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## **Ryurik Rostislavich (d. 1208?): the Unsung Champion of the Rostislavichi\***

### **Introduction**

During the second half of the twelfth century, the Rostislavichi of Smolensk, descended from Vladimir Monomakh's grandson Rostislav Mstislavich (d. 1167), became one of the most powerful dynasties in Rus'. They emerged as successful contenders for the throne of Kiev against their cousins the Yur'evichi of Suzdalia descended from Yury Dolgorukiy, against their cousins the Izyaslavichi of Volyn' descended from Izyaslav Mstislavich, and rivals of the Ol'govichi of Chernigov descended from Oleg Svyatoslavich.<sup>1</sup> One of the most active champions of the Rostislavichi fortunes, whose political career the chroniclers record for some fifty years, was Rostislav's son Ryurik. His career, however, was one of political turmoil.

In the light of his successes and failures he was a controversial figure for both chroniclers and historians who have conflicting views concerning his political importance. They disagree as to just how successful a ruler he was. According to Tatishchev who cites an unidentified chronicler

...he ruled for 37 years. Four times he was driven out [of Kiev], and he was tonsured, suffering much at the hands of his son-in-law [Roman Mstislavich]. He had no peace from any direction, for he himself was much addicted to drink and was manipulated by women (*zhenami vodim be*); he paid little attention to the ruling of the land, and his administrators (*tiuny*) did much evil. For this reason the Kievans had little love for him.<sup>2</sup>

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\* I wish to acknowledge that I have drawn upon material from Martin Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 2003, published by Cambridge University Press, and reproduced with permission. I have expanded and modified a number of the observations and conclusions concerning Ryurik Rostislavich's career expressed in that work.

1 For the various dynasties, see N. de Baumgarten, *Généalogies des branches régnantes des Rurikides du XIIIe au XVIe siècle*, *Orientalia Christiana*, vol. 35, nr. 94 (Rome, 1934), V, 27, 16, 23; and IV, 4.

2 V. N. Tatishchev, *Istoriya Rossiyskaya*, (abbreviated Tat.) 7 vols. (Moscow [abbreviated M.] — Leningrad [abbreviated L.], 1962–68), Tat. 4, 341; Tat. 3, 184–185; J. Fennell, *The Crisis of Medieval Russia 1200–1304* (London and New York, 1983), 34.

It has been pointed out that this description was composed by a Galician-Volynian or Kievan chronicler who was sympathetic to Roman Mstislavich.<sup>3</sup>

Under the year 1199 the *Ipat'evskaya letopis* gives us a different description of Ryurik. Igumen Moisey of the Vidubitskiy monastery, most likely writing in the chronicle that Ryurik himself had commissioned, records with great enthusiasm an encomium (*pokhvala*) to Ryurik on the occasion of the completion of the supporting wall below the church of St. Michael in the monastery. Moisey explains that since the church was built by Vsevolod Yaroslavich (d. 1093), four generations of princes ruled Kiev, but not one of them had as much love for the church as Ryurik in the fifth generation. Only Christ loving Ryurik with the goodwill of God completed the wall. Ryurik demonstrated goodwill towards monasteries and to all the churches, and love for their buildings.<sup>4</sup> Igumen Moisey also calls Ryurik 'tsar' and dignifies his principality by calling it an autocratic state known not only in the lands of Rus' but also in distant lands beyond the sea, and to the ends of the universe.<sup>5</sup>

Historians also have favourable appraisals of Ryurik's career. According to one, Rostislav's sons, David, Ryurik and Mstislav "distinguished themselves with ambition and bravery."<sup>6</sup> Others observe that Roman Mstislavich and Ryurik Rostislavich were the last outstanding figures in the list of twelfth-thirteenth century princes in Rus'.<sup>7</sup> Finally, another historian claims that with his success in Kiev Ryurik set the foundation for Rostislavichi dominance in Rus'.<sup>8</sup> Surprisingly, despite these positive appraisals of Ryurik's career, he has been largely ignored by historians in that no comprehensive examination of his political career has been written.

Just as Tatishchev's chronicle source is biased in favour of Roman, so Igumen Moisey is biased in favour of Ryurik. Therefore, neither can be taken at face value. Which view is closer to the truth? Let us first point out that there is no chronicle evidence that will help us to determine if Ryurik was much addicted to drink, if he was manipulated by women, and if his administrators did much evil. The purpose of this investigation is to examine the available chronicle information concerning his political career and to determine insofar as it is possible his goals, his achievements, and his failures.

### Ryurik's Early Years

The chroniclers fail to record the date of Ryurik's birth. According to the first chronicle reference made to him under the year 1157, however, we are told that in that year he participated on a campaign.<sup>9</sup> To be old enough to take part on a military

3 B. A. Rybakov, *Kievskaya Rus' i russkie knyazhestva XII–XIII vv.* (M., 1982), 496.

4 *PSRL* 2: 708–711; P. P. Tolochko, *Russkie letopisi i letopistsy X–XIII vv.* (Sankt–Peterburg, 2003), 140.

5 *PSRL* 2: 713; Rybakov, *Kievskaya Rus'*, 494; P. P. Tolochko, *Drevnyaya Rus'* (Kiev, 1987), 149–150.

6 D. Ilovayskiy, *Istoriya Rossii, chast' pervaya, Kievskiy period* (M., 1876), 249.

7 Rybakov, *Kievskaya Rus'*, 496; A. V. Emmausskiy, *Mstislav Udaloy* (Kirov, 1998), p. 142.

8 Fennell, *The Crisis*, 22.

9 See under the year 1158: *PSRL* 2: 491; "Gustinskaya letopis'," (abbreviated Gust.) *PSRL* 2 (SPb., 1843), 305; "Moskovskiy letopisnyy svod kontsa XV veka," *PSRL* 25 (M.– L., 1949), 63; for the correct date, see N. G. Berezikov, *Khronologiya russkogo letopisaniya* (M., 1963), 168–170.

expedition he must have been at least a teenager. Consequently, he would have been born around 1140 at the latest. He was one of Rostislav Mstislavich's five sons.<sup>10</sup> Since the chroniclers do not report the births of any of the sons, the silence of the sources has created controversy among historians concerning Ryurik's place in the genealogical order of Rostislav's sons. In the light of future political rivalries for Kiev, however, it is important that his genealogical status in the family be accurately established.

There is no doubt that Roman was the eldest of Rostislav's sons. A number of historians claim that Svyatoslav was the next in seniority,<sup>11</sup> others consider him to be the second youngest,<sup>12</sup> while others omit him from the family tree altogether.<sup>13</sup> Since he died in 1170,<sup>14</sup> that is, before Ryurik became involved in the rivalries for Kiev, Svyatoslav's rank in the family tree is not important to our investigation. It is generally agreed that the youngest of Rostislav's sons was Mstislav. The most important genealogical relationship for our investigation is the one that existed between Ryurik and David. Many historians claim that David was the senior of the two.<sup>15</sup> A smaller number holds that Ryurik was the elder brother.<sup>16</sup> During the course of our investigation circumstantial evidence will show that Ryurik was older than David and this is the genealogical order that we will adopt.

In 1162, according to the chronicles, Rostislav Mstislavich brought the Polovtsian princess Belukovna as wife for Ryurik.<sup>17</sup> The couple evidently had no children and, to judge from the silence of the sources, she seemingly died not long after from unexplained causes, perhaps in childbirth. To judge from the information that at a later date two princes of Turov are called Ryurik's brothers-in-law,<sup>18</sup> he married a princess of Turov, named Anna, at an undisclosed date.<sup>19</sup> Anna gave birth to two sons and four daughters. The order of seniority of the girls is not reported but concerning the sons we know that Rostislav was older than Vladimir. The former was born in 1072 and the latter in 1187, fifteen years later.<sup>20</sup> From the date of Rostislav's birth we know that Ryurik married Anna before 1072.

10 Baumgarten, *Généalogies*, IX, 6. As we shall see, Ryurik was most likely older than David. According to Berezhkov David was probably born in 1141/2 (*Khronologiya*, 208.) If this date is correct, Ryurik would have been born in 1140 at the latest.

11 See, for example, Baumgarten, *Généalogies*, IX, 3.

12 See P. V. Golubovskiy, *Istoriya Smolenskoj zemli* (Kiev, 1895), 203.

13 See, for example, Fennell, *The Crisis*, 177.

14 See under the year 1172: *PSRL* 2: 550; O. M. Rapov, *Knyazheskie vladenyia na Rusi v X-pervoy polovine XIII v.* (M., 1977), 161; M. Hrushevs'kyi, *Istoriia Ukrainy-Rusy*, vol. 2, XI–XIII vik (Kyiv, 1992), 594, Table 7; for the correct date, see Berezhkov, *Khronologiya*, 159.

15 Baumgarten, *Généalogies*, IX, 4; Fennell, *The Crisis*, 177; Rapov, *Knyazheskie vladenyia*, 159–160; M. Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246* (Cambridge, 2003), 396.

16 Tat. 4, 271; Tat. 3, 83; Golubovskiy, *Istoriya Smolenskoj zemli*, 203; Hrushevs'kyi, *Istoriia Ukrainy-Rusy*, vol. 2, 594, Table 7.

17 *PSRL* 2: 521–522; Gust, 307; *PSRL* 25: 72. For the correct date, see Berezhkov, *Khronologiya*, 157–158.

18 In 1190 Ryurik's brother-in-law (*shurin*) Svyatopolk Yur'evich of Turov died (*PSRL* 2: 665; Gust., 322), and five years later his brother Gleb Yur'evich of Turov died. (*PSRL* 2: 694).

19 Concerning her name, see under the year 1199: *PSRL* 2: 710; Baumgarten, *Généalogies*, IX, 6.

20 For Rostislav, see *PSRL* 2: 567; for Vladimir, see *PSRL* 2: 657–658. Baumgarten, *Généalogies*, IX, 18–23. According to one view Ryurik had a third son named Svyatoslav (Emmausskiy, *Mstislav Udaloy*, p. 143).

The chronicles tell us little about Rurik's career before the early 1170s when he became involved in the rivalry for Kiev. Up until then he is mentioned a number of times as a participant in military campaigns. Nevertheless, even though he is referred to only in passing, we learn useful details about his career and genealogy.

As already noted, the chronicles refer to him for the first time under 1157 when Izyaslav Davidovich campaigned against Yury Yaroslavich of Turov. We are told that Rurik with Smolensk troops accompanied Izyaslav's attacking force.<sup>21</sup> The news that Rostislav of Smolensk assigned his son Rurik to command his troops implies that Rurik held a position of genealogical seniority among the Rostislavichi brothers even though, as we have seen, he was probably still a teenager. His seniority is supported by news the chronicler gives two years later. In 1159, Rostislav sent Roman and Rurik to help Rogvolod Borisovich of Polotsk wage war against Minsk.<sup>22</sup> The information that Rurik accompanied his eldest brother Roman suggests that Rurik was next in genealogical seniority and that their remaining brothers were still too young to participate in military encounters.

