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The System of Government under Volodimer the Great and His Foreign Policy

OMELJAN PRITSAK

1. INTRODUCTION

Nothing certain is known about the system of government in the ninth-century Kaganate of Rus'. Ibn Fadlan's data from AD 922, although based on second-hand information, demonstrate the influence of the Khazar system of government on the Rus' state. The Rus' kagan—Ibn Fadlan calls him in Arabic *malik ar-Rūs*, "the king of the Rus'"—like the Khazar kagan has "a deputy (Arab. *xalīfa*) who commands the army, fights against enemies and represents him [the kagan] before his subjects."¹ The *PVL* applies to this deputy the corresponding Slavic term, воевода, "military commander." An examination of relations between the *vojevoda* Svēneld (Sveinaldr) and his prince, Igor',² shows that in Rus', as in the Khazar state, conflicts between the kagan and the *vojevoda* were possible and did arise. From the tract of ca. 907 (the so-called Treaty of 907) it appears that in the Polock principality ruled by Oleg (Helgi) there were three main seats. These were: Polock, Rostov, and Ljubeč.³ From the number of Oleg's envoys mentioned as having participated in the treaty with Byzantium in 911, however, it follows that besides "Oleg, the great Rus'ian prince" there were at least fourteen "serene and great princes" and "great *boyars*" who were "under his hand" (иче суть под рукою его, свѣтлх и великих князь, и его великих боярь).⁴

وله خليفه يسوس الجيوش و يو [اقع الاعلا و يخلفه] في رعيته¹

Meshed MS, 212b, lines 14–15 in Andrij Kovalivskij [Kovalevskij], *Kniga Axmeda Ibn-Fadlana o ego putešestvii na Volgu v 921–922 gg.* (Xarkiv, 1956), p. 313. Cf. Zeki Velidi Togan, *Ibn Fadlan's Reisebericht* (Leipzig, 1931), Arabic text p. 43, §93 and comments: Exk. §93a, pp. 253–256.

² On Svēneld, see A. Poppe, "Sveneld," *Słownik starożytności słowiańskich: encyklopedyczny zarys kultury słowian od czasów najdawniejszych*, 8 vols., ed. Władysław Kowalenko (Wrocław, 1961–1991), vol. 5, 1973, pp. 498–499.

³ In my *The Origin of Rus'* (Cambridge, MA, 1981), vol. 1, pp. 142–148, I have shown the artificial character of the text of the so-called Rus'-Byzantine treaty of 907. It was made from a selection of texts of the two real treaties, that of 911 (912) and 944 (945). The enumeration of the cities: "первое отъ города Киева, и пакы ис Чернигова и ис Переяславля" in the text of 907 was taken from the treaty of 944. But the names "на Полотъскъ и на Ростовъ и на Любъчъ" are taken from a third source.

⁴ In the *PVL*, ed. D. S. Lixačev (Moscow-Leningrad, 1950), vol. 1, p. 13, there are traces of the former glory of Polock: "а другое [княженье] на Полотѣ, иже полочане. От нихъ же кривичи, иже съдять верхъ Волги, и на верхъ Двины и на верхъ Днѣпра, ихъ же градъ

Somewhat more material for a study of the problem is provided by kagan Igor's Treaty of 944 (945). This treaty with Byzantium was negotiated by twenty-five envoys representing as many Rus'ian princes, all mentioned by name.⁵ The hierarchical ranking of the first four members of the dynasty as given here is interesting:

1) Kagan Igor' (*Ingvarr*)—the head of the dynasty. We know that he captured Kiev and transferred his residence there. Under his direct rule was "all the Rus'ian land" with its three commercial and political centers—Kiev, Černigov, and Perejaslav.⁶

2) Svjatoslav—Igor's son. According to Constantine Porphyrogenitus, Svjatoslav ruled during his father's lifetime in Novgorod.⁷

3) Olga (*Helga*)—Igor's wife. The chronicles state that her residence was in Vyšgorod.⁸

4) Igor'—kagan Igor's nephew. The sources do not mention his residence, but it was probably Rostov, the old capital of the kaganate.

These names are followed in the list by: 5) Volodislav, 6) Predslava, and 7) Sfanьdr, the wife (or, probably, widow—since her husband is not included in the list) of Ulěb (*Óleifr*). It is quite possible that Sfanьdr was the

есть Смоленскъ; тудѣ бо сидятъ кривичи. Таже сѣверъ отъ нихъ." About Ljubeč, see also A. N. Nasonov, *Russkaja zemlja* (Moscow, 1951), pp. 59–60, and M. N. Tixomirov, *Drevnerusskie goroda* (Moscow, 1956), p. 345.

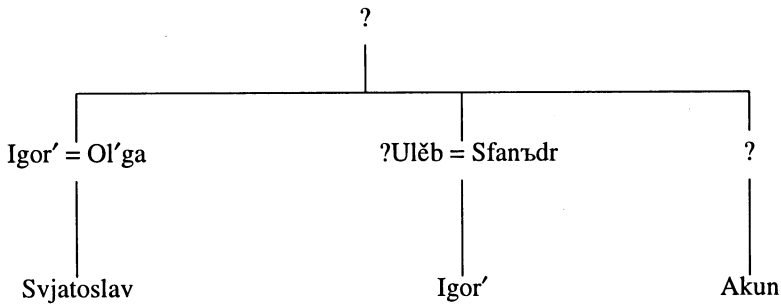
⁵ In the existing copies of the text the name of the twenty-second prince is omitted, but his envoy's name has been preserved. Aside from these envoys thirty merchants participated in the mission: *Letopis' po ipatskomu spisku* (St. Petersburg, 1871), p. 29. In the text of the Laurentian chronicle the names of four merchants were dropped by the copyists. Cf. *Lavrent'evskaja letopis'*, 3rd ed. (Leningrad, 1926), pt. 1, pp. 46–47. I am calling Igor' kagan on the following grounds. The highest imperial title in the Eurasian steppe was *qayān* (kagan). Its bearers were limited to few charismatic clans. One could become a kagan only if his father was a kagan (like later in Kievan Rus': only the sons of a Kievan ruler could rule there). One example from the steppe: Tamerlane did conquer a great part of Asia, but he never attempted to adopt the title kagan, since his clan (Barlas) had no imperial charisma. Instead he adopted the title *gürgeñ* ("son-in-law") since he (as later his successor) was married to a Činggisid princess, a daughter of a qayān, even if without a power, but with the clan's charisma. Jaroslav appears in Ilarion's *Slovo* as a kagan, as also his father Volodimer. Since Volodimer was a kagan, his father Svjatoslav must have been a kagan, as well as the known founder of the dynasty—Igor'. I may add that the *Annales Bertiniani*, where s.a. 839 for the first time the name *Rus'* appears, already calls the Rus' ruler *chacanus*. In his letter to the Byzantine Emperor Basil (871), the Frankish king Lewis II states that three people have the right to use the title kagan, namely, the Avar, the Khazars, and the Norsemen (meaning Rus'), see Vilhelm Thomsen, *Samlede Afhandlinger*, 4 vols. (Copenhagen, 1919–1931), vol. 1, p. 261. On the title "Rus' kagan" in the Islamic sources (first attested ca. 710 in the work of Ibn Rusta) see, e.g., V. Minorsky, trans., *Ḥudūd al-'Ālam* (London, 1937), pp. 159, 433, 436, 438. I cannot follow the views of P. B. Golden in "The Question of the Rus' Qaghanate," *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 2 (1982): 77–97.

