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BETWEEN RUS', BYZANTIUM, AND THE NOMADS TMUTARAKAN' IN THE NARRATIVE OF THE RUSIAN *PRIMARY CHRONICLE**

Abstract. The article is an attempt to provide a source analysis of the mentions of Tmutarakan' contained in the *Primary Chronicle* – the oldest surviving monument of medieval Russian historiography. In the text, particular emphasis is placed on the narrative strategy of the source and the image of the borderlands of Rus' contained therein. The author reflects on the place of information about events in the remote “exclave” of the Rurikids domain in the story about the dynasty and the territorial expansion of its state and formulates hypotheses about their origin. In addition, using the *List of Russian further and closer gods* as a basis, he raises the question of the functioning of Tmutarakan' in minds of the authors and recipients of later texts.

Keywords: medieval Rus', Tmutarakan', Byzantine-Russian relations, Rurikids, *Primary Chronicle*, Black Sea basin in the Middle Ages

The borderlands of medieval Rus' are an important topic in medieval studies since the 19th century, discussed not only by historians but also by archaeologists and philologists. However, most of the authors dealing with this issue have aimed to reconstruct the history of particular borderland areas or the course of the frontier in a certain period. By contrast, the source-based approach that I prefer, that is, placing the emphasis on the image of the borderlands in the sources rather than on their actual shape, is still rare.

The Rurikids ruled over a territory located at the meeting point of various civilizations. The dynasty controlled the lands bordering on both countries of Latin culture (Poland, Hungary and, in time, the lands of the chivalric orders in the Baltic area) and those inhabited by non-Christian nations (Volga Bulgaria,

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the Pechenegs, the Polovtsians, the Yotvingians and Lithuania). The Byzantine Empire, although it maintained strong and multifaceted ties with Rus', is relatively rarely included among the neighbours of the Rurikids' domain in a territorial (geographical) sense. Nevertheless, there is a place on the map of early medieval Eastern Europe where the *Rhōmais'* possessions for a time directly encountered the territories under the rule of members of the Russian dynasty. I am referring here to Tmutarakan' – a city with ancient roots, also known by the names Hermonassa, Matarch and Tamatarch¹. Its ruins are located in the Taman Peninsula, separated from the Crimean Peninsula by the Kerch Strait. In antiquity and the Middle Ages the centre changed its state affiliation several times: in the works of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, it figures as a outpost (*kastron*) of the Khazar Kaganate, previously ruled by the Byzantines to control the trade route leading to Persia and the Caucasus². In the 10th and 11th centuries its population constituted a heterogeneous ethnic mosaic: Greeks, Khazars, Armenians, Jews, relatively few Slavs and representatives of other nations. Undoubtedly, Tmutarakan' can be included in the broadly defined Byzantine *oikouménē*, for example due to its role as the seat of a bishopric³. The Rurikids took an interest in this area in the second half of the 10th century at the latest. Most probably at the time of Vladimir Sviatoslavovich the Great Tmutarakan', under unclear circumstances, was included in the sphere of influence of Rus' and its dynasty⁴.

¹ Researchers usually associate the Russian name with the earlier Khazar variant “Tumen-tarkhan”, cf. T. SKULINA, W. SWOBODA, *Tmutorokań*, [in:] *Słownik starożytności słowiańskich*, vol. VI, ed. Z. STIEBER, W. KOWALENKO, A. WĘDZKI, G. LABUDA, A. GAŚSIOROWSKI, T. LEHR-SPEŁAWIŃSKI, Wrocław 1961, p. 91–96. In the older historiography, Tmutarakan' was identified with ancient Phanagoria. In fact, the roots of the centre go back to the 6th century BC (at that time it was a Scythian centre for the grain trade).

² *Древняя Русь в средневековом мире. Энциклопедия*, ed. Е. МЕЛЬНИКОВА, В. ПЕТРУХИН, Москва 2014, p. 815–816; T. SKULINA, W. SWOBODA, *Tmutorokań*..., p. 91–96; J. SHEPARD, *Closer Encounters with the Byzantine World: the Rus at the Straits of Kerch*, [in:] *Pre-Modern Russia and its World. Essays in Honor of Thomas S. Noonan*, ed. K.L. REYVERSON, T.G. STAYROU, J.D. TRACY, Wiesbaden 2006, p. 25.

³ T. SKULINA, W. SWOBODA, *Tmutorokań*..., p. 91; A. POPPE, *Państwo i Kościół na Rusi w XI wieku*, Warszawa 1968, p. 22, 192–205 (further, mainly older, literature on the ecclesiastical affiliation of Tmutarakan' there); J. SHEPARD, *Closer Encounters*..., p. 37; C. ZUCKERMAN, *The End of Byzantine Rule in North-Eastern Pontus*, МАИАСТ 22, 2017, p. 315.

⁴ The dominant view is that the entry of Tmutarakan' under the rule of the Rurikids occurred between 960 and 980, and the main reason for this was the commercial importance of the centre. There is also a claim, popular especially in the older literature, of their earlier presence on the Taman Peninsula. It was disputed in 1960 by П. КАРЫШКОВСКИЙ, *Лев Диакон о Тмутараканской Руси*, ВВ 17 (42), 1960, p. 39–48, cf. Н. КОТЛЯР, *Тмутараканское княжество: реальность или историографический миф?*, [in:] *Древнейшие государства Восточной Европы. 2003 год: Мнимые реальности в античных и средневековых текстах*, ed. Т. ДЖАКСОН, Москва 2005, p. 108–109, 118 (further literature there); C. ZUCKERMAN, *The End of Byzantine Rule*..., p. 316. On the origins of

Issues relating to the history of the city have been repeatedly addressed in the field of Byzantine studies: there is, for example, a quite extensive literature on the references in the treatise *De administrando imperio* by the Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, as well as in the works of John Skylitzes⁵. The situation is a little different when it comes to Russian historiographical sources. Firstly, I have in mind the *Primary Chronicle (Tale of Bygone Years)* – an all-Russian narration about the dynasty and territorial expansion of the state⁶. It was compiled during the first two decades of the 12th century in Kyiv, undoubtedly based on older material. Thus, it represents primarily the viewpoint of the main centre of Rus'. The *Chronicle* is not a work of a single author (as Nestor the monk, who is believed to have created

the Russian presence in the Taman Peninsula based *inter alia* on the correspondence of Anonymus of Cambridge, *Notitiae Episcopatum* and the works of John Skylitzes cf. T. SKULINA, W. SWOBODA, *Tmutorokañ*..., p. 92; В. ЧИХАДЗЕ, *Тмутаракань (80-е гг. X в. – 90-е гг. XI в.)*. *Очерки историко-эрафии*, МИАСК 6, 2006, p. 140–142. I have chosen to refrain from deciding this question. Instead, I treat the time of Vladimir the Great as a kind of “starting point” for my deliberations. The reason is simple: in the pages of the *Primary Chronicle*, the beginning of the relationship between Tmutarakan' and Rus' falls precisely on the period of the reign of this prince, regardless of when the Kyivan rulers actually extended their influence on the Taman Peninsula.

⁵ It is not my purpose to give an overview here of all the extensive literature on the history of Tmutarakan', its place in the history of Rus and the relationship of the Rurikids' domain with Byzantium and its neighbours. In recent years, too, a number of works of an evaluative nature have been published on this subject, including the following monograph by В. ЧИХАДЗЕ, *Тмутаракань: печальный опыт историографии начала XXI века*, Москва 2017, cf. ИДЕМ, *Тмутаракань – владение Древнерусского государства в 80-е гг. X – 90-е гг. XI веков*, ВМГПУ 1(5), 2010, p. 20–37 (there reflections on the ethnic character of the city); ИДЕМ, *Тмутаракань (80-е гг. X в. – 90-е гг. XI в.)*..., p. 139–173 (there a compact overview of the most important topics in the scholarly discussion on Tmutarakan' with an emphasis on Russian-language literature). Among the more recent literature cf. for example: J. SHEPARD, *Closer Encounters*..., p. 15–77 (author perceives Tmutarakan' as a field for the transmission of Byzantine cultural and political models to Rus').

