

## OHRID LITERARY SCHOOL

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**Abstract:** The traditional universal values of St. Clement arise from the spiritual energy of St. Clement of Ohrid and his school, through which he guided his students to progress in knowledge and charity, through the power of life's tirelessness to strive for constant learning and awareness. Saint Clement's values are the foundations upon which modern civilizational achievements are based in the space and time we live in. The creation of the Ohrid Literary School played a major role in establishing Slavic literacy among the people of Macedonia and beyond. He also laid the foundations of the first Slavic church in Macedonia as the first Slavic bishop. The work of the school enabled the formation of a clergy cadre, and a rich and extensive literary opus was created. The contribution of the Ohrid Literary School is significant in terms of ecclesiastical, educational, and political character. There is a close connection between the Ohrid School and the first Slavic alphabet - the Glagolitic alphabet. Without the Glagolitic alphabet, it was not possible to translate the holy books and various literary works into a language that the people understood. Before the creation of the Pan-Slavic alphabet, the only option was to write everything that needed to be written in Latin or Greek letters. The Ohrid Literary School, over time, grew into the first Slavic university with about 3500 students. The work of the Ohrid Literary School left a significant mark on the educational development of Europe. It was a large educational center, where lectures were in the Slavic language and religious texts were translated. Through the activities of the Ohrid Literary School, with great respect for the work of their teachers, Clement and Naum enlightened the people, testified about God and showed people the way to Him. They continued the tradition of their teachers. Classes were held in churches, where students learned to write independently, transcribe, and create works in which the order and customs of the church would first be described. At the same time, they tried to highlight the work of their teachers, the holy brothers Cyril and Methodius. Over time, they managed to establish groups within the school that directly focused on different areas: one in church activity and the other in literature. This type of educational institution was conceived back in the Moravian Mission, but unfortunately, at that time, such an idea was not possible to be realized. The foundations that were laid during that period significantly helped in the establishment, conception, and development of the Ohrid Literary School. As a result of all these activities, the Glagolitic script was used for more than two centuries.

The school contributed to building a strong and dedicated educational and clerical staff. The people gladly accepted the teachings of Saints Clement and Naum, strongly believed in them, and supported them.

The Ohrid Literary School contributed to the city of Ohrid becoming the center of Slavic culture. The Ohrid Literary School produced a large number of educators and clergy who transmitted their own knowledge to the population in all regions where the South Slavs lived. For the first time, the Ohrid Literary School published instructive and praiseworthy articles that were acceptable and understandable to the general public, on one hand, and enabled the author, St. Clement of Ohrid, to worthily express gratitude to his teachers, emphasizing the immense importance of their work for the Slavic people, on the other hand.

**Keywords:** St. Clement, St. Naum, Ohrid Literary School, enlightenment, religion;

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Writing about the Ohrid Literary School is indeed a serious challenge, given the historical context in which it was established, the circumstances in which it was created, and the various historical sources that describe its work. Analyzing the historical circumstances and the development of the Ohrid Literary School, the conclusion that this school was created by the most dedicated and tireless student of the brothers St. Cyril and Methodius, St. Clement of Ohrid, is unequivocal. Due to his dedication and engagement, St. Clement was deserved for the development of the Ohrid Literary School at the turn of the 9th and 10th centuries. Analyzing the manner of expression and transmission of knowledge, it can be concluded that St. Clement was wise and dedicated to the work of his teachers. There is no doubt that he was highly educated in Byzantine schools, and the fact that he was one of the closest collaborators of the brothers Cyril and Methodius was crucial for the development of Slavic literacy and culture. The spirit of the Ohrid Literary School was based on the words of love and respect that St. Clement of Ohrid wrote for his teachers, especially for St. Cyril, because he believed that he had done a good deed for the Slavic peoples, idealized his character by emphasizing his moral values, equating him with the level of a saint, an act that later actually happened. Because of these foundations on which the Ohrid Literary School was established, it had a central place in the medieval history of the Slavic peoples, especially as an inseparable part of the culture and tradition of the Macedonian people. The Ohrid Literary School had a strong moral credibility and capacity to

continue the work of the holy brothers Cyril and Methodius. Thus established, the Ohrid Literary School created successors who, after the death of Saints Clement and Naum, were able to continue their work and carefully pass it on from generation to generation.

## **2. HISTORICAL CIRCUMSTANCES THAT PRECEDED THE CREATION OF THE OHRID LITERARY SCHOOL**

The Byzantine state had to find a way to defend itself from the increasing pressure felt by the Bulgarian state. It was always difficult to respond militarily to the challenges that arose. They decided to devote themselves to the mass spread of Christianity among the Slavs, their baptism, and literacy. This sacred duty was entrusted to the sons of Leo: Constantine (Cyril) and Methodius. They came from an aristocratic family from Thessaloniki. Methodius was the older brother and, according to Byzantine customs, he studied in schools for children from the wealthier classes who were mainly prepared for military and administrative duties. Methodius was bright, wise, and strong, so he was recognized by the Thessaloniki authorities at a very young age. At the age of 20, he was appointed as a ruler of the Slavic principality. He was assigned military duties in the Thessaloniki region, following his father.