⁶ See Nasonov, *Russkaja zemlja*, 28–50 (map between pages 32–33).

⁷ *De administrado imperio*, ed. Gy. Moravcsik (Budapest, 1949), 56, lines 4–5 (§9).

⁸ See *Letopis' po ipatskomu spisku*, ed. 1871, p. 38.

mother of Igor', Igor's nephew. If so, then Ulěb must have been the brother of kagan Igor'. The next four princes were probably also connected with the dynasty, since the last of them is likewise called Igor's nephew: 8) Tur̃duv, 9) Fast (*Fastr*), 10) Sfir̃ko, 11) Akun (Hákon), "Igor's nephew" (нети Игоревъ). When Ol'ga, who—as Igor's successor—now resided in Kiev, traveled to Constantinople in 957 she was accompanied by her "nephew" (probably Igor', the nephew of Kagan Igor' as mentioned in the Treaty of 944) and twenty envoys representing Rus'ian princes (probably also the same number). In one of the last places in the list Constantine Porphyrogenitus names the envoys of Svjatoslav, Ol'ga's son.⁹ This must signify that the heir to the throne, because he was a minor, held the last place in the dynastic order of precedence. On the basis of the above we can construct the following genealogy for the early "Rjurikids":



Before his second campaign against Danubian Bulgaria (ca. 969) Svjatoslav entrusted the reins of power in Rus' to his three sons. The eldest, Jaropolk, received Kiev and the Poljanian land. Oleg, the second son, received the eastern part of the Derevljanian land with his seat at Ovruč, but was killed by Jaropolk soon after their father's death. It is of interest that neither of Svjatoslav's older (and legitimate) sons wanted to go to Novgorod, which (probably together with the Rostov land) passed to Volodimer, the son of Svjatoslav's concubine, Maluša. We know that Svjatoslav had a co-regent (and former *vojevoda*), Svěnelđ, who ruled over the western part of the Derevljanian land and over the Uličian (Tiverčian) land. Svěnelđ had two sons, Ljut (*Liótr*) and Mstiša. The sources also mention Svjatoslav's military commanders. In the account of the Bulgarian campaign Svjatoslav is immediately followed in the military hierarchy by 'Іκμop (*Hinckmar*), and

⁹ *De ceremoniis aulae Byzantinae*, J. J. Reiske, vol. 2 (Bonn, 1830), §15.

then by Σφέγκελος. Both were slain in the war with Byzantium in 971.¹⁰ During these campaigns Svjatoslav left Pretič, that is, the son of Prēt (Fretr)¹¹ as his chief *vojevoda* in Rus'. Pretič proved himself a worthy antagonist of the Pečeneg prince (mentioned ca. 968). The only brother of Volodimer Svjatoslavič to survive the events of 972–979 was Σφέγγος (Sveinki)¹² who, however, is not mentioned in the *PVL*. He probably did not hold any administrative position. In 1016 he is mentioned as a military commander together with the condottiere Χρυσόχειρ, a kinsman of Volodimer (the degree of kinship is unknown).¹³ Volodimer entrusted the administration of his state exclusively to his sons.

2. WIVES AND SONS OF VOLODIMER THE GREAT

Historians of Volodimer's reign have generally ignored an important body of facts that provide a key to the better understanding not only of his system of government but of his foreign policy as well. The data in question consist of three lists. One is a list of Volodimer's wives and their sons (here referred to as List № 1) and two lists of his sons (List № 2, List № 3). With but minor exceptions, the chronicle traditions are based on the same sources, so the variants of these lists are relatively few in number. A list of Volodimer's wives and their sons (List № 1) is given in chronicle entries for 980.¹⁴

- | | |
|--|--|
| [1] у быша ему водимыя Рогънѣдъ
юже посади на Лыбеди идеже ныне
стоитъ сельце Предславино
От неяже роды 4 сыны: Изеслава
Мстыслава, Ярослава, Всеволода,
а 2 тчери; | [1] His lawful wife was Rogъnĕd'
whom he settled on the Lybed' where
now the village of Predslavino stands. ¹⁵
By her he had four sons: Izjaslav,
Mstislav, Jaroslav, Vsevolod,
and two daughters; |
| [2] от Грекинѣ Святополка; | [2] by the Greek woman (he had) Svjatopolk; |
| [3] от Чехинѣ Вышеслава; | [3] by the Czech woman (he had) Vyšeslav; |

¹⁰ Leon Diaconus, *Historiae*, ed. C. B. Hase (Bonn, 1828), p. 149 (Ἰκμop), pp. 135 and 144 (Σφέγκελος/Σφάγελος). Cf. Ernst Kunik, *Die Berufung der schwedischen Rodsend* (St. Petersburg, 1845), vol. 2, pp. 186–187.

¹¹ *PVL*, ed. D. S. Lixačev, vol. 1, pp. 47–48. Cf. Kunik, *Die Berufung*, vol. 2, p. 185.

¹² Georgios Kedrenos, *Synopsis*, ed. I. Bekker, vol. 2 (Bonn 1839), p. 464. Cf. Kunik, *Die Berufung*, vol. 2, pp. 169–170.

¹³ Georgios Kedrenos, *Synopsis*, vol. 2, p. 478. Cf. Kunik, *Die Berufung*, vol. 2, pp. 170–171.

¹⁴ *Lavren'evskaja letopis'*, 3rd ed., 79–80; *Letopis' po ipatskomu spisku*, ed. 1871, p. 53. Cf. *Novgorodskaja pervaja letopis'* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1950), p. 128; *Moskovskij letopisnyj svod konca XV veka* (PSRL, vol. 25, Moscow-Leningrad, 1949), p. 358; *Patriaršaja ili Nikonovskaja letopis'* (PSRL, vol. 9, St. Petersburg, 1862), 41; V. N. Tatiščev, *Istorija Rossijskaja*, vol. 4 (Moscow-Leningrad, 1964), p. 132. Joannis Dlugosii [Długosz], *Annales seu cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae*, ed. Jan Dąbrowski, vol. 1–2 (Warsaw, 1964), pp. 192–193 = Polish translation, *Jana Długosza Roczniki czyli kroniki sławnego królestwa polskiego*, bks. 1–2 (Warsaw, 1961), p. 261.

¹⁵ Rogъnĕd''s Slavic name was Predslava.

- | | |
|---|---|
| [4] а от другоѣ Святослава
и Мьстислава; | [4] and by the other (Czech woman)
(he had) Svjatoslav and Mstislav; ¹⁶ |
| [5] а от Болгарыни Бориса
и Глѣба. | [5] and by the Bulgarian woman
(he had) Boris and Glěb. ¹⁷ |

Because this list does not include Volodimer's "youngest sons," Stanislav, Pozvzd, and Sudislav, it may be assumed that Volodimer married the mother of Boris and Glěb *before* 980.

