona, at a very early age Simeon studied “the art of rhetoric and the syllogisms of Aristotle in Constantinople.” He is supposed to have studied at the School of Magnaura where, in the second half of the 9th century Arethas of Caesarea had started his work and future Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenetos had been educated. This is the environment where the Macedonian Renaissance and encyclopedic education originate from. It is again from Liutprand that we learn that Simeon gave up his studies later and dedicated himself, as people say, to his monastic asceticism. This information is accepted to be evidence of the intention of Knyaz Boris to entrust Simeon with the spiritual life of the country (Bojilov, 1983, 36). That is to say that we observe conscious and well grounded policies of the royal family to gain control over both the secular and the spiritual power via development of the relevant human resources—in this case Simeon, son of the Knyaz.

As is well known, however, the monastic seclusion of Simeon was short lived. It is supposed that with the arrival of the disciples of Cyril and Methodius after 885 he took active part in their literary activities and moving the capital city from Pliska to Preslav is associated with his aspiration that it should become for the Bulgarians what Constantinople was for the Byzantines. In this way a circle of highly educated persons was formed around young Simeon, including scholars and authors like Clement and Naum of Ohrid, Constantine of Preslav, John the Exarch, Chernorizets Hrabar, Presbyter Grigorii, Tudor Doxov.

And it was only too natural having in mind the high education Simeon had received in Constantinople and his strive to imitate the elitist culture created in the Byzantine capital at the time. For instance, Old Bulgarian literature reveals evidence of the unique potential not just of the translators, but of the authors of original texts as well.

The ambitions of Simeon, materialized in the new Christian capital city of Preslav which he paralleled with the highest levels of the cultural paradigms of the time, i.e. with Constantinople and Jerusalem, devel-

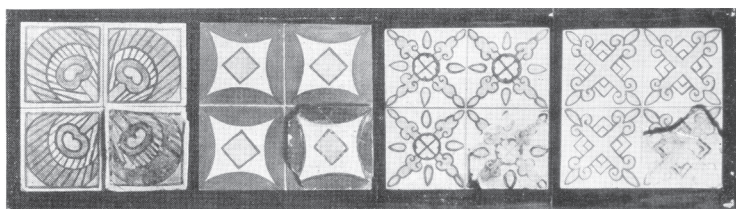
oped an exquisite phenomenon called ‘Golden Age’ by earlier researchers. Texts were translated for the needs of the sovereign and the court elite which were of quality tantamount to the best Byzantine specimen (Džurova, Velinova, 2011, 83–105).

The high level of the works translated in this period is an evidence of the excellent knowledge of Greek language and the theological literature on the part of the first generation of Old Bulgarian literary men and not all works they were familiar with were obligatorily translated into Bulgaria. The intensity of the literary process in Preslav was amazing, because in the course of only several decades the main genres of Byzantine liturgical and theological literature were translated and they lastingly added didactic-catechetical aspect to the Slavonic literature as a whole.

Evidence of this are not only the liturgical texts, but also major theological encyclopedias, such as the *Hexameron*, historiographical works, works of the Church fathers, rhetorical and hagiographical literature, works of monks (the Ladder of Divine Ascent, Sermon of Abba Dorotheus, Patericon, Parenesis of Ephrem the Syrian, etc.). The design of the Cyrillic manuscripts from the former king’s library, known only by their Russian copies, corroborates the theory that the high Constantinople standards of decoration and miniature production were followed, rather than the provincial specimen typical of the Glagolitic codices. The manuscripts which were translated and illuminated for the needs of the court, e.g. the Ostromir Gospel (1056–1057) and the Mstislav Gospel (1113–1117), the Lectionary of Svetoslav (Simeon) of 1073 are parallel to the best works of manuscript decoration produced in the Byzantine capital city in the end of IX and X century, especially to those decorated in coloured Byzantine style (Džurova, 2002).

The intensive temple construction in Preslav of basilica and cross-vault churches was crowned by the so-called Round Church built at a distance of 10m from the palace of the Tsar. It is a rotunda with a rectangular narthex and a square atrium decorated with rich plastic and ceramic elements, the resemblance of which with the church structures in Constantinople is indisputable and they have been subject of numerous studies. The ceramics decorating the floors and the walls of the churches and the residential buildings impress with the rich ornamental repertory, compared not only to manuscript decoration, but also to the decoration of enamel items, fabrics and church plate (Akrabova-Jandova, 1976, 62–80; Totev, 1988).