⁶ This is perfectly illustrated by the first sentences of the monument, which reflect the dominant narrative strategy, crucial to my studies: *These are the narratives of bygone years regarding the origin of the land of Rus', the first princes of Kiev, and from what source the land of Rus' had its beginning (Се повѣсти времяньнѣ[хъ] лѣ[тѣ] в[ѣ]к[ѣ] куду естъ пошла руская земля кто въ киевъ нача первѣе княжи[т]и в[ѣ]к[ѣ] куду руская земля стала естъ)*, *The Russian Primary Chronicle. Laurentian Text*, ed. S.H. CROSS, O.P. SHERBOWITZ-WETZOR, Cambridge Massachusetts 1953 (cetera: *The Russian Primary Chronicle*), p. 51; *Лаврѣнтьевская лѣтопись*, [in:] *Полное собрание русских летописей*, vol. I, Ленинград 1926–1927 (cetera: *Лаврѣнтьевская лѣтопись*), col. 1; *The Povest' vremennykh let. An Interlinear Collation and Paradosis*, vol. III, ed. D. OSTROWSKI, D.J. BIRNBAUM, H.G. LUNT, Cambridge 2003 [= HLEUL.T, 10.3] (cetera: *The Povest' vremennykh let*), p. 1. All quotations of the *Primary Chronicle* in English are cited exactly after this edition, so that the form of some toponyms differs from the one I use (e.g. Kiev instead of Kyiv etc.). In the case of the fragments of the *Primary Chronicle* discussed in the present article, there are no significant differences between the various manuscripts. For this reason, I have chosen to treat the *Laurentian Codex* from around 1377 as the principal basis for the source. Parallel to the edition within the *Полное собрание русских летописей* series, I used the intertextual edition by D. Ostrowski et al., which includes readings of five primary manuscripts.

the oldest known redaction of the source, is sometimes perceived), but has a comparative character. The source is very specific: it would be incorrect to treat it as a yearbook or chronicle as known from the Latin culture. Chronological issues play a special role in researching it, due to the use of the *Anno Mundi* reckoning and the three styles of marking the beginning of the year: March, September and ultra-March. The March style is predominant in the *Primary Chronicle*, whereby the year is counted from March to February (for example, the year 6569 runs from March 1061 to the end of February 1062). Most of the dates recorded in the *Primary Chronicle* up to 6569 are, moreover, uncertain and should be treated with a great deal of caution, but the references to Tmutarakan' refer mainly to later times (however, it is very important to take this chronological limit into account)⁷.

The main purpose of my paper will be to show what role in the narrative of the *Primary Chronicle* play the ephemeral mentions of Tmutarakan', which I propose to treat not simply as part of Rus', but as a distant, coastal exclave of the wider Rurikids' domain during the period from the late 10th to the early 12th century, when representatives of that dynasty ruled there⁸. However, it is not my intention to discuss the political status of the centre, its exact fate and cultural conditions. In any case, there is an extensive literature on the topic in question⁹.

Tmutarakan' is first mentioned in the *Primary Chronicle* under the year 6496 (c. 988), when reference is made to the sons of the just-baptised Vladimir the Great, who have been given authority over various centres:

Vladimir was enlightened and his sons and his country with him. For he had twelve sons: Vysheslav, Izyaslav, Yaroslav, Svyatopolk, Vsevolod, Svyatoslv, Mstislav, Boris, Gleb, Stanislav, Pozvzd, and Sudislav. He set Vysheslav in Novgorod, Izjaslav in Polotsk, Svyatopolk in Turov, and Yaroslav in Rostov. When Vysheslav, the oldest, died in Novgorod, he set Yaroslav over Novgorod, Boris over Rostov, Gleb over Murom, Svyatoslav over Dereva, Vsevolod over Vladimir, and Mstislav over Tmutorokan. Then Vladimir reflected that it was not good that there were so few towns round about Kiev, so he founded forts on the Destna, the Oster', the Trubezh, the Sula and the Stugna. He gathered together the best man of the Slavs, the Krivichians, the Chuds and the Vyatichians, and peopled these forts with them. For he was at war with Pechenegs and when he fought with them, he often overcame them¹⁰.

⁷ Н. БЕРЕЖКОВ, *Хронология русского летописания*, Москва 1963.

⁸ Н. КОТЛЯР, *Тмутараканское княжество...*, p. 107–108, 118.

⁹ J. SHEPARD, *Closer Encounters...*; С. ZUCKERMAN, *The End of Byzantine Rule...*; В. ЧИХАДЗЕ, *Тмутаракань: печальный опыт...* (the most extensive, but not necessarily complete, overview of the literature on this topic there).

¹⁰ *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, p. 119. Володимиръ просвѣщенъ имъ и с[ы]н[о]ве ѹго и зем-
ля ѹго бѣ бо оу него с[ы]н[о]въ вѣ Въшеславъ Изаславъ Ёрославъ С[ва]тополкъ Всеволодъ
С[ва]тославъ Мъстиславъ Борисъ Гльбъ Станиславъ Позвиздъ Судиславъ и посади Въше-
слава в Новѣгородъ а Изаслава Полотъскъ а С[ва]тополка Туровъ а Ёрослава Ростовъ
оумершю же старѣишему Въшеславу Новѣгородъ посадиша Ёрослава Новѣгородъ а Бориса
Ростовъ а Гльба Муромъ С[ва]тослава Деревъхъ Всеволода Володимери Мъстива Тмуторо-
кани и реч[ь] Володимеръ се не добро еже малъ городъ вколо Киева и нача ставити городѣ

I should note at this point that it was a characteristic of the editor of the *Chronicle* to include within a single annual entry a description of the entire historical process, i.e., events happening over several years or even decades (especially as some of Vladimir's sons already mentioned were born after his conversion)¹¹. Such is the situation in this case: the extended story of the baptism of Rus' includes the establishment of a new territorial division, which probably developed gradually. The information is in fact a repeat of an earlier account placed under the year 6488 (ca. 980), which also mentions the granting of towns among sons, although without including Tmutarakan'¹². It is no coincidence that the creator introduced the name of the city into the narrative precisely when describing the creation of a new Christian state, formed by the prince, and then "sanctified" by the adoption of the true faith. Part of this process, as we read in the same note, is the formation of the borders and defining the extent of the dynasty's power – this is when the former Varangian-Slavic "commonwealth of interest" is, on the ground of the *Primary Chronicle* narrative, transformed into a territorial state¹³.

Thus, the power in Tmutarakan' was taken, by Vladimir's will, by his son Mstislav¹⁴. This storyline is continued in the next entry, placed under the year 6529

по Деснѣ и по Востри и по Трубешеви и по Суль и по Стугнѣ и поча нарубати мужь лучышии w[тѣ] Словень и w[тѣ] Кривичь и w[тѣ] Чюди. и w[тѣ] Вятичь и w[тѣ] сихъ на сели градѣ бѣ бо рать w[тѣ] Печен[н]гъ и бѣ воюася с ними и wдолае имь, *Лаврѣнтьевская лѣтопись*, col. 121; *The Povest' vremennykh let*, p. 944–950, cf. Н. КОТЛЯР, *Тмутараканское княжество...*, p. 108–111 (there is an interesting remark that the towns may have received governors – Vladimir's sons – at that time, which was not tantamount to giving them the status of centres of separate principalities).

¹¹ A. JUSUPOVIĆ, „Червень и иные грады” czy też „гроды Червеньскыя”? *Dzieje ziemi czerwieńskiej w źródłach pisanych (IX–XIII w.)*, [in:] *Od grodów Czerwieńskich do linii Curzona*, vol. I, ed. M. Wołoszyn, Kraków–Leipzig–Rzeszów–Warszawa 2017, p. 74, 76–77.

¹² *Лаврѣнтьевская лѣтопись*, col. 76.

¹³ A. SIWKO, A “Commonwealth of Interest” in the Rus'ian-Byzantine Treaty (ca. 944), *SCer* 11, 2021, p. 405–426. I am aware that the term “territorial state” can be interpreted in different ways. Personally, I understand it as a political commonwealth associated with a defined territory, which is governed using an administrative structure. This territory has relatively stable “borders”, which are maintained by defence systems. Examples of the latter are, in the case of Rus', the area centred on Cherven' (on the frontier with Poland) or the strongholds on the Desna, Oster, Trubezh, Sula and Stugna rivers, used for defence against invasions of nomads, cf.: *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, p. 119; *Лаврѣнтьевская лѣтопись*, col. 121. Among the authors dealing with this issue in the Russian context, cf. e.g. В. УКОЛОВА, П. ШКАРЕНКОВ, *Формирование ранней российской государственности в контексте средневекового Европейского политогенеза*, НИВ 50.4, 2016, p. 8–17.

¹⁴ А. ГАДЛО, *О начале славяно-русской миграции в Приазовье и Таврику*, СРЭ 1973, p. 87 suspected that another son of Vladimir – Sviatoslav, who died in 1015 – may have reigned in Tmutarakan' before Mstislav. J. SHEPARD, *Closer Encounters...*, p. 30 discusses the question of Mstislav's identity with a certain “Sphenegos”, whose name appears in the chronicle of John Skylitzes. According to the British author, it is the same person: a prince whom Byzantium used to secure its own interests in the region. C. ZUCKERMAN, *The End of Byzantine Rule...*, p. 317–318 disputes this view by pointing to Sven Hakonsson. In his opinion, Mstislav may have settled in Tmutarakan' during the domestic war between Yaroslav the Wise and his brother Sviatopolk.

