

ISTORIYA RUSOV AND ITS AUTHOR

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More than a hundred years have passed since *Istoriya Rusov* — the historical legend of the Ukraine¹ — was published, and still the endless conjectures, research and critical work as to its author continues.² Already it has its own history and its own literature. Critical works as to the sources, the time of writing, and the author are numerous.

The first manuscripts of *Istoriya Rusov* were found in the first quarter of the last century, and for nearly forty years Yuriy Konys'ky, a White Russian Archbishop, was considered the author. A period of examination, critical investigation, and research began which continues until today. In his Preface the author conceals his name with unusual skill, referring to the names of eminent historians and political personalities of the latter half of the eighteenth century. One was Yuriy Konys'ky, the Archbishop of White Russia, famous for his historical and polemical works against the Poles and the Church Union; the other, Hryhory Poletyka, an able historian, a defender of the rights and freedom of the Ukraine and the Ukrainian nobility, and a delegate to the *Komissiya novovo ulozheniya* in 1767. It is interesting to note that the writer does not state that they are the authors; rather, he so merges the name of Konys'ky in the text that the editing, emendations, and confirmation of the authenticity is attributed to him and receives the sanction of his clerical authority. Its comparison to other chronicles, its evaluation as the best and most authentic, and its use in the *Komissiya novovo ulozheniya* is cleverly attributed to Hryhory Poletyka. In this manner, the author plants the idea in the reader's

¹ A phrase of Professor Borschak.

² The most recent works on *Istoriya Rusov* and its author:

A. Yakovliv, "Do pytannya pro avtora *Istoriyi Rusov*," *Zapysky NTSh*, Vol. 154, L'viv, 1937.

M. Voznyak, "Psevdo-Konys'ky i psevdo-Poletyka," *Istoriya Rusov v Literaturi i nausti*, vydannya Ukr. mogulyans'ko-mazepins-koyi akademiyi nauk, Pratsi viddilu ukrayinoznavstva, III, I'viv-Kiev, 1939.

O. Ohloblyn, "Khto buy avtorom *Istoriyi Rusov?*," *Nashi dni, Krakiv*, XI, 1943; "Do pytannya pro avtora *Istorii Rusov*," *Ukrayina*, ch. 2, Paris, 1949.

E. Borschak, *La Légende historique de l'Ukraine*, Paris, 1949.

mind that one, or both, of these men were responsible for the *Istoriya Rusov*, and he achieved his purpose of concealing the true identity of the author for many years. Thus, the first copies and the edition published by O. Bodyans'ky were called "*Istoriya Rusov* by Yuriy Kony's'ky." A. von der Bringen was the first to consider Yu. Kony's'ky the author of *Istoriya Rusov*. Others, Ryleyev, M. Maksymovich, V. Belinsky, A. Pushkin, N. Gogol, Bantysh-Kamensky, Sreznevsky, Kostomarov, T. Shevchenko, P. Kulish, O. Bodyansky, Klevanov, Archbishop Filaret, and, at one time, O. Lazarev's'ky, followed his example.

In the sixties of the nineteenth century, scholars refused to accept Kony's'ky as the author and turned to Hryhory Poletyka. Michael Maksymovich was the first to voice his doubts. In his opinion, Kony's'ky was not and could not have been the author of *Istoriya Rusov*, because the author, in many places, reveals definite anticlerical views. In 1874, Professor V. Ikonnikov suggested Hryhory Poletyka as the author. O. Lazarev's'ky ardently supported this position in many of his works. At one time, M. Voznyak, and later M. Hrushevsky, N. Vasylenko, O. Yablonovsky, D. Doroshenko, and Horban' also agreed with this assertion. V. Horlenko and, then, M. Drahomanov, A. Storozhenko, L. Yanovsky, and, of late, E. Borschak have viewed Vasyl', the son of H. Poletyka, as the author. M. Horban' resolutely opposed this, stating that in V. Poletyka's essay "On the Origin, Lineage, and Merits of the Little Russian Nobility" he had virtually copied the entire historical section from his father's notes. O. Lazarev's'ky advanced the hypothesis that the author was both the Poletykas. L. Maykov, Onatsky, and N. Vasylenko in part, later supported this.

Recent scholarship has rejected these views. Scholars, studying the text of *Istoriya Rusov* and the lives of the people named in the Preface, seek for the author outside the Poletyka family. In 1925 Professor Slabchenko advanced the opinion that the author was Oleksander Bezborod'ko.³ P. Klepats'ky, using O. Bezborod'ko's letter to his father, Andriy Bezborod'ko, dated March 31, 1778, as a basis, supported him.⁴ M. Voznyak and A. Yakovliv

³ M. Slabchenko, *Materialy do ekonomichno-sotsiyal'noyi istoriyi Ukrayiny XIX st.*, Vol. I.

⁴ P. Klepats'ky, "Lystuvannya O. Bezborod'ka z bat'kom, yak istorychnye dzherelo," *Yubyl. zbirnyk VUAN no poshanu M. Hrushevs'koho*, Vol. I.

analyzed the problem in detail and unearthed more proof that the author was Bezborod'ko.⁵ Although they worked on the same problem at the same time (the former worked in Lviv, the latter in Prague in the period 1933-1935), they arrived at their conclusions independently.

Finally, Professor O. Ohloblyn stated in his article that the author was Opanas Lobysevych, while others cautiously expressed their opinion that Prince Repnin and V. Lukashevich were the authors. However, the latter did not substantiate their assertions.

Scholars, believing the author to be anonymous, did not research the ideas of *Istoriya Rusov*, nor did they seek the original manuscript. Twenty years after the publication of *Istoriya Rusov*, M. Maksymovich began to search for the original, but without success. Another twenty-five years passed and in 1891, O. Lazarev's'ky in an article "A Conjecture as to the Author of *Istoriya Rusov*"⁶ wrote that "a few days ago," i.e., in 1891, an eighty-five year old man, A. I. Khanenko (1805-1896), had told him how and under what circumstances the manuscript of *Istoriya Rusov* was discovered "about 1828." It was found while taking an inventory of the Hryniiv estate in the Starodub district which had belonged to O. Bezborod'ko.⁷ S. Laykevich and O. Hamilia, who took the inventory probably in the absence of the new owner, found the manuscript in the Hryniiv library and showed it to S. M. Shiray, the Marshal of the Chernihiv Nobility. The latter made a copy of it for himself and returned the manuscript to the library. Some of the Starodub landowners made copies from this for themselves, e.g., Yakiv Poletyka, the grandson of H. Poletyka. Later, Shiray sent his copy to Bantysh-Kamensky; A. Khanenko made a copy from the copy of Poletyka and sent it to O. Bodyansky, the publisher of *Istoriya Rusov*.

⁵ See footnote 2.

⁶ A. Lazarevsky, "Dogadka ob avtore Istoriyi Rusov," *Kievskaya starina*, 1891, No. 4, p. 113.

⁷ After O. Bezborod'ko died (1799), the estate passed into the hands of his brother, Count Ilia Bezborod'ko. Then, as a dowry, the estate was given to his son-in-law, Prince Lobanov-Rostovsky; in 1828 it passed into the hands of Prince Golitsin. The inventory of the estate was conducted by the members of the Starodub court, S. Laykevich and O. Hamilia, according to court procedure.

This story of Khanenko is interesting for its information on the discovery of the manuscript "about 1828" by the court officials, i.e., those making an inventory of the Hryniv estate. In addition, we know who made copies of the manuscript for themselves and to whom it was afterward sent. However, the story also raises the possibility that copies of the manuscript of *Istoriya Rusov* existed prior to the inventory, since any arrangements for copying the manuscript were made privately.

In his monograph, M. Voznyak actually quotes A. F. von der Briggens letter of October 21, 1825 to Ryleyev. It is evident from this letter that Briggens, a Chernihiv landowner, had previously informed Ryleyev about *Istoriya Rusov*. An excerpt was enclosed in this letter and he told Ryleyev that he intended to publish "Konys'ky," i.e., *Istoriya Rusov*, with critical remarks.⁸ The fact that it was known prior to 1828 is evident in M. Voznyak, who relied on other, earlier copies. He says that there was a copy in the Prosvita Library in Lviv called: "*History of Little Russia*, written by the White Russian Archbishop, Georgy Konys'ky in the . . . year and copied in 1818." This was written on paper watermarked 1817. Its original owner was Yakiv Puhach of the Dniepr region, but Roman Zaklynsky had donated it to the Prosvita Library. Another copy entitled *Istoriya Rusov ili Maloi Rossii* was in the Ukrainian National Museum in Lviv, but it was not complete. It was also written on blue paper with the watermark, 1814. The library of the Society of History and Antiquities in Moscow possessed a copy similar to that of Lviv. It had 265 pages and was dated 1824; its title, "By Georgy Konis'ky, White Russian Archbishop, *Istoriya Rusov ili Maloi Rossii*." The library had received it from Ivan Roskovshenko.⁹

The material quoted by M. Voznyak indicated that prior to the official discovery "about 1828" of the manuscript, other copies were extant. Private arrangements to copy the manuscript were made, evidently with the consent of those who possessed the original copy. After the inventory was completed by the court, this manuscript was returned to the original place. It is uncertain

⁸ Voznyak, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

whether anyone looked for it later in Hryniiv or on the other estates of Prince Golitsin, the new owner.

The original copy disappeared, but other copies were preserved. Later, a printed text of *Istoriya Rusov* was made from the best copy available and variant readings were provided from ten other copies, as its publisher, O. Bodyansky, had attested. The published works of Konysh'ky, and Hryhory and Vasyl' Poletyka are also available. Thus, the content, idea, style, personal characteristics, and turn of phrase of the text of *Istoriya Rusov* can be compared with these works.

However, this was not done for a long time, and it was largely the result of the hypothesis which attributed the authorship to an unknown person. This preconceived notion interfered with all research. Now in rereading this material, written by our own and foreign historians and critics, one wonders how they could have considered, for example, Yuriy Konysh'ky, a respectable Archbishop, a defender of the Orthodox Church in Poland, and a renowned authority on Church history, as the author. The *Istoriya Rusov* contained thoughts and expressions critical of religion, the clergy in general and priests in particular. In describing the so-called "Golden Age" in Poland during the reign of Stefan Batory, the author of *Istoriya Rusov* wrote: "He (Batory) made all the people of his kingdom aware of the spirit of unity and brotherly accord. Controversies about blood, preference, or religions, which often trouble the minds of man, were not apparent among them. Even the clergy, used to debating and the assumption of righteousness, then resembled pure lambs of the Golden Age, or of Adam's Fold, and, what was most delightful, there was perfect harmony of the major religions, the Roman and the Russian."¹⁰

Now, let us examine the following excerpt from *Istoriya Rusov* aimed at the clergy: "Some of the clergy removed themselves directly from that infection, i.e., the Church Union, and others feigned so doing, but they all regretted the loss of their power over the people, which had been given them by the Poles and, in addition, the fifteen families of parishioners who were enslaved and ruled over by the priests, and that every parishioner ought to

¹⁰ *Istoriya Rusov*, p. 28.

confer with the priest as to the ceremonies of the Church: Lenten and Saturday memorial services and wedding ceremonies. In such conferences there were continuous and persuasive pleas of the petitioners to the priest and it was called 'getting the priest's consent' . . . From this a folk saying evolved: 'It is not terrifying to get married, but it is fearful to get the priest's consent.' This villainous tradition . . . continues to this day, and the priests, with their income fixed from above, continue their shameless demands and toll-collections as before . . . and no one speaks or cries out about it."¹¹ At the end of this passage, the author describes how the Catholic and Orthodox bishops substituted for one another in case of absence by a mutual agreement and, thus, ruled over both dioceses, Catholic and Orthodox.

Konys'ky, an Orthodox Archbishop and a respectable Church historian, could not have written anything like this. And, in addition, there are other things in *Istoriya Rusov* which it would have been impossible for Konys'ky to write, since he did not have the necessary knowledge or experience. For example, he could not have discussed in such details the "thirty-four Cossack battles" against the Poles, international politics, treaties, the international balance of power, neutrality, etc. Nor could he have attempted to relate purely juridical details about the rights of the Cossacks, this "knighthly class," which in all respects was equal to the nobility. The author of *Istoriya Rusov* repeated this idea many times. He polemicizes with those who denied "rights to the knights." Nor could he have written about events in the period from 1760 to 1790 in the Ukraine. Konys'ky was not a witness of these events, but the author of *Istoriya Rusov* was.

