

Oleksij Tolochko

## Notes on the *Radziwiłł Codex*

The *Radziwiłł* or *Königsberg codex* is undoubtedly the most recognizable manuscript containing the chronicle text. It is the only illuminated medieval chronicle that survived, and its illustrations (613 in total), by being constantly replicated over the last century, formed that distinct set of imagery which we tend to associate with Kievan Rus'. The codex is usually thought to date to the early 1490s<sup>1</sup> and is believed to be a copy of a lost illuminated manuscript of the thirteenth century. The dating of the manuscript is the only thing certain about the earliest history of the codex. As with Homer's birthplace, no less than six cities have competed for the honor of being considered its hometown: Novgorod (Sizov 1905; Arcixovskij: 1944), Suzdal' (Kondakov 1902), Moscow or Tver' (Podobedova 1965), Beloozero (Kukuškina 1997), or, more vaguely, "some Great Russian province" (Šaxmatov 1902) were named. However, the documented history of the codex finds it far from the supposed place of origin. It is thus believed that at a certain point, the manuscript had left the 'Great Russian' territory, and from the 'Moscow or Vladimir [on Kljazma] district' travelled 'abroad': first to 'Belorussia', then to 'Lithuania' where it finally fell into the hands of the Radziwiłłs (Šaxmatov 1902: 2; Kukuškina 1994: 5).

In their reasoning, it would seem, the scholars were guided by their reluctance to lose such a rarity to an 'alien' national tradition rather than by the evidence, which consistently pointed in a different direction. A manifest Gothic style evident in the illustrations, as well as traces of the scribe's 'West-Russian' origin eventually forced Aleksej Šaxmatov to reconsider and to suggest a compromise location: Smolensk, which seemed a region Russian enough but, at the same time, prone to some 'Western' influences (Šaxmatov 1913). After having reached this 'realm of competition between West and East', as one scholar put it, it was only a matter of time before the codex would defect to the other side. In the 1980s,

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<sup>1</sup> The dating was suggested by Nikolaj Lixačev on the basis of the paper marks of 1486 and of 1495 (Lixačev 1899: 455-456) and was confirmed by the editors of the last facsimile edition, who identified the same watermarks as of 1487 and of 1491-1491 (Kukuškina 1994: 5-6). Lixačev apparently had little doubt that the codex originated in the Polish-Lithuanian state and he specifically looked for the match among the paper marks current there at the time. Šaxmatov vehemently objected: paper notwithstanding, nothing suggests that the *Radziwiłł* chronicle emerged in 'Western Russia' (Šaxmatov 1902: 5).

Aleksej Černecov suggested that the manuscript was commissioned in some ‘West Russian’ territory (Černecov 1981), while most recently Volhynia, and more specifically, the city of Volodymyr, was considered the manuscript’s probable place of origin (Nikitin 2004).

With these last two hypotheses, the *Radziwiłł codex*, after a century of scholarship, has finally reached its homeland, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. By reexamining the manuscript’s marginalia and the owners’ notes, the present article seeks to reinforce this idea, suggesting, in effect, a different life path for the codex. It seems that before being placed, as part of Bogusław Radziwiłł’s estate, at the Royal library in Königsberg, the manuscript had never left the territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

The *Radziwiłł codex* is now kept at the Library of the Russian Academy of Sciences (BAN 34.5.30). The last century before its arrival in Saint Petersburg is relatively well documented. The manuscript was brought there (“was returned to Russia” (Kukuškina 1994: 5)) before 1761 as a military trophy of the Seven Year’s War (1758-1763) during which Russian troops occupied Königsberg. However, the manuscript was available for Russian scholarship half a century earlier. While visiting the Royal library in 1711, Tsar Peter had been so impressed with the codex that he ordered an exact copy (including the illustrations), which was produced in 1713 (Šaxmatov 1902: 10-12) and, before the original became available, served as one of the principal sources for the chronicle text.

As is evident from the special stamp with the date 1671 attached to the book’s upper cover, the Royal library in Königsberg came into possession of the codex from Prince Bogusław Radziwiłł<sup>2</sup>. A relative of the Hohenzollerns on his mother’s side, Bogusław Radziwiłł spent his last years as the Governor General of Prussia and died in 1668 in Königsberg. Apparently, after his death, his book collection was donated to the library of the Elector of Brandenburg and Prussia.

