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# Kings of Kiev and Galicia

(On the occasion of the 700th anniversary of the coronation of Danilo Romanovich)

MYKOLA ANDRUSIAK

## I

HISTORICAL records concerning the origin of the East Slavonic (specifically Ukrainian) state go as far back as the 4th century of the Christian era. The Goths, who in the 3rd century had invaded the Dnieper basin and subdued the local Slavonic tribes, were defeated by the Huns in 372. Thereupon these tribes, whom the Gothic historian Jordanes as well as Byzantine writers of the 6th century call 'Antes', established an independent state. Hermanarich, the Gothic king, committed suicide rather than become subordinate to the Huns, and his successor, Winitar, according to Jordanes, also refused to recognise the overlordship of the Huns, succeeded in defeating them, and 'set out with his army to conquer the lands of the Antes'.

At first, he did not succeed, but in course of time he overcame the Antes, captured their king Boz along with seventy of his nobles, and had them all crucified as a lesson to his subjects. Jordanes uses the title 'rex' for both Germanic 'kuning' and the ruler of the Antes. It is fair to assume that already at that time the Eastern Slavs had taken from the Goths the title '\*kuning-' for a ruler and had slavised it to 'kūnędzi' (Ukr. *knyaz'*); consequently, the Old Church Slavonic 'kūnędzi' was translated by Jordanes as 'rex'.

## II

From that time on, the Eastern Slavs used the title 'knyazi' to denote their tribal chiefs. In the 8th century, however, the West Slavonic tribes came under the domination of the Frankish king Charlemagne, whom Leo III subsequently crowned as the West Roman emperor. In consequence of the vassalage of the West Slavonic princes to Charlemagne, there came into use among the Western Slavs the title 'kral' derived from his name, Karl (Carolus) to indicate a sovereign ruler. As a matter of fact, in Rus', too, the term 'knyaz' signified a sovereign. Accordingly Nestor's Chronicle calls both the Hungarian Stephen (István) and the Polish Bolesław 'knyazi', although they had received their royal crowns from other potentates, the former from the pope and the latter from the West Roman emperor Otto III. Yet already, before the formation of Rus', with Kiev as its capital, Bertin's *Annales* include the statement

that in 839 the Byzantine emperor Theophilus had sent ambassadors to the Frankish king Louis the Pious; together with Theophilus's ambassadors there came also delegates from the king of the tribe 'Ros', Hakan by name, who had arrived earlier in Constantinople, where they introduced themselves as being of 'Sveonian' stock. From this first mention of the sojourn of the tribe 'Ros' in Constantinople, it is hard to make out whether 'Hakan' was the distorted Scandinavian name 'Haakon' or the Khazar title 'kagan', which was used by the Metropolitan of Kiev, Ilarion, in his eulogy of Vladimir the Great.

### III

Both the Scandinavian and the Icelandic sagas call Vladimir (Volodimer) the Great 'konungr' of 'Garðaríki'. Again, in his chronicle of the West Roman emperors of the Saxon dynasty (three Ottos), Bishop Thietmar of Merseburg (975–1018) refers to Vladimir (or to his son Yaroslav the Wise) as 'Ruscorum-Ruscuorum-Ruscenorum rex', i.e. 'King of the Ruthenians'.<sup>1</sup> In the registers of the documents of the Byzantine emperors as published by F. Doergler, there is a brief notice to the effect that on 11 October 989 the Byzantine emperor Basil II had sent envoys consisting of the Metropolitan of Ephesus, the Eparch of Antioch, and several bishops and monks to Vladimir in Kiev, i.e. envoys whose mission it was to hand Vladimir a crown and the other regal insignia, as well as to present to him the imperial princess Anna as his bride.<sup>2</sup>

There is no doubt that the coronation of Vladimir as king-emperor took place simultaneously with his marriage to Princess Anna. Petro Isayiv's argument<sup>3</sup> that the Byzantine envoys had brought with them only a crown and that the papal envoys crowned him as late as A.D. 1000 cannot be substantiated, for nowhere in the extant historical records is there any mention of Vladimir's coronation by papal legates; also, it is difficult to assume that the Byzantine emperor had instructed his bishops merely to deliver the crown and to postpone the coronation itself until it could be effected by envoys from Rome, the ecclesiastical rival of Byzantium in the Slavonic countries. The very tradition of Vladimir's imperial crown was preserved in Constantinople down to the 16th century, when the Patriarch of that city referred to it in his official document of 1561 by which the imperial title of Tsar Ivan IV was confirmed.

<sup>1</sup> Andrei Mykytiak, 'Traces of Old Rusj Abroad' (*Keryx*, No. 4, Stamford, 1951, III, p. 20).

