

mark of Byzantine architecture. The triumph of Hagia Sophia is apparent even today, 1,400 years after its dedication. It dominates the skyline of modern Istanbul, a visual link between the Byzantine Empire and the 20th century.

In decorative art, the Byzantines are best known for their use of **mosaics**—small bits of colored glass or stone formed into pictures. When particles of gold were set into the mosaic, the whole picture sparkled with light. Another trick was to set the tiles at slightly uneven angles. The scene then appeared to ripple in a wave movement as the viewer passed. Mosaics were usually placed on the walls and ceilings of churches and homes, either displaying designs of religious importance, or simply decorative scenes of daily life. Wall paintings and icons added richness to building interiors.

Icons are mosaics or paintings of holy people, usually of Jesus, but also of Mary and other saints. Icons are considered sacred by Orthodox Christians, who treat them with great reverence. Copies of famous icons are often seen in Orthodox homes, but modern artists rarely attempt to produce original icons since their creation is governed by extremely precise rules.

Secular or worldly art was also created on a dazzling scale for royal palaces. Along with mosaics were polished marbles, inlaid bronzes, rich fabrics, gold and silver dishes, and jeweled ornaments—all representative of the Byzantine genius.

Section 2 Review

Identify bureaucracy, Cyrillic alphabet, mosaics, icons

Main Ideas

1. How did the relationship between the emperor, and the Church, the army, and the bureaucracy help the Byzantine Empire succeed?
2. What made the Byzantine Empire prosperous?
3. How did monasteries preserve classical learning?
4. Name three outstanding kinds of Byzantine architecture and art.

Critical Thinking

Identifying Assumptions: Historians say that Greek monks risked their lives to bring silkworm eggs from China to Byzantium to establish a Byzantine silk industry. With this information, what assumptions can you make about monks and the silk industry?

3

Kiev became the first Russian state.

The original homeland of the **Slavs** is unknown, but they were probably one of many peoples who migrated from Central Asia long before the Christian era. By the early 700s, the eastern Slavs had settled between the Baltic and Black seas, farming, hunting, fishing, and trading. The Slavs did not have central government but were organized into city-states ruled by wealthy merchants.

The first Russian state was founded on the Dnieper.

The Viking raiders of the coasts and inland waterways of Europe in the 800s also reached Slavic lands. (See Chapter 11.) According to tradition, in 862 a Viking chief named Rurik, probably a Danish feudal lord, became ruler of Novgorod [nôv'gə-rot'], an important city in northwest Russia.

One of Rurik's chieftains, Oleg, captured **Kiev** [kē'ef], a city on the Dnieper River. When Oleg took another city, Smolensk, he formed the first Russian state, making Kiev its capital. The Vikings and Slavs intermarried, merging their two cultures into one civilization later known as Russian.

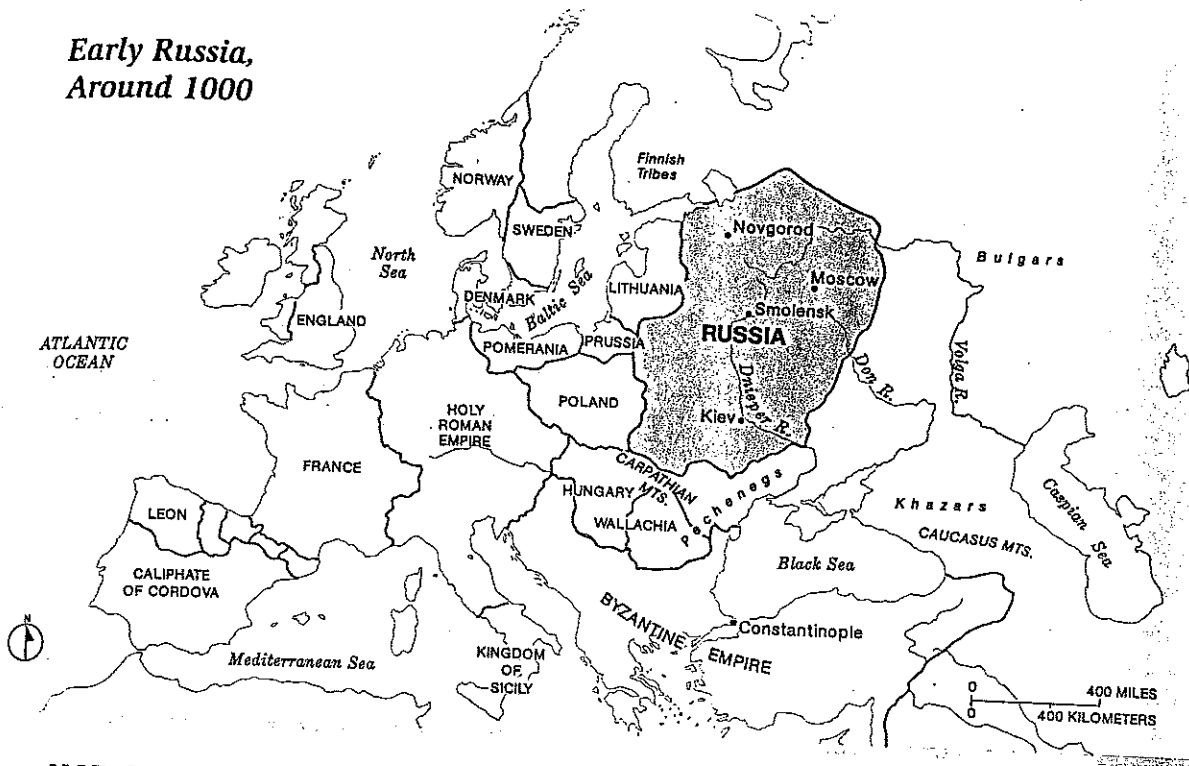
Over the next century, the Grand Princes of Kiev crushed their enemies, the Khazars in the south and the Bulgars to the east. By the 10th century, Kievan Russia had the strongest ruler in eastern Europe, though it remained a loose confederation of city-states. Its site on the Dnieper River made it a major stop on the trade route with the Byzantines.

