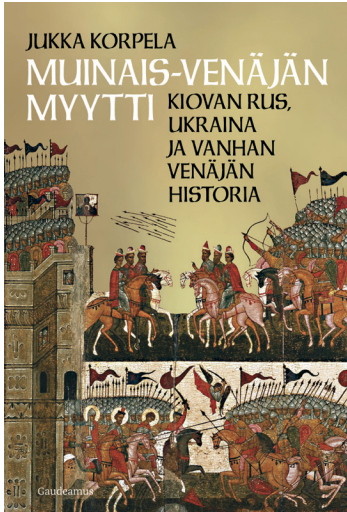


Jukka Korpela

The Myth of Ancient Russia

Rus of Kyiv, Ukraine and the History of Old Russia



Cover design: Pekka Krankka

A position of power must always be justified, and the most solid justification for power being exercised can be found in a lofty story. In Russia's official rhetoric, the winning narrative has been a vision of Ancient Russia extending in the west all the way to Poland, the Baltics and Finland. This interpretation is by no means an invention of Vladimir Putin and his contemporaries, but goes back centuries. It was this historical vision that in February 2022 supposedly justified the invasion of Ukraine.

In *The Myth of Ancient Russia*, award-winning historian Jukka Korpela tells the story of the development of Eastern Europe, from the Viking Age to the reign of Peter the Great, updating many outdated notions regarding Russia, Ukraine and how they took shape.

At the same time, Dr Korpela reveals when and for what purpose the concept of Moscow's Orthodox supremacy was built. Could Russia have ended up a Turkish-speaking Muslim country? Do one-thousand-year-old hagiographies and chronicles deny Ukraine of nationhood and the Ukrainians of their independence? Was there ever even such a thing as Ancient Russia?

About the author

JUKKA KORPELA, PhD, has been Professor of General History at the University of Eastern Finland since 1998, and has published a large international body of research on antiquity, the Middle Ages and Eastern Europe. His works include History Book of the Year winner *The Roots of Western Society* (Gaudeamus, 2015) and *Slaves from the North* (Brill, 2018).



Photo: Suvi Korpela

CONTENTS

- 1 INTRODUCTION: POWER AS JUSTIFIED BY HISTORICAL FAIRY TALES
 - 1.1 Concept of Millennial Russia
 - 1.2 Objective and Principles of this Work
 - 1.3 Longing for the Russian Land

- 2 WORLD OF THE DNEIPER AND ITS SURROUNDINGS IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES
 - 2.1 Problematic Perception of Nations and Background of the Word Rus
 - 2.2 Kingdom of the Rurik Clan Takes Shape in 9th and 10th Centuries
 - 2.3 Kyivan Rus, between East and West
 - 2.4 Yaroslav the Wise Takes Kiev towards the Christian West

- 3 FRAGMENTATION OF THE RURIKID EMPIRE IN THE 12TH CENTURY
 - 3.1 Problems of the Clan Kingdom Begin in Late 11th Century – Turkish Influence Grows
 - 3.2 Disintegration of Kyivan Rus: Eastern Centre to the Volga, Galicia Joins the West

- 4 ARRIVAL OF MONGOL RULE AND CULTURE IN EASTERN EUROPE
 - 4.1 Turkish Diversity and Islam in the Volga World
 - 4.2 Formation of the Mongol Medieval Empire and Golden Horde

- 5 BEGINNINGS OF UKRAINE AND RUSSIA IN THE LATE MIDDLE AGES
 - 5.1 West Separates from Eastern Europe and Begins to Convert the East
 - 5.2 Birth of Moscow
 - 5.3 Galicia, Novgorod and Lithuania: Formation of Ukraine

- 6 MOSCOW BECOMES THE NEW ROME OR UNIVERSAL CHRISTIAN POWER
 - 6.1 Kremlin Scholars Describe Moscow as Rome
 - 6.2 Story of Moscow as the Victorious Kingdom of Christ

- 7 NEW ISRAEL OR MOSCOW AS GOD’S CHOSEN PEOPLE
 - 7.1 Grand Duke of Moscow Becomes Roman Emperor in 15th–16th Centuries
 - 7.2 Perfect Holy Emperor – Ivan the Terrible
 - 7.3 Moscow Turns from Europe to the Caucasus and Central Asia

- 8 BYZANTINE RUSSIA EMERGES IN 17TH CENTURY
 - 8.1 Terrifying Period of Turmoil and the Romanovs
 - 8.2 Cossacks and Hetmanate: Who Rules on the Dnieper?
 - 8.3 Moscow Turns West after Mid-17th Century

- 9 PETER THE GREAT’S RUSSIA AND NEVA ROME

- 10 EPILOGUE: FROM CLAN EMPIRE TO EURO-FACED DESPOTIA

REFERENCES

SOURCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

INDEX

Gaudeamus 2023

Original title (Finnish): *Muinais-Venäjän myytti.*

Kiovan Rus, Ukraina ja vanhan Venäjän historia

Hardbound, 318 pages, illustrated (bw), ISBN 978-952-345-208-4

Foreign rights contact: Leena Kaakinen, publishing director

(leena.kaakinen@gaudeamus.fi, +35850 540 1303)

Address: Vuorikatu 6 A 13, 00100 Helsinki, Finland



Gaudeamus