<sup>2</sup> F. Doergler, *Corpus der griechischen Urkunden des Mittelalters und der neueren Zeit*. Reihe A. Regesten, Abt. I. Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches, Teil I.—Regesten 565–1026, Munich-Berlin, 1924.

<sup>3</sup> 'Was Volodymir the Great Crowned?' (*Way*, nos. 33–6, Philadelphia, 1949).

## IV

Yet Russian scholars, notorious for misrepresenting the history of Eastern Europe, have deliberately distorted that tradition as well; and so it was not to Vladimir the Great that the Byzantine imperial crown was sent; but, on the contrary, this event is supposed to have occurred in the 12th century, when the Emperor Constantine Monomachus transmitted the crown to Vladimir Monomakh, Grand Prince of Kiev, with the proviso that the coronation should be delayed till such time as God appointed a tsar. That mysterious tsar appears to have been Ivan IV. Accordingly, on the eve of his coronation, there was allegedly 'recovered' in Moscow the imperial headgear, or so-called 'Monomakh's cap', the shape of which has nothing in common with that of the Byzantine crown, but is rather one of Muscovite make, fashioned after the headgear of the Tartar (Mongol) khans.

The question arises, why did the writers of the Kiev annals after 1039, or at least Nestor, the compiler of *Povest' vremennykh let*, pass over in silence the coronation of Vladimir the Great at a time when its tradition was still fresh? My opinion is that the annalists did this, because after the death of Vladimir the Great his crown came into the hands of the fratricidal Svyatopolk the Damned, who in his flight from Kiev before the wrath of Yaroslav the Wise took the crown with him and apparently lost it. Accordingly both the coronation of the fratricide with the crown of his father and its subsequent disappearance were acts whose sacrilegious nature filled the annalists with dismay; therefore, in order not to mention the fate of the crown, they also remained reticent about the coronation of Vladimir himself. Starting with Yaroslav the Wise, the successors of Vladimir to the throne of Kiev undoubtedly held the Christian coronation ceremony as well, without Vladimir's crown to be sure, but with the blessing of the metropolitan; and after the same pattern the coronation ceremonies of the vassal princes were also performed.

## V

In an article, which appeared in *Chervona Kalyna* twenty years ago,<sup>4</sup> Theophil Kostruba considers Yaropolk Izyaslavich as 'the first king of the Ukraine'. In reality, however, Yaropolk presented himself to Pope Gregory VII in April 1057 only as the ambassador of his father, Grand Prince Izyaslav I, who had been expelled from Kiev by his younger brothers, Prince Svyatoslav of Chernigov and Prince

<sup>4</sup> See *Chervona Kalyna*, L'vov, c. middle 1930's, and recently reprinted in *The Ukrainian Toiler*, XX, no. 24, Toronto, 24 June 1953.

Vsevolod of Pereyaslavl'. On behalf of his father, Yaropolk requested the pope to grant the ousted prince the 'Ruthenian kingdom' as vassal of St Peter, and at the same time he lodged a complaint against the Polish king Bolesław the Bold, who had taken money from Izyaslav, but had not been able to put him in renewed possession of Kiev. In reply, the pope conveyed to Izyaslav the assurance that he would take Yaropolk as Ruthenian king under his protection, and in another bull, addressed to Bolesław, he ordered the Polish king to return the money to Izyaslav. Thus, at that time, the pope did not bestow any royal dignity on Yaropolk; nor did Yaropolk-Peter ever settle in Kiev to become the 'Ruthenian king'; he remained a vassal prince, first in Turov and later in Vladimir. True, in the last year of his reign, Izyaslav kept his son within reach in Vyshegrad, near Kiev. But after Izyaslav's death Vsevolod of Pereyaslavl' became grand prince of Kiev and limited Yaropolk's authority in Western Ukraine by carving out the principality of Dorogobuzh for David Igorevich, and those of Peremyshl', Zvenigorod and Terebovl' for Ryurik, Volodar' and Vasil'ko, the Rostislavichi.

While campaigning from Vladimir against Zvenigorod in 1087, Yaropolk was assassinated by some 'accursed villain'. The *Psalterium Trevirense* contains prayers said by Yaropolk's mother Gertrude (a Polish-born princess) for her murdered son. Among the pictures in this psalter there is one which shows Christ crowning Yaropolk. Kostruba regards this scene as proof of Yaropolk's coronation by the pope; to my thinking, it is Christ who, in answer to Gertrude's prayers, places on the head of Yaropolk-Peter the crown of a martyr.