Cyril, on the other hand, was completely focused on science. He was especially interested in philosophy. He spoke Greek and Hebrew fluently.

In the first half of the 9th century, in the period from 850-855, Constantine was entrusted with an important mission in the area around the Bregalnica River. He immediately began to spread Christianity in those areas, and with the help of Methodius, who ruled the Slavic principality at that time, they created the first Slavic alphabet intended for the Slavs, which consisted of 38 letters. This enabled the translation of books into the Slavic language and a church service was also established.

After the completion of Methodius' mission, he left the Slavic principality, and he went to live in a monastery on Mount Olympus. There, he developed extensive research activities, improving the Slavic alphabet.

## **3. OHRID LITERARY SCHOOL**

Cyril and Methodius were succeeded by their most faithful students, Clement and Naum. They established the Ohrid Literary School, which significantly contributed to the development of literacy among the people of Macedonia and beyond.

Clement came from the Slavic principality of Methodius, i.e., from the Strumica region. He was born in the late 30s and early 40s of the ninth century. From a young age, he was educated by St. Cyril and St. Methodius. As their student, he was a direct witness to the creation of the Glagolitic script and participated in that process.

Saint Clement of Ohrid was a very important person in the history of the Slavic peoples. He was wise and had a strong desire to learn. Saint Clement of Ohrid spread Christianity by organizing intensive literary, educational, and church activities, by translating holy books and educating thousands of students. He was known for his kindness, faith, and dedication to helping others. Saint Clement of Ohrid is celebrated as a saint because of his work in education and the spread of the Christian faith.

Naum was of noble origin from the region the Moesia. He spent most of his church-educational activity in Ohrid.

The Moravian ruler Rostislav asked for help from Byzantium to send him scholars who would preach in the Slavic spirit in the churches and educate the people there. On the other hand, Byzantium needed to expand its political influence in Central Europe, which directly brought it into conflict with the German-Bulgarian alliance. Thus, the holy brothers Cyril and Methodius, together with their students Clement and Naum, began the Moravian mission. This mission contributed to the complete rejection of the Latin language in these areas, which was certainly not approved by either Germany or the Pope. After the death of Methodius, his teachings were immediately declared false and rejected. Under German influence and with the direct support of Pope Stephen, the new Moravian ruler expelled Methodius' students: Clement, Naum, and Angelarius. They fled to Belgrade, which was under Bulgarian rule at the time. Then, they were summoned to the palace of Tsar Boris. Clement, because he was of Macedonian origin, was assigned to help in Macedonia and was sent to the Kutmichevica area, which was located in the southwestern part of Macedonia and the southern part of Albania, around Lake Ohrid. There, Clement built the monastery of St. Panteleimon and devoted himself most strongly to educational activities, which practically started the Ohrid Literary School.

Through his activities, Clement pushed out Greek influence and the Greek alphabet. Clement was appointed as the first Macedonian bishop, an act that marked the formation of the church of the Macedonian Slavs.

In 900, after completing the assigned missions, Naum decided to completely withdraw to the monastery "St. Archangels" in Ohrid, where he became a monk. Until the end of his life, he was actively involved in Clement's administrative and educational activities.

They laid the foundations of Macedonian medieval literature. Their letters were written with church content in order to eliminate the Greek language from the liturgy. Significant works through which historical science studies their work are: "Word on the Holy Trinity", "Praise of Cyril the Philosopher", "Praise of Demetrius of Thessaloniki" and others.

First, on December 23, 910, Saint Naum of Ohrid died, and later, on July 27, 916, Saint Clement of Ohrid died.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Saints Clement and Naum of Ohrid played a key role in many aspects. The Ohrid Literary School had a significant contribution to the establishment of the Slavic alphabet, enabled the creation of a rich literary fund and created a large clergy with strong capacity and knowledge to continue the work of their teachers. In this way, the longevity of this process was enabled and the Glagolitic script extended its existence among the people for a period of a little more than two centuries. Thus, the Glagolitic script took a dominant position in the educational activity of those regions.

St. Clement was very modest. He created more than fifty books, but he signed as the author of fifteen, and he wanted the rest to be the product of the Ohrid Literary School.

The key features of the Ohrid Literary School were:

- Consistent respect and preservation of the work of St. Cyril and Methodius;
- Exclusive use of the Glagolitic script;
- It set up barriers in order to isolate the influence from the neighborhood that was intended to harm the people who increasingly believed in the correctness of its actions;

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