This uplift, unprecedented in the ages to come according to genre opulence and illumination of the Slavonic manuscripts translated from



**Fig. 4** The ceramic iconostasis from Preslav

Greek, was most naturally the result of the role played by the two Bulgarian sovereigns, i.e. Knyaz Boris and Tsar Simeon who designed and established the first model of the Christian Bulgarian, respectively Slavonic, state. And it is for this that this period is indicative of the fact that when the interests of the two powers, i.e. state and religious, concur, royal iconography is developed.

### **Cross & Model of Church in their Hands**

In the so called Didactic Gospel (Homiliary) Knyaz Boris is depicted with the attributes of Christianity—the cross, on a background framed by an arch crowned with a cross. The decoration of the columns literally copies the capital of the preserved ceramic iconostasis of X century in Preslav. The same is also valid about the design used for the columns and the frieze of the arch above Knyaz Boris and the arches of the already mentioned ceramic iconostasis (Bulgaria in the Byzantine World, 2011, 20, ill. 48). A perfect example of this similarity is the specified already resemblance between the ornamentation on Tsar Simeon's dalmatic in the Miscellany of Hippolytus, especially the likeness of the rosettes with the flooring from Preslav. It is not by chance that the Tsar is depicted, following the pattern of Byzantine iconography, with the model of a church in his hand, i.e. the Golden Church, commissioned by him.

We find evidence of the unity of the policies of the two monarchs, i.e. the fact that Knyaz Boris was perceived as an enlightened prince and his activities aimed at consolidation of the Christian faith were continued by his son Simeon, in the *following note* by Monk Tudor Doxov: “These pious books, called Athanasii, were translated into Slavonic language from Greek on the orders of our Knyaz Simeon by the Bishop Constantine, disciple of Methodius, Archbishop of Moravia in the year 6414 (= 906) indiction 10 since the creation of the world. On the commission of the same Knyaz they were copied by Tudor Doxov at the





**Fig. 5** Facing ceramic tiles from Preslav

mouth of the River Ticha in the year 6415 (= 907), where he had built the new Holy Golden Church. In the same year on May 2, Saturday evening the father of the Knyaz, this humble servant of God who had lived with the true faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, passed away...”

The attempts of recent years to associate the portraits of the Bulgarian monarchs in the so called Didactic Gospel (Homiliary) and the Miscellany of Hippolytus with the images of Russian princes Boris and Gleb (Uhanova, 2009, 117–156) are not in line not only with the existing until now opinion and arguments stated by specialists in the field (Filimonov, 1875, 51–53; Svirin, 1950, 20, 24; Lazarev, 1953, 476–478; Šcepkina, Protasieva, 1958, 15; Golyšenko, 1959, 394, 407, 412–415; Ivanova-Mavrodinova, 1968, 108–110; Vzdornov, 1980, 16–17; Džurova, 1981, 26; Guzelev, 1985, 228; Protasieva, 1980, 10; Popova, 1983, 23; Maslenicyn, 1998, 92–93; Gorskij-Nevostruev, 1859, 409; Sreznevskij, 1867, 47–48), but also with the fact that the texts, where these miniatures have been preserved, are themselves indisputable evidence of Old Bulgarian practices and models. In this connection it is significant to study in what books these miniatures were portrayed?

The so called Didactic Gospel (Homiliary) (Syn. 262) is a collection containing Sunday lectures (sermons). The manuscript was compiled in the end of IX century by Constantine of Preslav, disciple of Methodius. The second manuscript, the so-called Miscellany of Hippolytus (Chudov 12), contains Sermons of Bishop Hippolytus “On Christ and the Antichrist” and “Commentary on the prophet Daniel” (Ivanova-Mavrodinova, 1976, 116, 117), i.e. the miniatures of the Bulgarian kings could not be related to the texts they were incorporated in. Their presence there could only be explained with the persons who had commissioned the publication, i.e. Knyaz Boris of Bulgaria and Tsar Simeon of Bulgaria and, later, by the Kiev Princes in XI–XII century

(Uhanova, 2009, 135–136).

According to the earliest description of the miniature, provided by Filimonov, it becomes clear that the background, on which Tsar Simeon is portrayed, was blue and the church model was golden, i.e. this description is in line with the quotation above, which mentions that Simeon had built the ‘new golden church’ at the mouth of the River Ticha in Preslav. An Old Bulgarian writer, John the Exarch, contemporary of Simeon, also offers information about an image of Simeon, portrayed in colour on a wall, which is supposed to be his portrait in the Golden Church, where blue and green dices of mosaic flooring have been found—the colours are also observed in the mosaic flooring of the churches in Preslav (Ivanova-Mavrodinova, 1976, 118–119).