(c. 1022). The prince had come into conflict with his brother already during the reign of Yaroslav the Wise in Kyiv, but in this case he still acts as governor of the head of the dynasty, and his seat is an integral part of the Rusian state:

6529. Yaroslav came to Brest. At this time Mstislav, who was in Tmutorakan', attacked the Kasogians. When Rededya, Prince of the Kasogians, heard the report, he went forth against him, and as both armies stood face to face, Rededya said to Mstislav: «Why do we destroy our forces by mutual warfare? Let us rather fight in single combat ourselves. If you win, you shall receive my property, my wife, and my children, and my land. But if I win, I shall take all your possession.» Then Mstislav assented to his proposal. Rededya thus suggested that they should wrestle instead of fighting with weapons. They straightway began to struggle violently, and when they had wrestled for some time, Mstislav began to tire, for Rededya was large and strong. Then Mstislav exclaimed, «Oh Virgin Mother of God, help me! If I conquer this man, I will build a church in thy name.» Having spoken thus, he threw the Kasogian to the ground, then drew his knife and stabbed Rededya. He then penetrated his territory, seized all his property, his wife, and his children, and imposed tribute upon the Kasogians. When he returned to Tmutorakan', he then founded a church dedicated to the Holy Virgin and built it, as it stands in Tmutorakan' even to the present day¹⁵.

Within a single entry, therefore, the creator of the *Chronicle* placed two events: the expedition of Yaroslav the Wise to Brest (a centre located in the borderland with Poland) and his brother's conflict with the Caucasian people of the Kasogians (most likely ancestors of the Circassians). Hypothetically, one can assume that in this case we are dealing with one of the few "certain" dates before 6569. The second story is epic and colourful. We are probably communing with a legend that was known to the creator of the Rusian annals. The bookmen decided to use the story of the duel to summarise the larger process of the rivalry between the Rurikids and the nations of the Caucasus¹⁶. In this way, the *Chronicle* presents

¹⁵ *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, p. 135. *Приде Ярославъ къ Берестию въ си же времена Мъстиславу суицю Тмутороканю поиде на Касогѣи слышавъ же се князь Касожьскѣи Редедѣ изиде противу тому и ставишема вбъма полкома противу собѣи и реч[нѣ] Редедѣ къ Мъстиславу что ради губивъ дружину межи собою но съи идевъ сѣ сама боротъ да аще идолюеи тѣи то возмеша имънѣ мое и жену мою и дѣти мотъ и землю мою аще ли азъ идолюю то възму твое все и реч[нѣ] Мъстиславъ тако буди и речъ Редедѣ ко Мъстиславу не вружѣемъ сѣ бѣевъ но борьбою и аста сѣ бороти крѣпко и надолзѣ борющемасѣ има нача изнамагати Мъстиславъ бѣ бо великъ и силенъ Редедѣ и реч[нѣ] Мъстиславъ в пр[и]ч[и]с[нѣ]тасѣ Б[огороди]це помози ми аще бо удолюю сему сзижю ц[нѣ]рк[о]въ во има твое и се рекъ оудари имъ в землю и възне ножъ [и] заръза Редедю [и] шедъ в землю юго въз все имънѣ юго [и] дѣти юго и дань възложи на Касогѣи и пришедъ Тмутороканю. заложу ц[нѣ]рк[о]въ ст[в]а[т]иже Б[огороди]ца и созда ю аже стоить и до сего дне[и] Тмуторокани, Лаврѣнтьевская лѣтопись, col. 146–147; *The Povest' vremennykh let*, p. 1164–1169.*

¹⁶ Н. КОТЛЯР, *Тмутараканское княжество...*, p. 111 (author interprets the note as a testimony to the breaking of fief dependence by one of the Circassian tribes reflecting the usual practice of relations between the Rusian governor and tribal leaders); J. SHEPARD, *Closer Encounters...*, p. 34–35 (there the interpretation of this tale as an example of "local folklore" and some interesting remarks on the archi-

a panorama of an area that was subordinate to the power of the Rusian princes, but still ethnically alien, where relations with the surrounding nations were crucial to policy. The fragment ends with a reference to the building of a church bearing the name of the Mother of God, which was to stand in Tmutarakan' "to the present day". The meaning of this phrase is clear at first glance – the temple existed in the times contemporary to the creator of the source. However, this construction, which occurs regularly in the *Chronicle*, may have another function: namely, it serves to emphasise the permanence of the process that took place¹⁷. For example: under the year 6489 (c. 821) we can read about Vladimir's seizure of *Cherven', Przemysl and other towns, which are under Rus to the present day*. In turn, under the year 6539 (ca. 1031), the *Chronicle* reports on the recapture of this area from Poland by Yaroslav the Wise, who displaced the local population to the Ros river, where these people were to stay *to the present day*. Here, therefore, we are dealing with an emphasis on the permanence of the bond between the Rusian dynasty and Tmutarakan' – a relationship that was most likely something current and obvious to the source's creator (or, alternatively, to the creator of the indirect account used by the 12th-century editor). Later in the narrative, in turn, reference is made to Mstislav's unsuccessful attempt to conquer Kyiv with the support of a force composed of Kasogians and Khazars – hence the question of the relationship between the princes ruling over the Kerch Strait and the local ethnos recurs.

As regards the fragments relating to the reign of Mstislav, the following observations are the most significant for the subject under study:

1. The author of the account (not necessarily the creator of the *Primary Chronicle* in the form we know today, but, for example, the individual creating the material he used) was most likely well acquainted with the political conditions prevailing on the Taman Peninsula, which was remote from the point of view of Kyiv. One might even dare to argue that, in the case of some years, his orientation on the situation in Tmutarakan' is equal or even better than on that of the centre of Rus'.
2. The local legend about the duel with the representative of the Kasogians and the foundation of the church must have reached him in some way.
3. The phrase "to the present day" suggests that this part of the narrative was written during a period when the bonds connecting Tmutarakan' and Kyiv

tectural parallels between Tmutarakan' and Chernihiv, which the author sees as evidence of Mstislav Vladimirovich's links with Byzantium, maintained even after the prince settled in the city on Desna); В. ПЕТРУХИН, *Никон и Тмуторокань: к проблемам реконструкции начального летописания*, [in:] *Восточная Европа в древности и средневековье. XV. Автор и его текст*, Москва 2003, p. 194–198 (once again about the story as an example of "local folklore" and tradition associated with the church).

¹⁷ *Лаврентьевская летопись*, col. 81, 150.

were still perceived as something current. Thus, it did not necessarily have to take place during the period of the editing of the *Primary Chronicle*, which fell at the end of the Russian presence on the Kerch Strait.

Further references to Tmutarakan' are found in entries relating to the 60s, 70s and 80s of the 11th century. For this period, the dates used in the *Chronicle* become more certain, which is perhaps a testament to keeping the records up to date. They almost exclusively revolve around a single issue: the rivalry between the princes occupying the main capitals of Rus' (Kyiv, Chernihiv, Pereyaslav) and the members of the dynasty deprived of their own "shares" in the Russian land, which was seen, also in the *Primary Chronicle*, as the collective property of the family. The latter are sometimes referred to as "izgoi"¹⁸, although today many scholars emphasize their status as "full-fledged Rurikids"¹⁹. Anyway, here we are dealing with princes who, as we shall see later, used Tmutarakan' as a kind of departure point for further struggle. It is worth noting at this point that the mentions of the city in the *Chronicle* appear in a kind of "sets": information on local events occurs immediately in several successive annual entries. One might even venture to say that in places the narrative is conducted from the perspective of Tmutarakan' or a person based there.

It cannot be ruled out that, as Vladimir Petrukhin once suggested, in addition to the account of Mstislav we are dealing with at least one more "Tmutarakanian story", originally a whole, later incorporated into the *Chronicle* and divided into notes from 6572–6574 (1063/1064 – 1065/1066). It mentions the capture of Tmutarakan' by Rostislav Mstislavovich, who expelled Gleb Sviatoslavovich (son of the then prince of Chernihiv), who ruled there from the city on behalf of his father:

6572. Rostislav, son of Vladimir and grandson of Yaroslav, fled to Tmutarakan', and with him fled Porey and Vyshata, son of Ostromir, the general of Novgorod. Upon his arrival, he expelled Gleb from Tmutarakan and occupied his principate himself²⁰.

¹⁸ А. Слядзь, *Предьстория византийской аннексии Приазовья: князь-изгой Ростислав Тмутараканский*, ПИФК 2, 2015, p. 5–6 (author notes the convenient location of distant, from the point of view of Kyiv, Tmutarakan' and the change in the nomadic "buffer" from the Pechenegs to the stronger and more numerous Polovtsians; I express my gratitude to Alex M. Feldman for drawing my attention to this text).