In a number of instances Rurik is the only son who is reported assisting his father or his father's allies in their battles. Rostislav's choice of Rurik as his companion or representative on campaigns speaks in support of Rurik's military prowess. Thus under the same year (1159) a number of chronicles report that Rurik helped Svyatoslav of Chernigov fight against Izyaslav Davidovich and the Polovtsy.<sup>23</sup> In the following year, after Rostislav became prince of Kiev, we learn that Rurik came to help his father fight against Izyaslav Davidovich.<sup>24</sup>

In 1162, Rostislav faced insubordination from his younger brother Vladimir Mstislavich who seized the town of Sluchesk. Rostislav called upon Rurik's leadership talents once again to command an alliance of princes from Turov, Chernigov, and Polotsk to evict Vladimir Mstislavich from the town. On seeing the large size of the attacking force Vladimir sued for peace and withdrew to his brother in Kiev.<sup>25</sup> Rurik's leadership qualities are emphasized again under the same year when he, evidently commanding the troops of the Kievan towns and friendly tribesmen, joined Mstislav Izyaslavich of Volodimir against Izyaslav Davidovich.<sup>26</sup> Thus his reputation as a military commander was evidently well established despite the fact that in 1162 he was still a young prince, perhaps some twenty years of age. We also learn that, in 1160 and 1162, when Rurik campaigned against Izyaslav Davidovich, he came from Torchesk, a southern outpost of Kiev, which was his domain at that time.

In 1167 Rostislav summoned all his allies to take up positions at Kanev to preempt Polovtsian attacks. The chronicles give the names of either three or two Rostislavichi who answered their father's summons. These were either 'Rurik, David, and Msti-

21 *PSRL* 25: 63; under the year 1158: *PSRL* 2: 491; Gust., 305.

22 *PSRL* 2: 496; Gust, 305.

23 *PSRL* 25: 67–68; "Lavrent'evskaya letopis'," *PSRL* 1, 2nd ed. (L., 1926), cols. 349–350; under the year 1160: *PSRL* 2: 505–507, 509; Gust., 306 and others.

24 *PSRL* 25: 70; "Ermolinskaya letopis'," *PSRL* 23 (SPb., 1910), 44; and others.

25 *PSRL* 2: 521; Gust., 307; *PSRL* 25: 72.

26 *PSRL* 2: 517–518.

slav' or 'Ryurik and David'.<sup>27</sup> As was the chroniclers' practice, the princes are listed in their genealogical order of seniority. Thus Ryurik was the eldest of the princes named. At that time their eldest brother Roman was prince of the more distant Smolensk and was not expected to participate in the campaign.

At the beginning of 1168 Mstislav Izyaslavich of Kiev summoned the princes of Rus' to join him on a campaign against the Polovtsy. We are told that the Rostislavichi were represented by Ryurik who came from his domain of Vruchiy.<sup>28</sup> According to this information, in 1168, the year after Rostislav's death, the chronicles report for the first time that Ryurik was the prince of Vruchiy. Although the sources refer to Vruchiy as Ryurik's domain they do not identify it as his patrimony. Nevertheless, there is chronicle evidence confirming that by the time of his father's death Vruchiy was Ryurik's patrimony.<sup>29</sup> After 1168, until his death which, as we shall see, probably occurred in 1208, he is reported visiting Vruchiy on at least seven occasions (1187, 1190, 1193, 1195, 1202, 1206, 1207) to look after the administration of his domain.<sup>30</sup> Significantly, no other prince is reported ruling the town during Ryurik's lifetime. This is strong testimony in support of the view that Vruchiy was his patrimony.

The chronicles do not inform us when Rostislav allocated Vruchiy to Ryurik but it may be possible to suggest a probable date. In 1162, as noted above, Ryurik was prince of Torchesk.<sup>31</sup> Later in the same year, however, his younger brother David seized control of the town against his father's wishes, therewith displacing Ryurik.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, in the same year Rostislav gave Belgorod to his youngest son Mstislav, presumably as his patrimony.<sup>33</sup> Ryurik however was older than Mstislav so it is logical to assume that Rostislav had given him a domain earlier or about at the same time. Nevertheless, since the chronicler reports that Rostislav returned Torchesk to his nephew Mstislav Izyaslavich in 1163,<sup>34</sup> this means that Ryurik was no longer prince of Torchesk in that year. We have already noted that in 1162 Rostislav had Ryurik marry a Polovtsian princess.<sup>35</sup> It is highly likely therefore, although the chronicles do not confirm it, that Rostislav allotted Vruchiy to Ryurik at the time of his marriage.

In 1167 Rostislav died.<sup>36</sup> After his death his nephew Mstislav Izyaslavich occupied Kiev rather than Rostislav's brother Vladimir Mstislavich who had a prior claim.<sup>37</sup> Mstislav's arrogant conduct, however, angered many of the princes and the boyars. In the winter of 1168 therefore, Andrey Bogolyubskiy of Suzdalia organized a coalition of princes to attack Kiev. It drove out Mstislav and pillaged the town. Although

27 See under the year 1168: *PSRL* 2: 527–528; Gust., 308; see under 1167: *PSRL* 25: 74; for the correct date, see Berezkhov, *Khronologiya*, 159. This order of seniority is repeated elsewhere, see for example, *PSRL* 2: 532–533, 541; *PSRL* 25: 75.

28 Under the year 1170: *PSRL* 2: 541. For the correct date, see Berezkhov, *Khronologiya*, 159.

29 See for example, *PSRL* 2: 543, 547, 657, 669.

30 *PSRL* 2: 657, 669, 678, 690; *PSRL* 25: 100, 105, 106.

31 *PSRL* 2: 517.

32 *PSRL* 2: 519.

33 *PSRL* 2: 519.

34 *PSRL* 2: 521.

35 *PSRL* 2: 521–522.

36 *PSRL* 2: 532.

37 See under the year 1168: *PSRL* 25: 75–76; and under the year 1169: Gust., 309.

Ryurik and David initially supported Mstislav, they later joined Andrey's coalition. After the campaign, on 8 March 1169, Gleb Yur'evich, Andrey's younger brother, sat on the throne of Kiev.<sup>38</sup> In the following year the Rostislavichi buttressed their alliance with the Yur'evichi. We are told that Ryurik, David, and Mstislav joined Gleb on a campaign against Vasil'ko Yaropolchich, the nephew of Mstislav Izyaslavich.<sup>39</sup>

On 19 August 1170 Mstislav Izyaslavich fell ill, died, and was buried in Vladimir in Volyn'.<sup>40</sup> Following his death, the Novgorodians expelled his son Roman and invited Andrey Bogolyubskiy, who now became the most powerful prince in the land, to be prince of Novgorod. Instead of occupying it in person or sending one of his sons, however, he appointed Ryurik Rostislavich to the town. Thus, on 4 October 1170 Ryurik occupied Novgorod.<sup>41</sup> This appointment shows that Andrey cultivated amicable relations with the Rostislavichi and by appointing Ryurik as his lieutenant he ingratiated himself with the Rostislavichi even further. We know almost nothing about Ryurik's rule in Novgorod. The only information that the chronicles give us comes from under the year 1171 which tells us that Ryurik deposed Posadnik Zhiroslav from office.<sup>42</sup>

By deposing Zhiroslav we see that Ryurik took active measures in the administration of the town but his eviction of the posadnik was probably unpopular with Andrey. Zhiroslav was Andrey's appointee and leader of the pro-Suzdalian faction. This is confirmed by the news that after Ryurik deposed him he fled to Andrey in Suzdal'. Furthermore, after Ryurik vacated Novgorod in the winter of 1171–72, Andrey reappointed Zhiroslav as posadnik.<sup>43</sup> When he antagonized Andrey Ryurik must have also alienated the pro-Suzdalian faction in Novgorod. This is suggested by the news that, according to a number of accounts, Ryurik 'fled' from Novgorod in the winter of 1171–72 and Andrey sent his son Yury to Novgorod as prince.<sup>44</sup> The chroniclers do not explain why Ryurik fled but it has been suggested that he was not reconciled with the Novgorodians.<sup>45</sup> The disgruntled townspeople must have been the pro-Suzdalian faction. This, Ryurik's only sojourn in Novgorod, was not a major episode in his political career. It was important, however, in that it was his first major administrative appointment. With that, it appears, he became a major player in the politics of Rus'. It also had special significance for his family. In 1172, while Ryurik was fleeing from Novgorod with his wife their first son Rostislav was born.<sup>46</sup>

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38 *PSRL* 1: 354–355; *PSRL* 25: 77–79; *PSRL* 2: 540–546.

39 *PSRL* 2: 550; Gust., 312.

40 See under the year 1172: *PSRL* 2: 559. Concerning the date, see Berezhkov, *Khronologiya*, 183–184.

41 *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis' starshego i mladshogo izvodov* (abbreviated NPL), edited by A. N. Nasonov, (M.–L., 1950), 33, 221–222; see under the year 1171: *PSRL* 25: 82; under the year 1173: *PSRL* 2: 562; Gust., 313.

42 NPL, 34, 222.

43 NPL, 34, 222. Yu. A. Limonov, *Vladimiro-Suzdal'skaya Rus'* (L., 1987), 69. Ryurik ruled Novgorod from 4 October 1170 until the winter of 1171/1172, for about a year and a half (V. L. Yanin, *Aktovye pechati Drevney Rusi X–XV vv.*, vol. 1, *Pechati X-nachala XIII v.* [M., 1970], 115).

44 See under the year 1172: NPL, 34, 222; under the year 1173: *PSRL* 2: 566–567; under the year 1174: *PSRL* 25: 83; *PSRL* 1: 365.

45 Ilovayskiy, *Istoriya Rossii*, 256; Hrushevs'kyi, *Istoriia Ukrainy-Rusy*, vol. 2, 199.

46 See under the year 1173: *PSRL* 2: 566–567.

### Kiev in the 1170s

On 20 January 1171 Gleb Yur'evich of Kiev died.<sup>47</sup> For the next half decade Kiev witnessed turbulent times as its princes came and went because Andrey Bogolyubskiy failed to successfully place a puppet on its throne. After Gleb's death he appointed Ryurik's eldest brother Roman to Kiev.<sup>48</sup> In 1173, however, Andrey and the Rostislavichi had a falling out. Convinced that the Kievans had poisoned his brother Gleb, Andrey insisted that Roman apprehend the culprits who had committed the deed and send them to him. When Roman and his brothers refused to comply with Andrey's wishes he demanded that Roman, David, and Mstislav depart from Kiev, Vyshgorod, and Belgorod and return to their patrimonial domain of Smolensk. He ignored Ryurik who was ruling Vruchiy outside the Kievan lands. Roman, not wishing to confront Andrey, returned to Smolensk as he was ordered to do and Andrey replaced him with his own brother Mikhalko in Kiev. The latter, perhaps not wishing to suffer the same fate that had befallen his brother Gleb, handed over Kiev to his younger brother Vsevolod and their nephew Yaropolk Rostislavich. Roman's brothers, however, were discontented with these arrangements and retaliated. On 24 March Ryurik, David, and Mstislav attacked Kiev, took Vsevolod and Yaropolk captive, and appointed Ryurik to Kiev.<sup>49</sup> Thus, for the first time, the Rostislavichi openly challenged the authority of Andrey who was their genealogical senior in the dynasty of Monomashichi.