If we remember the preserved to this day originals and Russian copies of the mentioned already Old Bulgarian manuscripts of the First Bulgarian Kingdom, it becomes clear that these two manuscripts with the portraits of the monarchs compose together a unique “Christian philosophical collection” which conforms with the eruditeness of the alumnus of the School of Magnaura—Tsar Simeon, who strived to create, most probably at his personal choice, a rich body of Christian literature for the needs of his court. It is a different matter that this model in a period of Proselytism did not meet the daily liturgical needs, which required to create a pragmatic liturgical body of works at a lower level to cater for the needs of daily church services (Džurova-Velinova, 2011, 83–105).

The portrayed images of the Bulgarian monarchs are in line with the high standard of performance of the rest of the miniatures of the period, such as the images in frontal pose from the Svetoslav Gospel Lectionary of 1073 and the lavish illumination in colourful Byzantine style of the Ostromir and Mstislav Gospel of XI–XII century.

What do the attributes in the hands of the Bulgarian monarch symbolize? The church in the left hand of Simeon in the Miscellany of Hippolytus illustrates what was a practice when depicting Byzantine emperors, i.e. the act of founding and commissioning the building of a church, in this case the Round Church, and the cross in the right hand of Tsar Boris is not just a symbol of martyrdom, but also a proof that he was the enlightener-knyaz, the one who had integrated his people with the great Christian family as well as a symbol of the victory of the monarch.

The nimbus crowning both Bulgarian kings is not a rare technique of the Byzantine, respectively the Slavonic, iconography. It had been used ever since the time of Emperor Constantine the Great, i.e. since IV

century and it is observed not only with saints, but also with members of the royal family when still alive. The use of nimbuses in this case also expresses the perception of their holiness.

To the arguments supporting that the images of the kings are precisely the portraits of the first Bulgarian Christian sovereigns—Knyaz Boris and Tsar Simeon, I would like to add also a not sufficiently known material from Greek manuscripts dated from the end of IX century—the beginning of X century. The rosettes of the dalmatic of Tsar Simeon in the Miscellany of Hippolytus (Chudov 12) are also found in the ceramic ornaments of Preslav. As early as 50 years ago (1945), archeological finds were discovered of the flooring of a church in Preslav. The tiles found there were of the octofoliolate type framed via a circle and they are identical with the motifs adorning the tunic of Tsar Simeon.

Similar designs are not rare in some Greek manuscripts of X century, i.e. of the time when the Old Bulgarian works were produced: Bodl. Barocci 181 (f. 4), first half of X century; Bodl. Auct. T. 3. 2., middle of X century, (f. 2) (Hutter, 1982, ill. 10–11); GIM, Synod. Gr. 134 (Vlad. 164) (ff. 2, 108v), end of X century (Fonkič, Poljakov, 1993, 64); Add. 11300 (f. 84) and Laur. Plut. IV. 29 (f. 122v); Paris gr. 139 (Weitzmann, 1996, 38, 43, X, 47); Korçë 92 middle of X century—the headpiece on leaf 130 of the Gospel of Mark (Džurova, 2011, ill. 81) and Cod. Ath. Gr. 210, first half of X Century (Chatzinicolaou-Paschou, 1997, fig. 52).

The rosettes of almond-tree leaves are also observed in a number of Greek manuscripts of X century, for instance again the Four Gospels of Korcha 92 (f. 210) in the headpiece to the Gospel of Luke, as well as in the ceramics of Preslav (Džurova, 2011, I, 99–111; II, ill. 83; Mavrodinov, 1959, fig. 294–296; idem, 1976, ill. 137, 140).

The cinnabar ornament on golden background of the dalmatic of Knyaz Boris (Synod.262) in the so called Didactic Gospel (Homiliary) resembles the ornament type and the style characteristics of the manuscripts performed in the so-called ‘lace’ style, or Laubsägestil, which emerged in X century and which was relatively short lived compared to the colourful (floral) style emblematic of Byzantine, which was also formed in X century, but had a longer life. In fact, what has to be emphasized here, is the fact that we have not come across proper Laubsägestil yet in any of the Slavonic manuscripts known to us in the way we know it from the Greek manuscripts of X century. However, the fact that it is observed in the dalmatic of Knyaz Boris most probably means that a series of loops in the chain of the illuminated earliest Slavonic books—the Old Bulgarian manuscripts—have been irretrievably lost.