¹⁹ The Old-Russian word "изгой" means a person who for some reason has left the native community, cf. *Словарь древнерусского языка*, vol. III, Москва 1990, p. 495. J. SHEPARD, *Closer Encounters...*, p. 17–18, 49, 55–56 (author makes a distinction between two types of Russian princes ruling in Tmutarakan': short-term rulers and dynasts who, due to their ties with Byzantium and their understanding of local realities, managed to maintain power over the Kerch Strait for a longer period of time); C. RAFFENSPERGER, *Conflict, Bargaining, and Kinship Networks in Medieval Eastern Europe*, Lanham–Boulder–New York–London 2018, p. 34–37, 47–48 (author puts all princes outside the "main line" of the Russian dynasty, deprived of the right for succession, into the category of "izgoi" – Tmutarakan' is perceived by him as a field of conflict between these two groups, as well as between the various lines of descendants of Vladimir the Great).

²⁰ *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, p. 144. В лѣт[о] ꙗꙑѣ ѿвѣ Бѣжа Ростислава. къ Тмуторока-ни с[и]нѣ Володимирѣ внукѣ Ярославлѣ и с нимъ бѣжа Порѣи и Вышата с[и]нѣ Сѣстромирѣ

In 6573 Svyatoslav then marched against Rostislav in Tmutorakan, so that the latter withdrew from the city, not because he feared Svyatoslav, but because he was reluctant to take up arms against his uncle. Svyatoslav, upon his entry (164) into Tmutorakan, re-established his son Gleb upon the throne, and returned home. Rostislav returned, however, and expelled Gleb, who re-joined his father, while Rostislav remained in Tmutorakan²¹:

6574. When Rostislav was at Tmutorakan', receiving tribute from the Kasogians and from other regions, the Greeks became afraid of him and sent to him an officer with treacherous intent. When he came before Rostislav and won his confidence, the Prince did him great honour. Then on one occasion while Rostislav was drinking with his retinue, the envoy said, «Oh Prince, I would drink to your health», and Rostislav accepted the compliment. The Greek drank half the goblet, and then offered the other half to the Prince to drink after dipping his finger in the cup, for he had a deadly poison under his fingernail. He thus passed the drink to the Prince, having determined his death for the seventh day thereafter. When the Prince had drunk the draught, the envoy departed to Kherson, where he reported that upon that day Rostislav would die, as did in fact occur. The people of Kherson then slew this officer by stoning him. Rostislav was a man bold in war, fair of stature, and handsome of feature, and he was generous to the poor. His death occurred on February 3, and he was buried there in the Church of the Holy Virgin²².

воеводы Новгородского и пришедь выгна Гльба изъ Тмуторокана а самъ съде в него мѣсто, Лаврѣнтьевская лѣтопись, col. 152; *The Povest' vremennykh let*, p. 1296–1297, cf. Н. КОТЛЯР, *Тмутараканское княжество...*, p. 113; А. РОПРЕ, *Państwo i Kościół...*, p. 192–193 (there a remark on Tmutarakan' as a “hereditary property” of Sviatoslavovich, cf. J. SHEPARD, *Closer Encounters...*, p. 43; А. СЛЯДЗЬ, *Предыстория...*, p. 14); С. СОРОЧАН, В. ЗУБРАЧ, Л. МАРЧЕНКО, *Жизнь и гибель Херсонеса*, Севастополь 2006, p. 317 (authors formulate a view of Tmutarakan' as a “Chernihiv-Constantinopolitan condominium”).

²¹ *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, p. 144. В лѣт[о] ꙗѣ ѿбѣ Иде С[вѣ]тославъ на Ростислава къ Тмутороканю Ростиславъ же в[ѣ]стѣ ступи прочь из град[а] не оубоаевься его но не хотѣа противу строеви своему оружьеа взяти С[вѣ]тославъ же пришедь къ Тмутороканю посади с[и] на своего наку Гльба и възвратиса въ своаеи пришедь наку влѣтъ Ростиславъ и выгна Гльба и приде Гльбѣ къ в[ѣ]стѣ ступи своему Ростиславъ же пришедь съде въ Тмуторокань/, Лаврѣнтьевская лѣтопись, col. 153; *The Povest' vremennykh let*, p. 1298–1300. The problem of the rule of Rostislav in Tmutarakan' was recently discussed by А. СЛЯДЗЬ, *Предыстория...*, p. 161–174 (further literature on, *inter alia*, possible earlier domains of Rostislav located in north-eastern and western Rus' there). This author, following in the path of V. Tartishchev, linked the prince's escape to Kerch with the Polovtsian invasion of 1064, and also drew attention to the role of the certain Novgorodians who supported him. The reasons for the Rostislav's decision to seize power exactly in Tmutarakan' were also commented on by: М. ДИМНИК, *The Dynasty of Chernigov, 1054–1146*, Toronto 1994, p. 60–64 (according to this author, the involvement in the conflict between the sons of Yaroslav the Wise and the Polotsk prince Vseslav was favourable for Rostislav – for that reason Sviatoslav was not able to take over Tmutarakan' from his kinsman again); С. RAFFENSPERGER, *Conflict...*, p. 51–52.

²² *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, p. 145. В лѣт[о] ꙗѣ ѿбѣ /Ростиславу суцю Тмуторокани и емлюцю дань оу Касогѣ и оу иньхъ странах[ѣ] сего же оубоаевься Гръци послаша с лѣстью котопана вному же прішедию к Ростиславу и вврившюся ѣму члѣшить и Ростиславъ единою же пьюцю Ростиславу с дружиною своєю реч[ѣ] котопанъ княже хочю на тѣа питу вному же рекии пии ин же испивъ половину а половину дасть князю питу дотиснувься палцемъ в чашиу бѣ бо имъеа под ногтемъ растворенье смртное и вдасть князю оурекъ см[ѣ]ть рть до днѣ семаго вному же испившиу котопанъ же пришедь Корсуню повѣдаше аеко в сии днѣ оумреть Ростиславъ аекоже и бѣс[ѣ]тъ сего же котопана побиха каменьемъ Корсуньстии

The narrative is then conducted from the perspective of Rostislav. The author mentions Gleb's two exiles, the effective exercise of sovereignty over the Kasogians (this important theme returns) and, finally, the conspiracy of a Byzantine military governor from nearby Chersonesus, who allegedly succeeded in personally poisoning the prince, which in turn was to lead to his own death at the hands of the Crimean population (here, in turn, is an interesting thread of the relations of the Rurikids of Tmutarakan' with the elite of the Byzantine dominions in the Crimea)²³. It concludes with an obituary of the ruler, which clearly shows the political orientation of the author of the account, sympathetic to him²⁴.

The emergence of references to the history of Tmutarakan' in the 1160s has for more than a century been linked to the existence of the so-called "Nicon's compilation", that was said to be written by the igumen of the Kyiv Monastery of the Caves²⁵. This monk, according to the *Kyivan Cave Patericon*, was to have stayed at the Kerch Strait after escaping, following his conflict with Prince Izyaslav Yaroslavovich²⁶, which resulted in an escape. According to Alexey Shakhmatov, among others, the establishment of a monastic centre in Tmutarakan', which was a branch of the Kyiv Monastery of the Caves, can be linked to his stay at the court of Rostislav²⁷. In 1073 Nikon was to return to Kyiv and create the above-mentioned

людѣ бѣ же Ростиславъ мужь добль ратень возрастомъ же льпѣ и красень лицемъ и м[и]л[о]-
ст[и]въ оубогымъ и оумре м[е]с[а]ца феврала въ ѣднь И тамо положень бѣс въ цркви с[в]а[т]ыхъ
Б[огороди]ца /, Лаврѣнтьевская лѣтопись, col. 166; *The Povest' vremennukh let*, p. 1318–1325.

²³ Cf.: J. SHEPARD, *Closer Encounters...*, p. 20, 51; А. АШИХМИН, *Взаимоотношения Тмутаракани и Восточного Крыма*, ЧО 1, 2016, p. 6–9; С. ZUCKERMAN, *The End of Byzantine Rule...*, p. 312–314, 327 (there is literature on the circumstances of Rostislav's death and remarks on the Byzantine estate management system centred on Chersonesus); А. СЛЯДЗЬ, *Предыстория...*, p. 2–3, 12–15 (there a view on the collaboration between Constantine X Doukas and Sviatoslav Yaroslavovich, for whom the Rostislav's presence in Tmutarakan' posed a threat, with emphasis on the international, not just Russian or local, context of the prince's murder), 15–18 (there reflections on the circumstances of the *katapan's* death).

²⁴ J. SHEPARD, *Closer Encounters...*, p. 52.

²⁵ Cf. М. ДИМНИК, *The Dynasty of Chernigov...*, p. 58.