When a critical examination of *Istoriya Rusov* began, i.e., an investigation of the sources and a collation of the contents with these incontrovertible historical sources, then immediately the "holy robe of historian was taken off Konys'ky," according to Kulish. This "disrobing" was no sooner completed than the researchers "robed" another person mentioned in the Preface, Hryhory Poletyka. Professor Ikonnikov in 1874 was the first to attribute the authorship to H. Poletyka, but only as an hypothesis. It

¹¹ *Istoriya Rusov*, pp. 38-39.

remained for O. Lazarev's'ky to present the case in all its details. Using the Poletyka archives, he published three articles in 1891 in *Kievskaya starina* under the general title: "Excerpts from the Family Archives of the Poletykas."¹² O. Lazarev's'ky based his assertion that H. Poletyka was the author of *Istoriya Rusov* on external evidence and on Vasyl' Poletyka's letter to Rumyantsev and did not collate the writings of H. Poletyka with the text of *Istoriya Rusov*. The letter was dated November 25, 1812. Vasyl' Poletyka describes a fire which destroyed the large and valuable library of his father, H. Poletyka. He wrote that the library was "collected carefully and with great difficulty by my father in his final days and later by me. The books are mostly on Little Russian history, the writing (of this history) was his aim and, finally, mine." O. Lazarev's'ky used this letter as the basis for his hypothesis that H. Poletyka had begun a history of the Ukraine and that his son, Vasyl', undertook its completion. He added that he found *no traces of this history in the family archives of the Poletykas*. Actually, M. Voznyak pointed out that M. O. Sudienko acquired some of the documents from the Poletyka archives before O. Lazarev's'ky, and, if he had found the *Istoriya Rusov* among them, he would have, undoubtedly, so informed O. Bodyansky, since he shared his discoveries in the field of "ancient Ukrainian writings" with him. Lazarev's'ky bolstered his hypothesis by saying: "The author of *Istoriya Rusov* was an ardent Ukrainian patriot, and so was H. Poletyka." He also supports his case with a passage from *Istoriya Rusov*, the story of the death of Hetman Mnohohrishny. Here, the author of *Istoriya Rusov* relates that Mnohohrishny died "of wounds" and "was buried with great military and church honors in Baturin." In reality, Mnohohrishny died in Siberia, having been banished by the tsar with his family after a trial in Moscow. Lazarev's'ky rationalized this historically incorrect account of the death of Mnohohrishny by saying that Poletyka could not describe Mnohohrishny's fate in accordance with the facts, since a distant relative was married to a daughter of Mnohohrishny. Such authoritative historians as M. Hrushev's'ky and N. Vasylenko sup-

¹² The three articles were: "Proiskhozhdeniye Poletyk," "Shest pisem raznykh lits o bibliotekе Gr. Poletyky," "Dogadka ob avtore *Istoriyi Rusov*."

ported this hypothesis; D. Doroshenko was a particularly fervent follower.

One must admit that H. Poletyka possessed an outstanding knowledge of the history of the Ukraine. Furthermore, he possessed a large library on Ukrainian history, which increased his advantages.¹³ His knowledge of history and his competence as an historian, author, and speaker were amply displayed when he was a delegate from the Lubny nobility to the Commission for Drawing Up a New Code of 1767. As a representative of the nobility, Poletyka was well prepared: he wrote some articles, propositions, notes, and made speeches. He debated with the representative of the Little Russian College, D. Natalin. Academician N. Vasylenko published many of his notes in the first volume of the Ukrainian Archeographical Collection of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1926.¹⁴ The remaining notes were published in other editions.

Those scholars who proposed H. Poletyka as the author tried to bulwark their assertions by saying that the various political and historical views, which are scattered throughout his writings, were later focused, creating the homogeneous historical *Weltanschauung* of *Istoriya Rusov*. D. Doroshenko wrote: "When the theses, expressions, and language of these notes are compared with those of *Istoriya Rusov*, there is no doubt that this man and the author of *Istoriya Rusov* are one and the same person," i.e. H. Poletyka.¹⁵

I once had the opportunity of questioning the accuracy of Doroshenko's statement in my article: "On the Question of the Author of *Istoriya Rusov*".¹⁶ A comparison of Poletyka's political and historical views with those of the author of *Istoriya Rusov* was proof that H. Poletyka was not and could not have been the author. I want to quote this article to point out how the proponents of this idea, i.e. H. Poletyka was the author, "read and compared" his writings with the text of *Istoriya Rusov*. Three important themes in the works of Poletyka are his attitude toward

¹³ He observed that the library was able to compete with any national or private library in Russia.

¹⁴ *Ukrajins'ky arkheohrafichny zbirnyk VUAN*, Vol. I, 1926.

¹⁵ *Khliborobs'ka Ukrayina*, No. 3, p. 189; *Ohlyad ukr. istoriohrafiyi*, p. 50.

¹⁶ See footnote 2.

the Ukrainian nobility (its position in the state, its rights and privileges, its relation to other classes of the population), his attitude toward the Ukrainian state structure after 1654 (the Hetmancy), and toward the national and the political program for the future.

H. Poletyka conjectured in reference to the privileges of the Polish kings that the Ukrainian nobility benefited from the same rights, privileges, and freedom as the Polish nobility. All military and civil establishments and laws depended upon the nobility who had the right to introduce laws at their Little Sejms and to submit them to the General Sejm for confirmation by the king. The Civil and criminal court were controlled by the nobility, and appeals to these courts went to the tribunal, which consisted of the nobility. The Ukrainian nobility were active in both *curiae*, "the senatorial and the knightly," which ruled over the Polish Republic with the king. The Ukrainian townspeople had the same legal status as the Polish. This, according to Poletyka, is the real basis of the nobility, clergy, and townsfolk under the Polish rule. With regard to the populace, the "muzhiks," Poletyka wrote that they, like the Polish and Lithuanian peasants, were completely dependent upon their landlords, who levied taxes and imposed work upon them, although, according to the tradition of the time, these were light and moderate.¹⁷ With respect to the Cossack army, a completely different basis was apparent. Poletyka, in presenting a history of the Cossacks' origin in 1516, named Ostap Dashkovych as their "founder and first commander." (In *Istoriya Rusov* Prentslav Laskorons'ky is named the first Cossack hetman.) Then, the Cossacks' table of organization during the reign of King Batory was described and the fact was stressed that the Cossacks were allowed the privileges of selecting their officers and the "supreme commander" from their own ranks, and that their estates were tax-free, etc. In addition, they could use the courts of the nobles in matters pertaining to their estates. But this did not mean that the Cossacks were eligible to serve in the zemsky administration; "the Cossacks did not have the prerogatives and preference of the nobles, who alone were

¹⁷ *Istorich. izvestiye*, pp. 148-149, 151-152.

privileged to hold civil rank.”¹⁸ In their legal acts, the supreme commanders were not called hetmans, but “senior officers of the Zaporozhian army.”¹⁹ When the Ukraine accepted the protection of the Muscovite Tsar, Bohdan Khmelnytsky, with his army, negotiated all the necessary points with Moscow, but, neither in the treaty nor in the petition to the tsar, “did he dare mention that he ought to be the supreme Regent in Little Russia and manage both civil and military affairs.” On the contrary, there was a provision in the treaty that “the nobility should continue to benefit from their rights,” i.e., the right to select senior officers for judicial posts and to hold the civil and criminal courts and that these rights should never be violated.²⁰ As a result of the Treaty of 1654, the nobles, the hetman, the army, the clergy, and the townspeople received separate certificates. Poletyka commented, “Hetman Khmelnytsky, although he considered himself the liberator of Little Russia, did not dare demand absolute power over this land, although, judging by his strength at that time, he could have gained it.”²¹ What he was not able to accomplish openly, he gained secretly for himself and the succeeding hetmans. He did not mention the tribunal and the court of appeals in the treaties, since he wanted to take the control into his own hands. Actually, this assertion is correct and is confirmed by the fact that the civil and criminal courts existed under the rule of B. Khmelnytsky and Vyhovsky, while they were not mentioned in the treaties during Yuriy Khmelnytsky’s reign. “And a period of misfortune followed in Little Russia.” The nobility, thus ignored and scorned, was forced to submit to the power of the Hetman and to enlist in the Cossack army. In such a situation there were many opportunities for the hetmans to carry out their arrogant and capricious desires.²² Poletyka continues: “Having deprived the nobility of the courts, the hetmans handed them to the military officers, captains and colonels, and took the appeal cases into their own hands. Instead of concentrating on military affairs

¹⁸ *Vozrazheniye . . .*, p. 153.

¹⁹ *Istor. izvestiye*, p. 153.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 159.

exclusively, they handled civil and criminal cases. They did the same with the town magistrate courts. They flagrantly usurped the prerogatives and powers of the sovereigns: the general treasury of Little Russia and the distribution of real property (towns, villages, lands, and the appendages of landed property). And in another place Poletyka wrote: "I do not know if any good man of the Little Russian nobility, one who knows his rights, would ever want to have a hetman. For it is common knowledge that they appropriated all the power and the rights of the nobility and then secured these usurpations by bribing those above them. If the power of the hetman was restricted, as the superior officers had requested, then they would not be harmful to Russia and would never be a burden to Little Russia. . . Neither the hetman of Little Russia, nor the power of his office is necessary, nor is any other power necessary; such an absolute power over all military, civil, and administrative details has no useful function. These hetmans would have the right to do whatever they wished, and, according to the law, absolute power belongs to a sovereign and to no one else."

From Poletyka's writings and speeches at the *Komissiya novovo ulozheniya*, we can summarize his national and political program: All rights and freedoms must be returned to the Ukrainian people, primarily, to the nobility, as it was under Poland. The national, executive, and judicial affairs must be administered by the nobility. The nobility will carry on its legislative functions at its sejms or general meetings, with the requisite that they submit the adopted laws to the tsar for approval. The army and military matters must be separated from the civil, rural, and urban affairs. The rule and administration of the hetman or anyone else, except the nobility, are unnecessary. It is on these premises that "Little Russia must be established, a state with its own rights and freedom and still useful to the Russian Empire."

Hryhory Poletyka, this so-called "ardent patriot," expressed these ideas in his writings and speeches during his most intense political and public activities. Now, what does the author of *Istoriya Rusov* have to say in respect to these questions? First, the author of *Istoriya Rusov* was familiar with Poletyka's writings. Thus, he disputes with him and controverts certain statements. A few passages in *Istoriya Rusov* deal with the nobility and other classes of the

population. The former is discussed in the chapter dealing with the set-up of the Ukrainian lands under Lithuanian rule. "The government officials, and the hetmans themselves, and the town and rural officials were elected from the knightly ranks and the population was made up of three classes: the nobility, the clergy, and the *pospolstvo*."²³ "The nobility, in conformity with the examples of all people and states, was composed of the worthy and distinguished families in the land, who always bore the title of knights in Rus'. The boyars, who derived from the princely families, were included in this class. Also, the selected officials and simple soldiers, who were called Cossacks by origin. These provided all ranks through an election and, after the tour of duty, returned to their former rank. These made up one knightly class. The clergy, composed of the most worthy of the knightly class, were distinguished by their service to God, and, according to the zemsky administration, they had equal rights." And finally the *pospolstvo*, in which class the author of *Istoriya Rusov* included the merchants and the people who lived in the city, the free men who lived in villages and paid the military tax, and those who were subject to the boyars and officials. The *pospolstvo* were tried according to the Magdeburg Laws. Thus, differences are already apparent in the outlooks of H. Poletyka and the author of *Istoriya Rusov*. In the latter, the basis of law for the nobility, clergy, and the Cossacks was one and the same. While in Poletyka's writings, the king's privileges and rights equal to the Polish nobility prevailed for the knightly class, the nobility, and the clergy. There was another set of laws, purely military, for the Cossacks, and, furthermore, the Cossacks did not belong to the nobility.