In the literature, it is sometimes erroneously claimed that Bogusław Radziwiłł inherited the manuscript from his father, Janusz Radziwiłł, to which allegedly the note on the codex’s last page testifies. In full, this Latin note was transcribed and published for the first time by Aleksej Šaxmatov whose comments are the source of some confusion (Šaxmatov 1902: 1). The note, indeed, states that the book was given as a gift to Prince Janusz Radziwiłł, the Palatine of Wilno and the Great Hetman of Lithuania, by his courtier Stanisław Zienowicz, the Prefect of Vilkia forests. However, Bogusław’s father never held the titles listed (his highest office was that of the Castellan of Wilno) and also died in 1620, when Stanisław Zienowicz was only 10. It is obvious that the Janusz the note refers to is not Bogusław’s father but rather his famous cousin, Janusz Radziwiłł (1612-1655).

Although lacking a date, Stanisław Zienowicz’s autograph bears enough chronological attributes to place it within a relatively short period of time. Janusz Radziwiłł was granted

<sup>2</sup> This mark is sometimes called Bogusław’s *ex libris* (Lur’e 1989: 4), which might not be technically correct. It sports the familial coat of arms of the Radziwiłłs (the so called ‘Trumpets’), but its date – 1671 – and also the legend (*bibliotheca a celsissimo principe, d[omi]no Boguslao Radzivilio bibliothecae, que Regiomonti est, electorali legato donata*) indicate that stamps like this were produced when Bogusław’s collection was merged with the library of the electors.

the office of the Palatine of Wilno in 1653 and became the Great Hetman of Lithuania on June 17, 1654 (Lulewicz, Rachuba 1994: 233). That means that the chronicle was not a 'familial relic' of the Radziwiłłs passed down the generations, as sometimes we read, but was acquired by Janusz Radziwiłł shortly before his death. The note also refutes a hypothesis that Janusz Radziwiłł may have borrowed the manuscript from the library of the Suprasl monastery (Nikalaeŭ 1993: 217-218; Ščavinskaja 1998: 251)<sup>3</sup>.

Unlike his cousin Janusz, Bogusław Radziwiłł was not known for his special interest in Cyrillic books. Most probably, the chronicle came into his possession simply as a part of his wife's dowry. After Janusz's death, Bogusław was appointed the guardian of his daughter and heir, Anna Maria, and married her in 1665 thus becoming the beneficiary of his cousin's fortune.

Not much is known about the manuscript's previous owner, Stanisław Zienowicz (1610-1672). He came from a prominent in the Grand Duchy family of the Despot-Zenowiczes, closely tied to the Radziwiłłs<sup>4</sup>. Stanisław's father Jerzy-Jan held the office of Castellan of Vitebsk, but all of Stanisław's offices were in Lithuania proper: since 1646 he was the Prefect of Wilkia forests. In 1653 he became the judge's assistant (*podśudek*) and later the judge of the land court (*podkomorzi*) in Wilkomir. He ended up holding a senatorial rank of the Castellan of Novogródek. Unfortunately, these bits of information do not hint at how Stanisław Zienowicz might have acquired the manuscript or how long he had owned it before presenting it to his patron.

The manuscript's previous ownership is reflected in a series of entries made on the back of the upper cover (now fol. 11) and also on fol. 1. They were reproduced several times (Šaxmatov 1902: 2; Lur'e 1989: 4; Kukuškina 1994: 6) and were interpreted as owners' notes for memory. Of these, only the first three (from the back of the cover) are the actual notes, while those on the fol. 1 are, in fact, mere probes of the pen<sup>5</sup>. The notes reflect the rather humble status of their authors and ordinary events of their lives: sowing rye, addition to livestock, a marriage during Lent. Yet they give us three dates: 1590, 1603, and 1606; two names: Parfen Pyrčkin and Kryštof Cyplia; and one locality: the Grodno county.