²⁶ А. ШАХМАТОВ, *Разыскания о древнейших русских летописных сводах*, Санкт-Петербург 1908, p. 431sq.

²⁷ М. ДИМНИК, *The Dynasty of Chernigov...*, p. 123–125; Н. КОТЛЯР, *Тмутараканское княжество...*, p. 107–109, 118 (there is an interesting interpretation of a passage in the *Kyivan Cave Patericon* where Tmutarakan' is referred to as an "island" – according to the author, the source's creator had in mind a symbolic "island in a sea of nomads", cf. В. ЧИХАДЗЕ, *Тмутаракань – владение...*, p. 21–22); А. ПОРРЕ, *Państwo i Kościół...*, p. 195–196 (there is an interesting study of the reference in *Kyivan Cave Patericon* to the [Arch]Bishop of Tmutarakan' Nicholas – according to the Polish author, this is the only identifiable example of the practice of the princes of the Sviatoslavovich line to appoint Russian clergy to the Byzantine [Greek] bishopric in Tmutarakan'); J. SHEPARD, *Closer Encounters...*, p. 46–47; В. ЧИХАДЗЕ, *Тмутаракань (80-е гг. X в. – 90-е гг. XI в.)...*, p. 147–148; ИДЕМ, *Тмутаракань – владение...*, p. 28 (there a literature review on the topic of a Russian monastery at Tmutarakan', the existence of which finds no confirmation in the archaeological material).

compilation which, according to A. Shakhmatov, was to be used by the creator of the *Primary Chronicle*, which should explain the existence of records not only concerning Tmutarakan' but written from the local (not Kyivian) perspective and covering the period up to the death of Rostislav. Although I personally consider the hypothesis of A. Shakhmatov probable, I am not in favour of treating it as a dogma. I consider a critical and flexible approach to the “classical” theory of the Russian researcher to be the most appropriate. For example: Nikon could have been the author of the “Tmutarakanian” passages preserved in the *Primary Chronicle*, but this is not the only possible option – if only because the cornerstone of the hypothesis of A. Shakhmatov is the belief in the reliability of the information contained in the *Kyivan Cave Patericon*²⁸. Indeed, as G. Prokhorov rightly pointed out, the contemporary researcher should be aware of the goal of the philologist that guided A. Shakhmatov. His original scientific interests (language reconstruction) and the research workshop he possessed strongly marked his approach to the object of research: the goal of the St. Petersburg scholar was to “reconstruct” the original version of the *Primary Chronicle* and to “reconstruct” the texts used by its author (or authors)²⁹. Whenever we are dealing with “reconstructed” texts, and these are the ones that make up the “classical” model mentioned above, it is appropriate to take special caution and be aware that we are operating at the level of hypotheses. A modern researcher who uses the *Primary Chronicle* therefore has at his disposal, in some sense, an older material, but transformed at a specific moment in history, i.e. most likely during the reign of Vladimir Monomakh (1113–1125). “Reconstructing” the original shape of a particular message, as A. Shakhmatov attempted to do, is always a risky exercise (even if, as in the case of Nikon’s biography, many of the facts provided by different sources seem to be very much congruent).

A contemporary Russian researcher Alexei Gippius, author of one of the most interesting revisions of the scheme of A. Shakhmatov, takes a slightly different view of the matter. He concluded that in the 1170s in Kyiv an annalistic compilation was indeed created, but it was based on an earlier one, connected to the circle of Izyaslav Yaroslavovich, not to a person conflicted with him³⁰. If one were to adopt this point of view then it would be difficult to link the “Tmutarakanian” information to the bookmen of the aforementioned ruler, whose knowledge of the fate of the remote residence of Rostislav would have to be much scantier.

²⁸ Nikon’s return to Rus’ is sometimes linked to the mission to Sviatoslav Yaroslavovich, recorded by the *Kyivan Cave Patericon*, entrusted to the *igumen* by the Tmutarakanians. The city’s population was said to wish to put Gleb back in power on the Taman peninsula, cf.: Патерик Киевского Печерского монастыря, ed. Д. АБРАМОВИЧ, Санкт-Петербург 1911, p. 26, 151; М. ДІМНІК, *The Dynasty of Chernigov...*, p. 64, 124.

²⁹ Г. ПРОХОРОВ, *Древнерусское летописание...*, p. 250sq.

³⁰ А. ГИПИУС, *До и после Начального свода...*, p. 60–61.

It is also worth noting the position of the opponents of Alexei Shakhmatov's "classical" theory, who, like e.g. Gelyan Prokhorov, look at Russian annalistic writing as an ongoing process in which individual records were originated continuously³¹.

On this background, the proposal highlighted above for the existence of a separate "Tmutarakian story" seems even more likely. Such an account, not necessarily authored by Nikon or by the author of a compilation created in Izyaslav's circle, may have come directly into the hands of the 12th-century editor of the *Primary Chronicle*³². The latter used the source in accordance with the narrative strategy he adopted. I also believe that it could have been in written form: there was a bishopric in Tmutarakan' as well as a Russian monastic centre: therefore, all the conditions for the development of a local scripture existed on the Taman Peninsula³³.

Let me start by quoting a note placed under 6586 (c. 1078/1079):

Oleg, son of Svyatoslav, fled from Vsevolod to Tmutarakan on April 10. In this year, Gleb, the son of Svyatoslav, was killed in Zavaloch'e. Gleb was kindly toward the poor and hospitable to strangers, zealous toward the church, warm in faith, peaceful, and fair in appearance. He was laid to rest in the Church of the Redeemer at Chernigov on July 23³⁴.

³¹ Г. ПРОХОРОВ, *Древнерусское летописание...*, p. 260, 266–267 (however, G. Prokhorov approves the view of Nikon's involvement in the creation of the *Primary Chronicle*). Among contemporary researchers the theory of A. Shakhmatov is challenged by, i.a., А. ТОЛОЧКО, *Очерки начальной Руси*, Киев–Санкт-Петербург 2015, p. 40.

³² Such a "living source" may have been another clergyman or lay dignitary. D. Likhachev suggested the figure of Vyshata, whose son John is directly referred to by the author of the Novel. J. Shepard has added, for example, Archbishop Nicholas to this group, stressing that the Tmutarakan' records may have come from several different sources and that the Kyiv Monastery of the Caves may have received regular information about events on the Kerch Strait, cf. J. SHEPARD, *Closer Encounters...*, p. 58 (there also about the relationship of Prince Vsevolod Yaroslavovich and his son Vladimir Monomakh with Byzantium); C. ZUCKERMAN, *The End of Byzantine Rule...*, p. 326); M. DIMNIK, *The Dynasty of Chernigov...*, p. 124–125. A critic of linking Nikon to the information on Tmutarakan' at the disposal of the *Chronicle's* creator is also В. ПЕТРУХИН, *Никон и Тмуторокань...*, p. 194–198. The Russian scholar has stated, *inter alia*, that the story of Rostislav was not initially broken down over the years. I can agree with his opinion.

³³ J. SHEPARD, *Closer Encounters...*, p. 52 (there some remarks on the possibility creation of the obituary of Rostislav Mstislavovich in the Kyiv Monastery of the Caves, while considering the relationship of the princes ruling in Tmutarakan' with this monastery).

³⁴ *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, p. 165. В лѣтъ[о] ѣсѣѣ Бѣже Гѣлѣгъ [с[и]нѣ] С[вѣ]тославѣ Тмутороконю в[тѣ] Всеволода мѣца. априла [і] В се же лѣто оубыенѣ бѣис[тѣ] Глѣбѣ с[и]нѣ С[вѣ]тославѣ В Заволочии бѣ бо Глѣбѣ м[и]л[о]стивѣ оубогимѣ и страннѣлюбивѣ тицанѣ имѣе к ѡ[г]рѣвамѣ теплѣ на вѣру и кротокѣ взоромѣ красенѣ ѡгоже тѣло положено бѣис[тѣ] Черниговѣ за Спасомѣ м[ѣ]с[ц]а июла кѣ д[ѣ]нѣ Стѣдлицю С[вѣ]тополку в него мѣсто Новѣгородѣ с[и]ну Изяславу Еррополку стѣдлицю Вышегородѣ а Володимеру стѣдлицю Смолинскѣ приведе Гѣлѣгѣ и Борисѣ поганѣе на Русьскую землю и поидоста на Всеволода с Половци, Лаврѣнтѣевская лѣтопись, col. 200–201; *The Povest' vremennykh let*, p. 1606–1610. Gleb's rule in Tmutarakan' is related to the issue of the so-called "Tmutarakan' stone" found in the eastern part of the Crimean Peninsula, which bears an inscription indicating that this prince measured distances, sometimes interpreted as evidence of the extent of his authority, cf. J. SHEPARD, *Closer Encounters...*,

I mentioned that most of the information on Tmutarakan' is related to the problem of the struggle between the dynasts deprived of their dominions and the rulers of central Rus' headed by the Kyivan princes. This is very clearly manifested in the accounts concerning Oleg Sviatoslavovich. Thus, the function of the distant exclave in the narrative of the *Chronicle* changes: whereas previously it appeared mainly in the context of relations with the Kasogians and Byzantines, from now the key role will be its role in intra-dynastic conflicts. There is also a change of point of view: the local perspective recedes into the Kyivan (all-Russian) one. News about events on the Kerch Strait becomes, despite the view of some scholars, much more general. Oleg himself is not by any means a foreground character: perhaps this is a deliberate effort by the compiler of the *Chronicle*, who worked in the circle of the prince's rivals (Svyatopolk Izyaslavovich and Vladimir Monomakh).