In a further discussion of the effects of the Church Union upon Ukrainian society, the author of *Istoriya Rusov* wrote that "a schism occurred between the Little Russian nobility in the military and provincial offices and the people, when the former proved unable to endure the loss of their rank and the Polish persecutions, i.e., the loss of their property. They renounced their Little Russian heritage, changed their names, and began to call themselves "native Poles." And their property, offices, and rights, equal to those of the Polish

²³ *Istoriya Rusov*, p. 7.

nobility, were restored. "And in gratitude, they accepted, in the minds of the Little Russian people, the Polish system of politics, and, in imitating the latter, harried these unfortunate people without regard."²⁴ In a further description, the author brands those nobles who betrayed their people "as Poles, but of the same religion as the Little Russians." In the provisions of the Treaty of 1654 with Moscow, it was agreed in the third article with regard to these "Polish" nobles that the nobility should continue to profit from their rights and privileges in the Ukraine, since they were equal to the native nobility and under military protection.²⁵ However, this hit the Government like a thunderbolt and proved a bitter pill to those who protected such vicious people. These nobles, always occupied the "highest ranks and offices in Little Russia and in the army and they introduced new faces into government service and were responsible for treacheries in favor of the Poles. They were instrumental in providing a bitter cup for the people to swallow and for all the vileness and carnage in Khmelnytsky's wake." These Polonized nobles slowly occupied all Cossack offices, gained control of the officers, and were proud of their families and "education"... Many of the Little Russians "envied and were jealous of them," especially the sons of priests who had sided with their "system." "The latter Polonized their names somewhat and boasted of their origin." Baptized Jews, those who were forced to accept Christianity, joined them and were entered in the ranks of the nobles on the basis of the articles of the Statute on Converts. "In merging the languages and origins," a class of nobles was formed, which was the "only whip for the Cossacks and Little Russians."²⁶ These nobles controlled all offices and institutions and became rich by various intrigues, or, rather, taking advantage of the simplicity and submissiveness, they deprived them (the Cossacks) of all rights as nobles, which included the title of knight. They had possessed these rights from time immemorial and these had been sanctioned by all treaties. These were acquired as their birth right. Consequently, many were driven to the remote regions of the land and others, into the rural

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

districts. The rest, into the situation in which they now find themselves.²⁷

The author of *Istoriya Rusov* availed himself of another opportunity to discuss certain characteristics of the Ukrainian nobility. He evaluated the judicial reform of 1763 of Hetman Rozumov's'ky and emphasized that the Cossack land affairs (zemsky, civil) were handed over to the district zemsky court with the civil affairs of the officials of the nobility. The Cossacks belonged to this class on the basis of their ancient privileges and treaties, which allowed all Cossack affairs to be resolved in courts on the basis of ancient privileges and treaties. Even the Polish nobles were protected by the army according to the articles of the treaty and they had not dared to appropriate rights for themselves alone. They did not deny these rights to the Cossacks, who were their protectors.²⁸

The last passage dealing with the courts was the reply of the author of *Istoriya Rusov* to such words of Poletyka to Natalin: "The College proclaimed that the Cossacks be respected as nobles; [it does so] without considering the general laws and the form of government of the Polish people. According to the laws and statutes of this Republic, there is a great difference between being tried according to the laws of the nobility and having a nobleman's preference. . . From ancient times, the Cossacks, as a military class, were tried according to the laws of the nobility. Thus it is today, military personnel are tried by the same law, but this is not satisfactory. Clergy are tried by the same law in Poland. Those clergy who are not of noble origin are judged by the same law as the military Tatars and the Jews. They do not have nobles' privileges. Why is it that in Cossacks' courts or amongst themselves they call themselves nobles? They do this through carelessness and because they are judged as nobles."

In collating the text of *Istoriya Rusov* and the writings of H. Poletyka on the trials of the Cossacks according to the articles of the laws of the nobility, the fact that the author of *Istoriya Rusov* was acquainted with the differences of opinion between Poletyka and the delegate, Natalin, is made clear. But he favored the

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 249.

opinion of the latter. Another fact must be emphasized here: to prove his point on the rights of the nobles, Poletyka relied on Polish laws; the author of *Istoriya Rusov* clung to the resolutions of the Ukrainian Code of 1743, although he did not refer to it specifically. This Code differentiated between the noble and knightly classes because of their origin and balanced the rights of both classes. Poletyka depended on what existed in Poland, while the author of *Istoriya Rusov* took his facts from the reality of the Ukrainian state.

Thus, a major disparity in outlook is apparent in the comparison of the texts in the matter of Cossack affairs, the status of the nobility, and the power of the hetman. Poletyka believed that the hetman was a usurper of both the rights and freedom of the nobles and the state power, which presumably in the Ukraine belonged only to the Muscovite tsars. On the other hand, the author of *Istoriya Rusov* believed that the hetman was "the head of the people," "the supreme chief and master of the lands of Rus'," "and a person who represented the nation."²⁹ Nowhere in *Istoriya Rusov* are there ideas critical of the hetmancy or of its functional value. When a stricture of the hetman is expressed, it is only directed to the person of the hetman and not to the administration, nor to the hetman as the chief instrument of the state. Poletyka used the idea of a republic of nobles with the Russian Tsar at the head, patterned somewhat after the Polish Republic; the author of *Istoriya Rusov* hoped for the restitution of the republican order in an independent Ukrainian state with an elective hetman at the head. Bitterly, he states that Hetman K. Rozumovs'ky, in refusing the hetmancy, did not show a firmness of spirit, having accepted as "compensation" the gift from the Empress — the Hetman's estate, the so-called *Hadyats'ky Klyuch*. He reproached the General Staff, which according to ancient custom, was to convene and send a delegation to the Empress to demand an election of a new hetman in such a case (the abdication of the hetman). But this time the officers were calm and did nothing. Following the example of the hetman, they expected to receive estates becoming their rank "as the last officials of the old system. They patiently awaited

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 95, 142 and 203.

the fulfillment of their expectations, priding themselves in the hope of becoming powerful officials at the expense of the nation, while leaving the nation to await a bounty from above." And they were badly mistaken. The author ironically remarks: "the results were entirely different."³⁰

I will not dwell on the minor points of difference, but I will emphasize the fact that Poletyka, like Konyš'ky, was not sufficiently versed in international politics or military matters to discuss them adequately. The author of *Istoriya Rusov* was.

The language and expressions in the works of Poletyka have much in common with *Istoriya Rusov*. It was the official Russian language used by Ukrainian writers of the second half of the eighteenth century. It is not in the similarity of expressions, however, that one must look for signs of identity, but in the personal characteristics of the language.

In Poletyka's work the language lacked local Ukrainian color in its construction and expressions. It is more cultured and more closely related to the official language; in certain cases, it is more refined than the Russian language of the period. Poletyka, having lived in Petersburg from an early age, was a foreign language translator and, consequently, used the literary language of the time.³¹ The language in *Istoriya Rusov* is not as smooth, dry, or academic.³² The most interesting feature is its personal characteristics of the following type: 1) *The use of Ukrainian proverbs*, either in their entirety or single words taken from them. For example: *yednat' popa; nabrydla; abyyak; dobryden'; shybenytsya; yakykh stvorylyste, takykh y mate; parafiya; zdyrstvo*; and many, many others. 2) *The use of biblical words and sentences*. For example: "and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again," "and wicked men shall die," "there was none to bury them," "into the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured," "and my sin is ever before

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 255.

³¹ He worked in the Academy of Sciences and, later, as chief inspector of the Nobles Naval Cadet Corps.

³² I am not a philologist and, as a dilettante in this respect, I may be mistaken in some things. Unfortunately, a philological study has not been made of the language. Such a study would be of great value to us, historians and jurists.

me," "come and see," and many others. 3) *A style taken from documents, which he had composed, and a speech style, adapted to contemporary language and persons.* For example: In the Privileges, given to Halychyna in 1339 by King Casimir: "In view of the persecutions and grief of the people of Rus', who have been impoverished by the local priests and ruined by the Hungarian kings, whence came impudent Byelovs and Kolmans, who appropriated the above-mentioned lands and destroyed them. . ." [obachivshi utiski i frasunki lyudu ruskovo, oskudelovo ksenzhatami tuteishimi i yak ikh nivechat kroli Vengerski, otrodky nakhalnykh Belov i Koloman, yaki zdavna zemlyu onuyu sobechili i nishchili. . .] Or the Muscovite delegates write from Poland to the tsar in the following language: "The servicemen (*żolnierstwo*) clink and rattle through the city and taverns to a terrifying degree and this in the presence of the ambassadors; and they say that in all the villages they have immense numbers of troops, and very often the bragging Poles say: 'The Cossacks are ours.'" [zholnerstvo (polske) po gorodu i v korchmakh vsegda pri nikh (poslakh) poshchelkivayet i pobryazgivayet, shto azhno uzhast beret; a po derevnyam u nikh voisk, govoryat, vidimo-nevidimo i chastekhonko khvastlivye polyachishki, progovarivayutsya, chto "nashi yuzh kazaki."] Or Sirkо writes to Hetman Samoylovych: "We are only amazed that you, Hetman, play with us so much, as does your father with the parishioners at dinners in Zinkov, which we wish you in return." [To nam tilko dyvno, shcho ty, pane getmane bagato kolo nas kharkhiruesh, mov tviy batyushka na khavturakh s parafianami v Zinkovi, choho my vam upriime zhalayem.] There are many others. 4) *Wit, humor, irony, and sarcasm* are scattered throughout *Istoriya Rusov*. They are used to poke fun at someone or something, or to jeer at someone and seal it with a sharp word. For example: Bohdan Khmelnytsky, in replying to the reproach of the Crimean Khan that the Hetman wished to accept the tsar's protection, stated that from among the evils which surround the Zaporozhian army, he choose the lesser one: "when the people of Rus' are unfortunate, they are unfortunate because of their neighbors (meaning the Tatars), who, without reason, tormented and insulted them, and now they are

jealous and torment themselves with pity which is aspic on the head of man.”³³ Speaking of the Zaporozhian dissatisfaction with the Muscovite protection, the author of *Istoriya Rusov* describes the reasons for this mood in the following manner: “During the campaigns of the Cossacks and Russian *streltsi* and quiver-bearers, the Cossacks endured frequent and deliberate mockery because of their shaved heads. The Russians, in grey, long-skirted coats and bast shoes, unshaven and wearing beards, looked like peasants and, nevertheless, had the unbelievable effrontery, or the odious habit, of using mocking, slang names for the troops of the other nations, *Polyachishki*, *Nimchurki*, *Tatarishki*, etc. They called the Cossacks *chuby* and *khokhly* and sometimes even “brainless *khokhly*.” The Cossacks were completely exasperated, quarreled and fought with them, and, finally, became irreconcilably hostile and breathed deep abhorrence.”³⁴

Or, Hetman P. Doroshenko wrote to the Hetman of the Left Bank Ukraine, Bryukhovets’ky: “You and your officers enriched yourselves in Moscow with women, while the people pay for the dowry . . . you resemble the shepherd who holds a cow by the horns while others milk her.”³⁵

On the atrocities and licentiousness in the Ukraine of the Muscovite army, the author of *Istoriya Rusov* said that it followed the formula, “I am a servant of the Tsar. I serve God and the Tsar for the entire Christian world. The chicken and geese, young women and girls belong to us according to the right of a serveman and according to the command of His Honour.”³⁶

Rumyantsev’s Census and Inventory displeased the author and provoked this comment: “But as a boon to humanity, through an unknown fate, they are being persecuted by all kinds of evil of those burdening them and they supply materials for philosophers, who wrangle for centuries about the origin of good and evil, and have not yet settled these questions. The people of Little

³³ *Istoriya Rusov*, p. 109.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 166.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

Russia, in their bliss, were visited by this infliction of an evil calumny.”³⁷

When the inhabitants were burdened with the quartering of soldiers and the support of the army of the Muscovite garrisons, the author quotes the following quasi-folk proverb: “O, Muscovites! O, Falcons! You have devoured our oxen! And if you return in good health, you will devour our remaining cows!”

5) Finally, the author used terms, concepts, and expressions foreign to Russian, which he borrowed from Western European languages of the period of the French Revolution. These pertain to national organization and bodies, international politics, and law. In addition to the frequent use of the terms national, nation, the author used others, e.g., politics, ministers, ministry, government, patriot, anti-patriot, citizen, departments, chancellor, revolution, neutrality, neutral, balance of power, blockade, contribution, and many others.