After Ryurik occupied Kiev we are told that the Rostislavichi consolidated their control over the Kievan lands by marching against Andrey's brother Mikhalko at Torchesk and offering him Pereyasavl' in addition to Torchesk. He accepted the offer, became their ally, and deserted Andrey. In addition, they also evicted Yaropolk's brother Mstislav from Tropol'.<sup>50</sup> Thus we see that under Ryurik's command the Rostislavichi considered themselves to be powerful enough to challenge Andrey a second time. It is noteworthy that Ryurik was not the senior prince of the Rostislavichi when he occupied Kiev. Even though this was an irregularity, there appeared to be no hostility between him and his eldest brother Roman. The latter did not claim that Ryurik was preempting his authority. Ryurik's occupation was also irregular in that he had not ruled his dynasty's capital of Smolensk before occupying Kiev, as was done by his father Rostislav and by his brother Roman. These however were critical times and it appears that the brothers were prepared to circumvent tradition in order to act as a unified family against Andrey.

The insubordination of the Rostislavichi enraged Andrey. Later in 1173 he ordered Ryurik to depart from Kiev and the Rostislavichi to vacate their domains in the Rus' land. The Rostislavichi, however, once again spurned Andrey's commands. He responded by marshalling a huge army consisting mainly of Monomashichi and

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47 *PSRL* 2: 563–564.

48 See under the year 1174: *PSRL* 2: 567–568; Gust., 313. Concerning the date, see Berezhkov, *Khronologiya*, 189.

49 See under the year 1174: *PSRL* 2: 569–571; Gust., 314; compare under the year 1172: *NPL*, 34, 222. Concerning the dates, see Berezhkov, *Khronologiya*, 189–190.

50 *PSRL* 2: 571–572; Gust., 314–315. Concerning the date, see Berezhkov, *Khronologiya*, 190.

Ol'govichi troops and invited Svyatoslav Vsevolodovich of Chernigov to be its commander-in-chief. The allies seized Kiev without a battle because the Rostislavichi abandoned the town in the face of the overwhelming invading force. Ryurik sought safety in Belgorod, which he would eventually treat as his patrimony; Mstislav fortified himself in David's Vyshgorod with David's troops; and David rode to Galich to solicit reinforcements from Yaroslav Osmomysl. After Ryurik deserted Kiev Svyatoslav occupied it but dissension in his alliance among the Turkic tribesmen called the Black Caps (*Chernye klobuki*) forced him to vacate the town. After he departed the Rostislavichi invited Yaroslav Izyaslavich of Lutsk, who had brought reinforcements from Volyn' around 10 November, to occupy the Kievan throne.<sup>51</sup> Svyatoslav objected to Yaroslav's rule, attacked him, and occupied Kiev, but after plundering it for twelve days vacated the town. Around the beginning of 1174, we are told, the Rostislavichi sent messengers to Andrey asking him to reinstate Roman in Kiev.<sup>52</sup> Their request demonstrates that despite their insubordination to him, they still recognized him to be the senior prince in the House of Monomakh.

On 29 June 1174, before Andrey Bogolyubskiy could give the Rostislavichi a definitive reply, he was murdered.<sup>53</sup> His death disrupted the balance of power and, on the one hand, enabled the Rostislavichi to assert their claim to Kiev more aggressively. On the other hand, it also permitted Svyatoslav Vsevolodovich of Chernigov to play a more commanding role in the politics of Kiev while at the same time acting as king-maker in Suzdalia. Not surprisingly, after Andrey's death the princes of Suzdalia were thrown into disarray as they vied for supreme authority in the northeast. It would be fifteen years before a prince of Suzdalia would intervene again in the politics of southern Rus'.

In 1175 Roman Rostislavich occupied Kiev without any fear of being challenged by the prince of Suzdalia.<sup>54</sup> Ryurik presumably remained in Vruchiy, David had Vyshgorod, and Mstislav was in Belgorod. In the following year, we are told, Roman of Kiev sent his two sons and Ryurik against the Polovtsy who had attacked towns along the Ros' River. David, who quarrelled with his brothers, at first refused to participate on the campaign but joined the other princes at a later date. Despite the Rostislavichi unified attack the Polovtsy defeated the four princes. Svyatoslav of Chernigov held David responsible for the defeat and demanded that Roman punish him for his conduct by depriving him of his domain of Vyshgorod. Roman however refused to impose such severe measures against his brother and instead returned to Smolensk. Svyatoslav therefore marched against Kiev and on 22 July 1176 seized control of the town.<sup>55</sup> Nevertheless, Svyatoslav failed to evict David and Mstislav from Kiev's two

51 Yaroslav was the younger brother of Mstislav Izyaslavich who, as was noted above, died on 19 August 1170 (Baumgarten, *Généalogies*, V, 39).

52 *PSRL* 2: 572–580; Gust., 315–316; compare *PSRL* 25: 83; *PSRL* 1: 367. Concerning the date, see Berezhkov, *Khronologiya*, 190.

53 *PSRL* 1: 369; *PSRL* 2: 580. Concerning the date, see Berezhkov, *Khronologiya*, 78–79, 190–192.

54 *PSRL* 2: 600; Gust., 316; compare NPL, 34, 223.

55 *PSRL* 2: 603–605; Gust., 316. Concerning the date, see Berezhkov, *Khronologiya*, 194. For a more detailed discussion, see Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 135–136.



satellite outposts of Vyshgorod and Belgorod. Understandably, this arrangement was unwelcome to Svyatoslav because it placed his actions under the close scrutiny of the two hostile Rostislavichi. No other prince of Kiev in the past had to rule under such constraining conditions. In the light of the restrictions that David's presence in Vyshgorod could place on an Ol'govichi prince in Kiev it is not surprising that Svyatoslav had attempted to force Roman to remove David from that Kievan outpost.

In 1179, it appears, the Novgorodians invited Ryurik's youngest brother Mstislav to become their prince. The following year, however, he fell ill and died.<sup>56</sup> After Mstislav departed from Belgorod, Ryurik evidently occupied the Kievan outpost. From that time on, to judge from circumstantial evidence, he treated it as his patrimonial domain in the Kievan lands and ruled it in addition to Vruchiy.<sup>57</sup> By seizing control of Belgorod Ryurik ensured that the two Kievan outposts would be controlled by the two genealogically eldest Rostislavichi.

### Ryurik as Co-ruler with Svyatoslav

On one occasion, in 1180, David Rostislavich was hunting along the right bank of the Dnepr and Svyatoslav of Chernigov was hunting along the left bank. While on the hunt Svyatoslav received news that Vsevolod Bol'shoe Gnezdo of Suzdalia had taken his son Gleb captive. It should be noted that the princes of every dynasty in Rus' looked upon the capture of one of their number as a great disgrace to their dynasty. In his ire, therefore, Svyatoslav insisted on avenging himself immediately but as Vsevolod was too far away he schemed to avenge himself against the Rostislavichi. The latter, he argued, were also Monomashichi and they continued to stymie his plans in the Kievan lands. He therefore schemed to take David captive and to evict Ryurik from Belgorod. After neutralizing the brothers he would take his revenge against Vsevolod. David, however, escaped his clutches and fled to Ryurik in Belgorod. Having declared war on the two brothers, Svyatoslav feared to return to Kiev and withdrew to Chernigov. This allowed Ryurik to occupy Kiev once again even though he was not the senior prince of the Rostislavichi.<sup>58</sup>

Although the chronicler claims that Svyatoslav plotted to evict the Rostislavichi from the Kievan lands because Vsevolod captured his son, Svyatoslav's statements reveal that Vsevolod was not the primary object of his revenge. Svyatoslav also had ample grounds for harbouring hostility towards the Rostislavichi themselves. He argued that they challenged his jurisdiction in Rus' whenever opportunity arose. The main reason why they succeeded in obstructing his authority was because they lived in the Kievan outposts of Belgorod and Vyshgorod. After capturing David, he was therefore determined to drive out Ryurik from Belgorod in order to become sole ruler of all the Kievan towns.

<sup>56</sup> *PSRL* 2: 606–607, 609; *NPL*, 36, 225; *PSRL* 25: 89.

<sup>57</sup> Concerning Ryurik's appropriation of Belgorod, see M. Dimnik, "The Patrimonies of the Rostislavichi in the Kievan Lands: An Anomaly," *Mediaeval Studies*, vol. 69 (Toronto, 2007), 198–199.

<sup>58</sup> *PSRL* 2: 614–616; compare Gust., 317–318. For a more detailed discussion, see Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 145–147.

In that same year Roman, the eldest Rostislavich, died in Smolensk.<sup>59</sup> Since his youngest brother Mstislav had died earlier in that year, Roman's death reduced the ranks of the Rostislavichi to two: Rurik and David. The latter replaced Roman in Smolensk, but in doing so vacated Vyshgorod therewith removing an important Rostislavich from the Kievan land. After Roman's death Rurik became the senior prince of the Rostislavichi. Thus he could now rightfully lay claim to Kiev on behalf of the Rostislavichi and become the main challenger to Svyatoslav for Kiev.

In 1181 Svyatoslav campaigned against Suzdalia intending to avenge himself against Vsevolod Bol'shoe Gnezdo. After the latter humiliated him in Suzdalia he went to Novgorod and from there marched south against David. From Drutsk, where he defeated David's Smolensk forces, he set off south against Rurik in Kiev. When the latter learnt that Svyatoslav was approaching Kiev and that Svyatoslav's cousin Igor' Svyatoslavich of Novgorod Severskiy and Polovtsian reinforcements were waiting for Svyatoslav near Vyshgorod, Rurik withdrew to Belgorod. Svyatoslav therefore occupied Kiev uncontested. Later, however, after Rurik learnt that the Polovtsy had set up camp at Dolobsk, located across the Dnepr from Kiev, he sent his troops to attack them.

Rurik's troops scored a brilliant victory over the tribesmen. Since the Polovtsy were essential to Svyatoslav's military superiority, their defeat gave Rurik the upper hand. He took advantage of his victory by dictating unfavourable terms of rule to Svyatoslav. Thus, in 1181, because the latter was senior to Rurik he acknowledged Svyatoslav to be the senior prince in Rus' by relinquishing the throne of Kiev to him.<sup>60</sup> That is, Rurik acknowledged Svyatoslav's seniority on three counts: Svyatoslav was physically older than he was, Svyatoslav belonged to a more senior generation, and Svyatoslav belonged to a more senior dynasty.<sup>61</sup> Nevertheless, Svyatoslav would not be just a figurehead; he would have real power albeit greatly reduced. He would have complete authority over Kiev and be the commander-in-chief of the co-rulers' united forces. Rurik, for his part, made Belgorod his political base and assumed jurisdiction over all the other domains in the Kievan lands that traditionally had fallen under the jurisdiction of the prince of Kiev.<sup>62</sup> The arrangement that Rurik dictated to his co-ruler was unprecedented in the history of Kievan Rus'. It is noteworthy that the co-rulers belonged to rival dynasties.