Russia adopted Byzantium's Orthodox Christianity.

In the mid-10th century, Byzantine missionaries converted to Christianity Olga, Grand Princess of Kiev and the first female ruler in Russia. Olga did not try to convert the rest of Russia herself, leaving that to her grandson Vladimir [vlad'i-mir]. Before deciding which faith to choose, however, Vladimir sent out teams to observe the Muslim Bulgarians, the Catholic Germans, and the Orthodox Byzantines. On their return they reported:

We journeyed among the Bulgarians . . . there is no happiness among them, but instead only sor-

Early Russia, Around 1000



MAP STUDY

The Russian state shown here was conquered by the Mongols in 1240. River travel was important in early Russia. Its capital, Kiev, was located on which river? Why did the Russians want to control the land of the Pechenegs?

row and a dreadful stench. . . . Then we went among the Germans . . . but we beheld no glory there. Then we went on to Greece . . . to the buildings where they worship their God, and we knew not whether we were in heaven or on earth. For on earth there is no such splendor or such beauty.

Vladimir officially adopted the Orthodox faith for all his people, although it was several hundred years before Christianity was accepted by most of the Russians.

The adoption of Orthodox Christianity was the single most important event in Russia's early history. Through the Church, Byzantine culture influenced the literature, art, laws, and customs of Kievan Russia and helped unify the people in a common faith. By accepting Orthodox Christianity, however, Russia was not, by definition, part of the Roman Catholic Church. This choice started Russia toward eventual isolation from the Latin civilization of western Europe.

Yaroslav established Russia as a European power.

Kievan Russia reached the height of its power during the rule of Vladimir's grandson, **Yaroslav** [yuru slaf'] the Wise, who reigned from 1019 to 1054. During his long reign, Kiev became the religious and cultural center of Russia, as well as one of the wealthiest and most civilized cities in all of Europe. The reigning kings of Hungary, Poland, and France welcomed Yaroslav's daughters as queens, and his son claimed a Byzantine princess as his wife. Yaroslav founded schools and libraries to support scholars and artists, and he issued the first Russian code of laws. With the help of Byzantine architects, he had a copy of the cathedral of Hagia Sophia built in Kiev. The Byzantine patriarch then sent a bishop to head the Kievan Church.

Yaroslav extended his domain by defeating his Slavic neighbors to the north and west. When he had subdued the Pechenegs, a Turkic people living along the Black Sea, Kiev was able to control its



The Virgin of Vladimir is Russia's most revered icon. It was probably painted in the 12th century.

water access to Constantinople, safeguarding this vital trade route.

Because of his accomplishments, Yaroslav is known as the New Charlemagne and, like his Frankish counterpart, was a beloved ruler. Like the empire of Charlemagne also, the Kievan state declined after the death of Yaroslav as Russian unity disintegrated into civil war among his heirs.

Kievan Russia revived briefly in the 1100s. It then subsided again into a fragmented shadow of its former glory, prey to the marauding armies of yet another Central Asian invader, the Mongols.

Section 3 Review

Identify Slavs, Kiev, Yaroslav

Main Ideas

1. Briefly describe the origins of the first Russian state.
2. By adopting Orthodox Christianity, what barrier did Russia create?
3. How did Yaroslav make Russia a successful European power?

Critical Thinking

Evaluating Sources of Information: The Old Chronicle, kept by monks of a later era, says that the Slavs invited Rurik and his Vikings to rule Novgorod because the people there were quarreling among themselves. Why should one be suspicious of the truth of such an assertion?