6) In addition to the above-mentioned individual characteristics, the original method of treating the historical process in the Ukraine at that time is striking. Granting the many historical errors and fabrications, *Istoriya Rusov* presents a true perspective of the internal affairs, the international situation in the Ukraine, her political weight and role among contemporary European states, and this in a broad and idealized manner.

The Ukraine of the Princely Period is described as an independent state under the leadership of elected princes.³⁸ As a result of the Tatar invasions and disputes among the princes, its independence was lost. Then, voluntarily, the Ukraine joined Lithuania and Poland on the basis of a treaty, occupying a position of equality in the federated Polish-Lithuanian-Ukrainian State.³⁹ Poland violated this federation; gradually the rights and freedoms of the Ukrainian people were abrogated and they were forced to accept the Church Union. Hetman Khmelnytsky, with the aid of the Cossacks, freed the Ukraine and restored its independence. From the period of B. Khmelnytsky, the author writes of the

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 257.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

history of the Ukraine against the background of contemporary European history. The Ukraine is part of the European system, states which are interconnected by an international, political balance. He points out the misgivings in Europe as a result of the Pereyaslav Treaty, since these states viewed the Treaty as a dangerous violation of the balance of power in Europe. Actually, the Muscovite State was strengthened by this Ukrainian union and was unexpectedly elevated to the ranks of the "mighty and fearful sovereignties."⁴⁰ It was for this reason that these western nations "besieged" Khmelnytsky with threats and demands that the Ukraine be returned to Poland, or, at least, "to its original, neutral position." After the victorious battle against the Poles, these threats became real. Supposedly, the author speaks through the Crimean Khan and characterizes the internal and external position of Moscow, her lack of culture, her desire for power and the annexation of kingdoms and empires.⁴¹ The author points out the Ukraine's obligations as an ally of Sweden and the demands of the latter that the Ukraine assist her in the battle against Poland and against the powerful German designs on Lithuania, Pomerania, and Holstein.⁴² Khmelnytsky aided Sweden to defeat Poland, Denmark and other nations. The latter, more concerned with their own interests, did not help Poland. After the conclusion of the treaty between Sweden and Denmark, the Holy Roman Emperor and German ruler, Ferdinand III, and the Polish Primate, Urban, sent Khmelnytsky a note asking him to sever the alliance with Sweden and to return to the Polish federation with equal rights. They promised to guarantee this, or, at least, "to maintain a neutrality." When he disagreed, they threatened to destroy "his nation," considering his actions to be detrimental and hostile toward the Catholic world.⁴³ Khmelnytsky presumably replied that he could not sever the treaty of alliance with Sweden, since international treaties are holy and inviolable. Soon a "unity mission" came from the Sultan and the Holy Roman Emperor. The "mission" stated that

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 134-135.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 156.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

Poland, having been utterly defeated in the wars with the Cossacks, Moscow, and Sweden, would be compelled to unite with Moscow either by treaty or under pressure, and, as a result, would become a "colossal state." Therefore, the Turkish and Roman rulers, espousing the peoples' rights and upholding the political balance of power, again demanded that the Hetman sever relations with Sweden, abandon the protection of Moscow, and unite with Poland "with the rights and freedoms of a free nation." A "constitutional enactment" with the Poles will be drawn up, which these rulers will guarantee and defend forever.⁴⁴ Here, Khmelnytsky makes an interesting reply, since it follows the eighteenth century concept of the "natural rights" of nations, i.e., the right to self-determination and defense of independence. Khmelnytsky accuses these nations of "seeking to preserve this balance of power by enslaving the Ukrainian people, which seems strange and incompatible with a political or moral code."⁴⁵

Again the author returns to the international significance of the Ukraine after the election of Yuriy Khmelnytsky. He says that foreign delegations came to the young Hetman and asked: "On what foundation and according to what plan and circumstances will he rule over the people of Rus'?" To this Yuriy Khmelnytsky replied that, having suffered enough from the "protection" and having been liberated from them "by the past revolutions and by the pressure of the nations upon them, he is resolved, in respect to the interested nations, to remain neutral and to trust only himself."⁴⁶ Finally, in the speech made by the Hetman Mazepa when he went over to the side of Charles XII, the author describes the Ukraine's difficult position when the territory became the scene of decisive battles between two "fearful despots." If the Swedish King proved the victor, then the Ukraine would be given to Poland as a spoil of war; if the Muscovite Tsar proved victorious, then Moscow would actuate its infernal plan, which had been prepared for the Ukraine. Mazepa chose the lesser evil; he signed

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 151.

a treaty with Sweden and demanded the same rights that the Ukraine had possessed under its previous princes and which are the right of every independent nation. Also, he demanded neutrality with Sweden, Poland, and Moscow.⁴⁷ "We, therefore," Mazepa stated, "should consider the Swedes as friends and allies sent by God to liberate and to raise the Ukraine 'to the highest degree of freedom and independence.' For it is known that formerly we were what the Muscovites are now: government, supremacy, and the very name Rus' passed from us to them."⁴⁸

These quotations from *Istoriya Rusov* indicate that its author had a thorough knowledge and understanding of international politics in the seventeenth century, but he adapted the concepts, ideas, and terms of the end of the eighteenth century to it. He idealized these political concepts and made his personages express themselves in the way the author deemed most appropriate. In this respect, he reveals himself. *Apropos* of the Poltava battle, he commented that Mazepa remained completely neutral and did not send his Cossacks against the Muscovite army. However, a fate befell them which was similar to the "dead bodies from Lebedyn." He then added: "It is noteworthy that the idea of neutrality, a foreign word, *was interpreted differently than it is today.*"⁴⁹

Only a person familiar with all the contemporary secrets of diplomacy, the system of the European balance of power, neutrality, etc., could have described international politics in such a way. The author was one who was experienced in the dealings of international politics with Sweden, Poland, Germany, Turkey, and the Crimea. Neither Konyš'ky, nor the Poletykas had this experience.

II

The personal characteristics of language, the professional knowledge of international politics and of the governmental structure

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 204.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

of West European nations, and the detailed descriptions of military incidents and battles, coupled with the evidence to be introduced, convince me that the author of *Istoriya Rusov* was Oleksander Bezborod'ko. This was my hypothesis in my article "On the Question of the Author of *Istoriya Rusov*."⁵⁰ M. Voznyak simultaneously came to the same conclusion in his monograph "Pseudo-Konys'ky and Pseudo-Poletyka."⁵¹ Since we did not know of each other's work, we therefore advanced different arguments and different methods of exposition. However, they supplement each other and lead to the same conclusion.

Oleksander Bezborod'ko, the son of a chief clerk, Andriy Bezborod'ko, was the most talented and prominent of the Ukrainians, who by a trick of fate served not his Fatherland but Moscow, which at that time was already called the Russian Empire. He was born in 1747 in the district of Chernihiv and died in 1799, being only fifty-two years old. During 1755-1765, he studied in the Kiev Academy and, having completed his studies with the rank of an Officer of the Hetman's Suite, entered the service as a secretary to Peter Rumyantsev, the Governor-General of the Ukraine and president of the Little Russian College and, after the abdication of Hetman K. Rozumovsky, he ruled the Ukraine. Two years later, at twenty, he became a member of the reformed General Court and, in 1769, after the declaration of war against Turkey, he enlisted. He commanded the Nizhen Cossack regiment and, later, a detachment made up of the Lubny, Myrhorod, and Kampany regiments. With these regiments, he participated in the battles in Moldavia and then beyond the Danube in the conflict with Turkey, 1769-1773. For this service he was promoted to a colonel and attached to the Kiev regiment. In 1774, he was sent by Rumyantsev to Empress Catherine II to report on the war. He remained as a private secretary to the Empress, receiving petitions destined for her. In 1780, he was attached to the College of Foreign Affairs and was "authorized to handle all negotiations" (with foreign nations). This post was the result of a memorandum on political affairs which he had submitted. In 1784 he actively

⁵⁰ See footnote 2.

⁵¹ See footnote 2.

participated in drawing up a peace treaty with Turkey; this concerned the Russian annexation of the Crimea, Taman', and Kuban'. He was awarded the title of Count of the Roman Empire, presented to him by the Holy Roman Emperor. As a reward for his work in the Swedish wars, he was granted the rank of a secret councilor, chamberlain, and given the post of the second vice-chancellor (after Osterman) in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1791, he bore complete responsibility for the negotiations at Jassy, which concerned the peace with Turkey. Afterwards, he took part in the partition of Poland, 1793-1795. When Catherine died in 1796, Tsar Paul I assigned him the chancellorship of the Russian Empire and he received the title of Most Serene Prince.

N. Hryhorovych in his monograph "Prince O. A. Bezborod'ko and the Affairs of His Period,"⁵² pointed out that O. Bezborod'ko had a fluent command of Russian, both spoken and written; however, his pronunciation had a decided Ukrainian accent. He had a phenomenal memory (he knew the whole Bible by heart). He quickly learned French, German, and Italian during his service. When Catherine was interested in the theories of the French Encyclopedists, she corresponded with Diderot and Voltaire; these matters passed through the hands of O. Bezborod'ko, her personal secretary.⁵³ O. Bezborod'ko was also influenced by the Encyclopedists and became, as was said at that time, "a freethinker, a Voltairian."

"In his writings, notes, and other documents," wrote N. Hryhorovych, "he is a man who thinks factually and penetratingly. He states his thoughts clearly, precisely, and, sometimes, with attractive vivacity. One might suppose that Bezborod'ko, had he entered the literary field, would have become a famous writer."⁵⁴

De Parello, the ambassador of the King of Sardinia, wrote of him: "Bezborod'ko is the only one to report directly to the Empress. Blessed with a good memory, which helps him considerably,

⁵² N. Grigorovich, "Knyaz' O. A. Bezborod'ko v svyazi s sobytiyami yeyo vremeni," *IRIO*, Vols. 26 and 29 and a separate publication in two volumes.

⁵³ Bezborod'ko did not relinquish this duty even after he became vice-chancellor.

⁵⁴ Grigorovych, *op. cit.*, 29, 87.

. . . he also possessed gifts of a higher order to resolve surely the most delicate matters. . ."⁵⁵

O. Bezborod'ko was interested in history, literature, and art. He was an adequate authority on art, possessing a large collection of paintings of the best European masters. M. O. Lvov, a poet, critic, and authority on contemporary art, lived for some time in Bezborod'ko's palace and introduced him to Derzhavin, Khemnitser, Fonvizin, and "freethinkers," like Radishchev, Novikov, etc. He maintained a close contact with them. In 1782 he accepted Vasyl' Kapnist into the postal service of his department and in 1788 he helped him submit a plan to the Empress, entitled: "How an Army of Volunteer Cossacks Might Be Selected and Maintained," to which Bezborod'ko appended his favorable opinion. It might be conjectured that Kapnist went on a secret mission to Frederick William II in 1791 with the aid of Bezborod'ko, who was then vice-chancellor and in charge of international relations. Bezborod'ko influenced Tsar Paul to release Radishchev, sentenced during Catherine's reign, from capital punishment. Later he was instrumental in Radishchev's pardon. He also stopped the investigations of the so-called "Martinists" in Moscow.⁵⁶

From this brief biography and from an analysis of his writings, it is evident that O. Bezborod'ko was highly educated for his time. His political and social views were similar to the ideas of the freedom-loving thinkers and writers of Western Europe. O. Bezborod'ko differed from the other magnates of the time in his gentleness, graciousness, and readiness to help those who turned to him. These qualities were even known abroad. M. Voznyak quoted H. I. Poletyka's letter from Vienna to his relative, also Hryhory Poletyka. H. I. Poletyka advised him as soon as he reached Petersburg "to address yourself to Bezborod'ko as soon as possible. I have heard much of his honesty and kindness and I am sure of these qualities."⁵⁷

His home in Petersburg was open to all, especially to his coun-

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 26, 321.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 26, 95-97.