To the names given in List № 1, one group of chronicles that is associated with the *Polychron of 1418* (to use A. Šaxmatov's terminology)¹⁸ has added the names of Volodimer's two "youngest sons" (without giving the names of their mothers) from List № 2: Sudislav and Pozvzd.¹⁹ The two lists of Volodimer's sons are both given under the year 6496/988. The first of these (List № 2) is simply an enumeration of their names:

- | | |
|--|---|
| Бѣ бо у него сыновѣ 12
Вышеславъ, Изяславъ, Ярославъ,
Святополкъ, Всеволодъ, Святославъ,
Мьстиславъ, Борисъ, Глѣбъ,
Станиславъ, Позвиздъ, Судиславъ. | He has twelve sons:
Vyšeslav, Izjaslav, Jaroslav,
Svjatopolk, Vsevolod, Svjatoslav,
Mstislav, Boris, Glěb,
Stanislav, Pozvzd, Sudislav. ²⁰ |
|--|---|

¹⁶ The Tverskij sbornik/Tver' Collection (*PSRL*, vol. 15, St. Petersburg, 1863, col. 73) has here: а от другія Чехини Святослава и Станислава, "and by the other Czech woman [he had] Svjatoslav and Stanislav." Tatiščev (*Istorija*, vol. 4, p. 132) even provides her name: и от другія, Малфриди, Святослава и Мстислава, "and from the other [Czech woman], Malfrida, [he had] Svjatoslav and Mstislav." Cf. the Hustynian Chronicle, (*PSRL*, vol. 2, 1st ed., St. Petersburg, 1845, p. 250): "Четверта Чехиня, отъ юя же роды Святослава и Мьстислава, "The fourth was a Czech woman by whom he had Svjatoslav and Mstislav." The source of the *Polychron of 1418* had "Stanislav" in place of "Mstislav": а от другія Святослава и Станислава, "and by the second [Czech woman he had] Svjatoslav and Stanislav." This text is found in the following group of chronicles: *Sofijskaja Pervaja letopis'* (*PSRL*, vol. 5:1, Leningrad, 1925), p. 46; *Vologodsko-Permskaja letopis'* (*PSRL*, vol. 26, Moscow-Leningrad, 1959), p. 20; *Mosk. let. svod* (*PSRL*, vol. 25), p. 58; *Novgorodskaja Četvertaja letopis'* (*PSRL*, vol. 4:1:1, Petrograd, 1915), p. 56. It is interesting to note that while Maciej Strykowski (*Kronika polska* etc., vol. 1, Warszawa, 1846, p. 126) has "Stanislav," Długosz (*Annales*, Books 1–2) has "Mstislav." The Tver' Collection (*PSRL*, vol. 15, 1863, col. 113) also mentions: Станислава, Святославля брата въ Смоленскѣ, "Stanislav, the brother of Svjatoslav in Smolensk." Nevertheless it is probable that Stanislav was the younger brother of Svjatoslav and Mstislav by the "other" Czech woman.

¹⁷ The source of the Pskov chronicles added a third son by the Bulgarian: а от Болгариня 10. Борис, 11. Глѣбъ, 12. Позвиздъ, "and by the Bulgarian woman he had 10. Boris, 11. Glěb, 12. Pozvzd." See *Pskovskie letopisi*, ed. A. N. Nasonov, vol. 2 (Moscow, 1955), p. 10).

¹⁸ See, e.g., M. D. Priselkov, *Istorija russkogo letopisanija XI–XV vv.* (Leningrad, 1940), pp. 142–145.

¹⁹ *Sofijskaja I let.* (*PSRL*, vol. 5:1, p. 46); *Vologod.-Perm. let.* (*PSRL*, vol. 26, p. 20); *Mosk. let. svod* (*PSRL*, vol. 25, p. 358). The Hustynian Chronicle continues the narration (on the basis of both annalistic and non-annalistic sources): Шестая Грекия, ея же ради и крестися, отъ нея роди дщерь Марию, "by the sixth, a Greek woman, for whose sake he was baptized, he had a daughter, Maria..." etc. (*PSRL*, vol. 2, 1st ed., p. 250).

The original compiler of this list was probably partial to the sons of Rogъnѣd'. Thus, Jaroslav (a son of Rogъnѣd') is listed before Svjatopolk although the latter, according to List № 3, was older. Similarly, Vsevolod (another son of Rogъnѣd') is listed before Svjatoslav, although List № 3 again indicates that Svjatoslav was the elder of the two. In one large group of chronicles, whose source again was the *Polychron of 1418*, this bias was partly corrected by having Svjatopolk precede Jaroslav.²¹ Długosz did the same (ca. 992). List № 3 follows in the *PVL* immediately after List № 2. It enumerates the appanages that Volodimer granted his sons:²²

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| [1] И посади Вышеслава в Новѣгородѣ, | [1] and he placed Vyšeslav in Novgorod, |
| [2] а Изяслава Полотъскѣ, | [2] Izjaslav in Polock, |
| [3] а Святополка Туровѣ, | [3] Svjatopolk in Turov, |
| [4] а Ярослава Ростовѣ. | [4] Jaroslav in Rostov. |
| [1a] Умершю же старѣйшему | [1a] And when the oldest, |
| Вышеславу Новѣгородѣ, | Vyšeslav, died in Novgorod, |
| [4a] посадиша Ярослава Новѣгородѣ, | [4a] he placed Jaroslav in Novgorod, |
| [5] А Бориса Ростовѣ, | [5] Boris in Rostov, |
| [6] а Глѣба Муромѣ. | [6] and Glěb in Murom. |
| [7] Свѣтослава Деревѣхъ, | [7] Svjatoslav in Dereva, |
| [8] Всеволода Володимери, | [8] Vsevolod in Volodimer, |
| [9] Мстислава Тмutorокани. | [9] Mstislav in Tmutorokan'. |

A comparison of List № 3 with List № 2 shows that the former does not mention Mstislav (the elder), son of Rogъnѣd'. Possibly he was no longer alive in 988.²³

3. THE SONS OF VOLODIMER THE GREAT

The original text of the entry under the year 988 could not have contained information about Vyšeslav's death since he was still alive in that year (according to the *PVL* he died in 1010). Thus, the original text for 988 could not have given information about changes in appanage resulting from the vacancy in Novgorod that was brought about by the death of Vyšeslav. Consequently, the sentence:

Умершю же старѣйшему	And when the eldest
Вышеславу Новѣгородѣ,	Vyšeslav died in Novgorod,

²⁰ See *PVL*, ed. D. S. Lixačev, vol. 1, p. 83.

²¹ *Nov. IV let. (PSRL, vol. 4:1:1, p. 89); Sof. I let. (PSRL, vol. 5:1, p. 71); Nov. I let. (PSRL, vol. 26, p. 30); Mosk. let. svod (PSRL, vol. 25, p. 365); Rogoŭ let. (PSRL, vol. 15:1, col. 16); Nikon. let. (PSRL, vol. 9, p. 57); Nov. V let. (PSRL, vol. 4:2:1, Petrograd, 1917, p. 88). Cf. J. Długosz, *Annales*, Books 1–2, pp. 190–251, and Strykowski, *Kronika*, vol. 1, p. 132.*

²² *PVL*, ed. D. S. Lixačev, vol. 1, p. 83.

²³ The presence of two Mstislavs in the list led the compilers to conclude that it must be a mistake. For this reason even modern scholars (e.g., D. S. Lixačev, *PVL*, vol. 2, p. 325) identified the elder Mstislav with Stanislav. However, Stanislav was one of Volodimer's youngest sons, while the elder Mstislav was the older brother of Jaroslav. In Tatiščev's source (*Istoriia Rosijskaja*, vol. 4, 1964, 132) this Mstislav was identified with Vyšeslav.

посадиша Ярослава Новѣгородѣ,	he [Volodimer] placed Jaroslav in
	Novgorod,
а Бориса Ростовѣ,	Boris in Rostov,
а Глѣба Муромѣ...	and Glěb in Murom...

must be considered a later interpretation dating from approximately 1010.