4 Autocrats ruled Russia after the Mongols.

From the time of the Huns in the 5th century, periodic waves of invaders from Central Asia swept into Europe. The Russians held off these invasions, but in the 13th century a far more serious threat appeared. Led by **Genghis Khan** [jeng'gis kán'], Mongol invaders overran parts of China, Persia, and Russia. (See page 302, Geography—A Key to History.) In 1240 Genghis Khan's grandson, Batu, captured Kiev and other Russian states, forcing the Russians into subservience to Mongol overlords.

Mongol tribes ruled Russia for two centuries.

The **Mongols** were fierce horse riders who used terror as a weapon of war. Showing no mercy as they rampaged over the countryside, they massacred most of the men they found and took the women and children into slavery. Their savagery is graphically related in the Old Chronicle's description of Batu's capture of a city three years before he sacked Kiev:

They came to the Cathedral . . . and they cut to pieces the Great Princess Agrippina, her daughters-in-law, and other princesses. They burned to death the bishops and the priests and put the torch to the holy church. And they cut down many people, including women and children. Still others were drowned in the river. . . . And not one man remained alive in the city. All were dead. . . . And there was not even anyone to mourn the dead.

So widespread was the destruction and so large was the tribute the Mongols required that some historians believe the Mongols held back the development of Russia by 150 or 200 years. Tribute is the money, goods, and services a conquered people are required to pay their conquerors on a regular basis.

Cut off by the Mongols from trade with Constantinople, and with no other markets for their honey and furs, the Russians were devastated by the tribute payments. In addition the Mongols kept them in nearly complete isolation from western Christendom for 200 years.

The Mongols made very few positive contributions to Russian civilization. As Muslims in a Christian land, they were alien to the culture and this, together with their conviction that they were far superior to the rest of the world, kept them apart from the Russians. Although they did not interfere with the Orthodox Church, they did force the clergy to support their rule. The Mongols deserve credit for introducing a postal system and a census to Russia, but they added nothing to the culture of the Russians.

Russian princes recovered political and trade initiatives.

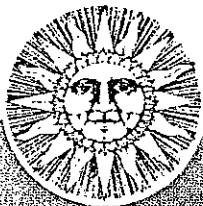
Russia's national hero during the early years of Mongol rule was Prince Alexander of Novgorod. Known as Alexander Nevsky for his defeat of a Swedish army on the Neva River in 1240, he also fought attacks in 1242 by the Teutonic Knights, a German group of crusaders. Nevsky never dared challenge the Mongols, however. From his capital at Vladimir, he led the Russians with Mongol permission. Daniel, Alexander Nevsky's youngest son, inherited the city-state of **Moscow**, hardly more than a few villages dominated by the Kremlin, a walled, wooden fortress. Daniel and his successors built up Moscow's strength and gained control of

the rivers, which improved their trade on the Volga River. Moscow became the new center of the Russian Church when the head of the Church moved there in 1328.

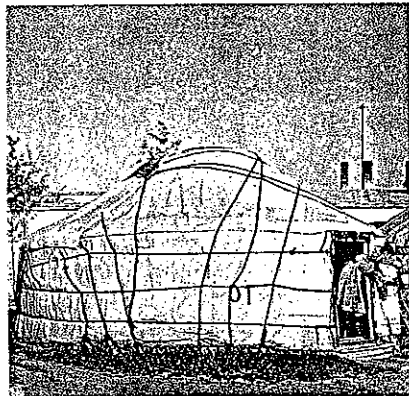
The princes of Moscow were obedient and reliable servants of the Mongols. As a reward they were given precedence over other Russian rulers, thus increasing their opportunities to strengthen their position. As Mongol power began to disintegrate in the late 1300s, Russian forces under Moscow's leadership attempted to overthrow Mongol rule. In retaliation, the Mongols sacked Moscow and once again forced the Russians to pay regular tribute. Not until the 15th century were the Mongols finally beaten, allowing Moscow to take over leadership of Russian lands.

Two Russian rulers established autocratic government.

The beginnings of a Russian nation can be traced to two harsh but able rulers, both named Ivan. The first was Ivan III, called **Ivan the Great**. The second was his grandson, Ivan IV, known as **Ivan the Terrible**. Both were ambitious and both took advantage of special conditions in Russia to increase their power. Unlike medieval Europe, for example, Russia had no parliament or Magna Carta to limit



DAILY LIFE



The Mongols who ruled Russia between 1240 and 1480 led a life of constant movement, always searching for fresh grazing grounds for their herds. Boys learned to ride ponies at age three, and women were expert riders as well. As they moved from place to place, the Mongols often carried their felt tents on large wagons drawn by many oxen (far left). The nomadic herders who inhabit Mongolia today live in similar tents called yurts (left).