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59 *PSRL* 2: 616–618; Gust., 318.

60 Compare Mstislav Vladimirovich's action in 1024, when he ceded control of Kiev to his brother Yaroslav because, he observed, Yaroslav was senior to him (*PSRL* 2: 134–136; *PSRL* 1: 147–149. See also M. Dimnik, "Succession and Inheritance in Rus' before 1054," *Mediaeval Studies*, vol. 58 [Toronto, 1996], 112–113).

61 Svyatoslav Vsevolodovich was descended from Svyatoslav Yaroslavich (d. 1076) who, at the time of Yaroslav's death in 1054, was Yaroslav's second eldest surviving son. Rurik was descended from Svyatoslav's younger brother Vsevolod (d. 1093). Svyatoslav Vsevolodovich was also the grandson of Oleg Svyatoslavich (d. 1115), whereas Rurik was the great-grandson of Oleg's cousin Vladimir Monomakh (d. 1125).

62 See under the year 1180: *PSRL* 2: 620–624; Gust., 317–318. For somewhat different interpretations of dual rule, see Rybakov, *Kievskaya Rus'*, 492 and Tolochko, *Drevnyaya Rus'*, 216–217. For a more detailed discussion, see Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 150–151.

According to the chronicler, Ryurik proposed the arrangement of co-rulers for a moral reason: he wished to end shedding Christian blood. No doubt he also had a more selfish motive. Namely, he believed that he lacked the necessary military power to depose Svyatoslav decisively. If they were not reconciled any future confrontations would undoubtedly end in an impasse just as they had in the recent past. Ryurik's solution, therefore, was to mark time. He relinquished his claim to Kiev for the time being but, as we shall see, he made Svyatoslav designate him as his successor after his death.

Two years later, in 1183, Svyatoslav and Ryurik buttressed their political union with a personal bond. Svyatoslav's son Gleb married Ryurik's daughter Anastasia.<sup>63</sup> After that, the chroniclers frequently stress Ryurik's family tie with his co-ruler by identifying Ryurik as Svyatoslav's *svat*, namely, as his daughter-in-law's father.<sup>64</sup>

Ryurik and Svyatoslav's duumvirate would prove to be a successful working arrangement. After their political alliance was bolstered by their family tie they worked hand in glove especially in the defence of the Kievan lands against Polovtsian attacks. The years from 1184 to 1187 witnessed the height of nomadic incursions on both banks of the Dnepr. Svyatoslav and Ryurik retaliated frequently and scored victorious punitive raids on a number of occasions. Ryurik became especially conscientious in defending his domains along the Ros' River region and in prodding Svyatoslav into leading offensive and defensive campaigns against the marauders. Nevertheless, since the princes were unable to pursue the marauders after each lighting strike the tide of incursions did not subside until the late 1180s. The chroniclers evidently report only the major military encounters.

Thus, we are told that on 23 February 1184 Khan Konchak pillaged the Pereyaslavl' lands. Svyatoslav summoned Ryurik and they rode in pursuit of the tribesmen. Nevertheless, after Svyatoslav's brother Yaroslav came from Chernigov and joined them with reinforcements he persuaded them to organize a summer campaign. They agreed but later Svyatoslav dispatched Igor' Svyatoslavich of Novgorod Severskiy and Ryurik sent Vladimir Glebovich of Pereyaslavl' after the nomads. Even though Igor' and Vladimir had a falling out, Igor' pursued the raiders, defeated them at the Khiriya River, and took many captive.<sup>65</sup> According to this information we see that the duumvirs shared the obligation of defending all the lands of Rus'. In keeping with this obligation it is noteworthy that Ryurik participated on campaigns against the Polovtsy on the left bank even though his own lands on the right bank had not been plundered. Accordingly, in the summer of 1184 Svyatoslav and Ryurik launched the major campaign that Yaroslav had advised. On 30 July they scored a great victory at the Erel' River where Khans Osoluk Burchevich and Kobyak and many others were taken captive.<sup>66</sup>

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63 *PSRL* 2: 624–625.

64 See, for example, *PSRL* 2: 628, 651, 652, and 659.

65 *PSRL* 2: 628–629; Gust, 318–319; concerning the date, see Berezhkov, *Khronologiya*, 201.

66 *PSRL* 2: 630–633; *PSRL* 1: 394–396; *PSRL* 25: 91; concerning the date, see Berezhkov, *Khronologiya*, 82, 202.

In 1185 Khan Konchak once again raided the lands of Pereyasavl'. After being informed of his incursion Svyatoslav and Rurik marshalled a retaliatory force. On 1 March, on finding the nomads camped in a water meadow, the princes attacked the enemy and captured many of the marauders but the khan escaped.<sup>67</sup> In the same year Igor' of Novgorod Severskiy led his disastrous campaign against the tribesmen. After his defeat at the Kayala River, the Polovtsy took advantage of their victory by increasing the number of their raids. Khan Konchak attacked the Pereyasavl' lands and Khan Koza pillaged Chernigov territories.<sup>68</sup> Two years later, in 1187, Khan Konchak pillaged the Ros' River region again. After that, the chronicler reports, marauding tribesmen often raided Rurik's lands on the right bank of the Dnepr.<sup>69</sup>

On one occasion, towards the beginning of April in 1187, Svyatoslav and Rurik rode out against the Polovtsy who were raiding the ford of Tatinets, on the right bank of the Dnepr River. After being alerted by the Turkic Black Caps to the deployed princely retaliatory force, the nomads fled to the left bank of the river. The princes, however, were unable to ride in pursuit because the spring thaw had suddenly swelled the river which became impassable. They therefore returned home. In pillaging Tatinets the nomads invaded Rurik's domains. After the failure of the April campaign, the chronicler reflects Rurik's concern for the defense of the Ros' River region. He reports the prince's enthusiasm for Svyatoslav's plan to conduct a campaign in the winter of 1187 and his suggestion to Svyatoslav that he summon all his allies to assemble at Chernigov.<sup>70</sup>

That winter, therefore, Svyatoslav and Rurik set out on a second campaign against the Polovtsy but they quarrelled. When they reached the Sneporod River Yaroslav of Chernigov did not want to go further but Rurik insisted on pressing on.<sup>71</sup> Although Svyatoslav was prepared to go deeper into the steppe in search of the nomads he refused to continue without his brother. Rurik, the chronicler relates, obstinately argued that the brothers continue the march, but they would not. Rurik lost the quarrel and was forced to return home without finding the tribesmen.<sup>72</sup> Rurik's determination to pursue the tribesmen vividly demonstrated his responsible conduct in the defense of his lands, contrary to Tatishchev's claim that he paid little attention to the ruling of the land. Significantly, this was the first reported occasion on which Rurik disagreed with Svyatoslav, but it would not be the last.

On 1 October 1187 Yaroslav Osmomysl' of Galich died.<sup>73</sup> His passing gave rise to a vicious succession rivalry during which a number of contenders challenged Yaroslav's sons Oleg and Vladimir for their father's throne. After Vladimir fled to King Béla III of Hungary Roman Mstislavich of Vladimir in Volyn' replaced him in Galich.

67 *PSRL* 2: 634–636; concerning the date, see Berezhkov, *Khronologiya*, 202.

68 *PSRL* 2: 644–649; Gust., 320.

69 *PSRL* 2: 653.

70 *PSRL* 2: 652–653.

71 The Sneporod has been identified as the Samara, an eastern tributary of the Dnepr below the Erel' (Ugol), (L. L. Murav'eva and L. F. Kuz'mina, [compilers] *Imennoy i geograficheskoy ukazateli k Ipat'evskoy letopisi* [M., 1975], 101).

72 *PSRL* 2: 653–654; compare Gust., 320–321. For a more detailed examination of the campaigns against the Polovtsy, see Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 156–160, 162–181, 187–188.

73 *PSRL* 2: 657; Gust., 321.

The king however marched against Galich with the intention of reinstating Vladimir. Roman therefore fled to the Poles but after they refused to help him he rode to his father-in-law Ryurik in Belgorod to ask for military assistance. Ryurik sent his son Rostislav to help him capture Galich.<sup>74</sup>

Meanwhile, Béla III who was in Galich sent envoys to Kiev inviting Svyatoslav to send his son Gleb to Galich. He explained that he was prepared to perform the favour that Svyatoslav had asked of him at an unspecified date. Svyatoslav therefore dispatched Gleb but without alerting Ryurik to his action. Not surprisingly, Ryurik became furious when he learnt that Svyatoslav had a special agreement with the king but Svyatoslav assured him that he had sent his son on a personal matter. Although the chronicler does not reveal the nature of the personal matter, from later information it would appear that Svyatoslav had probably requested the king to negotiate a marriage for Gleb's daughter Evfimia with an unnamed prince of Byzantium.<sup>75</sup> Ryurik was evidently appeased with the explanation because the princess was also his granddaughter. To prove his goodwill towards his co-ruler and to buttress their alliance Svyatoslav agreed to join Ryurik in attacking the king in Galich.

In 1188, therefore, Svyatoslav and Ryurik marched against Béla III. On the way Svyatoslav made a proposal to Ryurik. He suggested that Ryurik rule all the Galician lands and, in exchange, relinquish to him 'all the Rus' lands around Kiev' (*vsei Rouskoi zemli okolo Kyeve*). Ryurik rejected the offer because, the chronicler reports, he did not wish to part with his patrimony (*otchina*). Instead, he proposed that they divide the Galician lands between them. As a result they failed to reach an agreement and returned home.<sup>76</sup> From this information, we see that Svyatoslav was using Galich as a bargaining chip to gain possession of Ryurik's Kievan lands. This would allow him to become the sole ruler of Kiev and the Kievan lands and remove Ryurik as the co-ruler of Rus'. If Ryurik agreed to the proposal the prince of Kiev would once again become the single most powerful prince in Rus'. Ryurik's response was enigmatic. He refused to part with his Kievan possessions because they were his patrimony.

Which was the patrimony near Kiev that Ryurik was alluding to? As we have seen, in 1168, the chronicler reported that Ryurik's domain was Vruchiy but he did not identify it as Ryurik's patrimony.<sup>77</sup> Nevertheless, the chronicles give convincing evidence after 1168 that Vruchiy was his patrimony.<sup>78</sup> Just the same, was Vruchiy the patrimony that Ryurik had in mind in 1188 when he refused to relinquish control of it to Svyatoslav? This is unlikely since the domain of Vruchiy cannot be described as 'all the Rus' lands around Kiev'.<sup>79</sup> Under the year 970 the *Povest'vremenykh let* gives us a relevant item of information. It states that Svyatoslav Igorevich

74 PSRL 2: 660–661; compare Gust., 321.

75 See Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 208–209.

76 PSRL 2: 662–663; Gust., 322; concerning the date for the rivalry over Galich, see Berezkhov, *Khronologiya*, 204–205. For a more detailed examination, see Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 191–193.