⁵⁷ Voznyak, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

trymen from the Chernihiv and the Poltava districts. His waiting-room was always filled with these people, who came to the capital either with their private matters or to seek employment for themselves or their sons. O. Bezborod'ko personally received them and helped them with advice, money, and protection.⁵⁸

In defense of his countrymen, O. Bezborod'ko wrote and submitted to the Empress in 1784 "A Memorandum on the Chief towns of the Hadyach and Zmiyev Districts." The purpose was to introduce a petition in the Senate on behalf "of many nobles and members of the intelligentsia, who did not belong to the privileged class and who were deprived of their estates in favor of the Hadyach castle. This matter was litigated from 1778 and "the fate of these cities and many respectable families and persons from the armed services depended on a prompt decision." The Empress presented the *Hadyatsky klyuch* to ex-Hetman Rozumovsky. In his Memorandum, O. Bezborod'ko proved that these cities had never belonged to the Hadyach castle. Former hetmans had never assumed a specific ownership in this vicinity; however, "it was unknown how many inhabitants of these cities found themselves under Hetman Apostol, even though they had a tsar's certificate for the use of the Magdeburg Law. They took part in the elections of the hetmans and they signed statutes. This is another proof of the fact that O. Bezborod'ko kept the promise given to his father: a deep, unfeigned feeling for (his) fellow-citizens."

III

Two letters of O. Bezborod'ko to his father first indicated to M. Voznyak and myself that Bezborod'ko was the author of *Istoriya Rusov*. In the first letter of August 1, 1776, he asked his father to send him "the book containing the Hetman's Statutes, two books on the constitution, the old and the new; the manuscript histories of Little Russia, one folio (quarto) and one in sheet form, and to buy a very clearly printed book of the Statute, and, if possible, the Order of the Magdeburg Laws. . . Some peo-

⁵⁸ Grigorovich, *op. cit.*, p. 342.

ple need these books to publish a history of Little Russia and to print a translation of the Statute."⁵⁹

This list of sources which Bezborod'ko made up shows that he was familiar with the historical source materials of the Ukraine. A year after this letter, in 1777, Vasyl' Ruban published *A Short Chronicle of Little Russia from 1506 to 1776* in Petersburg. In the Preface he wrote: "The notes of this *Short Chronicle* for the period 1506 to 1734 were written by the Little Russian general clerks who were with the hetman, from the time of B. Khmelnytsky to the death of Danylo Apostol. I received these from His Grace, Georgy, Bishop of Mohyliv. Additions were made from that time until 1776 and the description of the present form of government, the notes to the hetmans, the chiefs of staff, and to the colonels were written by O. A. Bezborod'ko, a Kievan colonel. He served with HRM at the reception of the petition. Bezborod'ko knew the history of the Fatherland and possessed sufficient ability to execute the work...".

The text of Bezborod'ko quoted above and Ruban's Preface to the *Short Chronicle* supplement and explain each other. O. Bezborod'ko used the historical sources which his father sent him. These were needed to supplement Ruban's *Chronicle* and to compile the appendixes which Ruban published. It was the first historical work of O. Bezborod'ko.

After the publication of the *Short Chronicle* by Ruban, O. Bezborod'ko sent a copy of it to his father with a letter dated March 31, 1778. He wrote: "I take pleasure in presenting to you this *Chronicle of Little Russia up to 1776*. It includes the geographical description (of the land), a description of the government, and other vital information. Ruban, a court adviser, published it. I

⁵⁹ This letter needs some explanation. "The Hetman's Statutes" is undoubtedly B. Khmelnytsky's Treaty of 1654 with Moscow and similar treaties of succeeding hetmans. The two books on the constitutions refer to the Constitution of the Polish Republic. The manuscript histories of Little Russia: the small one might have been the "Sobraniye istoricheskoye" by Lukoms'ky, while the larger one might have been the "Litopys'" of Hrabyanka, which had considerable influence on the author of *Istoriya Rusov*. "The very clearly printed book of the Statute" is without doubt the Lithuanian Statute in Polish. This was published in several editions, some of which were not clear. The Lithuanian Statute was indeed translated into Russian and published in the beginning of the nineteenth century. Finally, the Order of the Magdeburg Laws (*Porjadok prav magdeburščych*) was a collection of the Polish compiler B. Groicki. It is in Polish.

present it to you as a just tribute to you, who have shown in many instances a direct love for our country, our loving Fatherland, and whose sincere efforts have been extended to draw from oblivion the events and circumstances, which indicate the fame and glory of our ancestors. In the Preface, you, dear sir, can see that I gave Mr. Ruban some help in the publication of this book and have provided the most authoritative information of the present period. It is unfortunate that he hurried the printing of the foregoing pages, which contain mistakes against reality which I would have thrown out and I would have added the necessary facts which were omitted."

"This little work is a guide to a more detailed history of Little Russia, which has been planned. Naturally, all errors appearing in the *Chronicle* will be rectified when we collect all the necessary data. I do this pleasant work in my leisure time and I bless your kind parental solicitude, which saw to it that I received a precise and detailed knowledge of my native land's position and of all its past events. My satisfaction will be consummated when I complete this work, and, in particular, when its completion is followed by other instances which allow me to express my love for my fellow citizens."⁸⁰

This excerpt from the letter written in 1778 is of primary importance in supporting the hypothesis that O. Bezborod'ko was the author of *Istoriya Rusov*. It confirms the fact that he was gathering material for a history of the Ukraine. Compared with Vasyl' Poletyka's letter, Bezborod'ko's letter is more important in that it speaks not only of future intentions but also of events which had already occurred and which were subject to investigation. In regard to the latter, the following facts should be mentioned: 1) A. Bezborod'ko had taught O. Bezborod'ko Ukrainian history from an early age and A. Bezborod'ko had spent almost forty years in the General Chancellery, one of the most important sources of Ukrainian history. Therefore, he could provide his son with complete information about "events and circumstances which indicate the fame and glory of [his] ancestors." 2) The fact that O. Bezborod'ko had supplemented Ruban's *Chronicle*.

⁸⁰ Grigorovich, *op. cit.*, pp. 26, 262.

In regard to Bezborod'ko's future intentions, the letter mentions the services rendered to his Fatherland and his countrymen. These facts are substantiated by documents which prove that O. Bezborod'ko, using his high office in the Russian Government and at the Court, had defended the interests of the Ukraine. For example, during the reign of Catherine II, he resolutely opposed the plan of the General Prosecutor, Prince Vyazemsky, "to increase the state's income," by allowing the "three Little Russian province" to retain their privileges, while the Cossacks still have to serve in the army.⁶¹ He supported the plan of Vasyl' Kapnist for the renewal of the Cossack army.⁶² He protested the conscription of Ukrainian recruits in 1794⁶³ and, during the reign of Paul, he so influenced the tsar that the judicial system of 1763, which was abolished by Catherine, was restored. He was instrumental in moderating some of the severer aspects of Catherine's regime. I have already mentioned his solicitude and care for his countrymen. There were similar facts which were not recorded in documents, but which, nevertheless, offered basis for a reproach made against Bezborod'ko and for the rumors that he wanted to rule the Ukraine in the way the former hetmans ruled.⁶⁴ Now, it is necessary to prove that O. Bezborod'ko actually made use of the *Short Chronicle of Little Russia*, when he wrote the *Complete History of Little Russia*; that the author of *Istoriya Rusov* used it in his works; that O. Bezborod'ko made the corrections and appendixes which were mentioned in the letter to his father.

Ikonnikov, Slabchenko, and Yershov in their investigations of *Istoriya Rusov* confirm the fact that its author used Ruban's *Short Chronicle* with the appendixes by O. Bezborod'ko. In many instances, the author of *Istoriya Rusov* followed exactly certain descriptions, names of persons, and expressions and ideas. In his monograph, M. Voznyak compared the text of *Istoriya Rusov* with the text of the *Short Chronicle* in some detail.⁶⁵ In my article

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, I, pp. 514-522.

⁶² *Ibid.*, II, pp. 516-517.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 314.

⁶⁴ Voznyak, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

⁶⁵ On pages 139-150 he quoted parallel passages.

“On the Question of the Author of *Istoriya Rusov*” I did the same, emphasizing the emendations and additions which support the idea that *Istoriya Rusov* was written much later than the publishing of the *Short Chronicle*. With this in mind, the valid and definitive conclusion is that the author of *Istoriya Rusov* borrowed from the *Short Chronicle*.

Let us now compare this conclusion with O. Bezborod'ko's letter of 1778. He wrote “This little work (Ruban's *Short Chronicle*) is a guide for the complete history of Little Russia, now being planned. Naturally, all errors appearing in the *Chronicle* will be rectified.” Therefore, the letter categorically established the same relation between the *History of Little Russia* and the *Short Chronicle* as existed between *Istoriya Rusov* and the *Short Chronicle*. One logical conclusion evolves: the *History of Little Russia* by O. Bezborod'ko is nothing else but the *Istoriya Rusov*, and the author is the same Bezborod'ko. This was the conclusion of my article written in 1935.

In his monograph, M. Voznyak arrived at the same conclusion, only expressed more categorically. He wrote: “The similarities between *Istoriya Rusov* and Bezborod'ko's letters to his father are of particular importance. Without them, it would be impossible to prove that O. Bezborod'ko was the author on the basis of similarities between *Istoriya Rusov* and his additions to Ruban's book, i.e., it would be impossible to explain them as a borrowing from an unknown author. The similarity between *Istoriya Rusov* and Bezborod'ko's supplementary material and the similarity between *Istoriya Rusov* and O. Bezborod'ko's letters to his father provide a solid basis for recognizing him as the author of *Istoriya Rusov*.¹⁸⁸

In addition to these similarities between the *Istoriya Rusov*, Ruban's *Short Chronicle*, and the letters of O. Bezborod'ko to his father, a comparison of the text of *Istoriya Rusov* with the thoughts, style, and personal characteristics found in the works and the correspondence of O. Bezborod'ko, are of tremendous value. Here again, Voznyak and I found many similarities which substantiated our conclusion. I will quote the most outstanding:

a) In 1776 O. Bezborod'ko wrote a memorandum: “A Picture

¹⁸⁸ Voznyak, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

or Short Description of the Russian-Tatar Wars and of the Events which Originated in the Middle of the Tenth Century and which Continued almost Uninterrupted for 800 Years." It begins with the following "Forewarning": "King Janus considered himself a most shrewd sovereign because of his knowledge of past history. Not only did he rule his kingdom wisely, but he was able to foresee future events. . . For this reason he is usually represented with two faces, as the emblem, which shows that he saw the future as well as the past. All the more so, it is necessary to know the history of one's state as well as one's neighbors. . . The Tatarian people are so closely connected with us that it is almost unpardonable not to have sufficient knowledge of them. . . On the contrary, I often had the occasion to hear wise and respected men who spoke of the Tatars as they would of a contemptible creature. . ." He wrote further that he only had "superficial information" about the Tatars, since he was in the Crimea "and other neighboring cities during the war." Therefore, he read "the various writings of foreign authors on this people, especially the histories of the past Russian wars with the Tatars . . . and a terrible and sad picture is presented to us: all Russia divided and swimming in its own blood."