Thus, the initial version of the text dealing with Volodimer's distribution of appanages among his sons must have appeared as follows:

[1] И посади Вышеслава Новѣгородѣ,	[1] And he placed Vyšeslav in Novgorod,
[2] а Изяслава Полотъскѣ,	[2] Izjaslav in Polock,
[3] а Святополка Туровѣ,	[3] Svjatopolk in Turov,
[4] а Ярослава Ростовѣ,	[4] Jaroslav in Rostov,
[5] Святослава Деревѣхъ,	[5] Svjatoslav in Dereva,
[6] Всеволода Володимери,	[6] Vsevolod in Volodimer,
[7] Мстислава Тмutorокани,	[7] Mstislav in Tmutorokan',
[8] [а Бориса Муромѣ].	[8] [and Boris in Murom]. ²⁴

This would indicate that in 988 Volodimer established *eight* appanages, each with its seat in an important commercial center or in the capital of a former state since absorbed into the "Rjurikid" empire (about this see below). In 1010 Jaroslav left Rostov for Novgorod. His successor in Rostov was Boris, whose seat in Murom passed to his young brother, Glěb. The Scandinavian sagas tell the story of the proud, beautiful, and rich Swedish queen, Sigríðr Stórráða, who was wooed unsuccessfully by many princes. Among the unfortunate suitors, who paid with their lives for the temerity of courting the haughty beauty, we find the name of Vissavaldr (Vsevolod) of Garðaríki (Rus'). Vsevolod incurred Sigríðr's wrath because he was only an appanaged prince, and she had him burned alive. This Rus'ian prince has been correctly identified as Vsevolod Volodimerovič, prince of Volodimer-in-Volhynia.²⁵ Since the most important dates in Sigríðr's life are known, they can help establish the approximate date of Vsevolod's death.

Sigríðr was probably the daughter of Mieszko I of Poland (962–992).²⁶ She was born before 966, and thus was over ten years Vsevolod's senior. Sigríðr was first married in 985 to Eiríkr sigrsæli (the Victorious), King of Sweden (ca. 964–995). After Eiríkr's death (995) she married her second husband, the King of Denmark, Sveinn I tjuguskegg (the Fork-Beard), b. 964/5, d. February 13, 1014; king from 986. The marriage took place in 998. She died in 1014. It is evident, then, that Vsevolod could not have courted Sigríðr earlier than 995 (the year of Eiríkr's death) or later than 998 (when she remarried). Thus, his death must have occurred between 995 and

²⁴ For the argumentation supporting this addition see below.

²⁵ See Friedrich Braun, "Das historische Russland im nordischen Schriftum des X–XIV Jahrhunderts," *Festschrift Eugen Mogk* (Halle an der Saale, 1924), pp. 160–161 and N. N. Il'in, *Letopisnaja stat'ja 6523 goda i ee istočniki* (Moscow, 1957), p. 105.

²⁶ See O. Pritsak, "On the Chronology of Óláfr Tryggvason and Volodimer the Great: The Saga's Relative Chronology as a Historical Source," *HUS* 16, no. 1–2 (1992): 29–30, n. 80. See also W. Dworzaczek, *Genealogia* (Warszawa, 1959), pl. 35, 36.

998. Vsevolod’s successor in Volodimer was Boris, as Nestor’s *Čtenie* (“Reading”) on the lives of Boris and Glěb indicates.²⁷ Subsequently, according to the *Hustynian Chronicle* and Strykowski, Boris was followed in Volodimer by his young brother, Pozvzd.²⁸

On the basis of the foregoing data it is possible to establish a list of eight appanages and their occupants in the years 988, ca. 995–998, and 1010.

Appanage	988	ca. 995–998	1010
1. Novgorod	Vyšeslav	Vyšeslav	Jaroslav
2. Polock	Izjaslav	Izjaslav	Izjaslav
3. Turov	Svjatopolk	Svjatopolk	Svjatopolk
4. Rostov	Jaroslav	Jaroslav	Boris
5. Derevljanian land	Svjatoslav	Svjatoslav	Svjatoslav
6. Volodimer	Vsevolod	Boris	Pozvzd
7. Tmutorokan’	Mstislav	Mstislav	Mstislav
8. Murom	Boris	Pozvzd (?) ²⁹	Glěb

An examination of these lists shows that the appanages may be divided into two types, one represented by the appanages of Izjaslav and Svjatopolk, and the other by those of Jaroslav and Boris. Both Jaroslav and Boris participated in a system of succession that may be compared to the later “ascent by scales.” Izjaslav and Svjatopolk, on the other hand, did not take part in this system and continued to hold their original seats. In fact, Izjaslav and his dynasty remained in Polock permanently. We must conclude, therefore, that Volodimer divided his state into two types of sub-units. The first type consisted of appanages, the second of vassal provinces. The appanages comprised primarily territories which were connected with Volodimer’s dynasty. These included Rostov and Murom (the kaganate of Rus’), as well as Novgorod. For these appanages Volodimer intended the succession to be based on principles of seniority and “ascent by scales.” The intended vassal provinces embraced those lands which had formerly been independent. We know from the *PVL* that until the reign of Volodimer both Polock and Turov had their own dynasties (the dynasties of the “Varangians” Rogvolod (Rognvaldr) and Tur, respectively). A similar situation existed in the Derevljanian land, where the dynasty of Mal/Niskina ruled until its subjugation by Igor’ and Ol’ga. Another example was Khazarian Tmutorokan’, the

²⁷ “Čtenie o žitii i o pogublennii i o čjudesěx svjatuju i blaženuju strastoterpcju Borisa i Glěba. Spisanie Nestora,” ed. I. I. Sreznevskij, *Čtenija* (Moscow, 1859), text p. 9.

²⁸ If Pozvzd received Volodimer-in-Volhynia, a seat higher in rank than Murom, it would appear that at the time of his promotion he was prince at Murom. Thus, he was Boris’s successor both in Murom, and later in Volodimer. This means that in ca. 988 Glěb was still with his father. He entered the system of “ascent by scales” only after the death of Vsevolod (between 995 and 998) when he received Murom, the lowest-ranking seat.

²⁹ See note 28.

former Empire of the Bosphorus, which was conquered by Svjatoslav. The dual organization of Volodimer's state may be represented in the following manner:

Appanages (in the system of ascent by scales)	Vassal provinces (with their own dynasties)
1) Novgorod	1) Polock
2) Rostov	2) Turov
3) Murom	3) Derevljanian land
4) Volodimer (Volhynia) ³⁰	4) Tmutorokan'

The version of the 1010 list that was incorporated into *PVL* was incomplete as were, in consequence, those chronicles dependent on it. Długosz's Rus'ian source continued the text further:³¹

Caeteris vero filiis tribus natu minoribus, videlicet	For the remaining younger sons
[10] Stanislao,	[10] Stanislav,
[11] Poszwyd,	[11] Pozvizd,
[12] et Sudislao	[12] and Sudislav
[Włodimirus Dux] Kyoviensem et Berestow Principatus non nisi morte sua in eos devolvendos reservat.	[Volodimer] kept the principalities of Kiev and Berestovo, which they were to receive only after his death.

Strykowski's Rus'ian source provides these same data but with some additional information that is not found in Długosz:³²

...Włodzimierz...dał...	...Volodimer...gave to
[10] Stanisławowi, Smoleńsko;	[10] Stanislav—Smolensk,
[11] Sudziśławowi, Plesków;	[11] Sudislav—Pleskov (Pskov),
[12] a Pozwizydowi Wołyń;	[12] Pozvizd—Volhynia;
tymże też, jako młodszym, po śmierci swojej	also to them, as his younger sons, designated after his death
Kijów i Berestów księstwa, nazначzył.	the principalities of Kiev and Berestovo.