Šaxmatov believed these entries to be the earliest evidence of the manuscript's migration to 'Western Russia.' He contrasted them with the earlier set of the reader's marginal notes, which, in his view, prove that as late as the 1520s the codex had not yet left the place

<sup>3</sup> The suggestion was based on the receipt (dated April 24, 1654) issued by Janusz Radziwiłł to the effect that he borrowed two books, "the chronicle and irmologion", from the monastery's father superior Siluan Kuncewicz (published: Upravlenie 1870: 215-216). Unless the Zienowicz's note was faked in order to cover up the theft (which seems unlikely), 'the chronicle' referred to in the receipt must have been a different one.

<sup>4</sup> On the Despot-Zienowiczes (1610-1672) see: Niesiecki 1845: 170-174; Ptaszycy 1878; Ptaszycy 1894.

<sup>5</sup> Two of them replicate the beginnings of some official documents, while the third one paraphrases the entry by Kryštof Cyplia from the first set.

of its origin in central Muscovy (Šaxmatov 1902: 2). He claimed that neither the language of marginalia nor their author's hand shows the slightest traces of 'West Russian origin' (Šaxmatov 1902: 2, 7-8). The chronological computation in one of the notes led Šaxmatov to infer that its author was writing in 1528.

It turns out that Šaxmatov erred in all points.

There are a total of twelve marginal notes in the manuscript, all left by the same reader<sup>6</sup>. Contrary to Šaxmatov's assertion, the hand is clearly Ruthenian cursive revealing some traces of the scribe's Gothic training (see fig. 1 and 2).

Their content is quite variegated: the reader was simply flagging, without any system in mind, anything that for some reason seemed noteworthy. On fol. 88, he marked the first mention of Lithuanians with the note: *W* ЛИТВЕ. On the right margin of fol. 90 he marked the account of metropolitan Ilarion's election with the note: *W* МИТРО[ПО]ЛИТѢ [О,ЕО]ПѢТѢ. The report on Prince Jaroslav's death he flagged as: *ДѢ СНО* ЄРОСЛАВЪ (fol. 93v); the account on nomadic Cumans's attack as: *W* ТАТАРСКІЯ ЯЗЫЦѢ (fol. 134v); the report on the building of the Dormition Cathedral in Vladimir-on-Kljazma as: *W* МОСКОВС[КОМ] ВОЛОДИМИ[Р]Е (fol. 204); the sacking of Kiev in 1169 as: *ПЕРВОЕ ВЗѢТІЕ* КИЄВСКОЕ (fol. 205v); the description of the Novgorod citizens' arrogance as: *СВОБОДА* НОВГОРОДСКАЯ (fol. 210); the account on the ancient origin of the 'veče' custom as: *ЗРИ* ДѢЛНЫНЫ КД ДОБРО (fol. 220v). To the list of the princes' armies coming from different cities he added: *ВѢДѢ* ВОЛОДИМИРЬ СТАР[ШИ]И НІИ ЛУЦ[ЦИ]К (fol. 231); to the mention of the city of Polock: *ЗРИ* W ПОЛОЦ[КУ] (fol. 239).

Taken separately, these brief notes are mostly territory neutral. One, however, instantly targets its author's geographical point of view, as well as his political affiliation from the note on fol. 204. For him, the city of Vladimir-on-Kljazma is 'Muscovite' (Московский), that is it belongs to 'Москва' as the Russian state was habitually called by the Ruthenians – in contrast with the other one of the same name in the Grand Duchy (Volodymyr-Volynsk). This note was intended to alert future readers so they could discriminate between the two cities. From the note on fol. 231 – *ВѢДѢ* ВОЛОДИМИРЬ СТАР[ШИ]И НІИ ЛУЦ[ЦИ]К – we can deduce the author's keen interest in things Volhynian, and even his peculiar 'Volodymyr patriotism': he thought he found in the chronicle text (listing Volodymyr before Luck: *и ГАЛИЦКАЯ ПОМОУ . и ВОЛОДИМИРЬСКАЯ . и ЛУЦКАЯ* [PSRL 38: 150]) an argument for the primacy of Volodymyr. By the late fifteenth century, the fortunes of this once principal city of Volhynia were in decline, while Luck was emerging as the center of the province, of which our author apparently disapproved.