After, Bezborod'ko describes in his own words the 800 years of wars with the "Tatar-Pechenegs," "the Tatar-Polovcians," and, finally, "the Mongolian Tatars." Later he writes about the "Kazan' Tatars."⁶⁷

There are some similarities between the quoted material and *Istoriya Rusov*. The first is the conferring of a regal title to the Roman "two-faced Janus," although the explanation of the two-faced designation is correct. Similar "travesties" were typical of *Istoriya Rusov*. A second similarity is the expression: "swimming in its own blood." This hyperbole occurs a few times in *Istoriya Rusov*. For example, the author wrote in the Preface: "How this region (Little Russia) was ravaged in all ways, destroyed, and completely devastated, so to speak, reddened and *saturated with* human blood," and further "this people (Russian) was almost always in fire and swam in blood. . ." The third similarity: After

⁶⁷ IRIO, Vol. 26, appendix V.

describing the decline of the Kievan Principality, which was caused by princely dissensions, the author of *Istoriya Rusov* comments that “it was not difficult for the ‘Mongolian Tatars’ to defeat them.” The memorandum of O. Bezborod’ko explains why the author of *Istoriya Rusov* used the term “Mongolian Tatars” for “Tatars.” He used the word “Tatar” for Pechenegs, Polovcians, as well as for the real Tatars. The fourth similarity: O. Bezborod’ko comments that he often heard “wise and respected men, who spoke of the Tatars as they would of contemptible creatures.” There is a similar idea in the expressions of the author of *Istoriya Rusov*, where he condemns the Muscovite habit of using derogatory appellations for foreign people: *Polyachishki*, *Niemchurki*, *Tatarishki*. He branded such treatment of other nations “contemptible haughtiness” and an “odious habit.”

b) The author used the word “*Rusnak*” in a few places in *Istoriya Rusov*. For example: “Rusy or *Rusnaky*, according to the color of the hair.”⁶⁸ Or: “A part of the Slavic territory from the Danube to the Dvina, from the Black Sea to the rivers Sty’r, Sluch, Berezyna, and Dinets received the name “Rus,” and the people inhabiting it were called “Rus” and “*Rusnaky*” in general.”⁶⁹ O. Bezborod’ko used this same word, which is rarely used in historical texts, in his memorandum: “An Abridged Historical Description of Moldavia, Selected from Various Annalists.”⁷⁰ For example, “Because of its fertility and fine climate, (Moldavia) beckoned to those who had fled to the mountains and to many from Poland, the *Rusnaky* in particular.” Or, “He (Dragosh) did not find other inhabitants except *Rusnaky* in the region which later was inhabited and known as the Sochava district.” Or, “Someone from the *Rusnaky*, Petrechenko by name, became a Moldavian.” One could find the word *Rusnak* in Hrabtynka’s *Chronicle*, which Bezborod’ko possessed and which was the main source of the *Short Chronicle*. Although he did not verify this, E. Borschak in his work, “The Historical Legend of the Ukraine,”⁷¹

⁶⁸ *Istoriya Rusov*, p. 2.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁷⁰ IRIO, 26, pp. 386-394.

⁷¹ “La Légende historique de l’Ukraine.”

states that the word *Rusnak* was first used by Dobrovs'ky and Bandtke in 1815-1816. This, as it were, indicated that *Istoriya Rusov* was written later than the above-mentioned dates.

c) The author of *Istoriya Rusov* describes the various army incidents, battles, campaigns, etc. in detail and with great pleasure. This indicates a predilection for the military, which he placed on a par with the nobility in regard to their legal rights and privileges. The same predilection is apparent in the works of Bezborod'ko. In his letters to Vorontsov, Bezborod'ko details various army dispositions and commands, often of his own making, which are suitable for both the army and the navy.

In *Istoriya Rusov* there is a detailed description of the Cossack campaigns against the Tatars and Turks in 1577,⁷² under the command of Hetman Bohdan or Bohdanko. The author mentions the villages, fortresses, and regions of the Crimea: "Perekop or Or" (the Turkish name for Perekop is Or-kopi); Kinburg (the Turkish name is Kili-Burun); the stone bridge at Daria (near Kinburg); Syvash Sea; Bakhchysaray; Kozlov; a Crimean river, Salhir; the lands of the Don Cossacks; the Kuban' up to the Cherkassian boundaries; and cities in Bulgaria: Siliстria, Varna, Kilia, and others. Hetman Bohdan's campaign is most aptly described. Only a man who had visited all these places could have written it. From Bezborod'ko's autobiography inserted in the petition to Paul I in 1799,⁷³ it is evident that O. Bezborod'ko, with his three Cossack regiments, took part in the battles between the rivers Buh and Dniestr, later in Moldavia, and both banks of the Danube, in attacking Siliстria and other places up to the end of the war with Turkey. He visited the Crimea, the Don, Taman', and the Kuban'. In 1784 he conducted the peace negotiations with Turkey which concerned the union of the Crimea, Taman', and the Kuban' with Russia. Finally, in 1791 in Jassy, he conducted the preliminary negotiations with Turkey which culminated in the peace treaty. Therefore, only O. Bezborod'ko could have described these places, the battles, and the area in such detail. A good example is the description of the storming of Perekop.

⁷² *Istoriya Rusov*, pp. 24-26.

⁷³ IRIO, 29, pp. 641-642.

While in this area near Crimea, Taman', and Kuban', it is worthwhile to point out that the author of *Istoriya Rusov* tried to prove that these regions were within the old Rus' orbit. He wrote, "The ruins of ancient cities witnessed this. These cities bore Slavic names and the inscriptions on stones and statues were in the Cyrillic alphabet. Streams, lakes, and nomadic settlements, which are found in the Crimean steppe, on Taman' island, and in ancient Tmutorokan', also bore Slavic names." E. Borschak sees a link between the mention of Tmutorokan' and the so-called "Tmutorokan' stone," found on the island of Taman' in 1792. Musin-Pushkin published the first description of it in 1794. Although Professor Borschak does not recognize the authenticity of the stone itself,⁷⁴ he considers this date (1794) important, since the *Istoriya Rusov* could not have been written earlier. Later researches and excavation of the Taman'-Tmutorokan' cities and ancient sites, and the lower bank of the Don, confirm the fact that cities bearing Rus' names existed on the banks of the Don and at its mouth.⁷⁵ Near Sarkel', there is "Bila Vezha" [white tower] with its threatening white walls and "the towers of the fortresses of other cities could still be seen in the eighteenth century," Miller asserts.⁷⁶ Therefore, O. Bezborod'ko could have seen them when he visited these places. In addition to the "white tower," there was a "Rus' village" and a "Rus' port" at the mouth of the Don near Azov.⁷⁷ The Tmutorokan' stone had the following inscription in the Cyrillic alphabet: "In the year 6576 (1068), indicta 6, Prince Hlib measured the ice-covered sea from Tmutorokan' to Krchev 10,000 and 4,000 sazhens." Miller (p. 56) wrote that in the special expedition of 1930, he verified the measurements on the stone and found them to be correct. This is a good example of how time and scientific methods and researches unexpectedly verified the authenticity of certain passages of *Istoriya Rusov*, which severe critics had branded as false or the work of the author's imagination.

d) The author of *Istoriya Rusov* made Bohun speak these words

⁷⁴ Borschak, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

⁷⁵ M. Miller, *Naukovy zbirnyk UVAN*, Vol. I. 1952.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42 and 54-57.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

of protest against the sale of the enslaved peasantry: "In regard to the *pospolstvo*, they are considered as serfs, even though they come from the same people, as if they were bought from slaves or captives (this explanation was taken from the proposed Codex of 1743), and these serfs, or, as they call themselves 'peasants of both sexes' . . . contrary to all civilized laws and appropriations, are sold at markets by their rulers and masters as animals, and frequently, traded for dogs."⁷⁸

How O. Bezborod'ko felt about this matter is evident in his "Memorandum on the Needs of the Russian Empire," written just before his death in 1799. In this "Memorandum" he proposes "to alleviate the peasants' burdens" by such measures: "Villages can only be sold with the land, and personal sale of peasants is prohibited as being essentially slavery. The same interdiction applied to the sale of recruits, since recruits must undergo military training according to the judgment of the community. It is permissible to re-settle peasants with the consent of the authorities and with their consent; after a certain length of service, household servants must be returned to farming or be given freedom in order that, during a new revision, they may have the right to choose their service or occupation. Thus, real freedom is created for the peasants."⁷⁹ In his last will, he instructed his brother to grant freedom to the household servants on all his estates.

e) With great indignation, the author of *Istoriya Rusov* describes the tortures of the people when questioned by the Chancellery of Ministerial Administration on matters relating to the tsar's person (the so-called "deed and word of the Sovereign"). He ended his description with this supposed folk saying: "If part of the land (where the Ministerial Chancellery stood) could be dug up by God's hand, a fountain of human blood, shed by ministerial hands, would gush forth."⁸⁰ In the "Memorandum" written by O. Bezborod'ko there are the following demands: "The higher courts will deal with all insults directed against His Majesty. In processing these affairs, all secret methods will be done with, where

⁷⁸ *Istoriya Rusov*, p. 98.

⁷⁹ IRIO, 29, appendix XVIII.

⁸⁰ *Istoriya Rusov*, p. 238.

the blood of human beings and citizens are oppressed, contrary to the laws which are promulgated for other criminal affairs.”⁸¹

f) In another place the author of *Istoriya Rusov* speaks as if it were Polubotok speaking and reproaches Tsar Peter I thus: “In general, the laws governing all humanity and preserving them from evil are a perfect mirror of the duties and conduct for the tsars and masters. They are the first guardians and preservers (of these laws). Whence does it come that Thou, O Sovereign, placing yourself above the laws, rend us with thine absolute power?”⁸²

In the “Memorandum” O. Bezborod’ko wrote as follows: “The sovereign-autocrat, if he is endowed with a quality worthy of his rank, must perceive that the power given to him is absolute, but not to govern according to his whims. Having established the law, he should be the first to respect and obey it.”⁸³ Both quotations have the same idea: the absolute monarch is restricted by the laws which he himself has promulgated.

To supplement this exposition of Bezborod’ko’s ideas and convictions I will refer to another excerpt from his “Memorandum on the Needs of the Russian Empire.” He writes: “It will not be contrary to autocratic power if the Sovereign, after pronouncing the Creed [evidently at the coronation], would take a solemn oath in words which would convey to his people his immaculate intention to reign for the glory of the Empire and for the public good. Such an oath would have this meaning. In Russia there are three classes: the nobility, the townspeople, and the villagers. They all have different guarantees and privileges. However, their common guarantees are: 1) equal legal protection, 2) equality of personal safety and of private property, 3) participation in the government as prescribed by law.”⁸⁴

O. Bezborod’ko expressed the basic principle of constitutional monarchy very carefully, in the gentle form of a proposition, but, still, quite clearly: The absolute power of the monarch is restricted by his solemn oath to reign for the benefit of his people. His oath

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 646.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 229.

⁸³ *IRIO*, 29, p. 643.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 29, appendix XVIII, p. 644.

confirms the constitutional freedom: the protection of the law, the guarantee of personal safety and possessions, and the assurance, guaranteed by law, of participation in the government. After the French Revolution such ideas were common throughout Europe, but the first one to express them openly in Russia was the Ukrainian O. Bezborod'ko.

g) Some places in *Istoriya Rusov* can be explained only after admitting that the author was O. Bezborod'ko. For example:

1.) The author was favorably disposed toward those who ruled over the Ukraine during the reign of Empress Anna: Shakhovsky, Baryatinsky, Aleksander Rumyantsev ("the term of office of these generals was brief, just, and comforting to the Little Russians"). He favored Rumyantsev's son, Peter Rumyantsev, the Little Russian Governor-General. "The Little Russian nation in particular was delighted with its Governor-General, because they remembered his father . . . and he really justified the hopes of the people by his patriotic interest in their welfare."⁸⁵ The author of *Istoriya Rusov* praised the Little Russian College of 1765. "This College gained power as the dew covers the pasture, or, as hoarfrost, the fleece, that is, very quietly and gently."⁸⁶ The College stopped the extortions by the Muscovite garrisons in the Ukraine. He mentions that taxes had been levied of one ruble, two kopecks from each house instead of having to supply forage and provisions for the army. But he does not ignore the unsuccessful attempt to take a "General Census of the Ukraine" by the Muscovite officials. He gives some details which show that the author was either an eyewitness of the Census, or, at least, one who had primary evidence of the tragic-comic scenes which took place during it. His own humorous predilection was revealed when he witnessed such events.

The fact that O. Bezborod'ko held a position in the General Chancellery during the Rumyantsevs' administration and that he was on friendly terms with them, explains his favorable attitude toward these administrators. O. Bezborod'ko began his service in the office of General P. Rumyantsev and he continued to use the sympathy and support of this man. Young Bezborod'ko cam-

⁸⁵ *Istoriya Rusov*, p. 255.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

paigned with him in 1769 and he might have been an eyewitness of the Census with him.⁸⁷

2) The antagonistic feeling toward Teplov of the author of *Istoriya Rusov* is similar to the feeling of Bezborod'ko toward Teplov and, partly, toward K. Rozumovsky, after the latter had abdicated the hetman's office. This was the result of the land disputes with Rozumovsky. These disputes centered chiefly on the estates which were the due of a Kievan colonel: the Kobyz and the Irzhav lands, the Kozar' mills, etc. According to Bezborod'ko, "these were stripped from him."⁸⁸ Under Rozumovsky the land administration was for a long time in the hands of Teplov.