The fact that Stanislav received Smolensk, and Sudislav Pskov, is also confirmed by the source of the *Polychron of 1418*.³³ The *Hustynian Chronicle* (*PSRL*, vol. 2, 1st ed., 1843, p. 259) does not mention the principalities of

³⁰ Reasons for this inclusion are given below.

³¹ J. Długosz, *Annales*, vol. 1–2, pp. 250–251. See the new Polish translation based on the autograph: *Jana Długosza Roczniki czyli kroniki sławnego królestwa polskiego*, bks. 1–2, pp. 324–325.

³² Strykowski, *Kronika*, vol. 1, 152.

³³ Nov. IV let. (*PSRL*, vol. 4²:1:1, 90); Sof. I let. (*PSRL*, vol. 5²:1, 71); Volog.-Perm. let. (*PSRL*, vol. 26, 30); Mosk. let. svod (*PSRL*, vol. 25, 365); Nikon. let. (*PSRL*, vol. 9, 57); Tatiščev, *Istorija Rossijskaja*, vol. 4, 1964, 138.

Kiev and Berestovo in the corresponding passage, but it names Volhynia as Pozvzd's appanage:

Володимер посады	Volodimer placed
[10] Станислава въ Смоленску	[10] Stanislav in Smolensk,
[11] Судислава в Плесковѣ,	[11] Sudislav in Pleskov,
сы есть въ Псковѣ,	that is, in Pskov,
[12] Позвизда въ Волиню.	[12] Pozvzd in Volhynia.

The term "Volhynia" is undoubtedly identical here with the appanage of Volodimer (in-Volhynia). It evidently became the seat of Pozvzd³⁴ after the death of Vsevolod, which was related above. This is clearly an indication that Volodimer, a recently established city in a newly conquered territory of great importance for the trade routes to the West, was incorporated into the system of appanages. The above passage also provides evidence about the close and direct links of Smolensk and Pskov to Kiev/Berestovo. This, again, was due to the great commercial importance of these two cities. Smolensk was located near the famous Okovskij forest in which the Dnieper, the Dvina, and the Volga, the most important arteries of trade at the time, all had their sources. This fact was known to the author of the *PVL*.³⁵ Pskov was also strategically situated for control of the Gulf of Finland, this gateway to Scandinavia and the Baltic.³⁶ The sources provide very scanty information about Berestovo. From the *PVL* we know that it was Volodimer's favorite residence, where he maintained one of his three harems,³⁷ and that it was there that he died.³⁸ Jaroslav was also fond of Berestovo. His friend, the future Metropolitan of Kiev, Ilarion, had his monastic cell there, which later became the nucleus of the Kievan Monastery of the Caves.³⁹ The only political act connected with Berestovo was the investiture, attested in the *PVL*, of Svjatoslav and Vsevolod (Jaroslaviči) in Jaroslav's palace on March 22, 1075, after the expulsion of Izjaslav.⁴⁰ The two usurpers undoubtedly chose Berestovo for the ceremony in order to lend it greater legitimacy. In 1096 Svjatopolk Izjaslavič had his foe and father-in-law, the Polovcian prince

³⁴ The name Pozvzd is attested in Slavic mythology as the name of the wind god. In the Rogožskii Chronicle (*PSRL*, vol. 15²:1, Petrograd, 1922, col. 16) Pozvzd is called Vasilko. It is possible that, like his father, he bore the Christian name Vasilij. The Tver' Collection instead of Pozvzd's name has the name of Boleslav; the compiler, however, confuses this "son of Volodimer" with the Polish prince Boleslaw I: Болеслава въ Лясѣхъ Великихъ, "[Volodimer had a son] Boleslav, in the land of the Great Ljazi" (*PSRL*, vol. 15²:1, col. 113).

³⁵ *Letopis' po ipatskomu spisku*, 1871, p. 4: изъ Воковьского лѣса.

³⁶ Cf. Nasonov, *Russkaja zemlja*, pp. 70–76, 80–83.

³⁷ *Letopis' po ipatskomu spisku*, 1871, p. 53.

³⁸ *Letopis' po ipatskomu spisku*, p. 90.

³⁹ *Letopis' po ipatskomu spisku*, p. 109.

⁴⁰ *Letopis' po ipatskomu spisku*, p. 128.

Tugor-ta[r]kan, buried near Berestovo, possibly for dynastic reasons.⁴¹ Finally, Berestovo is mentioned as the victim of attacks by its nomad neighbors. In 1096 Bonjak the Polovcian burned the princely court in Berestovo.⁴² And in 1151 the town was stormed by the Kouï, Torks, and Pečenegs.⁴³ This is the last reference to Berestovo that we possess. Unfortunately, the chronicles provide us with no details on the principality of Berestovo.

The fact that Kiev/Berestovo was to remain in the possession of his young sons is clear evidence that Volodimer considered this appanage to be a "patrimony" in the Turco-Mongolian sense of the "home-hearth" which passed to *od-tigin*, the youngest member of the family ("hearth prince").⁴⁴ The Saxon chronicler, Thietmar (b. 976, d. 1018; from 1009 Bishop of Magdeburg), was very well informed about Rus'ian affairs after the death of Volodimer. His informants were the Saxon participants in the expedition by King Boleslaw I of Poland to aid Svjatopolk (1017–1018). Thietmar writes:⁴⁵

Rex ille [Volodimer]	This king [Volodimer] died from
plenus dierum obiit	the burden of days,
integritatem hereditatis suae	leaving his inheritance in its
duobus relinquens filiis.	entirety to two sons;
tercio [Svjatopolk] adhuc	a third [Svjatopolk] was
in carcere posito	at that time in prison
qui postea elapsus	from which he later escaped,
conjugē ibidem relicto	leaving his wife there and
ad socerum [Boleslaw I] fugit.	fleeing to his father-in-law [Boleslaw].

Although, in general, scholars have a high regard for Thietmar as a historical source, in this instance it is usual to believe him mistaken. Thus, in view of later developments after the battle of Listven (1024), N. Il'in believes that the two sons referred to by Thietmar were actually Jaroslav and Mstislav (the younger).⁴⁶ This is hardly acceptable. As we have already seen, Volodimer had divided the state among his sons long before his death, retaining only Kiev/Berestovo (together with Smolensk and Pskov) as his own domain. After Volodimer's death this, according to the sources used by

⁴¹ *Letopis' po ipatskomu spisku*, p. 162. Cf. *Slovo o polku Igoreve*, line 63 in Roman Jakobson, *Selected Writings*, vol. 4 (The Hague-Paris, 1966), p. 172.

⁴² *Letopis' po ipatskomu spisku*, p. 161.

⁴³ *Letopis' po ipatskomu spisku*, p. 296.

⁴⁴ Boris Ja. Vladimircov, *Obščestvennyj stroj mongolov. Mongol'skij kočevyj feodalizm* (Leningrad, 1934), pp. 54–55, 98, 111. See also N. N. Poppe, "Perezitki kul'ta ognja v mongol'skom jazyke," *Doklady Akademii nauk SSSR—B* (Leningrad, 1925), p. 14, and "Zum Feuerkultus bei den Mongolen," *Asia Major*, 2 (1925): 130–145.

⁴⁵ *Chronicon*, ed. R. Holtzmann and Werner Trillmich (Berlin, 1958), p. 434.