The overall impression one gets from these annotations is of a person whose geography is that of the Grand Duchy: of the five cities mentioned four are 'Lithuanian' (Kiev, Volodymyr, Luck, Polock), while the only one outside the Grand Duchy is marked as foreign. The author was primarily concerned with church affairs (he flagged three accounts, more than on any other subject). And he was probably a native of Volodymyr.

<sup>6</sup> To these, one other, on fol. 2v, missed by descriptions of the manuscript, should be added: "ЯЗЫК СЛОВѢСКИИ [...]И ПОСЕЛИ ПО [КОГ]ОРЫ МЕСТА." Its hand seems different from the rest in the set yet undoubtedly Ruthenian.

испигни ѿросла влѣ С. Ф. М. постави ѿ росла  
 вѣ . и лари ѿ митрополита . роукиа . вѣ стѣ софи .  
 собравъ епѣтѣ : **С**ъ ждалаже мѣ . тора прозѣа  
 печерскни монастырь . бѣолюбнво моу кнзю ѿросла  
 воу . любаше бере стовѣ . и цркъ вѣто соущо . стѣа

Шма  
 мѣ  
 пѣ

**С**ъ еросла  
 мѣ .  
 бѣ вѣ а пѣи волю бѣи . сама мѣ же болѣо соущо . и прѣ  
 шѣ шю кѣ вѣ шето роу . и рѣз болѣ вѣ мѣ . и жѣ сла  
 то гдѣ соущо . а стѣо сла вѣо в коло дѣ мѣри . вѣ вѣола  
 гдѣ оу тогда оу шѣа : бѣ вѣолюбн ѿ шѣ мѣ . гѣ вѣ се бѣ  
 и . еѣо и мѣ аше прѣо оу говѣ . ѿ ро сла вѣо прѣ стѣи со мѣ  
 цѣ . жнѣ тѣа . и прѣ да стѣ шю свою бѣоу . вѣоу . а по

**Ш**ма  
 ѣ  
 цѣ .  
 никака зѣа хрѣтѣ ѿ мо мѣ . а ѣцѣа нѣо сѣдѣ тѣа ѿ по тѣи мѣ .  
 е вѣ рѣ дѣи сѣ нѣа . мѣ жнѣ во сто ко . и нѣ вѣ ро . чнѣ ло и  
 а колѣ мѣ . то рѣ мѣне . и пѣ чѣ мѣ жн . то рѣи кѣ тола вѣцѣ  
 мѣ дѣи гѣ нѣ дѣ тѣ вѣ сѣ вѣ дѣ тѣа ѿ шѣ . ѿ ко и колѣ пѣ  
 бѣ вѣ мѣ со тѣа . е гдѣ и сѣ ка гдѣ ѿ мѣ и . и нѣ бѣ жѣ вѣо стѣ

пожелѣтѣо со зѣа вѣ цркъ и стѣи е бѣи . вѣ вола дѣи  
 ри . вѣ ло вѣ тѣ рнѣ мѣ . и хрѣтѣ олюбн вѣ мѣ кн зѣ мѣ  
 а мѣ рѣ вѣ мѣ . и оу крѣ снѣ о дѣ нѣ во . мнѣ го рѣ а зѣи тѣи .  
 мѣи и ко пѣ мѣи . и рѣ рѣ гѣ мѣ а мѣ нѣ е мѣ вѣ сѣ нѣ сл . и

со мѣ стѣо сѣ  
 вѣ ло рѣ мѣ

**П**рѣ о сѣ о дѣ а сѣ  
 мѣи е мѣи е .  
 лѣ вѣ х ѣ оу . прѣ ставнѣ вѣ ло вѣ тѣ рнѣ и хрѣтѣ олюбн вѣ мѣ  
 кн зѣ и жѣ сла вѣ . сѣ вѣ вѣ ло вѣ тѣ рѣ мнѣ о кн зѣ а мѣ рѣ вѣ и по  
 ло жѣи а и цркъ и стѣи е бѣи вѣ вола дѣ мѣри . и вѣ стѣа кѣ  
 лѣ вѣ х ѣ оу . прѣ ставнѣ вѣ ло вѣ тѣ рнѣ и хрѣтѣ олюбн вѣ мѣ  
 и кн зѣ ѿ росла вѣ . сѣ вѣ вѣ ло вѣ тѣ рѣ мнѣ о кн зѣ сѣ вѣ рнѣ и ѿ