77 Under the year 1170: PSRL 2: 541.

78 See for example, PSRL 2: 543, 547, 657, 669. See also footnote 30 above.

79 Compare Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 193 where it is stated incorrectly that Vruchiy was the patrimonial domain that Ryurik referred to in this instance.

(d. 972) allocated Kiev to his son Yaropolk. To Oleg, his younger son, he gave as a patrimony the lands of the Dereva tribe whose capital was Vruchiy.<sup>80</sup> Svyatoslav's distribution of patrimonial domains therefore confirms that Vruchiy was not part of the Kievan lands.<sup>81</sup>

Consequently, what patrimony did Rurik have in mind when he rejected Svyatoslav's offer? Clearly we must look for towns closer to Kiev. In 1180, as we have seen, when Svyatoslav failed to evict Rurik and David from their towns in the Kievan lands, Rurik was ruling Belgorod and David was in Vyshgorod. These Kievan outposts do qualify as being located around Kiev. Were they the patrimony that Rurik refused to surrender to Svyatoslav?

Rostislav it appears was the prince who first allocated Kievan towns to his sons. There is no documented proof that he intended the towns to be their patrimonies but circumstantial evidence suggests this. As we have seen, around 1162 he gave Vruchiy, which is not in the Kievan lands, to Rurik; from later evidence we learn that it was his patrimony. It is reasonable to assume that he also gave patrimonies to his remaining sons. Thus, it appears that he gave Belgorod as a patrimony to his youngest son Mstislav. We may infer this from Mstislav's reply to the Novgorodians under 1178 when he initially declined their invitation to rule Novgorod because, he claimed, he did not want to depart from his patrimony.<sup>82</sup> Although the chronicler does not identify the patrimony, later evidence makes it clear that the domain in question was Belgorod. Since, however, Rurik occupied Belgorod in 1178 after Mstislav went to Novgorod it appears that he appropriated the town for himself at that time.<sup>83</sup>

The chronicles neglect to state to which son Rostislav allocated Vyshgorod. Nevertheless, under the year 1174 we learn that Andrey Bogolyubskiy expelled David from Vyshgorod, Roman from Kiev, and Mstislav from Belgorod. In the same year he commanded his officials to drive out Rurik and David 'from their patrimonies' (*iz otchiny svoei*).<sup>84</sup> We therewith receive indirect confirmation that Andrey looked upon Vruchiy and Vyshgorod as Rurik and David's patrimonies. Significantly, he did not challenge the two Rostislavichi concerning their patrimonial claims. Rather, he was determined to evict them because they rebuffed him by refusing to surrender to him the Kievans whom he accused of poisoning his brother Gleb.<sup>85</sup> Andrey's conduct reveals that he acknowledged the Rostislavichi claims to Kievan towns as their patrimonies and that he did not believe their claims to be a contentious issue.

We have no documented evidence informing us when the Rostislavichi appropriated the Kievan towns as their permanent domains. We also are not told if they gained control of them all at the same time or if they laid claim to them

<sup>80</sup> *PSRL* 2: 55–57; *PSRL* 1: 67–69; NPL, 119–121.

<sup>81</sup> See also A. N. Nasonov who observes that Vruchiy and the *derevskaya zemlya* around it were not considered to be part of Rus' or 'the Rus' land' ("*Russkaya zemlya*" i obrazovanie territorii drevnerusskogo gosudarstva [M., 1951], 29).

<sup>82</sup> *PSRL* 2: 606–607.

<sup>83</sup> See footnote 57 above.

<sup>84</sup> *PSRL* 2: 573–574.

<sup>85</sup> *PSRL* 2: 569.

as opportunity arose. For example, did they seize control of Belgorod and Vyshgorod while Rostislav ruled Kiev and the other towns during the turbulent 1170s? There can be little doubt, however, that they consolidated their control during Ryurik's rule as senior prince of the dynasty. As we have seen, in 1181 when he concluded his agreement with Svyatoslav, the prince of Kiev formally acknowledged the Kievan towns to be the permanent possessions of the Rostislavichi. Or, what is most likely, at that time Svyatoslav merely formalized an existing situation, namely, that Ryurik as the senior prince of the Rostislavichi controlled the princely appointments to all the Kievan towns except to Kiev. Up to the creation of the duumvirate, the prince of Kiev enjoyed the prerogative, at least notionally, of appointing minor princes to Kievan domains. After the unprecedented pact in 1181 the prince of Kiev formally relinquished that power to Ryurik and the Rostislavichi. Thus we see that in 1188 when Ryurik refused to turn over control of his patrimony in the Kievan lands he was evidently referring to Belgorod, Vyshgorod and all the other Kievan towns.

In the following year, peace was restored in Galicia. Vladimir Yaroslavich escaped from Hungarian captivity and with the help of Polish forces reinstated himself in Galich in the early part of August. He then sought backing for his rule from his uncle Vsevolod Bol'shoe Gnezdo in Suzdalia and pledged to be Vsevolod's loyal vassal. The latter therefore forbade all the princes from challenging his nephew's rule in Galich. In the light of this threat they agreed.<sup>86</sup> Significantly, this was the first time after Andrey Bogolyubskiy's death in 1174 that the prince of Suzdalia believed himself to be powerful enough to interfere in the politics of southern Rus'.

Two of the princes most acutely affected by Vsevolod's threat were the other two senior Monomashichi: Ryurik of Belgorod and Roman of Vladimir in Volyn'. There was an important difference in the seniority of the three cousins. Ryurik and Roman belonged to the branch of Monomakh's family descended from his eldest son Mstislav. Vsevolod belonged to the branch descended from Monomakh's second youngest son Yuri Dolgorukiy. Although Ryurik and Roman belonged to a more senior branch, even more relevant was the consideration that all three belonged to different generations: Vsevolod belonged to the second generation after Monomakh; Ryurik belonged to the third generation after Monomakh; and Roman belonged to the fourth generation after Monomakh. Therefore, Vsevolod was the most senior of the three.<sup>87</sup> His seniority gave him the right to assume the role of the 'father' of the Monomashichi in keeping with the instruction that Yaroslav the Wise had given to his sons before his death. As we shall see, in his dealings with Ryurik and Roman, Vsevolod would place great importance on his genealogical seniority. Indeed, to judge from later circumstantial evidence, it was probably at this time that Ryurik and Roman, in acknowledging Vsevolod to be the senior prince of the Monomashichi, agreed to defer to his judgment in all major political decisions.

86 *PSRL* 2: 666–667; Gust., 322. Concerning the date, see Berezhevskiy, *Khronologiya*, 205.

87 Baumgarten, *Généalogies*, V, 7, 16, 27, 47; IX, 6; VI, 1, 14. For a more detailed examination, see Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 193–194.

In the summer of 1190 we are told that Svyatoslav and Rurik brought peace to the land of Rus' by forcing the Polovtsy to accept their terms.<sup>88</sup> In the autumn, however, the period of peace ended after Svyatoslav took Khan Kuntuvdey of Torchesk captive because jealous neighbouring tribesmen levied false accusations against him. Svyatoslav released Kuntuvdey only after Rurik convinced him of the khan's innocence. Since the latter was the ruler of Torchesk in the Poros'e region, which was one of the Kievan towns under Rurik's jurisdiction, Kuntuvdey was Rurik's vassal. Although Svyatoslav attempted to reestablish peace with the khan he refused to ignore the unjust charge. He rode to the Polovtsy and persuaded them to attack towns along the Ros' River administered by the Black Caps who had slandered him. Since the Turkic tribesmen were also Rurik's vassals, Kuntuvdey's attacks on their towns penalized Rurik rather than Svyatoslav who had insulted the khan. Rurik alerted Svyatoslav to the danger of renewed attacks and warned him that the two of them should not be looking after their private affairs in Vrchiiy and Chernigov while leaving Rus' undefended.<sup>89</sup> Thus we see that Rurik's concern for Kuntuvdey, for the defense of Rus', and for running his domain bespeak a responsible attitude contrary to Tatishchev's claim that he paid little attention to the ruling of the land.

In the same autumn of 1190 another crisis strained Rurik and Svyatoslav's relationship. The chronicler reports that Svyatoslav had a dispute, which he does not explain, with Rurik, David, and the Smolensk land. We are told that Svyatoslav assembled all the Ol'govichi to help him find a means to avoid violating his oath to the Rostislavichi. The chronicler once again fails to describe the nature of the oath. As was to be expected, Rurik as the senior prince of the Rostislavichi was their spokesman and, as we shall see, he may also have had the greatest personal interest in the dispute. Moreover, the news that he drew Vsevolod of Suzdalia into the controversy suggests that the issue was of concern to all the Monomashichi.

According to the account, Rurik reminded Svyatoslav that in 1181, when he became prince of Kiev, he had promised to adopt the same terms of rule in relation to the Rostislavichi that Rurik's eldest brother Roman had adopted when he was prince of Kiev. If Svyatoslav kept his promise then the Rostislavichi would remain his allies. If, however, he intended to revive the dispute that the Ol'govichi had originally had with Rurik's father Rostislav, Svyatoslav would violate his promise to them. If he did that, the Rostislavichi would break their alliance with him.<sup>90</sup> To judge from Rurik's vague declaration, it appears that Roman had settled to the satisfaction of the Rostislavichi a dispute that the Ol'govichi had had with Rostislav when he ruled Kiev. The Ol'govichi had challenged him on some unidentified issue but later withdrew their challenge when his son Roman became prince of Kiev. Rurik demanded that Svyatoslav not renew that challenge.

<sup>88</sup> *PSRL* 2: 668. Concerning the date, see Berezhkov, *Khronologiya*, 206.

<sup>89</sup> *PSRL* 2: 668–669; Gust., 322–323. For a more detailed examination, see Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 196–197.

<sup>90</sup> *PSRL* 2: 670.



If we review the relations between Ryurik and Svyatoslav over the previous decade we will see that the controversy may have already surfaced on at least two earlier occasions. The first time was in 1180 when Svyatoslav failed to capture David and to drive out Ryurik from Belgorod. The second time was eight years later when Svyatoslav and Ryurik marched against Béla III. Before they besieged Galich Svyatoslav proposed that Ryurik take all the Galician lands and in exchange give to Svyatoslav his Kievan domains. Ryurik, however, refused to relinquish control of his Kievan patrimony. To judge from Svyatoslav's desire to evict David and Ryurik from Rus' on the first occasion, and Svyatoslav's request for the domains around Kiev on the second occasion, the Rostislavichi jurisdiction over the Kievan towns was the main object of Svyatoslav's concern in each instance.