From the *Life of St Marian, Abbot of Regensburg* we learn that a monk, Maurice by name, had set out for Kiev, to the 'Ruthenian king', in order to secure a subsidy for the erection of the monastery of St James and St Gertrude in Regensburg. Father Maurice was graciously received by the king and his prominent boyars and presented with expensive furs worth about 100 marks. Maurice's journey to Kiev took place in 1119-25, and the 'king' in question was Vladimir Monomakh.

Thirty silver marks (grivnas) for the benefit of the Benedictine Monastery under the patronage of St Peter in Erfurt were donated by Roman, 'King of the Ruthenians', designated in our Galician-Volynian Chronicle as 'Autocrat and Emperor of all Rus'. After his death, the Hungarian king Andrew (András) II (1205-35), as 'guardian' of Roman's young sons, began to style himself 'King of Galicia and Lodomeria', by which he admitted that the Galician-Volynian state was a sovereign kingdom.

## VI

Writing even earlier than Kostruba, Mykola Chubaty<sup>5</sup> alludes to a papal message to the 'Ruthenian kings', all of whom he sees in the person of the Galician prince Danilo. In mentioning this message (dated 1231) from Gregory IX 'illustri regi Russiae' (p. 28), Chubaty observes that the 'king' addressed could have been Danilo as the mightiest among the contemporary Ukrainian rulers (p. 29).

At the beginning of the 1230's Danilo fought with changing fortune against the Hungarian occupants of Galicia, who were supported by some local boyars under the leadership of Sudislav; at the same time Danilo was at war with his cousin, Prince Aleksandr Vsevolodovich of Belz. In this war on two fronts, Danilo received help from Vladimir IV, Grand Prince of Kiev, a younger son of Roman's father-in-law, Rurik Rostislavich. Beyond any doubt, the above-mentioned letter was addressed by the pope to Vladimir IV, whose concern was to win the metropolitan see of Kiev over to union with Rome. Another papal message 'Ioanni, illustri regi Russiae', seems to refer to Izyaslav IV, son of Mstislav III, who was tortured to death by the Tartars on the Kalka river. In 1235, Izyaslav succeeded Vladimir IV, who returned in the following year for the second time to his capital.

## VII

But the prospect of the union of Kiev with Rome gained in actuality only after the first Tartar invasion of the Ukraine (1240). The union was favoured by the Grand Prince of Kiev, Mikhail Vsevolodovich (of the Ol'govichi in Chernigov), whose son Rostislav married the daughter of the Hungarian king Albert (Béla) IV. For ten years (1235-45), Rostislav sought with the aid of the Hungarians and the Poles to seize Danilo's Galicia for himself. But the attempt failed.

In the meantime, Mikhail sent Peter Akerovich, Metropolitan of Kiev, to the Council of the Roman Catholic Church at Lyons (1245); through union with Rome, Mikhail intended to secure an alliance with Western Europe against the Tartars. It seems that the Tartar khan had taken cognizance of Mikhail's design (possibly thanks to the prince of Suzdal', Yaroslav Vsevolodovich, who by the grace of Khan Batu had become ruler of Kiev in 1246); for the khan summoned him to come to the seraglio and, in token of purification from evil intentions, to pass two fire-ordeals and pay homage to the protective spirits of the khan's ancestors. Mikhail, however, refused to

<sup>5</sup> See 'Western Ukraine and Rome in the 13th Century' (*Memoirs of the Shevchenko Scientific Society*, CXXIII-CXXIV, L'vov, 1917).

yield and consequently died of torture. Like Mstislav III, who on the Kalka river was crushed to pulp by the Tartars (1223), Mikhail too has been put by the Orthodox Church in its calendar of saints as a martyr of the Christian faith.

When Innocent IV wrote in his edict of 3 May 1246 (issued in connection with the declaration made by the Metropolitan Peter before the Council of Lyons) to the 'Ruthenian king' in the following terms: 'Therefore We have decided to patronise you and your kingdom, as one recently acquired, with singular grace and favour, and gladly lend Our ear to your pledges and petitions'; when he took the 'Ruthenian king and his State under the protection of St Peter'; and when he sent to the court of the 'Ruthenian king' two Dominican monks as his legates—that 'Ruthenian king' was already dead. Chubaty as well as Mykola Holubec<sup>6</sup> therefore wrongly maintain that 'rex Russiae' was Danilo.