Fig. 1  
 Notes on fol. 90, 93v, 134v, 204, 205v

така заіа наса жма рѣгъ асирти не предан мене . гла  
 двѣ . тако и снѣлю новгородскыи . на казлѣ и смрнѣ до  
 конца земли за престѣпление крѣпко . и за то рддсть .  
 и наведе мана . и млтвю своею и збави рѣи . не глтвѣ же  
 правн соу новгородци . замн за вна сво бо жемн сѣ новго  
 рдци . прадѣды кнзъ наши . но аще бы тако было . то же

и его мтрѣ . и на свою правдо . новгородцие кой згнѣ  
 ла . и смолна не . и кнѣне . и получа не . и ца власти .  
 ꙗко на домоу правде сха дѣла . ꙗко старейшии  
 збѣдумлю . ꙗко мжѣ и при городи сгнѣтъ . а злѣ  
 го рд старыи рдство . и соудаль . и псвои рехота  
 це свою правдо по ставити . а не хотѣху правды

лощи стѣ слави чь всеволо . рюрикѣ рости слави чь . ца  
 лодимирѣ глѣ бо ви . стѣ слави глѣ бѣ . гоу ргѣи глѣ  
 бѣ ꙗко рошскыи . романови мсти славѣ . двѣ ви и за  
 славѣ . всеволо мсти слави . и галнцка ꙗпомѣ . и воло  
 димирскѣи . и лоуцка ꙗ . и тои доша кнѣи вкѣте вси .

сдохотѣ мн рѣи . ꙗко же и прѣкѣ глѣтъ . брамѣ слави на лоу  
 че ѣ мн рѣи стѣ дѣи . солстивы же мн рѣи вѣще вели  
 ю пакость земли пвора . о глѣтъ ꙗма змѣи и де  
 на полтескѣ двѣ рости слави и со смоленьска . а снѣ его  
 мсти слави и хноваторѣ . и злошъска . ва гнѣковолода  
 кнѣи . и глѣтъ сѣи все слави . и слышаша полочане . и злѣ

Fig. 2

Notes on fol. 210, 220v, 231, 239



Fig. 3

*Manicules on fol. 207v and 200v*

Our author's cultural milieu, however, is most manifestly revealed in the note on fol. 207v. Its content is not particularly remarkable in dealing with the Cumans' attack on the town Polonne, which once belonged to the Tithes Church of Kiev. The account is (somewhat erroneously) flagged as: *В Полоно митрополи горѣ*. Rather, it is the attached drawing of the palm with the index finger extended that is noteworthy. The drawing was not recognized as anything noteworthy and is vaguely referred to in the descriptions of the *Radziwiłł codex* as 'palm with extended index finger' (Šaxmatov 1902: 7; Lur'e 1989: 4; Kukuškina 1994: 6) or even as a 'drawing of a blessing hand.' In fact, we found two such drawings in the manuscript. Another one, unnoticed by scholars, is on fol. 200+v<sup>7</sup>. Part of it was cut while binding the book, yet it is clearly distinguishable (see fig. 3).

The significance of these drawings was not recognized by scholars of the codex because they are alien to the normal repertoire of Cyrillic manuscripts. However, they are very common in Medieval manuscripts in the West. Called variously – 'pointing hands,' 'fists,' 'indexes,' and most recently, 'manicules' – they are a regular feature of scribal practice, as well as readers' habits. As William H. Sherman points out, they were particularly common in the

<sup>7</sup> It marks the story of translation of the famous relic, the icon of the Virgin, and its installation in Vladimir.