In 1190, the terms of Roman's rule some fifteen years earlier were central to the dispute. As we have seen, after Rostislav's death Andrey Bogolyubskiy appointed his puppets to Kiev. From 1171 to 1173 Roman was his appointee.<sup>91</sup> Later, after Andrey's death Roman occupied Kiev again, from 1175 to 1176, but as an independent ruler.<sup>92</sup> On one of these two occasions, probably the second, he most likely formally acknowledged Belgorod and Vyshgorod as the patrimonies of Mstislav and David. In doing so he imitated Andrey Bogolyubskiy's tacit recognition of the patrimonies and the formal recognition made by Mstislav Izyaslavich. The latter, on becoming prince of Kiev in 1169, had officially endorsed the Rostislavichi in their domains.<sup>93</sup>

Even though the Ol'govichi objected to Roman's confirmation of Rostislavichi patrimonies, it was at that time that they evidently pledged to abide by his verdict. On occupying Kiev in 1181 Svyatoslav assumed the same authority over the Kievan lands that Roman had held. Nevertheless, Ryurik's victory over the Polovtsy undermined Svyatoslav's military advantage enabling him to force Svyatoslav to formally acknowledge the Rostislavichi patrimonies of Belgorod and Vyshgorod just as Roman had done. What is more, although the chronicles do not report this, Ryurik was probably able to demand an even greater concession from Svyatoslav. Taking advantage of his victory he demanded that Svyatoslav also confirm the lesser Kievan domains as Rostislavichi patrimonies.

Thus, if our interpretation of the crisis of 1190 is correct, Svyatoslav attempted to seize control of Belgorod, Vyshgorod, and the other Kievan outposts without breaking the oath that he had made in 1181 to Ryurik. That is, he attempted for the third time since 1180 to deprive the Rostislavichi of their Kievan patrimonies. By doing so he would depose Ryurik as a *duumvir*. Moreover he would significantly lessen the territorial base of the Rostislavichi because Ryurik, as the senior prince of his dynasty, would be required to occupy the Rostislavichi capital of Smolensk in place of David. He would also have to compensate any other Rostislavich who had been ruling a Kievan patrimony with a domain in the Smolensk lands.

In wishing to evict the Rostislavichi from the Kievan domains Svyatoslav and the Ol'govichi had right on their side. The Ol'govichi would have challenged Rostislav's

91 *PSRL* 2: 567–568; for the correct date, see Berezkhov, *Khronologiya*, 189.

92 *PSRL* 2: 600, 604.

93 *PSRL* 2: 534.

patrimonial allocations to his sons in the Kievan lands by reminding him that, according to tradition, he did not have the authority to grant the Kievan towns as patrimonies because Kiev was not his patrimony. By giving Kievan towns away as patrimonies he violated the so-called testament of Yaroslav the Wise according to which the Kievan lands were to become the common patrimony of his three eldest surviving sons - Izyaslav, Svyatoslav, and Vsevolod - and their descendants. Furthermore, the Ol'govichi would have reminded Rostislav that he could grant Kievan domains to his sons only as temporary possessions. After his death his sons would have to relinquish control of them. Each new prince of Kiev assumed the authority either to reappoint the incumbent prince to a Kievan domain or to give it to another prince of his choosing. Svyatoslav objected to Ryurik because the Rostislavichi retained their Kievan domains after Rostislav's death and therewith violated traditional practice. That would have been the formal reason why Svyatoslav sought to evict the Rostislavichi from the Kievan lands. There was also a more practical reason that he had expressed in 1180 when he attempted to capture David of Vyshgorod and evict Ryurik from Belgorod. He had declared that by living in the two Kievan outposts the brothers stymied his plans in the Kievan lands at every turn.

In the end Svyatoslav's plans whatever they were came to naught. Ryurik's envoys gave him the agreement that Ryurik, David, and Vsevolod Bol'shoe Gnezdo required him to accept on oath. At first he refused to agree to the terms and dismissed the envoys but later he summoned them back and complied with the Monomashichi demand.<sup>94</sup> We are not told the terms of the settlement but we may assume that they were similar if not the same as the ones that he had accepted in 1181.

Thus, in 1190 Svyatoslav backed down from his challenge to the Rostislavichi and Ryurik retained control of the Kievan patrimonies with even greater authority. Svyatoslav may have had two cogent reasons for not rejecting Ryurik's terms. On the one hand he did not wish to initiate a full-scale war that would also allow the Polovtsy to intensify their incursions. On the other hand, as we shall see, in 1181 he had designated Ryurik to be his successor to Kiev. Thus, after his death Ryurik would assume control of Kiev in addition to the Kievan domains. At that time his crusade to make the Kievan towns incontestable Rostislavichi patrimonies would be virtually assured.

After Ryurik and Svyatoslav were reconciled over the crisis of 1190 they returned to the business of defending the Kievan lands against nomadic incursions. Thus we are told that two years later the two stood guard at Kanev all summer to defend Rus' from Polovtsian raids.<sup>95</sup> In the winter of 1192 Ryurik was also reconciled with Khan Kuntuvdey. He bribed the Polovtsy into handing over the miscreant and reinstated him as a vassal. Nevertheless, he did not repeat Kuntuvdey's controversial appointment to Torchesk. Instead he gave the khan a less important town on the Ros' River in part, no doubt, as punishment for his attacks on the Poros'e region.<sup>96</sup> Moreover, in this

94 *PSRL* 2: 669–670. See Dimnik, “The Patrimonies of the Rostislavichi”, 206–209. For a somewhat different interpretation of the controversy, see Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 197–199.

95 *PSRL* 2: 673; Gust, 323.

96 *PSRL* 2: 674; Gust., 323.

way Ryurik demonstrated his administrative acumen by obviating any future opposition from the Black Caps who had objected to Kuntuvdey's rule in Torchesk.

In 1193 Ryurik demonstrated his talents as a negotiator by concluding peace with the Lukomorskie Polovtsy. Following his success Svyatoslav proposed that the co-rulers conclude peace with all the nomads above all with the Burchевичи.<sup>97</sup> The two princes therefore went to Kanev to parley with the tribesmen who came to the left bank of the Dnepr. They, however, insulted the princes and the negotiations came to naught. After the Polovtsy departed Ryurik recommended to Svyatoslav that they launch a winter campaign against the nomads. Svyatoslav however excused himself on the grounds that he had personal business to look after in his patrimony. Ryurik observed that he also had personal business to attend to, namely, he proposed to lead a campaign against the Lithuanians. Svyatoslav however accused Ryurik of shirking his obligation to the Kievan lands since the Poros'e region was under his jurisdiction and defending it was his duty.<sup>98</sup> Despite Svyatoslav's criticism of Ryurik, his intention to campaign against the Lithuanians testifies to his attitude of responsibility for the administration and defense of his patrimonial domain of Vruchiy.

That winter the Polovtsy intensified their raids on the Poros'e region. Ryurik's son Rostislav, in response to a request from the Black Caps, led a campaign against the nomads without informing his father. His force scored a brilliant victory. On learning of Rostislav's raid Svyatoslav complained to Ryurik accusing his son of renewing war with the tribesmen. Moreover, despite the imminent danger to the Poros'e region that this raid created, Ryurik still proposed to lead a separate campaign against the Lithuanians. Ryurik took Svyatoslav's criticism to heart and aborted his private campaign. During January and February of 1194, therefore, the two princes stationed their troops at Vasiliev guarding against any possible raids. Since the nomads did not strike Svyatoslav went to his domain and Ryurik returned to Vruchiy. After the princes withdrew, however, the nomads renewed their attacks. The chronicler's remark at the end of this report is noteworthy in the light of Tatishchev's accusation that Ryurik paid little attention to the ruling of the land. The chronicler remarks that Ryurik "stood guard at Vasiliev for a long time, serving his lands".<sup>99</sup> This was Ryurik and Svyatoslav's last joint military expedition.

### Ryurik as Sole Ruler of Kiev

Towards the end of July in 1194 Svyatoslav died in Kiev. His last official act was to summon Ryurik to Kiev.<sup>100</sup> This news confirms that he had pledged to designate Ryurik as his successor. Ryurik's authority in Kiev however would be differ-

97 The Lukomorskie Polovtsy probably lived at the mouth of the Dnepr River and along the shores of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. The Burchевичи lived along the east bank of the Dnepr River (S. A. Pletneva, "Polovetskaya zemlya," *Drevnerusskie knyazhestva X–XIII vv.*, ed. L. G. Beskrovniy [M., 1975], 286–288).

98 *PSRL* 2: 676; Gust., 323.

99 *PSRL* 2: 676–679. For a more detailed examination, see Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 202–204.

100 *PSRL* 2: 681.

ent from Svyatoslav's authority. While Svyatoslav ruled Kiev he had held at best a notional superiority over his co-ruler Rurik and the Rostislavichi. After Rurik became sole ruler of Kiev, however, the Ol'govichi had to swear oaths of allegiance to him. Moreover, as co-rulers Svyatoslav and Rurik had addressed the interests of both the Ol'govichi and the Rostislavichi. It remained to be seen if Rurik would continue this policy or favour the Rostislavichi at the expense of the Ol'govichi. He would undoubtedly be persuaded to favour his own dynasty by the fact that he wielded greater power than Svyatoslav had done. He was now the sole ruler of both Kiev and the Kievan domains and he did not have to work with a co-ruler from a rival dynasty who could curtail his actions.

According to the Hypatian chronicler, the Kievans welcomed Rurik with the customary pageantry and he "sat on the throne of his grandfather and his father" in St. Sophia.<sup>101</sup> This information suggests that, contrary to Tatishchev's assertion that the Kievans had little love for him, at least at the beginning of his reign he was popular with the townspeople. Moreover, from the chronicler's report we may assume that the townspeople acclaimed him as grand prince and the metropolitan enthroned him. According to the Suzdalian Laurentian chronicler, however, Vsevolod Bol'shoe Gnezdo sent his officials to install Rurik.<sup>102</sup> Vsevolod's chronicler wished to emphasize that his prince, genealogically the most senior member of the Monomashichi, wielded supreme authority over the dynasty including over the appointment of the prince of Kiev. Nevertheless, the report is not accurate. Since Vsevolod's emissaries could not have arrived in Kiev from distant Suzdalia as quickly as Rurik had travelled from nearby Belgorod, Vsevolod's envoys must have arrived after Rurik was already installed. Consequently, they would have merely conveyed Vsevolod's official approval of a *fait accompli*. The important point to note is that Vsevolod's intervention in Rurik's installation was a warning to him that Vsevolod planned to meddle in his affairs.