The author of *Istoriya Rusov* described Teplov as a two-faced person and ended his description in this way: "Teplov, the cabinet minister and former advisor and favorite, met him (Rozumovsky) in one of the tsar's inner chambers and, during the usual greeting, kissed the hetman. Orlov, standing in the doorway of the opposing room, witnessed the kiss and affirmed the prophesy of the hetman's mother, who had said openly, 'And kissing, he betrayed him.'" When Bezborod'ko entered the service of the Empress, he found Teplov there and he might have heard about the "Judas' kiss" from eyewitnesses.

Teplov's complicity in the "treason" is connected with the compulsory abdication of Hetman Rozumovsky. In my work *Ukrainian-Muscovite Treaties*,⁸⁹ I explained on the basis of documentary data that a plan was composed during the General Rada of 1763 which was to be submitted to Catherine. In case of Hetman Rozumovsky's death, it provided that one of the Hetman's sons should be chosen in his place, "the most worthy one and selected on the same basis as the Hetman was." Only officers with the rank of colonel signed this document, but the chiefs of staff were divided and, therefore, did not sign. It remained only a plan and was not submitted to the Empress. However, she learned about it and of the tendentious statement which was affixed to it. H. Tep-

⁸⁷ N. Grigorovich, *Monografiya*, Vol. I, p. 240f.

⁸⁸ See his letter to his father from 1776 in *IRIO*, 26, p. 244.

⁸⁹ "Ukrayins'ko-Moskov'ski dogovory," *Pratsi Ukr. Naukovoho Instytutu u Varshavi*, Vol. XIX, p. 172.

lov, who was then in the court service, gave the Empress "A Note on the Disorder in Little Russia," which contained many arguments on the troubles in the Ukraine and which was aimed against the hetman's government. There is no doubt that Teplov was largely instrumental in forcing his protector, K. Rozumovsky, to abdicate and that the "Judas' kiss" episode, described in *Istoriya Rusov*, really occurred.

Later, in a letter to his father in 1778, O. Bezborod'ko wrote: "Although Teplov is fading, he lies so much more in his old age that even the Count [Rozumovsky] does not believe him."⁹⁰

3) In his monograph, M. Voznyak emphasized the similarity between some passages in *Istoriya Rusov* and the instructions given the delegates to the *Komissiya novovo ulozheniya*, who were the representatives of the nobility of Chernihiv regiment for 1767. General-Judge A. Bezborod'ko and his son O. Bezborod'ko, Officer of the Hetman's Suite, signed the instructions. Thus, Voznyak established a connection between the ideas and even expressions in *Istoriya Rusov* and these instructions. For example, the Governor-General, P. Rumyantsev, was praised for preventing the quartering of soldiers among the inhabitants, the pillaging of food and fuel, and from other plundering carried out by the Muscovite army. He was also praised for settling the complaints of the peasants who had been sent to fortress construction gangs and other governmental work; for comparing the Hetmans Khmelnytsky and Mnohohrishny, etc.⁹¹

By comparing point eight of the instructions to the deputies of the Chernihiv regiment, Ruban's *Short Chronicle*, and *Istoriya Rusov*, Voznyak explains why the author of *Istoriya Rusov*, contrary to historical documents, changed the fairly correct text of Ruban's *Short Chronicle* and wrote that Hetman Mnohohrishny died "from wounds in Baturyn" and was buried there with "the military and the church paying him high respects."⁹²

h) The author of *Istoriya Rusov* was a great admirer of the military. *Istoriya Rusov* is full of descriptions of campaigns, battles

⁹⁰ IRIO, 26, p. 283.

⁹¹ Voznyak, *op. cit.*, pp. 132-133.

⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 139-140.

(often there are detailed descriptions of the localities where the battles took place), plans for battles, and other details. Often, the exact number of the dead, the wounded, and the imprisoned are given. For example, after Nalyvayko's battle against the Poles "they were counted and, according to the Cossack notches, the Poles lost 17,330;⁹³ after Ostryanytsia's victory "the Cossacks counted 11,317 Polish dead and 4,737 of our own."

O. Bezborod'ko was also an ardent admirer of the military profession. At one time he actively participated in the battle against Turkey and the Crimea. His letters reveal this interest and his love for the military. He wrote in a letter of 1768 to his father before he went to war: "Near Cracow, General Apraksin defeated the confederates. Of 8,000 men, 4005 were killed and the rest were taken prisoner; 40 were killed on our side and more than 800 wounded."⁹⁴

His letters also reveal the high value he placed on a military career. In a letter to M. Myklashevsky, dated 1786, he wrote: "Sharpen your sword, fix your musket, and step into battle. If I was in your place, I would cry if they did not let me go. I would leave everything just to have a look at a battle. . ."⁹⁵

M. Voznyak quotes another letter written by O. Bezborod'ko to his friends in 1790. "The bearer of this note will be the child about whom you worried so much that he should never smell gunpowder. I admit that a similar thought does not occur to me. I am not a father, but at least I had a father who, at the beginning of the last Turkish war, did not prevent my leaving the court chair to go to war, rather he praised me for it. . . I have a brother, a successor to all my property. He had an important rank . . . but both he and I were ashamed to sit peacefully during the war. Therefore, he entered the army and now he considers himself fortunate. In one letter you wrote to Osyp Stepanovich (Sudienko) that you love the Cossacks and grieve for them. Do you know why the heroic Cossack spirit in Little Russia vanished? Because for some time schoolboys have taken the place of the Cossacks;

⁹³ *Istoriya Rusov*, p. 37.

⁹⁴ IRIO, 26, XVI.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

instead of Paliy Bilotserkovsky, Khrysta Senchansky, Lavro Ostapsky and others, they were replaced by dandies and non-military people, who at first threw out their traditional clothes and then dressed up in German costume, and became, as the late, old Stepan Afendyk (commanding colonel at Pereyaslav) use to say: 'In battle, he is not a warrior, nor at home, a master.' I really do not know whether your child has any military ability. If he has, why not let him go? He has already been prepared for this in the Cadet Corps. He would have been a major a long time ago and a bearer of the cross but for your refusal. He could always be an assessor, but it is not so easy to attain military honor."⁹⁶

i) All personal characteristics of language and style found in *Istoriya Rusov* are in Bezborod'ko writings. There are quotations from the Bible, humor, wit, puns at his and at others' expense, and so forth. I will mention a few. In a letter to M. Myklashevsky, Bezborod'ko writes: "In marriage I would advise you to adhere to the law given by Jacob in the Bible: 'Do not take to wife a woman of foreign sons.'"⁹⁷ In another letter: "In him, the Scripture was fulfilled: I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed, begging bread."⁹⁸ And in many other instances. He enjoyed using Ukrainian words and expressions in his private correspondence. For example, in a letter to Kochubey, he wrote: "Your friend Ivan (Osterman) is a big, deaf fool. . . He went to the village for ten days with his fat woman [*Repekha*]. Do not be insulted when I abuse him. Osyp Stepanovych (Sudienko) says: 'He deserved what he got.'"⁹⁹ Or in another letter: "According to our proverb: Thank the Lord for legs," and many others.¹⁰⁰

j) Professor D. Čiževsky in his article "Beyond the Bounds of Beauty"¹⁰¹ gives examples of the so-called "play on words." This

⁹⁶ Voznyak, *op. cit.*, pp. 155-156.

⁹⁷ Grigorovich, *op. cit.*, II, p. 640.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 384.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 495.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 639.

¹⁰¹ D. Čiževsky, "Poza mezhamy krasy," *Literaturno-naukovy zbirnyk, UVAN*, 1952.

is the use of words and expressions which “extend beyond the bounds of fine writing,” as, for example, the use of wit, antithesis, the grotesque, caricatures, etc. The object was to attract the reader’s attention and influence his feelings. D. Čiževsky relates this “play on words” to the Ukrainian Baroque style of the eighteenth century.

With this in mind, I studied the writings of O. Bezborod’ko and compared them to *Istoriya Rusov*. I found many examples of such “play on words.” I will give some examples. In Bezborod’ko’s letter to one of his friends written in 1790 and quoted above, there is this example of a play on words: “I was not a *father*, but at least I had a *father*.” In a letter to Vorontsov, O. Bezborod’ko wrote: “Unfortunately, to satisfy the unworthy Poles (*v ugodu negodnym Polyakam*), it was necessary to adopt the bad plan of a vagabond, Altest, for the opening of a land customhouse.” Or in a letter to Miloradovich we read: “In our time there are many such clerks (*pisar*) as there were in the olden days, that is, illiterate (*nepismenny*).” In another letter to the same Vorontsov, he wrote: “Of the army generals (*sukhoputny*) there are a few useful ones (*putny*).” O. Bezborod’ko described Kochubey: “He knew how to settle *four* affairs, but they thought it was too late to award him the *second* [grade] of the Vladimir [Order].”

In one letter to his father, he refuted the rumor that distillery rights will have to be adapted to the landowner’s rank. He wrote: “One can travel by coach and have a livery which accords with one’s rank, but for a distillery, one needs only grain, woods, and the freedom of Little Russia.” O. Bezborod’ko wrote about his close friend, O. S. Sudienko, that he “will retire to comfort . . . and he will be fortunate, comparing himself to the Prussian captain of Frederick William’s time who had a mouth full of bread, but nothing to chew it with, since his teeth had been knocked out.” In a letter to Lopukhin in 1798, when Bezborod’ko was already ill, he wrote: “I rewarded my natural laziness by rapid labor and understanding, but now, only the natural remains, my memory and other gifts have utterly vanished.” He wrote a year before his death: “I live without moving, hoping to leave society

and settle in the village, where I might find a haven for my final days. I mean: a home, a garden, a church, and a grave.”¹⁰²

This Baroque style, used to describe humorous and tragic incidents in particular, is widely used in *Istoriya Rusov*. For example, representatives of the clergy evaluate the Muscovites: “The Muscovite gifts are all in bast, and it is inevitable that even the people, who live with it, will be so impoverished that they will take shelter in the bast and under it.”¹⁰³ The author of *Istoriya Rusov* described Biron’s brother: “The inhabitants of Starodub and its surrounding territory shudder at the very mention of the rages of the brother of Biron, who was lame, almost without legs. Almost fully crippled, nevertheless, he held the Russian rank of a full general. . .” In describing the comic scenes of Rumyantsev’s “Census,” the author of *Istoriya Rusov* uses the same Baroque style. “The roar of the cattle and the crying of the children announced from afar the Commissars approach. . . Having done with the people and the cattle, they dealt with the landowners and possessors. They demand from them purchase deeds and the proof of their ownership of the estates and land, and shook loose the treasure boxes of everyone. Usually they required no cadastres or the Tsar’s charter; but these were possessed only by priests, chiefly Archbishops. . .”

And here are examples of tragic events. In Polubotok’s address to Peter I, we read: “It is well-known that we alone destroyed fully half of the Swedish army on our land, without using any flattery or temptation . . . but for this we were slandered and angered; instead of being thanked and rewarded, we were subject to inescapable slavery . . . and we must pay an unendurable and dishonorable [*nesnosnaya i ponosnaya*] tribute. . .”¹⁰⁴ And again, the author describes this incident: “Only the Little Russians and their armies were humiliated, a parable among peoples, that is, without reward and gratitude. And although, in defeating the Swedish army, they showed more zeal and diligence than the others . . . nevertheless, by the calumny and chicanery of the favorite of Menshikov, they were subject to contempt, insult, and

¹⁰² Grigorovich, *op. cit.*, I, p. 441.

¹⁰³ Voznyak, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

¹⁰⁴ *Ist. Rus.*, p. 230.

persecutions; and their losses, the ruin, and devastation . . . almost unaccountably remained without any reward and appreciation. In short, they were paid evil for good and hatred for love."¹⁰⁵

Anyone who is used to expressing his thoughts in writing, whether he be a creative writer, an historian, or a lawyer, has his own specific way of expressing himself, his own style. To deliberately change this style, the various personal characteristics, is almost impossible. These personal characteristics will reappear in sentences, turn of phrase, and in vocabulary. The author of *Istoriya Rusov* concealed his identity by using the names of Konyš'ky and Poletyka, but he could not conceal his style, which is reflected in his work. In addition to the other arguments, this style reveals that O. Bezborod'ko was the author because the same words, sentences and expressions are used in his other works. He was a prominent literary talent, and N. Grygorovich, in the monograph dedicated to him, says: "At times he states his thoughts with an attractive vivacity. Had he entered the literary field, he would have become a famous writer."