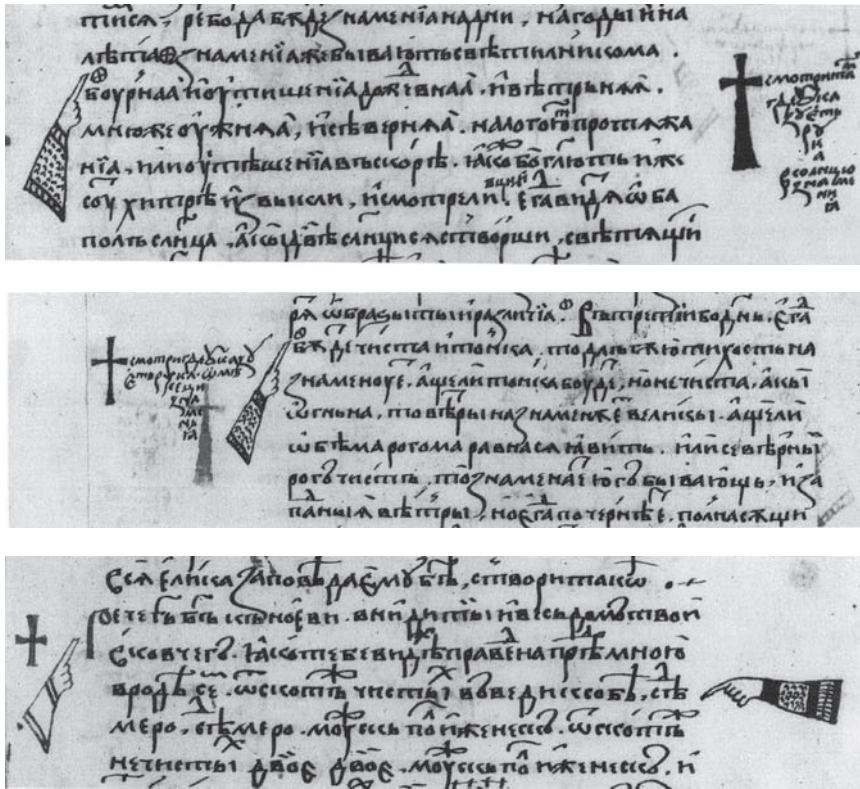


Fig. 4

*Manicules in the Xronograf of Vilnius (fol. 6, 6v, 20)*

manuscripts produced and annotated in Italy during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and continued well after the invention of printing. During the fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries, throughout the West *manicules* were among the most widely used symbols in the readers' arsenal (Shermann 2005: 19-48; Sherman 2009: 25-52).

I know of only two other Cyrillic manuscripts with historical texts that have drawings of *manicules* in them; both come from the territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The first is the so-called *Xronograf of Vilnius*, a compilation on the universal history from the Creation through the first century AD, of the early sixteenth century (Library of Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, N° 109/147). One of its readers, most probably still in the sixteenth century, apparently took special pride in his ability to draw *manicules*, having left, in effect, dozens and dozens of them, of various forms and shapes (see fig. 4)<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> I am grateful to Katerina Kyrychenko (Institute of Ukrainian History, Kiev), who is currently preparing a study on the *manicules* of the so called *Xronograf of Vilnius*, for providing me with a photocopy of the manuscript.



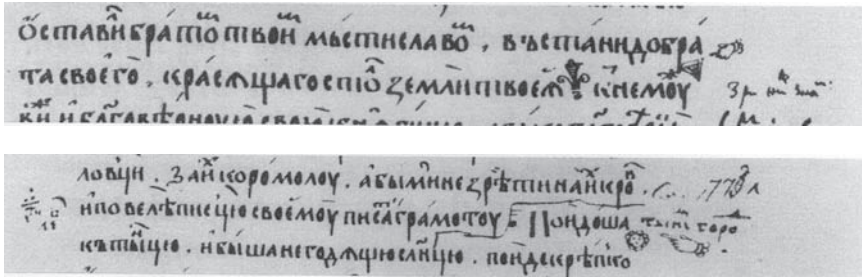


Fig. 5

Manicules in the *Xlebnikov Chronicle* (fol. 379 and 384)



Fig. 6

Note with chronological computation on fol. 157v

The other one is the famous *Xlebnikov* copy of the *Hypatian Chronicle*, of the mid-sixteenth century, made most probably in Kiev (National Russian Library, F.IV.230). Here, one of the readers used *manicules* to indicate the correct order of the text (garbled by the scribe) that he had established (see fig. 5).

It is clear that the two *manicules* in the *Radziwiłł* codex could only have been drawn by a person who went through Western formal schooling or, at least, was at home with the habits of reading current in the Latin West.