⁴⁶ *Letopisnaja stat'ja 6523 goda*, p. 104–105; cf. also M. Hruševs'kyj, *Vyjimky z žerel do istoriji Ukrajiny-Rusy*, L'viv, 1895, 96, n. 1.

Długosz and Strykowski, was to pass to his youngest sons as their inheritance. As we have seen, Volodimer had three “youngest sons” (that is, those born after 980): Stanislav, Pozvizr and Sudislav. Pozvizr, the son of the Bulgarian woman and brother of Boris and Glēb, received Volhynia after Volodimer’s death, leaving only Stanislav (the brother of Mstislav the younger) and Sudislav with the status of “youngest sons.” It is thus reasonable to maintain that they became Volodimer’s successors in Kiev/Berestovo. They reigned jointly under the protection of Mstislav (the younger) of Tmutorokan’ until 1036, when both Mstislav and Stanislav died. We owe this important information to a Byzantine historian of the eleventh century, Joannes Skylitzes. In his chronicle (which is taken to AD 1057) he writes (ca. 6544/1036) as follows:⁴⁷

ἐτελεύτησαν δὲ καὶ οἱ τῶν Ῥῶς ἄρχοντες, Νοσισηλάβος καὶ *Ζινισηλάβος καὶ ἄρχειν προεκρίθη τῶν Ῥῶς συγγενῆς τῶν τελευτησάντων *Ἱεροσηλάβος.

The archonts of Rhōs, Nosisthlabos [Mstislav], and Zinisthlabos [Stanislav] passed away and the brother of the deceased Jerosthlabos [Jaroslav] began to rule over the Rhōs.

This explains why, even after his treaty that followed the battle of Listven, Jaroslav still did not dare move to Kiev and remained in Novgorod. References to these events were evidently eliminated from the earlier redaction of the *PVL* by chroniclers loyal to Jaroslav’s dynasty. Only a brief note has been preserved stating that immediately upon his return to Kiev after Mstislav’s death in 1036, Jaroslav imprisoned his younger brother, Sudislav⁴⁸ (Stanislav was probably no longer alive), who spent 23 years in prison, until his nephews released him in 1059. In the light of the above, this brief mention assumes major significance.

A summation of the analysis detailed above provides us with a clear picture of the system of government during Volodimer’s reign. Under Volodimer the state was divided into *three* “spheres.” The first was Volodimer’s own domain which consisted of:

- 1) the capital domain of Kiev/Berestovo, and
- 2) domains under the direct control of Kiev/Berestovo:
 - a) Smolensk, and
 - b) Pskov.

The order of succession envisaged for Kiev was regulated by the Altaic (Turco-Mongolian) system of the “home-hearth.” This domain was the

⁴⁷ Georgius Cedrenus Joannis Scylitzae ope ab J. Bekkero suppletus et emendatus II (Bonn, 1839), p. 515.

⁴⁸ В се же лѣто всады Ярославъ Судислава в порубѣ, брата своего, Плесковѣ, оклеветанъ к нему, “in the same year, Jaroslav imprisoned Sudislav, his brother, in Pskov, because he had been slanderiously accused.” *PVL*, ed. D. S. Lixačev, vol. 1, p. 102.

inheritance reserved for Volodimer's youngest sons, with the stipulation that if one of them died or otherwise left the system, his rights automatically devolved on the remaining son or sons. The two younger sons of the Bulgarian woman, Glěb and Pozvzd, were the first to be recognized as Volodimer's "youngest sons" for patrimonial purposes. For reasons still unclear, the younger Pozvzd left this system first when, following Vsevolod's death (ca. 995–998), he succeeded Boris to the seat of Murom. In 1010 Pozvzd was followed in Murom by his older brother, Glěb, after his own promotion to Volodimer in Volhynia. By this time the position of "youngest sons" had probably gone to Stanislav and Sudislav. These two became Volodimer's successors in Kiev/Berestovo after his death. But even before this they ruled in their father's name in Smolensk (Stanislav) and Pskov (Sudislav), probably as his lieutenants. The second "sphere" embraced four seats-appanages distributed among Volodimer's older sons. The seat lowest in rank was Murom, followed in ascending order by Volodimer-in-Volhynia, Rostov, and Novgorod, which as the highest-ranking seat, was reserved for the oldest son. In this "sphere" the order of succession was regulated by a system that a later source calls *лествичное восхождение* ("ascent by scales"). As already observed, in the original distribution of appanages among Volodimer's sons, the system of "ascent by scales" culminated with Vyšeslav. His death triggered a chain reaction of changes in occupancy of the seats. Jaroslav left Rostov for Novgorod and was followed in Rostov by Boris, whose seat in Volodimer now passed to Pozvzd. The third "sphere" included provinces which formerly had been independent states. These now became vassal provinces with Volodimer's sons forming their new dynasties. These states, four in number, were:

- 1) Polock,
- 2) Turov,
- 3) the Derevljanian land,
- 4) and Tmutorokan'.

Of these only the Polock dynasty of Izjaslav Volodimerovič survived through the entire pre-Mongolian period in the history of Rus'.

4. THE WIVES AND SONS OF VOLODIMER SVJATOSLAVIČ

The next problem is to establish the birth dates of Volodimer's sons, and the dates of Volodimer's marriages with his chief wives up to 980. These wives were: Rogъněd' (Ragnheiðr), the Greek woman, the Bulgarian woman, and the two Czech women. The name of the second of Volodimer's Czech wives is known; it was Maľfrěd' (Málfríðr). To simplify the task, a table is presented below coordinating available chronicle information. This table shows, first of all, that Volodimer fathered thirteen, not twelve, sons. One of

Volodimer's Sons in Order of Their Birth

ORDER OF BIRTH	SOURCE:		List № 1 (980)		List № 2 (988)		List № 3 (988)	
	WIFE: Rogъnъd'	Greek Woman	Czech Woman I	Czech Woman II	Bulgarian Woman	Not Given	Not Given	Not Given
1			Vyšeslav			Vyšeslav	Vyšeslav	seat: Novgorod
2	Izjaslav					Izjaslav	Izjaslav	seat: Polock
3	Mstislav (the elder)					—	—	—
4		Svjatopolk				Svjatopolk	Svjatopolk	seat: Turov
5	Jaroslav					Jaroslav	Jaroslav	seat: 1. Rostov
6				Svjatoslav		Svjatoslav	Svjatoslav	2. Novgorod
7	Vsevolod					Vsevolod	Vsevolod	seat: Derevjanian land
8				Mstislav (the younger)		Mstislav	Mstislav	seat: Volodimer
9					Boris	Boris	Boris	seat: Tmutorokan'
10					Glěb	Glěb	Glěb	seat: Rostov
11				Stanislav		Stanislav	Stanislav	seat: Murom
12					Pozvizi	Pozvizi	Pozvizi	
13					Sudislav*	Sudislav*	Sudislav*	

*Sudislav's mother has not yet been identified.

them, Mstislav (the elder) died while still a child.⁴⁹ Their order of birth is given here:⁵⁰

- 1) Vyšeslav
- 2) Izjaslav
- 3) Mstislav (the elder)
- 4) Svjatopolk
- 5) Jaroslav
- 6) Svjatoslav
- 7) Vsevolod
- 8) Mstislav (the younger)
- 9) Boris
- 10) Glěb
- 11) Stanislav⁵¹
- 12) Pozvzd⁵²
- 13) Sudislav