On becoming prince of Kiev one of Rurik's most important tasks was to allocate Kievan domains to the minor Monomashichi. Thus, on 17 May 1195 his brother David of Smolensk came to Kiev to help him distribute the Rostislavichi patrimonies in the principality of Kiev. Rurik seemingly invited his younger brother to come and help him make the allocations out of deference to his status as the only other surviving son of Rostislav. Even though Rurik, as prince of Kiev and senior prince of the dynasty controlled all the Kievan domains, he chose not to distribute them without his brother's collaboration. It is noteworthy, however, that he avoided seeking advice from Vsevolod Bol'shoe Gnezdo. Since he treated the towns as Rostislavichi patrimonies he considered allotting them to be a Rostislavichi matter which did not require Vsevolod's approval. Consequently, he kept Belgorod in his own family by giving it to his son Rostislav, and he allowed David to keep Vyshgorod. He granted five lesser outposts to his son-in-law Roman Mstislavich of Galich. Thus only the Monomashichi

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<sup>101</sup> *PSRL* 2: 681.

<sup>102</sup> *PSRL* 1: 412; *PSRL* 25: 95. For a more detailed examination, see Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 211–212.

now ruled the Kievan domains especially after Ryurik removed the only Ol'govich, Svyatoslav's son Gleb and his own son-in-law, from Kanev.<sup>103</sup>

Vsevolod, however, challenged Ryurik's allocations. He pointed out that Ryurik and the Rostislavichi had acknowledged him as the senior prince in the House of Monomakh. To be sure, Ryurik admitted this in one of his messages to Vsevolod when he stated: "you, brother, are the eldest of us all in Vladimir [Monomakh's] tribe." (*A ty, brate, v Volodimeri plemeni starei esi nas.*)<sup>104</sup> The chronicler does not report on what occasion all the Monomashichi, above all the Rostislavichi and Roman, acknowledged Vsevolod as their senior prince. As noted above, however, this may have occurred in 1189 when Vsevolod demanded that all the princes of Rus' pledge not to evict his nephew Vladimir Yaroslavich from Galich.

Vsevolod observed that despite his seniority Ryurik had ignored him by refusing to grant him towns. He therefore withdrew his military support to Ryurik and told him to seek help for the defence of Rus' from those to whom he had allotted towns. Vsevolod was especially furious because Ryurik had given Torchesk, Tropol', Korsun', Boguslavl', and Kanev to his son-in-law Roman. Vsevolod however demanded to have those towns for himself and threatened to attack Ryurik. On being told of Vsevolod's ire, Roman agreed to return the towns to Ryurik in exchange for either other domains or a comparable payment. Ryurik handed over the five towns to Vsevolod and he was appeased. Vsevolod, in turn, gave Torchesk to Ryurik's son Rostislav, his own son-in-law, and dispatched his *posadniki* to administer the other four towns.

It is noteworthy that Vsevolod challenged Ryurik's distribution of towns to Roman not because he claimed that Ryurik lacked the authority to allocate the towns but because Ryurik had ignored him, that is, out of wounded pride. In other words Vsevolod, like his brother Andrey Bogolyubskiy at an earlier date, acknowledged the Kievan towns to be Rostislavichi patrimonies which they had the right to rule. But Vsevolod undoubtedly had a more practical reason than merely wounded pride for demanding the towns. By gaining control of a number of Kievan domains he increased his influence over Ryurik. Just as the latter had curbed Svyatoslav's rule in Kiev with his jurisdiction over the two neighbouring Kievan outposts, Vsevolod could curtail Ryurik's power as prince of Kiev through the *posadniki* that he had appointed to the four Kievan towns. Nevertheless, there was an important difference between Svyatoslav and Ryurik's rule in Kiev. Although Svyatoslav and Ryurik had been co-rulers, Ryurik had acknowledged Svyatoslav to be the senior partner because he was senior in age and in genealogical seniority. As prince of Kiev Ryurik, however, was to be neither an autonomous ruler nor the senior partner. He had to rule under the thumb of Vsevolod, the senior prince of all the Monomashichi who now also obtained a territorial foothold in the Kievan land itself.

Roman was furious when he learnt that Torchesk had been given to his brother-in-law Rostislav claiming that Ryurik had wanted to give the town to Rostislav from the very beginning. Ryurik however reminded Roman that he had voluntarily surrendered

103 *PSRL* 2: 681–685; Gust., 324. Concerning the date, see Berezhkov, *Khronologiya*, 207.

104 *PSRL* 2: 686; see I. Ya. Froyanov, *Kievskaya Rus'* (L., 1980), 56.

the towns to Vsevolod and after that they were his to do with as he pleased. He cautioned Roman that they should not estrange Vsevolod because all the Monomashichi acknowledged him to be their senior prince. Refusing to be reconciled Roman conspired against Rurik by forming an alliance with Yaroslav Vsevolodovich of Chernigov and persuading him to seize Kiev. On learning this news Rurik informed Vsevolod that Roman and the Ol'govichi were planning to wage war against him and called upon Vsevolod to come to his defense. In the face of his father-in-law's impending retaliation Roman sought safety with the Poles. Unfortunately for him, while with the Poles he was wounded in battle and, on returning to Volyn', sought to be reconciled with Rurik. The latter forgave him for his betrayal and gave him the town of Polonny and a district on the Poros'e region in compensation for his loss of the five towns.<sup>105</sup>

In the autumn of 1195, after Yaroslav's overt declaration of hostility and his failed alliance with Roman, Rurik took precautions against this new threat to his rule from the Ol'govichi. He, David, and Vsevolod challenged Yaroslav with an ultimatum. They demanded that he and the Ol'govichi pledge never to seize their patrimony, neither Kiev nor Smolensk, either from them, or from their descendants, or from any other prince from the House of Monomakh. With this demand the Rostislavichi, for the first time, attempted to secure their control permanently over Kiev. In other words, they attempted to violate the directive given by Yaroslav the Wise in his so-called testament that Kiev must not become the permanent possession of any one of his sons but remain the common patrimony of Iziaslav, Svyatoslav, and Vsevolod and their descendants.<sup>106</sup> Should Yaroslav capitulate to Rurik's demand and relinquish the rightful claim of the Ol'govichi, then the Monomashichi, but above all Rurik and the Rostislavichi, would become the sole claimants to Kiev.

In making their controversial demand the Rostislavichi attempted to realize Monomakh's ambition of securing Kiev as the patrimony of his descendants. As it has been suggested elsewhere, in 1097 at the Congress of Lyubech, Svyatopolk Iziaslavich the prince of Kiev, and Vladimir Monomakh the prince of Pereyaslavl' demoted the Svyatoslavichi of Chernigov to the place below Monomakh in the order of succession to Kiev. Consequently, in 1113 after Svyatopolk died, Monomakh rather than Oleg Svyatoslavich occupied Kiev.<sup>107</sup> Later, before his death in 1125, Monomakh seemingly convinced the citizens of Kiev to recognize his eldest son Mstislav as his successor and to proclaim Kiev to be his patrimony.<sup>108</sup> All of Mstislav's heirs, however, were not as capable as their father had been at ruling Kiev and failed to maintain their control over it against powerful Ol'govichi challengers. In 1195, the Rostislavichi endeavoured to usurp the right of succession from the Ol'govichi once again. Significantly, in the House of Monomakh the Rostislavichi did not have first claim to Kiev. As we have seen, Vsevolod Bol'shoe Gnezdo had that right as the patriarch of all the

105 Concerning the controversy over Rurik's allocation of domains, see *PSRL* 2: 683–688; Gust., 324; compare under the year 1196: Mosk. 96–97. Compare also Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 213–214, where it was suggested wrongly that David was older than Rurik.

106 *PSRL* 2: 688–690; Gust, 325; under the year 1196: *PSRL* 25: 97.

107 M. Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov, 1054–1146* (Toronto, 1994), 216–218.

108 Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov, 1054–1146*, 305–308; 324–331.

Monomashichi. Indeed, in the early 1170s he had ruled Kiev fleetingly when his elder brother Andrey Bogolyubskiy had appointed him to the town.

Yaroslav Vsevolodovich of Chernigov did not reject the Monomashichi demands outright but conceded on one point. He promised that he and the Ol'govichi would not seek to evict Ryurik from Kiev and therewith prudently agreed to maintain the status quo. After all, Ryurik was already ensconced in Kiev and Yaroslav realized that should he attempt to evict him Ryurik could summon the superior forces of the united Monomashichi to his aid. Nevertheless, Yaroslav refused to give up the right of future Ol'govichi generations to ruling Kiev. Rather, he proclaimed bluntly, that following Ryurik and David's death succession to Kiev would be decided by God's providence. In other words, the Rostislavichi and the Ol'govichi would have to determine who was to rule Kiev through military force. Yaroslav pointed out that as the Ol'govichi and the Monomashichi were both offspring of Yaroslav the Wise, they both had a legitimate claim to ruling the capital of Rus'.<sup>109</sup> In 1195, therefore, Yaroslav rebuffed the Rostislavichi by rejecting the most controversial demand that they had made to date. His refusal to comply with Ryurik and David's ultimatum however was too important for the Rostislavichi to pass over without a military challenge.

It was most likely Ryurik who prompted the other two Monomashichi to formulate the challenge to Yaroslav since he was the one whom Yaroslav had planned to depose. If he was driven out of Kiev he would lose political superiority in southern Rus'. Thus, after Yaroslav rejected the demand, it was again Ryurik who took the initiative by turning to Vsevolod for help. He took advantage of Vsevolod's insistence that the Rostislavichi respect him as the patriarch of the Monomashichi by requesting him to assume the responsibility of leading a campaign against Yaroslav. Vsevolod complied with the request by promising to march against Chernigov in the winter. Acting as the commander-in-chief of a joint campaign with the Rostislavichi would bolster his status as the senior prince of the Monomashichi. Nevertheless, after Yaroslav sued for peace and promised to accept all of Vsevolod's terms, he cancelled the campaign. In 1195, at the beginning of the winter, Yaroslav also sent a delegation to Ryurik requesting him to refrain from invading the territories of Chernigov before he, Vsevolod, and David had decided whether to be reconciled or to initiate war. Ryurik agreed, sent the Polovtsy back to their camps in the steppe, and withdrew to his patrimony of Vrchiy.<sup>110</sup>

We may assume that when Yaroslav asked Ryurik for a truce he probably promised not to challenge Ryurik for Kiev. In return, to judge from subsequent information, Ryurik granted him the town of Vitebsk which was under Rostislavichi jurisdiction but located west of the principality of Smolensk. Although Ryurik sent messengers to his brother in Smolensk asking him to arrange for Yaroslav's occupation of the town, the

109 According to a late source, Yaroslav declared that the Ol'govichi and the Monomashichi both had the right to rule Kiev from the days of their forefathers according to the ladder system of succession instituted by Yaroslav the Wise depending on to whom God chose to give it ("Patriarshaya ili Nikonovskaya letopis'," *PSRL* 10 [SPb., 1885], 26–27).

110 Concerning the demand of the Monomashichi, see *PSRL* 2: 688–690; under the year 1196: *PSRL* 25: 97. Concerning the dating of these events, see Berezhkov, *Khronologiya*, 207. See also Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 215–217.

prince of Vitebsk, who was David's son-in-law, refused to hand it over. Yaroslav, however, was convinced that David was the one who refused to comply with Rurik's directive and made preparations for war. In March of 1196 he dispatched an Ol'govichi force commanded by two of his nephews to evict David's son-in-law from Vitebsk.