And he, it would appear, was one of the very first readers of the *Radziwiłł* chronicle.

Šaxmatov, and following him many others, believed that marginal notes were entered in 1528. His reasoning was as follows. The account of Prince Volodimer Monomax sending his son to the throne of Volodymyr-on-Volhynia (in the entry for 1119, fol. 157v) is flagged by the following note: Володимирьской цркви .ѿ. лѣ. вѣ трицати и вѣ дву; ‘the church in Volodymyr is 368 years old’ (fig. 6).

I believe – Šaxmatov wrote – that it might have occurred to the reader that the story deals with Vladimir of Suzdal’ and with Andrej Jurevič, the founder of the city’s ca-

thedral. This church was finished in 1160; adding 368 to this year, we obtain that the marginal note was entered in 1528 (Šaxmatov 1902: 7).

This is a strange piece of logic. Why an annotator, having just read the phrase: “The same year Volodimir sent his other son, Andrew, to rule in Volodymyr” (То҃го лѣтѣ Воладѣмиръ снѣа своѣ дроугаго. Андѣрѣа. кнѣжити к Володимирию присла [PSRL 38: 104]) would imagine that the story is about a different Andrew, the son of Jurij, who lived half a century later and did not yet enter the chronicle story? And why would the reader imagine that the city in question is not Volodymyr-on-Volhynia (mentioned in the same entry earlier), but the one on the Kljazma, of which he is not even aware yet? Indeed, the reader stumbles upon the mention of this second Vladimir only on fol. 204, almost fifty folios down, and marks his discovery with a note.

Šaxmatov, of course, proceeded from his general belief that the annotator was Russian and must have referred to Russian realities. Yet he also struggled with the technical difficulty. The year when the Dormition Cathedral in Volodymyr-on-Volhynia was built is not known, and thus the chronological computation in the note yields no meaningful date. On the contrary, the date of the Dormition Cathedral in Vladimir-on-Kljazma is well attested, conveniently suggesting 1160 as the benchmark<sup>9</sup>.

Normally, chronological calculations like this refer to the annals to which they happen to be attached. If our annotator placed his note at 1119, that means that he believed (for some reason or another) that 368 years to his times have passed since this particular year. This yields 1487 as the date when he read the codex and left his annotations. This is surprisingly early but not impossible: Lixačev found the match for the codex’s earliest water mark in the document dated 1486 (Lixačev 1899: 455-456)<sup>10</sup>. That the illuminated (and, presumably, intended for some special occasion or patron) manuscript was subjected to such a treatment so early, should not be a surprise. Many a scholar would admit that whatever the inceptive designs for the book might have been, the *Radziwiłł codex* was left unfinished and unbound.

<sup>9</sup> The only source which provides a hint at the chronology of the cathedral in Volodymyr-on-Volhynia is the late, sixteenth-century, *Nikon Chronicle*. In the entry for 1160, it reports that Prince Mstislav Izjaslavič ‘finished wall paintings in the church in Volodimer-on-Volhynia’ and also decorated it with the precious vessels (PSRL 9: 229). The editor of the *Nikon Chronicle* got it wrong, however: in his sources, the account (under the year 1161) referred to the decoration of the Dormition Cathedral in Vladimir-on-Kljazma finished the previous year (cf. for instance: PSRL 25: 71; PSRL 7: 75-76).

<sup>10</sup> This dating would elucidate the meaning of the note on fol. 205v – первое взѣе Киѣское (‘the first sacking of Kiev’). It was entered under the impression of the event still fresh in the author’s memory: the catastrophic sack of Kiev by the army of the Crimean Khan Mengli Girey in 1482. It was a disaster on a scale unprecedented: the castle and the city were burned, the Palatine of Kiev Ivan Xodkevych (Chodkiewicz?), together with his family, was taken captive, as was the Archimandrite of the Caves Monastery, and the event made a strong impact on the contemporaries’ mind as the biggest calamity ever visited on the ancient city (for details see: Pelensky 1980).



Fig. 7

Depiction of the sun in the *Nurnberg Chronicle* (1495) and the *Radziwiłł Chronicle* (fol. 124v)

Already toward the end of the work, it would seem, the codex was found to be a failure and discarded. During this time, the manuscript was treated rather casually and different people meddled with it, for example, adding pictures or amending the existing ones.