The change in narrative is perfectly illustrated by the obituary of Gleb Sviatoslavovich, brother of Oleg, who twice left Tmutarakan' as a result of the actions of Rostislav Mstislavovich and finally ruled there until at least 1068, before becoming prince of Novgorod³⁵. The obituary is placed under the year 6586:

Gleb was kindly toward the poor and hospitable to strangers, zealous toward the church, warm in faith, peaceful, and fair in appearance. He was laid to rest in the Church of the Redeemer at Chernigov on July 23³⁶.

Although the records of the 60s suggest that their author was a supporter of Rostislav, in this case we are dealing with an obvious praise of his rival (although the obituaries of Rostislav and Gleb are slightly similar). Therefore, it cannot be entirely ruled out that the information contained in the annual entry of 6586 comes from a source close to the Sviatoslavovichs of Chernihiv. However, let us turn to an earlier note, placed under 6585 (c. 1077/1078):

Izyaslav advanced with Polish support, and Vsevolod went forth against him. Boris settled at Chernigov on May 4; his reign lasted eight days until he fled to join Roman in Tmutarakan. Vsevolod went to Volyn' to attack his brother Izyaslav. Peace was concluded, so that Izyaslav came and settled in Kiev on July 15. Oleg, the son of Svyatoslav, was with Vsevolod at Chernigov³⁷.

p. 53; C. ZUCKERMAN, *The End of Byzantine Rule...*, p. 327; В. ЧИХАДЗЕ, *Тмутаракань (80-е гг. X в. – 90-е гг. XI в.)...*, p. 145 (there is an overview of the discussion on the monument and the literature). On his weak position in the Taman Peninsula (in contrast to Rostislav, who was said to enjoy local support), writes А. СЛЯДЗЬ, *Предыстория...*, p. 9.

³⁵ М. ДИМНИК, *The Dynasty of Chernigov...*, p. 72.

³⁶ Cf. C. RAFFENSPERGER, *Conflict...*, p. 74.

³⁷ *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, p. 165. В лѣт[о] ѣѣ фѣ нѣ [6585] Поиде Изаславъ с Ляхы Всеволодъ же поиде противу ѣму Сьде Борисъ Черниговъ м[е]с[я]ца мае ѣ днѣ и бѣс[т]ъ] княженъа ѣго. и дѣни и бѣжа Тмутараканю к Романови Всевождъ же [иде] противу брату

It contains two important pieces of information:

1. Roman Sviatoslavovich is mentioned as the prince ruling in Tmutarakan. We know nothing about the circumstances under which he took over the Kerch Strait, but it is quite likely that this happened while his father (d. 1076) was still alive.
2. In 1073, after the second restoration of Izyaslav Yaroslavovich in Kyiv, Boris Vyacheslavovich, a grandson of Yaroslav the Wise, deprived of his own dominion arrives to Tmutarakan' – at the court of Roman.

The story is continued in the next entry, which I quoted above. There we can read about Oleg Sviatoslavovich who, on 10 April 1078, left Chernihiv where he was staying under his uncle's supervision, and joined Roman and Boris, who resided in Tmutarakan'. The three princes used the city as a sort of staging base: there they gathered an army, composed mainly of Polovtsians, and set off into Rus' against two surviving sons of Yaroslav the Wise³⁸. The story ends with an account on the agreement made between Izyaslav and Vsevolod, a description of the battle in which Izyaslav and Boris were killed, and information about Vsevolod's seizure of the throne in Kyiv. We should note how different here is the image of Tmutarakan': the city functions as a distant point. There is a lack of precise information about events happening on the Taman Peninsula, which contrasts with the picture of Kyiv and the whole of "proper Rus'", for which we can find detailed descriptions, full of onomastic details³⁹.

More interesting, however, is the detailed information contained in the entry of 6587:

Roman advanced with Polovcian forces as far as Voin', but Vsevolod remained near Pereyaslavl and made peace with the Polovcians. Roman returned homeward with them, but they killed him on August 2. The bones of Svyatoslav's son and Yaroslav's grandson still lie there even to this day. The Khazars took Oleg prisoner and shipped him overseas to Tsar'grad. Vsevolod appointed Ratibor as his lieutenant in Tmutorakan⁴⁰.

*Изяславу на Волгынь и створиста миръ и пришедь Изяславъ съде Къкъвътъ мѣца июула ег'дн[ь]. Гдлезь же с[ы]нъ С[вя]тославль въ оу Всеволода Черниговъ, Лаврѣнтѣевская летопись, col. 199; *The Povest' vremennykh let*, p. 1604–1606.*

³⁸ The participation of the Polovtsians in the armies of Oleg, Roman and Boris is interesting for two reasons. Firstly, it continues the plot of the importance of relations with the nomads and other tribes of the region from the point of view of the effective exercise of power over Kerch, cf. A. Слядзь, *Предыстория...*, p. 11 (further literature there). Simultaneously, the bringing of pagan nomads to Rus' functions in the *Chronicle*, edited in the circle of Oleg's opponents, as a kind of "founding sin" of the Chernihiv line of the Rurikids.

³⁹ A different view of the matter is held amongst others by: J. ШЕРПАРД, *Closer Encounters...*, p. 58; В. ПЕТРУХИН, *Никон и Тмуторокань...*, p. 195.

⁴⁰ *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, p. 167–168. *В лѣтъ[о] ѿсѣѣ нѣз Приде Романъ с Половци къ Воину Всеволодъ же ста оу Переяславла и створи миръ с Половци и възвратиса Романъ с Половци*

I would first like to draw attention to the circumstances of Roman's death. I see two possibilities for where the murder took place: the steppe which separated Tmutarakan' from "proper Rus'" and Tmutarakan'. I consider the second option more likely. This is evidenced by the word "returned" ("и възвратиса Романъ с Половци възпаль"), implying that Roman had managed to arrive at his residence, as well as the mention of a burial – I find it entirely plausible that the prince was laid to rest in the city⁴¹.

Even more interesting is the reference to the overthrow of Oleg by the "Khazars" and handing him over to Byzantium as a prisoner⁴². I would like to draw attention to the inconclusive nature of the ethnonym used. On one hand, it may contain one of the ethnic groups inhabiting the heterogeneous, as I pointed out in the introduction, city (perhaps even the dominant group⁴³). At the same time, it cannot be ruled out that by "Khazars" the author of the note understood the general population of Tmutarakan', the former Khazar stronghold. In that case, we would be dealing with an emphasis on the foreignness of the centre in relation to Rus'⁴⁴.

*въспаль [и] бѣишо юму. оубиша и Половци м[ъ]с[а]ца августа в[ъ] д[е]нь Суть кости юго и досель [лежаще тамо] сн[ы]на С[в]а[тослава] внука Ерослава а С[ъ]ла юмие [Козаре] по-точииша и за море Ц[ъ]с[а]рюграду Всеволодъ же посади посадника Ратибора Тмуторокани, Лаврѣнтьевская летопись, col. 204; The Povest' vremennykh let, p. 1641–1645, cf.: M. DIMNIK, *The Dynasty of Chernigov...*, p. 155–156; S. FRANKLIN, J. SHEPARD, *The Emergence of Rus 750–1200*, New York 1996, p. 262–263; C. RAFFENSPERGER, *Conflict...*, p. 47 (in this context, the author makes an interesting remark according that Tmutarakan' was linked simply to the principality of Chernihiv rather than to a certain line of Rurikids), 60.*

⁴¹ The fact that Roman was laid to rest "somewhere on the Black Sea steppes" is in turn stated by: А. ГАДЛО, *Этническая история Северного Кавказа X–XIII веков*, Санкт-Петербург 1994, p. 98–99; А. СЛЯДЗЬ, *Предыстория...*, p. 9.