## VIII

Negotiations between Danilo and Vasil'ko Romanovich on the one hand and Rome on the other did not begin before Plano Carpini, papal legate to the Tartars, had passed through the Ukraine in 1246–1247. On his return from the khan, Carpini was joined by Danilo's ambassadors who, as 'legati Danielis regis Russiae', are mentioned by the pope in his message of 13 September 1247. But already on 27 August of the same year, the pope addressed his letter 'illustri regi Russiae Danieli'. Chubaty is of the opinion (*op. cit.*, p. 50) that from the very beginning of the negotiations the pope had planned to crown Danilo, on the grounds that in all his correspondence the former had treated Danilo as 'rex' and not 'dux'. In my opinion, however, this distinction emanated from the papal recognition of Danilo as sovereign ruler, just as the grand princes of Kiev had been called kings in the papal bulls. Even the bull in which the pope took Danilo's family under his protection was addressed 'Danieli Russiae et Vasilko Laudomeriae, fratri eius, regibus'. In another bull of 14 May 1253, the pope summoned the Christians of Poland, Bohemia, Moravia, Lusatia, and Pomerania to embark on a campaign against the Tartars and thus to help 'nostrum filium, illustrem regem Russiae', i.e. Danilo. Unfortunately, none of them was inclined to succour Danilo, who was subsequently crowned in December 1253 by the papal legate Opison at Dorogichin, on the Bug river.

Taking into consideration the fact that, from the very beginning of their exchange of letters, Innocent IV called Danilo 'rex Russiae', Danilo's coronation did not actually promote him from prince to

<sup>6</sup> See *Greater History of the Ukraine*, p. 254.

king. After the tragic death of the Kiev grand prince—the 'Ruthenian king'—Mikhail, the pope regarded Danilo as sovereign ruler of the Ukraine, entered into negotiations with him concerning the union of the Church of his realm with Rome; and when Danilo assented to such union—on condition that he should receive help from Roman Catholic countries against the Tartars—the pope ordered his legate to crown Danilo, thus indicating that he was taking the Ruthenian king under his protection.

But when none of the Western rulers displayed any willingness to aid Danilo in shaking off the Tartar yoke, our king also delayed proclaiming the union of the Church of his country with Rome. This being the case, Alexander IV, in his bull of 1257, charged Danilo with failing to live up to his covenant and appealed to the loyal Roman Catholic rulers to force Danilo to bring about the union with Rome. Yet, like the call of Innocent IV to help Danilo, this demand of Alexander IV fell on deaf ears. Realising the utter indifference of Western rulers towards the defence of his country against the Tartars, Danilo considered it expedient to break his ties with Rome, so as not to provoke the Tartars.

## IX

After Danilo's death, the Latin title 'rex' was appropriated by the princes of Galicia and Lodomeria in the official documents they sent to Western Europe. So Prince Yury L'vovich calls himself 'rex Russiae et dux Lodomeriae'. There is, however, no documentary evidence to the effect that he had renewed relations with the pope or had had any negotiations with him about the union, as has been asserted by Mykola Holubec<sup>7</sup> and Volodymyr Maciak.<sup>8</sup> The latter now denies what he himself wrote in his publication 'New Light on the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria in 1290–1340' (Augsburg, 1948, p. 19). Yury I's grandson (his daughter's son), Boleslav Yury II, styled himself merely 'Prince of Rus' (or sometimes 'Little Rus'), but his successor, Prince Dmytro Ded'ko, in his message to the council and merchants of Toruń (Thorn) calls his predecessor the 'Ruthenian king'. Again, Ded'ko's contemporary, the Hungarian king, Louis (Lajos) I, makes a distinction between 'Ruthenian kingdom' and the kingdom of Hungary.<sup>9</sup>

The documentary fragments we have quoted, although incomplete, nevertheless sufficiently justify the conclusion that in authentic West European sources both our grand princes of Kiev in the pre-Tartar period and the Romanovichi of Galicia and Lodomeria were invariably styled 'kings'. For this very reason all historians, in such

<sup>7</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 265.

<sup>8</sup> *The Ukrainian Toiler*, no. 2, 5 June 1953.

<sup>9</sup> See Holubec, *op. cit.*, p. 336.

treatises as are written in West European languages (including West Slavonic ones), should use this nomenclature. The customary literal translation of our term 'knyaz' has hitherto been apt to prompt the Western world to adopt the misleading view that our rulers were not sovereign.<sup>10</sup>

*(Translated by A. MYKYTIAK)*

<sup>10</sup> These valuable findings of the author with regard to the imperial status of Kiev and the royal status of Galicia (Halych) are confirmed in the official titles of the Russian tsars and the Austrian emperors. Thus, Catherine II called herself 'Empress and Autocrat of Kiev' (cf. her ukases of 15 December 1762 and 25 July 1763), while the Russian tsars of the 19th century put first 'All-Russian Autocrat' and then 'Emperor of . . . Kiev' (preceded by Moscow). And on the basis of the Austro-Hungarian Compromise (1867), the titles of Francis Joseph and Charles I included that of 'King of Galicia and Lodomeria', i.e. the title used by the Hungarian kings since Andrew II. (Translator's note.)