And the fact that it is found in the garment of Knyaz Boris imitating the portraits of Byzantine emperors of X–XI century (see Cod. Ath. Gr. 413 and Coislin 79 of 1080 r. f., where Emperor Nikephoros III Botaneiates was portrayed with John Chrysostom and Archangel Michael on 2v) is evidence of the practices to follow the Byzantine models of the day, which were available in the court of the Bulgarian monarchs (Chatzinicolaou-Paschou, 1997, fig. 88, 391; Lazarev, 1986, ill. 237–238).

The ornament, filling in the columns and the arch where the figure of the king is positioned is used in Greek manuscripts in the end of IX century and the first decades of X century, for instance in the Four Gospels of Korcha 93 and of Messina, F. V. 18 (Džurova, 2011, I, 99–111; II, 123–131; Iacobini-Perria, 1998). The same is also valid of dotting the contours of the garment, the nimbus, and the arches. This is one of the favourite motifs of the end of IX and of X century.

### **Era of the idea of “Divine State”**

Thus in the end of IX century and the first decades of X century, when the model of the Christian state was formed in Bulgaria, the efforts of the first rulers, i.e. Prince Boris and Tsar Simeon, were aimed at the development of a highly educated state and clerical elite similar to the elite of Constantinople. The series of preserved original Ancient Bulgarian manuscripts, or the manuscripts that existed and now we restore on the grounds of Russian copies of XI–XII century, attest to a conscientiously translated into Ancient Bulgarian philosophical and dogmatic complex, which, in addition to liturgical books, also included eschatological and interpretative works, liturgical and dogmatic rules, as well as works containing annalistic information. This is a collection of literary works, which testifies to a highly educated monarch and well-read monks. This was the time when the objectives of the sovereign of the state and of the head of the church were focused on the creation and the establishment of the Christian identity of a newly converted nation and this required the production of manuscripts for daily liturgical needs, as well as manuscripts to meet the needs of high-ranking state officials and servants of God, who created the first written model of Slavonic culture following the Byzantine tradition and this model would become a paradigm to be followed by the rest of the Slavonic people.

Unfortunately, this synchronization of the policies of the state and the clergy could hardly be repeated in the ages to come due to a number of historic events, such as the Byzantine Rule (1018–1185), the crusades;

the rule of the Latin Empire (1204–1261); and later of the Turkish Empire (1393–1878). These circumstances modified the relations between the state and the church due to dynamic priorities: by the end of XIV century—of the state, and after XIV century—of the church which, due to the absence of a state system, had to play the role of ‘guardian of the national identity and faith’ in the course of five centuries. But in these early days of formation of the Christian model of state the common objectives also predetermined the synchronization, the symphony between the two powers at least in the first decades (in the end of IX and the first half of X century). For this reason the sovereign was portrayed both as an enlightener with a cross in his right hand as the commissioner of churches and with a nimbus, i.e. as a divine man in the way we find his image in the so called Didactic Gospel (Homiliary) and the Miscellany of Hippolytus and which would serve as a model of portraying the sovereigns of other Slavonic states—in this case the iconography of St. Boris and Gleb.

The cultural and literary activities of Simeon were combined with political ambitions for the crown of a tsar and the scepter of a patriarch entirely according to the ideology of Byzantine emperors and the main principle of this ideology—*imperium and sacerdocium*, i.e. *imperium sine patriarcha non staret*—there is no kingdom without a patriarch. In 913 the enthronization of the first Bulgarian patriarch took place simultaneously with the enthronization of Knyaz Simeon as Tsar of the Bulgarians.

The reign of Tsar Simeon in the first decades of X century was marked by remarkable literary and cultural upsurge which contributed to the integration of the Slavonic world with the Byzantine civilization via adapting it to the Bulgarian context. It was not by chance that Tsar Simeon was portrayed as the founder of the Golden Church in the Miscellany of Hippolytus, prototype of which was the Golden Temple of Solomon. He was depicted as a state and religious leader of the newly converted Bulgarian people, as the Viceroy of God, of the Word—Christ, totally in the spirit of the Byzantine political theology, created as early as in III–IV century by Eusebius of Caesarea and Emperor Constantine the Great. And this is so, because in these decades of the history of the Bulgarian state in the end of IX century and the beginning of X century the idea of the divine state prevails over everything else. And the two preserved miniatures of Knyaz Boris and Tsar Simeon are an explicit illustration of this fact.

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