⁴² The issue of sending Oleg to Byzantium (to the island of Rhodes), where his presence is also recorded in the *Itinerarium of Ighumen Danil* (*There is also the island of Rhodes, great and full of many riches. And on that island stayed Oleg, the Russian prince, for 2 summers and 2 winters [Таже Род островъ, велик и богатъ встм велми. И в томъ островъ был Олегъ князь русскый 2 лѣтъ и 2 зимъ]*, *Хождение игумена Данила*, ed. Г. ПРОХОРОВ, <http://lib.pushkinskijdom.ru/Default.aspx?tabid=4934> [24 III 2023]), and his return to Tmutarakan' is a separate subject of interest to researchers. The reason for sending the prince back to the Kerch Strait may have been a change on the imperial throne: Alexius I Comnenus, who had reigned since 1081, most likely trusted Oleg and gave him, as his vassal with the title of *доух*, the task of securing the region. According to some researchers, the marriage of the Russian dynast to Theophano Mouzalon played a not inconsiderable role here (this view was discussed and criticised by В. ЧИХАДЗЕ, *Тмутаракань (80-е гг. X в. – 90-е гг. XI в.)...*, p. 152–154). Despite his dependence on the Empire, Oleg later began to use a titulature that somewhat indicated his autonomous status, cf. J. SHEPARD, *Closer Encounters...*, p. 43–45 (there, *inter alia*, interesting remarks on the seals of Oleg and his wife, as well as the silver coins he issued with Slavic inscriptions), C. ZUCKERMAN, *The End of Byzantine Rule...*, p. 320 (there a broader reflection on Oleg's titles).

⁴³ M. DIMNIK, *The Dynasty of Chernigov...*, p. 156.

⁴⁴ Personally, I consider the first variant more likely. Above all, however, I regard this information as a procedure with an educational dimension: for the sin of bringing "strangers" (Polovtsians) to his

The events of the settling of the governor Ratibor in Tmutarakan' caused a significant political change on the Kerch Strait. This transition on the pages of the *Chronicle*, edited after all in the circle of Vsevolod's son, functions as a success for the new ruler of Kyiv. Thus, instead of the princes seeking their fortune, control over the Taman Peninsula is assumed by a man from outside the dynasty, a direct representative of the supreme prince⁴⁵. This situation however did not last long, as already under 6589 (1081/1082) we can read about the overthrow of Ratibor by two other princes, David Igorevich and Volodar Rostislavovich, who already "conventionally" decided to use the exclave as a starting point to fight for better domains⁴⁶. It is no coincidence that it is then that the knowledge of the creator of the *Primary Chronicle* about Tmutarakan' for a while becomes a little more precise. The arrival of the representative of the Kyivan prince at Kerch may have resulted in a better understanding of the situation on the ground⁴⁷. This, in turn, meant that more accurate source information was available to the 12th-century editor for this period.

For the last time, the name of Tmutarakan' appears in the *Chronicle* under the year 6602 (1094/1095):

Svyatopolk made peace with the Polovcians, and took to wife the daughter of their prince Tugorkan. In this same year, Oleg arrived from Tmutarakan before Chernigov with a force of Polovcians. Vladimir fortified himself in the city. Oleg then approached and burned

homeland, Oleg meted out punishment, which he also received at the hands of "strangers" (Khazars), not his "fellow people" (Rusians). On the interpretation of the term "Khazaria" used on the seals of the princes ruling in Tmutarakan, cf.: J. SHEPARD, *Closer Encounters...*, p. 28, 43 (there about the Khazars as a strong community on the Taman Peninsula, similarly among others: C. ZUCKERMAN, *The End of Byzantine Rule...*, p. 319, 323–326). With this background information, particularly interesting is also the view of А. ЕРЕМЕНКО, *Периодизация Таманской цивилизационной модели развития. Региональная культура*, ДК 17, 2000, p. 47, according to whom in the 8th or 9th century there was to be enough conversion of the Tmutarakanian elite to Judaism in order to avoid falling under the supremacy of Byzantium. C. RAFFENSPERGER, *Conflict...*, p. 79 (*The PVL labels them as Khazars, perhaps to set them apart, perhaps as a comment on religion [the "Jewish Khazars" are one of the groups that visit Volodimer in 986 to discuss conversion], 19 but they could be classed as Russian, as they inhabited a Russian city. It might perhaps be a stretch to do the same thing for the Pechenegs or even the Kasogians, though*).

⁴⁵ Ratibor has also attracted the attention of researchers because of seals bearing his name found on the Crimean Peninsula. Some historians take this as an argument for the wide reach of his power. I consider it more appropriate to see them as evidence of the intense contacts maintained by the Russian dignitary with the Byzantine possessions, cf. В. ЯНИН, П. ГАЙДУКОВ, *Актовые печати Древней Руси X–XII вв.*, vol. III, Москва 1998, p. 121; Н. КОТЛЯР, *Тмутараканское княжество...*, p. 117; J. SHEPARD, *Closer Encounters...*, p. 55 (there further literature and interesting remarks on the later career of Ratibor who, according to the author, during his stay on the Kerch Strait was to learn the Byzantine "art of governance").

⁴⁶ This episode, seen as an example of rivalry between the "izgoi" and the "main line" of the Russian dynasty, as well as a wider outline of David Igorevich's efforts to gain a principality in Rus, has been recently discussed by C. RAFFENSPERGER, *Conflict...*, p. 47–50.

⁴⁷ M. DIMNIK, *The Dynasty of Chernigov...*, p. 157–158.

the environs, including the monasteries. Vladimir made peace with Oleg, and departed from Chernigov to occupy his father's throne in Pereyaslavl', while Oleg took possession of the city that had been his own father's. The Polovtsians committed many depredations in the vicinity of Chernigov, and Oleg made no attempt to restrain them for the reason that he himself had inspired their raids. This was in fact the third time that he had led a force of pagans to attack Rus'⁴⁸.

There is a widespread belief that after Oleg Sviatoslavovich achieved his goal and captured Chernihiv, his fatherland, he relinquished power in Tmutarakan' in favour of the Byzantines. Nevertheless, later Arabic sources mention a local dynasty called "Oloubas", which was said to have consisted of several princes. It is therefore possible that Oleg or his descendants may still have ruled the Kerch Strait for some time, possibly by Byzantine appointment. To some extent, Slavic (Rusian) culture also survived on the Kerch Strait, including the activities of the Rusian monastic centre. Finally, however, the 12th-century imperial documents regulating the rules of the Genoese merchants testify to the return of the city to the direct sovereignty of the *Basileus*⁴⁹. Nevertheless, the period of the Rurikids' self-imposed presence on the Taman Peninsula has ended, and the circumstances of this event remain a matter of dispute⁵⁰. From the point of view of my study,

⁴⁸ *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, p. 179–180. В лѣтъ[о] ѿ ѿхъ в Сотвори миръ с[ва]тополкъ с Половци и посе собѣ жену дщерь Тугорканю кн[а]зѣ Пол[о]вцакаг[о] Том же лѣтъ[ом] Приде Олѣгъ с Половци ис Тѣмutorоконал [и] приде Чернигову Володимеръ же затворисл в градъ Олѣгъ же приде к граду и пожже иколо града и манастыръ пожже Володимеръ же створи миръ съ Олгомъ и иде из града на столъ итень Переяславлю а Олѣгъ вниде в град[ѣ] w[тѣ]ца своего Половци же начаша воевати иколо Чернигова Олгови не взбранящю бѣ бо самъ повелѣлъ имъ воевати се оуже третѣе наведе поганыѣ на землю Русьскую, Лаврѣнтѣевская лѣтопись, col. 227–228; *The Povest' vremennykh let*, p. 1792–1795.

⁴⁹ J. SHEPARD, *Closer Encounters...*, p. 61–65; C. ZUCKERMAN, *The End of Byzantine Rule...*, p. 322–323 (there a mention of the possibility of perceiving Tmutarakan' remaining under the rule of the Rusian princes as a city "detached" from the Romeian empire based on the correspondence of Archbishop Theophylact and Gregory Tarontines).

⁵⁰ *Древняя Русь в средневековом мире...*, p. 816 (there a suggestion that the reason for the decline in the interest of the Rusian princes in the Black Sea territories was the civil war then taking place in Volhynia, related to the blinding of Prince Vasilko of Trembovla); Н. КОТЛЯР, *Тмутараканское княжество...*, p. 118; J. SHEPARD, *Closer Encounters...*, p. 28–30 (there is a thesis on the Byzantine policy of "minimalist administration", i.e. the use of Rusian elites, especially Rostislav Mstislavovich and Oleg Sviatoslavovich, as governors of strategic territories on the northern coast of the Black Sea, which was supposed to be more cost-effective than keeping governors sent from the centre of the Empire. There are also interesting reflections on the titulature of the princes ruling in Tmutarakan', which the author treats as evidence of the penetration of Byzantine political models into Rus' precisely through these dynasts, cf. IDEM, *Mists and Portals: the Black Sea's North Coast*, [in:] *Byzantine Trade, 4th–12th Centuries. The Archaeology of Local, Regional, and International Exchange*, ed. M. MANGO, Farnham 2009, p. 429, 438–439; C. ZUCKERMAN, *The End of Byzantine Rule*, p. 328). Alternative views of either further Rurikids' presence in Tmutarakan' or the city's transition under the power of the Polovtsians were discussed by, for example, В. ЧИХАДЗЕ, *Тмутаракань (80-е гг. X в. – 90-е гг. XI в.)...*, p. 162–163 (further literature there).

the following question is essential: why was this moment not recorded in the Russian sources? Or should it have been recorded at all?