Jaroslav Volodimerovič was born in 978 (at the time of his death in 1054 he was seventy-six years old). Svjatopolk must have been born in the same year as Jaroslav, but a few months or weeks earlier than Jaroslav, the son of Rogǫnĕd'. We know this because it was not possible for Volodimer to have taken the "Greek woman" from Jaropolk (who had received her from his father after the campaign of 971) before 977. Because Svjatoslav, the son of the second Czech woman, was immediately younger than Jaroslav, he must have been born a few months or weeks after the latter, probably still in 978. Boris was born in 979, and some ten to twelve months after (at any rate not later than 980, since the sources already mention him in that year) was born his brother, Glěb. Because Vsevolod (Rogǫnĕd''s son) and Mstislav the younger (the son of the second Czech woman) were older than Boris (b. 979) and younger than Svjatoslav (b. 978), they must have been born in 979. Thus, Vsevolod, Mstislav the younger, and Boris were all born in the same year a few weeks or months from each other. From the foregoing it follows that of Volodimer's thirteen sons, seven (from Svjatopolk to Glěb) were born within a space of four years, between 977 and 980. They were born of four different mothers. Volodimer went to Novgorod in 967, so he could not

⁴⁹ Mstislav (the elder), Rogǫnĕd''s second son, is not mentioned in lists № 2 and № 3. This means that he must have died before 988, probably before the birth of Mstislav (the younger). Compare the analogous situation in the late twelfth century with the two Mstislavs Davidovici of Smolensk (*Letopis' po ipatskomu spisku*, 1871, ca. 1187, pp. 440–441), and ca. 1193 (p. 456).

⁵⁰ This list gives priority to the sons of Rogǫnĕd', that is, it lists Jaroslav before Svjatopolk, and Vsevolod before Svjatoslav. However, the sequence in List № 3 shows that Svjatopolk was older than Jaroslav, and Svjatoslav older than Vsevolod.

⁵¹ Starting with the Hypatian Chronicle, various redactions of the chronicles connect Stanislav with the second Czech woman.

⁵² For the argumentation that Pozvzd was born of the same mother as Boris and Glěb, see p. 12.

have courted Rogŭnĕd' before then. We do not now exactly when he raped Rogŭnĕd' before her parents' eyes, but this must have happened between 970 and 977, most probably in 975 (when Volodimer was about twenty years old).⁵³ Since Rogŭnĕd''s third son, Jaroslav, was born in 978, her older sons could not have been born later than 976 (Izjaslav) or 977 (Mstislav the elder). If Izjaslav was born in 976, then Volodimer's oldest son, Vyšeslav, must have been born before 976. The rape of Rogŭnĕd' could not have taken place earlier than 975. From this analysis it may be concluded that Volodimer married his first wives, the first Czech woman and Rogŭnĕd', in 975. Volodimer's youngest sons—Stanislav, Pozvizard, and Sudislav—were born between 981 (not earlier, since they are not mentioned in the 980 list) and 989 (not later than one year after Volodimer's baptism in 988). We can now summarize our conclusions about Volodimer's marriages with his five chief wives before his baptism. Volodimer took his first two wives (Czech woman I and Rogŭnĕd') in 975. He married the Greek woman ca. 977. Because the oldest son of the second Czech woman (whose name was probably Malŭfrĕd') was born in 978, we can conclude that Volodimer married her in 977. Similarly we can say that he married the Bulgarian woman ca. 978, since the birth of Boris can be dated ca. 979.

5. THE FOREIGN POLICY OF VOLODIMER THE GREAT

In the Middle Ages, as in modern times for that matter, marriages of rulers were dictated by political considerations. So it was in Volodimer's case. Polock was an important center of Baltic trade situated close to the Lithuanian frontier. For Novgorod it was imperative to have control over Polock. This was the reason why Novgorod's policy-maker, Dobrynja, engineered the campaign that culminated in the destruction of Rogvolod's entire dynasty, whose sole survivor, Rogŭnĕd', became Volodimer's wife.⁵⁴ A striking feature of Volodimer's matrimonial situation is the fact that he married two Czech wives. They were probably members of the Premyslid dynasty. This would indicate that in the earliest stage of his political career Volodimer found an alliance with Bohemia of prime importance. Why? An attempt will be made to answer this question. Economic factors undoubtedly played a role. Prague was a very notable center of medieval trade. From the third quarter of the ninth century the important Kiev-Regensburg trade route passed through the Bohemian capital.⁵⁵ For Novgorod, which was linked

⁵³ At Volodimer's birth (ca. 955) his father, Svjatoslav, was probably not older than twenty-three. By Igor's death (944) he had still not reached his maturity (13 years). Volodimer was Svjatoslav's son third known to us.

⁵⁴ On Volodimer's activity in the Varangian lands see Pritsak, "On the Chronology," pp. 28–32.

⁵⁵ See Fritz Rörig, *Die europäische Stadt und die Kultur des Bürgertums im Mittelalter* (Göttingen, 1964), p. 17.

with Kiev by the Dnieper river, participation in Central European trade was very important. This was probably the reason why Volodimer gave Novgorod to his half-Czech son, Vyšeslav.

There was, however, another reason for Volodimer's desire for friendly relations with Bohemia, particularly at the time when he was preparing to seize the Kievan seat. In 955 the might of the Magyars was finally broken in the battle on the Lech River near Augsburg. This event, which put an end to the devastating Magyar attacks, was of great, even crucial, significance for Europe and Rus'. From this Magyar defeat there emerged two victors. The first was Otto of Saxony, whose prestige as conqueror of the Magyars enabled him to accomplish the "renovatio Imperii Romani" in 961. The second was Otto's vassal and ally, Boleslav I of Bohemia (929-967). Boleslav took advantage of the vacuum which resulted from the Magyar defeat and, evidently with the consent of his protector, occupied a large part of the territory of the former Moravian Realm. Thus, after 955 the Czech Premyslid state replaced the Magyars on the south-western frontier of Rus'. From 965 this Czech state became allied with Mieszko I of Poland who married Dubravka, the daughter of Boleslav I, and was baptized in the following year (966). After Dubravka's death (977), however, relations between her brother, Boleslav II (967-999), and Mieszko I became strained, evidently because Mieszko I laid claim to a part of the territory of the former Moravian Realm. In this situation Volodimer's first political-military action as prince of Kiev was the famous campaign against the Ljachs (Poles) and the occupation of Peremyšl (which evidently had been founded by the Premyslids) and the so-called Červen towns (981).

In this undertaking Volodimer must have acted in agreement with Boleslav II of Bohemia, whose daughter it was that he probably married. We have already seen that Volodimer took his second Czech wife (Malъfrěd') in 977. This could not have been a fortuitous choice, but the result of a Czech-Rus'ian alliance directed against the aggressive Mieszko. There is also reason to believe that Volodimer was an active participant in internal Czech affairs. The *PVL* states laconically that in 992: "Иде Володимеръ на Хорваты,"⁵⁶ "Volodimer marched against the Croats." Speculations about the exact identity of these Croats has created a voluminous literature. Yet none of the solutions proposed thus far is very convincing, particularly the hypothesis involving the "White Croats" of Galicia of which so many historians have become enamored. The only real (and not ephemeral) Croats in the Eastern Europe of the time were the Slavniki dynasty, rivals of the Premyslids, who until 995 played an important role in Bohemian politics and ruled over half of the Czech lands. They are the only ones to whom the Rus'ian chronicler could possibly have referred. Indeed, the most important problem of Boleslav II's reign was his struggle with the Slavniki. In 995 he

⁵⁶ *PVL*, ed. D. S. Lixačev, vol. 1, p. 84.

finally destroyed all members of this dynasty (except St. Voytech-Adalbert). But the road leading to Boleslav's triumph must have been paved with a number of military undertakings. One of these was Volodimer's campaign against the Croats (the Slavniki) in 992. The second event of international significance at the time was the Byzantine offensive against Bulgaria, which began in the years 967–972. Volodimer's father, Svjatoslav, was actively involved in it and for a brief period even occupied a part of the Bulgarian state. This involvement finally cost Svjatoslav his life. Among Svjatoslav's prisoners captured in 969 was the Bulgarian tsar Boris II (969–973; d. 979), whom Svjatoslav kept in honorable captivity in Preslav. From 972 he was a prisoner of the Byzantines under similar conditions. In 976 the Kometopuli brothers (David, Moses, Aaron, and Samuel) raised the banner of revolt in Bulgaria. Boris II and his brother, Roman, fled from Constantinople in order to join the rebels. As a result of a tragic misunderstanding Boris II was killed shortly after, but Roman, whom the Byzantines had castrated in order to incapacitate him as a possible ruler, remained with the rebels until his death in 997.

