



Letters in the Cyrillic alphabet , note the E is in the latin format.

Л

The traditional cyrilic letter L



Lavinsky signature

Glagolitic alphabet and the 13th century letter E. see Babichev signature below

†	Ɔ	Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ	Э	Ɱ	Ɱ
a	b	v	g	d	ε	ž	dz
Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ
z	i	i	ǵ	k	l	m	n
Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ
o	p	r	s	t	u	f	x (kh)
Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ
o	ts	č	š	št	w/ə	i	y
Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ	Ɱ
æ/e	yu	ž	yž	š	yš	f	i/v



*T app 1

Many Slavic languages (Russian included) use what's called the Cyrillic alphabet. But before we talk about Cyrillic, we need to talk about what came before it: Glagolitic. Glagolitic was developed by two brothers, St. Cyril and St. Methodius (Cyrillic is named after St. Cyril), at the request of the Byzantine Empire. See, the Byzantine Emperor wanted to spread Christianity to the Slavic people but the Slavic languages didn't have a written alphabet. The Empire would be dependent upon either the Pope or the Franks to help with converting the Slavs, something he very much did not want. Cyril and Methodius were tasked to come up with a writing system so that religious texts could be written in Slavic languages. They took some letters from Greek, Hebrew, Coptic, and possible Armenian alphabets. Some of the letters are so weird their origins are still being debated. They made all the letters into a similar style and translated some Bibles.

A few decades later, at the end of 9th century, the First Bulgarian Empire made Christianity the state religion. They faced the same problem of writing Slavic sounds. For a while, they wrote Bulgarian using Greek letters. The Greek alphabet was all well and good, but Greek has fewer sounds than Slavic languages. So they took the Greek alphabet and added about 10 letters from the Glagolitic bibles they had.

English is written using the Roman, or Latin, script. The Latin alphabet also developed from the Greek alphabet. That's why some letters from Latin and Cyrillic look very similar (those are the Greek-derived letters) and others look "backwards" or very different (the Glagolitic-derived letters). The letter ⟨ѣ⟩ originated in the thirteenth century as a variant of ⟨е⟩, at first, according to Đorđić[1] in superscripted line-final position, but by the end of the century elsewhere as well.[2] In the following centuries it continued to appear sporadically as an uncommon variant of ⟨е⟩, but not later than in the fifteenth century amongst the Eastern Slavs it began to be used to indicate initial (uniotated) [e]. According to Yefim Karskiy, "Western Russian ustav knows ⟨ѣ⟩, e.g. in Miscellany of the 15th c. from the Public Library (manuscr. #391) (экъсеквіе etc.), chronicles of 15th-16th cc., Miscellany of Poznań (16th c.),[3] Statut of 1588... It is difficult to say whether it has been developed here independently or it came from South Slavic manuscripts, where ⟨ѣ⟩ occurs as early as in 13-14th cc." [4] Although the revision of Meletius Smotrytsky's grammar published in Moscow in 1648 does not include ⟨ѣ⟩ in its alphabet, it does consistently write Этѣмолѣгіа (Etymologia), in contrast to Єтѣмолѣгіа in the first edition of 1619. It was by no means confined to this function in the period, however, as the prevalent spellings реѣстрѣ, маѣорѣ.