I have already mentioned that the subject of the *Chronicle's* narrative is the history of the dynasty and the territorial expansion of its state. Several decades ago Mykola Kotlyar considering the question of the political status of Tmutarakan' and following the path set by Aleksandr Gadlo, rightly pointed out that we are not dealing with an integral part of Rus' understood as the territorial state of the Rurikids⁵¹. For this reason, among others, I prefer to use in this article the term "part of the domain of the Rurikids", which, in my opinion, better illustrates this specific case⁵². Over the past two decades, other researchers (including Jonathan Shepard) have shown that princes such as Mstislav Vladimirovich or Oleg Sviatoslavovich exercised and maintained power over the Kerch Strait due to two factors: the support of the Byzantine emperors and understanding of the local cultural conditions⁵³. This was manifested, for example, in the titulature they used on their seals⁵⁴. In research of a strictly source nature, however, the perspective of the modern historian must, to some extent, be discarded in favour of "getting into the mind" of the creator of the source – in this case the editor of the *Chronicle*, who worked in the early 12th century. For him, Tmutarakan' was uninterruptedly part of the Russian state – even when the princes who ruled there were in conflict with the sovereigns of Kyiv or Chernihiv, they still remained members of the dynasty. Thus, the bookman included the history of Tmutarakan' in the story of the territorial expansion of Rus'. Following from there, we can guess why he did not record the return of the power over the area under the direct sovereignty of the Empire: this fact was not important from his point of view, as it did not fit into the narrative strategy he adopted.

Furthermore, I venture to put forward a thesis that the *Primary Chronicle* cemented in medieval Russian historiography the common image of Tmutarakan' as an integral part of Rus', as evidenced by references to the city present in the later sources. In the scientific literature it is used to refer in this context to the famous

⁵¹ А. ГАДЛО, *Предыстория Приазовской Руси. Очерки истории русского княжения на Северном Кавказе*, Санкт-Петербург 2004 (the author perceived Tmutarakan' as an autonomous unit, where the local population 'elders' had a large share in governance and decided on the occupation of the princely throne); Н. КОТЛЯР, *Тмутараканское княжество...*, p. 107–118 (the main argument of the Ukrainian scholar is that Tmutarakan', remote and separated by nomadic territories, could not be incorporated into the *tax and administrative system of Rus'*); С. ZUCKERMAN, *The End of Byzantine Rule...*, p. 318.

⁵² В. ЧИХАДЗЕ, *Тмутаракань – владение...*, p. 31 describes Tmutarakan' as *having been under the protectorate of the former Russian state for more than a century, when Byzantine interests in the region had evidently disappeared and an ephemeral state formation in which a great deal depended on the policy of Byzantium, which saw the city and its appurtenances as its dominion, which for a short time acquired the status of a barbarian archontia*.

⁵³ J. SHEPARD, *Closer Encounters...*, p. 31–34, 42–43. А. СЛЯДЗЬ, *Предыстория...*, p. 13.

⁵⁴ С. ZUCKERMAN, *The End of Byzantine Rule...*, p. 318–323.

*Tale of Igor's Campaign*⁵⁵. For this reason I would like to draw attention to another, less recognisable monument: the anonymous *List of Rusian further and closer gords*, which is a peculiar annalistic record preserved in the several 15th-century manuscripts⁵⁶. It consists of around 360 toponyms divided into several categories. This source was probably created in the 14th century, however it contains the names of many centres that no longer existed at that time, as they fell during the Mongol invasions in the 13th century⁵⁷. The creator must therefore have used older accounts, dating from before the Mongol era. The exact purpose of the note is unclear: it may have served merchants or pilgrims, or it could have been a kind of supplement to the historiographical narrative contained in the same manuscripts. It is significant that among the towns mentioned in the *List* we also find Tmutarakan', where the Rusian princes, as we know, exercised their power until the first half of the 12th century at the latest. Moreover: it appears in a section where almost only the towns in the immediate surroundings of Kyiv are mentioned. In my opinion, the author of the note may simply not have known where exactly Tmutarakan' was located. He may have known the name from the pages of narrative sources, especially the *Primary Chronicle*. Judging by the context in which the town appears in the annalistic narratives, he intuitively placed it alongside the sub-Kyivan centres. Far more importantly, however, the fourteenth-century bookmen still perceived Tmutarakan' as part of the wider Rus' – a place located within its ideal borders, which the *List* was meant to represent.

* * *

Let me highlight a few main conclusions. First, I would like to emphasise that we must distinguish the *Primary Chronicle's* records of Tmutarakan' into those that refer to its fate in the 10th and first half of the 11th century and those that describe later events. In the first case, the creator of the *Chronicle* was very likely to have used transmissions from Tmutarakan', including those written in the entourage of Rostislav Mstislavovich, which he then incorporated into the narrative which he was compiling (as for the previously occurring fragments relating to the reign of Mstislav Vladimirovich in Tmutarakan', we can assume that the compiler of the source was also in possession of material created on the Kerch Strait). Perhaps, as

⁵⁵ E.g.: Н. КОТЛЯР, *Тмутараканское княжество...*, p. 108, 116–117; М. DIMNIK, *The Dynasty of Chernigov...*, p. XV; В. ЧИХАДЗЕ, *Тмутаракань – владение...*, p. 31.

⁵⁶ М. ТИХОМИРОВ, *Список русских городов дальних и ближних*, ИЗ 40, 1952, p. 214–259; А. ДЕДУК, «Список русских городов дальних и ближних»: история изучения, [in:] *Русский книжник 2014*, Москва 2015 (further literature there). The purpose of the source is not fully known. Personally, I favour the idea that we have to do with a compilation “descriptive map” of the Rus' – a kind of “scholarly aid”, complementing the narration contained in the annalistic compilations, which it accompanies within the individual manuscripts.

⁵⁷ А. ПОПЕ, *Gród Wolyń*, SW 4, 1958, p. 256.

suggested by A. Shakhmatov, this information came from Nikon's hand, but this is not the only possible option. Tmutarakan' was probably a centre of Rusian culture, and the presence of Rusian clergy (especially if we accept as credible the references to the existence of a Slavic monastery there) created suitable conditions for the development of local scripture. Thus, one cannot use the "Tmutarakan' argument" against the propositions of researchers who either revise A. Shakhmatov's theories (A. Gippius) or completely reject them (G. Prokhorov).

Further notes are primarily concerned with the rivalry between Oleg Sviatoslavovich as well as other princes residing in Tmutarakan' and the older Rurikids (Izyaslav and Vsevolod Yaroslavovichi supported by their sons). At that time, the narrative is conducted from the Kyivan perspective, which results in less precise information on the distant exclave. It can be assumed that for this period the author of the *Chronicle* had at his disposal mainly Kyivan accounts related to Oleg's political opponents. For this reason, the narrative refers to the struggle between the older princes against Oleg, rather than the struggle conducted by Oleg himself.

The conclusions based on the analysis of the accounts I have discussed have most often been treated separately – usually simply as a "reservoir" of knowledge on the fate of certain territory in the 10th–12th centuries, or alternatively as supplementary information concerning the political relations in the Rurikids' domain. We should place them in a broader, source-focused context – by which I mean the *Primary Chronicle's* narrative strategy. Indeed, the creator of the source had at his disposal material from different eras but used it in an authorial manner to create a new synthesis of domestic history. Thus, information about Tmutarakan' figures very concretely in the dynastic tale. The main aim of the 12th-century erudite was to fit the history of the city into the story of the territorial expansion of the Rusian state. This is why the name of the city appears for the first time in the entry of 6496, which describes the organisation of the new Christian territorial state. For the same reason we do not find any information in the *Chronicle* about the return of the city to the rule of Constantinople: its inclusion would have been pointless from the point of view of the employed narrative strategy. At the same time, the authors of the accounts attached great importance to issues important for the effective exercise of power over the Kerch Strait, such as relations with the Kasogians, the Polovtsians and the Byzantines of Chersonesus. Finally, it should be emphasised that the creator of the *Chronicle* achieved his goal: in the minds of his successors who wrote in the following centuries, Tmutarakan' functioned simply as an integral part of the Rusian "oecumene", regardless of its actual, complicated political status in the 11th century.

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