

Against Isidore and the Latins

Anonymous Russian, *Slovo izbranno na latynju*, trans. from the Italian translation by A. Danti. In A. Pertusi, *La Caduta di Costantinopoli. II. L'Eco nel Mondo*. Milano: A. Mondadori 2003, p. 253. Dated 1461-1462, this account attacks Cardinal Isidore of Kiev, formerly an orthodox bishop, who visited Russia in 1440 and 1443 as apostolic legate to persuade the Russian church to enter into union with Rome.

....But you, O Isidore, deceiver and apostate, how long shall you hate and persecute the Holy Church that shines with piety in the land of Rus'? How long shall you prove an obstacle to the grace of the Holy Spirit by introducing into the Holy Church of Russian Orthodoxy the unleavened bread¹ that is offered by the Latins? You have done things hated and abhorred by God, you have loved gold, you have destroyed your faith, you have deceived the emperor, you have provoked the patriarch, you have filled the imperial city with ruin, and after having ruined the souls of some of the Orthodox, you have gone far from God. Therefore, O accursed Isidore, see now how because of your deception and violation of divine law—which had brought the Greek people the piety of the true faith—even the imperial city falls to ruin because of the union with the Latin heresy, and thanks to punishment towards you, which God has permitted through the invasion of the pagans, a tremendous number of Agarenes (Turks), men without God, has attacked and killed the orthodox people.

¹ In contrast to the orthodox churches, which use leavened bread, the Latin Church used unleavened bread or “azymes”, in the celebration of the Eucharist. This difference had been a central feature of tensions between the Latin and Greek churches since the early Middle Ages.