M. D. Priselkov has suggested that the choice of names for Volodimer's sons by the Bulgarian woman, Boris/Roman and Glěb/David, was not accidental.⁵⁷ The older son (born ca. 979, but in any case before the death of Boris II in this year) received the names of the two Bulgarian tsars who had only recently escaped from Byzantine captivity—Boris (as his princely name) and Roman (as his baptismal name). The princely name of the younger son was Scandinavian—Glěb (Guðleifr), but his baptismal name was David, the name of the oldest of the Kometopuli brothers. The Kievan metropolitan (Ioann I) (ca. 1007–ca. 1020), himself a Bulgarian, composed a service in honor of Saints Boris and Glěb in which he attributed to Boris imperial prerogatives: Цесарьскимъ вѣнцемъ отъ уности украшенъ, пребогатыи Романе, власть велия бысть своему отечеству и веси твари (“Adorned from youth with the imperial crown, o rich Roman, may your power be great in your patrimony and over all creatures”).⁵⁸ This eulogy becomes even more significant if we remember that the Bulgarian rulers Symeon and Peter (the father of Boris II and Peter) had the official title of “emperor” (tsar) that even Byzantium recognized.

From these facts it may be concluded that Volodimer's Bulgarian wife was a member of the Bulgarian ruling dynasty, probably the daughter of Peter I (927–969) and thus the sister of Boris II and Roman. Volodimer's dynastic ties with Bohemia and Bulgaria were immensely significant for the

⁵⁷ *Ocerki po cerkovno-političeskoj istorii Kievskoj Rusi X–XII vv.* (St. Petersburg, 1913), p. 56.

⁵⁸ D. Abramovyč (D. I. Abramovič), *Žitija svjatyx mučenikov Borisa i Glěba i sluzby im* (Petrograd, 1916), pp. 136–137. About the Metropolitan Ioann see Teofil Kostruba, “Kyjiv'skyj mytropolyt Ivan (ok. 1007 – ok. 1020),” *Narysy z cerkovnoji istoriji Ukrajinj X–XIII stolittja*, 2nd ed. (Toronto, 1955), pp. 19–26.

cultural history of Eastern Europe. In both countries, particularly in Bulgaria, the great Moravian traditions continued to play their creative role. They particularly found expression in the Slavonic Rite of Saints Cyril and Methodius, who raised the Slavonic tongue to the status of a sacred language. This also served to determine the character of the Christian rite in Rus' and the culture for which it served as the foundation. The fact could not have escaped Volodimer the statesman that the most powerful rulers of Europe in his time were the two Christian emperors and the head of Christendom, the pope. This influenced the direction of his diplomatic activity, for Volodimer decided to enter into relations with all three. Thus, he took advantage of the difficulties created for Emperor Basil II of Byzantium by the pretender Bardas Phocas to demand the porphyrogenita Anna in marriage. This only act paid Volodimer vast dividends, and not only in his relations with Byzantium. The Western Empire at this time was ruled by Theophano (d. 991), regent for the child-emperor Otto III (983–1002), who was a close relative of Anna. Volodimer's direct relations with the popes, John XV (985–996), Gregory V (996–999), and Sylvester II (999–1003), date from the same period. When Anna died in 1011, Volodimer took a German wife the following year. This was the third daughter of Chuno Welf von Oeningen and the granddaughter of Otto I.⁵⁹

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⁵⁹ Cf. Il'in, *Letopisnaja stat'ja 6523 goda*, p. 115.

Appendix I
The Wives and Sons of Volodimer before His Baptism

Rogǫnĕd' m. ca. 975 d. 1000	Czech Woman I m. ca. 975 d. ?	Greek Woman m. ca. 977 d. ?	Czech Woman II Malĕřfrĕd' m. ca. 977 d. 1000	Bulgarian Woman m. ca. 978 d. ?
	1) Vyšeslav b. ca. 976 d. 1010			
2) Izjaslav b. ca. 976 d. 1001				
3) Mstislav (the older) b. ca. 977 d. before 979				
		4) Svjatopolk b. ca. 978 d. 1019		
5) Jaroslav/ Georgij b. 978 d. 1054				
			6) Svjatoslav b. ca. 978 d. 1015	
7) Vsevolod b. ca. 979 d. 995/98				
			8) Mstislav/ Konstantin (the younger) b. 979, d. 1036	
				9) Boris/Roman b. ca. 979 d. 1015
				10) Glĕb/David b. ca. 980 d. 1015
			11) Stanislav b. ca. 981/87 d. before 1036	
				12) Pozvizd/ Vasil'ko b. ca. 981/87 d. 1015

*Volodimer had thirteen sons. According to List № 2, the youngest was Sudislav. Neither the identity of Sudislav's mother, however, nor the date of his birth has been established.

APPENDIX II

*The System of Government and Chronology of Reigns of Volodimer's Sons*I. *Personal Domain of Volodimer*

Sons "at father's side" 988–995/98 Pozvizr
 986–1010 Glēb
 1010–1015 Stanislav
 Sudislav

A. Capital Domain of Kiev/Berestovo:

1015 Stanislav, Sudislav
 1015–1016 Svjatopolk
 1016–1017 Boris
 1017 Jaroslav
 1017–1019 Svjatopolk (second time)
 1019–1023 Jaroslav (second time)
 1024–1036 Stanislav, Sudislav
 1036–1041 Jaroslav (third time)
 1041–1044 Brjačeslav Izjaslavič of Polock
 1044–1054 Jaroslav (fourth time)

B. Domains under the direct control of Kiev/Berestovo:

	Smolensk		Pskov
ca. 1010–1036	Stanislav	ca. 1010–1036	Sudislav

II. *Four Appanages of Volodimer's Sons*

Novgorod	Rostov	Volodimer	Murom
Vyšeslav	Jaroslav	Vsevolod	Boris
988–1010	988–1010	988–995/98	988–995/98
		Boris	Pozvizr
		995/98–1010	995/98–1010
Jaroslav	Boris	Pozvizr	Glēb, Boris
1010–1036	1010–1015	1010–1015(?)	1010–1015

III. *Vassal Provinces with Dynasties of Volodimer's Sons*

Polock	Turov	Derevljanian land	Tmutorokan'
Izjaslav	Svjatopolk	Svjatoslav	Mstislav
988–1001	988–1019	988–1015	younger (capital at Černigov)
Brjačeslav			988–1036
1001–1044			
Izjaslavič			