IV

As to the date of writing, some chronological facts from the lives of the proposed author and some facts in the text itself, allow us to establish, if not the exact time, then the approximate time of writing. I will first of all outline the chronological dates of the proposed authors. Yu. Konyš'ky died in 1795; Hryhory Poletyka in 1784; Vasyl' Poletyka was born in 1765 and died in 1845; O. Bezborod'ko died in 1799; Lobysevych died in 1805. This is, therefore, a wide time range.

In the text of *Istoriya Rusov* there are these hints on the time of writing. The author concludes with these words: "At the beginning of 1769 the army undertook a general campaign and a war with the Turks broke out. And how it will end, God only knows!"¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 257.

However, this date was not trustworthy, since facts and events are mentioned in the text which occurred after this date. In addition, while this date may indicate the completion of the manuscript, it does not indicate its period of preparation.

There are clues in the text which contradict the date given by the author. On page 39 the author referred to Wagner, the historian. It is known that Daniel Ernst Wagner wrote the *History of Poland*. It was published for the first time in 1775, and a second edition in 1788. Some scholars, A. Yershov and E. Borschak, believe that the reference to the Slavic inscription on the Taman' and Tmutorokan' statues and stones marked the starting point of the writing of *Istoriya Rusov*, since the Tmutorokan' stone, with its Slavic inscription, was found in 1792, and a description of it published in 1794.

In the Preface to *Istoriya Rusov* we read: "Only when the Little Russian army supported Poland, was she powerful and fierce. As soon as they left her, she started an immediate decline, *and the consequences are known.*" The author undoubtedly meant Poland's partition, which took place in 1772, 1793, and 1795, by the word "consequences."

In another place, he wrote: "The monasteries, in pampering Menshikov, held them (Muscovite refugees, the Old Believers) forever in serfdom and lost control over them *only when their ruin had come.*"¹⁰⁷ This word "ruin" was the act of secularization which deprived the monasteries of their lands and subjects. This occurred in 1786.

Finally, the author of *Istoriya Rusov* used the word "revolution" twice.¹⁰⁸ This word was in use after the French Revolution 1789-1793. The author often used words like "patriot, patriotic"; expressions "a patriot of his nation"; and he used the term "national anti-patriot" once.¹⁰⁹

A. Yershov and E. Borschak tried to prove that *Istoriya Rusov* was written in the second decade of the nineteenth century. They relied on the fact that the author used these words and expres-

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 223.

¹⁰⁸ *Istoriya Rusov*, pp. 151 and 188.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

sions: nation, national, ministers, ministry, the system of a national balance of power, neutral, neutrality, etc. It is difficult to agree with this. In the historical documents of the period of Hetman Rozumovsky, 1750-1763, the terms “nation, national,” in the sense of nation and state, were used by the Ukrainian General Chancellery. For example, in the Proclamation of 1760, it is stated that “the national Little Russian seal” was affixed. In the Hetman’s Order of 1755, national treasury and national sums are mentioned. In one of the instructions to the delegates to the *Komissiya novovo ulozheniya* of 1767 it is written: “they petitioned to retain the laws under which B. Khmelnytsky and the whole entity of the Little Russian Nation came under the Great Russian State.”¹¹⁰ These examples are evidence that the author of *Istoriya Rusov* did not have to wait for the Napoleonic Wars to learn to use these terms.

This can be applied to the usage of the words “minister” and “ministry,” which, as Yershov stated, became “tangible concepts” from the time of Tsar Alexander I. The author of *Istoriya Rusov* was not only an historian, but also a politician. He was well acquainted with the history of the hetmanate and with the system of national administration in Western Europe. Ministers, such as the tsar’s residents in the Ukraine, appeared during the reign of Peter I. The College, which was officially called “Little Russian College,” and, later, “The Chancellery of Ministerial Administration,” of which the author of *Istoriya Rusov* wrote so much, existed in the Ukraine from 1709 to 1749. There were ministers in Russia during the reign of Peter I, cabinet ministers during Anna’s reign, and ministers during the reign of Catherine II. A “College of Foreign Affairs” was called the “Ministry of Foreign Affairs.” As a member of this College, O. Bezborod’ko, in a letter to Rumyantsev in 1786, wrote in reference to himself: “As the Minister of Foreign Affairs, it is impossible to be without some type of representation.”¹¹¹ During the reign of Tsar Alexander, only the number of cabinet ministers was increased, but there was

¹¹⁰ I. Telichenko, *Soslovnyia nuzhdy . . .*, p. 391.

¹¹¹ IRIO, 26, p. 176.

no council of ministers in Russia as a college organ, headed by a prime minister, until the Revolution of 1905.

A. Yershov's and Professor E. Borschak's conclusion that the "system of national balance of power," which the author of *Istoriya Rusov* referred to, became known only after the "Congress of Vienna in 1815, is also in error. The author mentioned that in 1654 the system of political balance had only "begun to develop," while, at the Congress of Vienna, it had already been realized. In addition, during the reign of Catherine II, a project was elaborated with the aid of O. Bezborod'ko for an "armed neutrality." The idea of a political balance was the basis. O. Bezborod'ko drew up the final project and put it into effect during the English-American War.¹¹² He also formulated the "Act for the Defense of Free Trade and Navigation of the Neutral Nations" with Prussia in 1781. In the following year he was active in forming the naval agreement with Portugal to defend the freedom of neutral navigation.¹¹³ This is proof that prior to the Congress of Vienna the idea of a political balance, neutrality, etc. were known in Russia.¹¹⁴ These were even used in the national policies and much of the responsibility was in the hands of Bezborod'ko.

Why did the author of *Istoriya Rusov* end his narrative with the news of the outbreak of the war with Turkey? The answer is in the appendixes which Bezborod'ko affixed to the *Short Chronicle*. Here, Bezborod'ko wrote: "His (P. Rumyantsev, the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian-Ukrainian forces during the war with Turkey) famous deed and acts belong to the Russian history in general, and so this *Short Little Russian Chronicle* will end here on this point." The *Chronicle* really ended with the year 1769 as did the *Istoriya Rusov*. In the Preface to *Istoriya Rusov* the author explained that he was undertaking a "History of Little Russia," because the *General Russian History* passed over this.

Prior to this time, the literature on *Istoriya Rusov*, its author,

¹¹² Grigorovich, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 64-65.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 82-83.

¹¹⁴ It is important to note that the author of *Istoriya Rusov* wrote the word *neutralitet* in this way *neutralit t*. O. Bezborod'ko did the same.

and the time of origin was written chiefly with a view to its unknown author and, only partially, to its contents. Scholars who believed H. Poletyka to be the author were hampered by the date of his death, 1784. Those who believed the Poletykas, father and son, to be co-authors, assumed that H. Poletyka started *Istoriya Rusov*, and, after his death, his son, Vasyl', finished it, i.e., c. 1815-1816. Those who considered Vasyl' Poletyka the sole author, reasoned in the same way. Professor O. Ohloblyn stated that Opanas Lobysevych wrote this work between 1802 and 1805. M. Voznyak thought that Bezborod'ko wrote *Istoriya Rusov* in 1778, saying, "it was written without interruptions with a youthful lack of criticism." In a letter of March 31, 1778 to his father, Bezborod'ko wrote that the "small publication (Ruban's *Chronicle*) now serves as a guide "for the proposed publication of a complete 'Little Russian History.' "

V

In my article "On the Question of the Author of *Istoriya Rusov*," I opined that O. Bezborod'ko was the author. After reviewing the new works on this theme (M. Voznyak, Ohloblyn, Borschak), I re-examined my previous arguments and concluded that the author was O. Bezborod'ko. As to the problem of the date of his writing this work, the letter quoted by Voznyak is not so definitive that one could conclude that he had written it already in 1778. But two reservations are revealed in this letter; we must add these words to his quotation: "as soon as I collect all the necessary," and "*practicing this pleasant work in my leisure time after all other work is done.*" In these reservations, there is some basis for stating that, if he had begun to write *Istoriya Rusov*, then the civil service, his duty as the personal secretary to Catherine II, his participation in the College of Foreign Affairs, and his duties as minister, took up all his "leisure time." National and political matters occupied his attention and made this talented young historian the most eminent politician and authority on international relations of the period. He later wrote to his father: "Matters pertaining to the Senate, Synod, Foreign College, including the most secret, the admiralty and lieutenancy, pass through my hands

. . . and a large part of the personal affairs of the Empress."¹¹⁵ In addition to this, diplomatic transactions, the drawing up of treaties, the partition of Poland, wars with Sweden, Turkey, and many other affairs, occupied much of his time. Bezborod'ko did not have "leisure time" to write *Istoriya Rusov*. He was free from this intensive work only in 1794-1796, when Count Zubov appeared at the Empress' court, the new and last favorite of Catherine. Bezborod'ko was the only one of the court officials who was allowed to enter Catherine's chamber to report important matters to her personally. Zubov demanded that Bezborod'ko report first to him and, then, he, Zubov, would act as the intermediary. The aged Catherine, completely under Zubov's spell, complied with these demands. Bezborod'ko was insulted, but, as it turned out, he had more leisure time. I believe that it was in this period, 1794-1796, that the preparation of the definitive text of *Istoriya Rusov* and its Preface took place. In the final redaction Bezborod'ko placed the Ukraine in the circle of European nations and introduced different ideas on the Ukraine's role in Eastern Europe. He included material and recollections which had occurred after 1778; he used diplomatic terminology which was familiar to him, and perhaps, emphasized the biting characteristics of the Muscovites and the Muscovite State.

O. Bezborod'ko was compelled to conceal his name because of his high position. The publisher of Ruban's *Short Chronicle* had written in his foreword that the basis of this book was the "Memoirs (Diary) from 1506 to 1734," which he had received from "His Grace, Georgy Konyshky, Bishop of Mohyliv." O. Bezborod'ko, familiar with this fact, concealed his identity by using Konyshky's name and by adding H. Poletyka's name for the sake of credibility, since he knew that both men were dead.

Oleksander Bezborod'ko died on April 4, 1799. The Muscovites described him thus: "Your friend," Count Rostopchin wrote to Vorontsov, "is nearing the end of his life. There is no hope. God be with him. His good deeds, which arise from a kind heart,

¹¹⁵ IRIO, 29, p. 325.

surpass his weaknesses. Everyone is in tears. Russia will be proud of him; *but he did not love her as a son loves his mother.*"¹¹⁶

O. Bezborod'ko bequeathed all his personal and real property to his brother, Count Ilia Bezborod'ko, who died in 1816. The Bezborod'ko family name vanished with the latter's death, and, with it, the reason for keeping *Istoriya Rusov* from the public. Therefore, the appearance after 1816 of the first copies is explained. One of the copies in the library of the Taras Shevchenko Scientific Society in Lviv was dated 1818. Another copy, perhaps the original, was discovered around 1828 in "the Hryniw Library, Starodub district, on the estate which belonged to Ilia Bezborod'ko." It is important to point out that the judges transmitted the manuscript first of all to Stepan Shiray. It was not because he was the Marshal of the Chernihiv Nobility, but because the Shiray family was related to the Bezborod'kos. The wife of Ilia Bezborod'ko was the daughter of Ivan Shiray. Thereafter, *Istoriya Rusov* was widely circulated in the Ukraine in numerous copies. It was not known to the Poletykas before that time; had it been known, the grandson of H. Poletyka would not have needed to make a copy of it from the Hryniw manuscript.

In general, no evidence (excerpts, comments, or notebooks) could be found in the writings of the other candidates which could be adduced as proof that one of them was the author of *Istoriya Rusov*. However, the complete text was found in the library of the estate which had belonged to Bezborod'ko's brother and heir, Ilia. This fact shores up and supplements the other proof that the author was Oleksander Bezborod'ko, chancellor and Serene Prince of Russia, which he "did not love as a son loves his mother."

¹¹⁶ Grigorovich, *op. cit.*, II, p. 433.