These intrusions were also made by persons of ‘Western’ persuasions. On the low margin of fol. 228 someone entered a drawing of his geomantic divination efforts (Černecov 1977: 301-307; Černecov 1981: 284)<sup>11</sup>; while a picture of the sun on fol. 124v copies the illustration found in the famous *Nuremberg Chronicle* (published in 1495) (see fig. 7).

We would probably never learn who commissioned the *Radziwiłł codex* and for what purpose. Several hypotheses offered so far lack sufficient merit<sup>12</sup>. Unfortunately, we know next to nothing about historical imagination of the time, and so the impulses behind the commissioning of an illuminated chronicle with the Old Rus’ text will remain obscure. The production of the *Radziwiłł codex* might have been an isolated incident or a part of some wider movement of reviving interest in ancient history and recovering it from the oblivion. If issues like these are a matter of divination, other things are more certain, however. All indications suggest that the *Radziwiłł codex* was produced in Volhynia and circulated only within the space of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, as apparently did the previous exemplar

<sup>11</sup> Geomancy was not known in Muscovy. On the contrary, texts describing this practice are attested in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (Turilov, Černecov 1985).

<sup>12</sup> Konstantinas Jablonskis has suggested that the book listed as ‘Kievan Chronicle’ in the inventory of the Albrecht Gaštold’s library entered into the Lithuanian Metrics (1510), could refer to the *Radziwiłł codex*. He conjectured that the chronicle may have belonged to his father, Martin Gaštold, who was palatine of Kiev in 1471-1481 (Jablonskis 1961: 21-25). However, other scholars would maintain that the ‘Kievan Chronicle’ of the inventory must have been a copy of the *Hypatian Chronicle* (Jasas 1971: 34; Gudmantas 2003: 5). I am grateful to Kateryna Kyrychenko for pointing me to this literature and helping with translation.

which is now lost. Indeed, there is a strong possibility that the *Radziwiłł codex* is a replica of an illuminated manuscript that emerged in the late thirteenth century in the same royal Volhynian scriptorium where the illuminated codex with the chronicle of George Hamartolos (the so-called *Trinity Hamartolos*, RGB, f. 173 [MDA], Fund., N° 100) was also created<sup>13</sup>.

### Abbreviations

- PSRL 7: *Polnoe sobranie russkix letopisej*, VII. *Letopis' po Voskresenskomu spisku*, Sankt-Peterburg 1856.
- PSRL 9: *Polnoe sobranie russkix letopisej*, IX. *Letopisnyj sbornik, imenuemyj Patriaršeju ili Nikonovskoju letopisju*, Sankt-Peterburg 1862.
- PSRL 25: *Polnoe sobranie russkix letopisej*, XXV. *Moskovskij letopisnyj svod konca XV veka*, Moskva-Leningrad 1949.
- PSRL 38: *Polnoe sobranie russkix letopisej*, XXXVIII. *Radzivilovskaja letopis'*, Leningrad 1989.

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<sup>13</sup> Some striking correspondences between the Radziwiłł codex's and Trinity Hamartolos's illustrations suggest that both tapped on the same set of iconographic models current in a single scriptorium. On this see my forthcoming study (Tolochko forthcoming).

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### Abstract

Oleksij Tolochko  
*Notes on the Radziwiłł Codex*

The *Radziwiłł Codex* is the only surviving Medieval Cyrillic manuscript with the chronicle text. Views as to its date and the place of origin varied in literature, yet there is a strong tendency to place it within the context of the nationally defined "Great Russian" cultural tradition. By examining the marginal notes entered by one of the very first manuscript's reader, the article challenges the accepted wisdom. It appears that the codex was created before 1487, most possibly in Volhynia, and circulated only within the space of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. There is a strong possibility that the *Radziwiłł Codex* is a replica of now lost original that emerged in the late thirteenth century in the same royal Volhynian scriptorium where the illuminated codex with the chronicle of George Hamartolos (the so-called *Trinity Hamartolos*) was also created.

### Keywords

Radziwiłł Code; Medieval Cyrillic Manuscripts; Volhynia.