The Ol'govichi force defeated David's troops and took captive his most senior nephew Mstislav Romanovich. Moreover, after defeated Smolensk soldiers informed Yaroslav's nephews that the people of Smolensk were dissatisfied with David's rule, the two Ol'govichi suggested to their uncle that he launch an attack on David himself in Smolensk. Rurik sent messengers to warn Yaroslav that should he capture Smolensk and kill David he, Rurik, would retaliate by attacking Chernigov. In the light of Rurik's threat Yaroslav turned back from his campaign and sent messengers to Rurik absolving himself of any wrong doing. He argued that David was the guilty party because he had helped his son-in-law to keep Vitebsk. Rurik, for his part, sought to free David from blame by explaining that his messengers had not yet reached David before Yaroslav waged war. The outcome of their disagreement was that the two princes remained at odds.<sup>111</sup> The incident reveals Rurik's loyalty to his brother and to the Rostislavichi. As senior prince of the dynasty he assumed the role of the defender of its princes, their rights, and their claims.

Following the Vitebsk conflict Rurik once again sent messengers to Vsevolod in Suzdalia admonishing him for failing to attack Chernigov as he had promised to do. As a result of Vsevolod's failure to attack Chernigov, Rurik argued, Yaroslav had sent his troops against the Rostislavichi at Vitebsk which took captive Rurik's nephew Mstislav Romanovich. As we have seen under the year 1180 when Vsevolod himself had captured Svyatoslav's son Gleb, the princes of every dynasty in Rus' looked upon the capture of one of their number as a great disgrace to their dynasty. Rurik therefore demanded that Vsevolod avenge the insult by freeing Mstislav. Vsevolod promised to come with his forces but instructed Rurik that, in the meantime, he begin aggressive action against the Ol'govichi. During the summer of 1196, therefore, Rurik conducted sorties into the Chernigov lands but Vsevolod failed to arrive. Yaroslav, for his part, pleaded with Rurik to refrain from plundering Ol'govichi domains and tried to reassure Rurik that he neither intended to attack Kiev nor that he had any argument with Rurik. What is more, he promised to release Mstislav if Rurik would pacify him with David and Vsevolod. Despite these conciliatory overtures Rurik stubbornly refused to cooperate and continued conducting his raids onto Ol'govichi lands.<sup>112</sup>

Meanwhile, by the autumn of 1196 Roman's wounds which he had sustained while fighting with the Poles had healed. He therefore renewed his alliance with Yaroslav who was undoubtedly eager to find allies in the light of Rurik's persistent incursions. In retaliation Roman ordered his men to raid Rostislavichi domains in the Kievan lands. By attacking Rostislavichi towns he forced Rurik to withdraw some

111 Concerning the campaign against Vitebsk, see *PSRL* 2: 690–694; Gust., 325; under the year 1196: *PSRL* 25: 97–98. Concerning the date, see Berezhkov, *Khronologiya*, 207. Compare Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 218–220 where it is suggested wrongly that David was older than Rurik.

112 *PSRL* 2: 694–696. Concerning the date, see Berezhkov, *Khronologiya*, 207.



of his troops from raiding the Chernigov lands. Thus, as a counter measure, Ryurik dispatched his nephew Mstislav Mstislavich to Vladimir Yaroslavich of Galich asking him to assist Mstislav in pillaging Roman's domains. While Roman's troops and Ryurik's allies were raiding each others territories, Ryurik himself rode to join forces with Vsevolod who had finally invaded the Chernigov lands.<sup>113</sup>

After Vsevolod joined forces with David he wished to be reconciled with Yaroslav and the Ol'govichi but David remained adamant that they should attack Chernigov. David reminded Vsevolod that he had promised to join Ryurik and David at Chernigov where they would dictate to Yaroslav terms acceptable to all three Monomashichi. Vsevolod, however, had his mind set on negotiating a private agreement. Therefore, ignoring David's objections and without informing Ryurik of his intention, he sent messengers to Yaroslav to negotiate a separate pact.

Not surprisingly, Vsevolod changed to his own advantage some of the terms that Ryurik had insisted the Monomashichi impose upon Yaroslav. Similar to Ryurik, he required Yaroslav to set Mstislav Romanovich free. Nevertheless, Vsevolod had a personal motive in making this demand because Mstislav was his relative through marriage.<sup>114</sup> He also introduced a new demand. He insisted that Yaroslav evict from Chernigov Yaropolk, the son of Vsevolod's eldest brother Rostislav.<sup>115</sup> In 1174, after the death of Andrey Bogolyubskiy, Yaropolk had succeeded him to Vladimir for a brief period. As Vsevolod's genealogically most senior nephew and with Yaroslav's military support he remained a potential challenger to Vsevolod's rule in Vladimir. Yaroslav appeased Vsevolod by promising to free Mstislav and to evict Yaropolk. Furthermore, Vsevolod insisted that Yaroslav sever his alliance with Roman. Although this demand was in keeping with Ryurik's wishes Vsevolod made only a token effort at enforcing it. It was to his advantage to keep Yaroslav and Roman's pact alive because as allies they presented a threat to Ryurik's control of Kiev. Fear of being attacked by the two princes would guarantee Ryurik's dependence on Vsevolod's military support and in this way buttress Vsevolod's supremacy in the House of Monomakh. Thus, in the light of his political interests he did not object when Yaroslav refused to end his pact with Roman. Finally, in keeping with the demands that the Monomashichi had made in the previous year, Vsevolod prohibited Yaroslav from either driving out Ryurik from Kiev or David from Smolensk. To Ryurik's great displeasure, however, Vsevolod omitted the demand that the Ol'govichi relinquish their claim to Kiev on behalf of future generations of Ol'govichi.

As was to be expected, after Ryurik learnt the terms that Vsevolod's agreement he was furious and rejected it. Even though David had kissed the Holy Cross to the settlement Ryurik refused to be pacified. He accused Vsevolod of breaking his every promise. Above all, he looked upon Vsevolod's unwillingness to break the alliance between Roman and Yaroslav, and the latter's refusal to renounce the claims of future

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113 *PSRL* 2: 696–698.

114 According to Vsevolod's chronicler, the prince's main objective for marching south was to obtain the release of his *svat* Mstislav and to secure Kiev for Ryurik (*PSRL* 1: 413).

115 Baumgarten, *Généalogies*, VI, 16; Rapov, *Knyazheskie vladения*, 165–166.

generations of Ol'govichi to Kiev as devastating failures for the Rostislavichi. The chronicler reports that in his indignation he repossessed the four Kievan towns that he had granted to Vsevolod a year earlier and allotted them to his brothers.<sup>116</sup> After that Rurik remained estranged from Vsevolod.

On 23 April 1197, David died and Mstislav Romanovich, whom Yaroslav had set free as he promised, succeeded him as prince of Smolensk.<sup>117</sup> For a few years following David's death inter-dynastic rivalries subsided and, to judge from chronicle information, allowed Rurik to direct his energies to cultural projects. On 1 January 1198 we are told that the metropolitan consecrated the church of St. Vasily that Rurik had built and dedicated to his patron saint.<sup>118</sup> In the same year he commissioned reinforcing the supporting wall beneath the church of St. Michael at the Vidubitskiy monastery.<sup>119</sup> In the following year, after the wall was completed, his chronicler reported that the prince with his family came to the monastery for a blessing ceremony. As has been noted above, in his encomium of gratitude Igumen Moisey of the Vidubitskiy monastery praised Rurik with great enthusiasm giving us, contrary to Tatishchev's scribe who claimed that the Kievans had little love for Rurik, a glowing portrayal of the prince.<sup>120</sup> Moreover, building a church and the restraining wall for the Church of St. Michael were activities that reflected a responsible administration, one that Tatishchev's chronicler denied existed during the period of Rurik's rule.

After the few years of relative peace the last decade of Rurik's career proved to be turbulent. During the first five years the bane of his life was his son-in-law Roman Mstislavich. After Vladimir Yaroslavich died in Galich in 1198 Roman occupied the town.<sup>121</sup> Refusing to forgive his father-in-law for granting the five Kievan towns to Vsevolod Bol'shoe Gnezdo he began raiding Rurik's lands and those of neighbouring Rostislavichi. In 1201 Rurik finally summoned the Ol'govichi to help him retaliate against Roman. Five years earlier, as we have seen, Yaroslav of Chernigov had refused to sever his pact with Roman. In 1201, however, Yaroslav's successor Oleg Svyatoslavich broke that alliance. He chose to work with Rurik just as his father Svyatoslav had collaborated with him when the two had exercised dual rule over southern Rus'. Accordingly, Oleg rode to Rurik's assistance.

Roman, however, rallied the troops from Galich and Vladimir in Volyn'. Significantly, the Monomashichi, the Turkic Black Caps, and the militias from all the towns

116 Concerning Vsevolod's campaign against Chernigov, see *PSRL* 2: 694–702; Gust., 325–326; see also under the year 1197: *PSRL* 1: 413; *PSRL* 25: 98–99. Concerning the date, see Berezhevskiy, *Khronologiya*, 85, 208. For a more detailed examination of the negotiations, see Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 220–221, 223–227.

117 *PSRL* 2: 702; Gust., 326; see under the year 1198: *PSRL* 25: 99; *PSRL* 1: 414. According to Berezhevskiy, David was 57 years of age when he died (concerning David's death, see his *Khronologiya*, 208).

118 See under the year 1197: *PSRL* 2: 707. Concerning the correct date, see Berezhevskiy, *Khronologiya*, 208.

119 See under the year 1199: *PSRL* 2: 708–711; Gust., 326. Concerning the correct date, see Berezhevskiy, *Khronologiya*, 209–210.

120 *PSRL* 2: 711–715. Concerning the encomium, see footnotes 4 and 5 above.

121 See under the year 1199: Gust., 326. Gust. reports the death of Yaroslav Mstislavich and other events under the year 1199 which the Lav. also puts under the year 1199, but which, according to Berezhevskiy, occurred in 1198 (*Khronologiya*, 209). This suggests that the events that Gust. reports under the year 1199 also occurred in 1198.

in the Kievan lands also came to his aid. Such overwhelming desertion of Ryurik's allies seemingly buttresses the view that he was unpopular in the Kievan lands. To be sure, the chronicler reports that the Kievans opened the gates of the lower town (*podol'*) to Roman's troops. This evidence suggests that there may be an element of truth to Tatishchev's claim that the Kievans had little love for Ryurik.<sup>122</sup> Nevertheless, the desertion of the Monomashichi and the inhabitants of the Kievan towns in this instance is the only recorded evidence before 1201 of opposition to Ryurik from among his allies. This implies that at least until that year he was not generally disliked. Rather, in this instance the desertions may have been prompted by a specific incident. That event may have been Ryurik's alliance with the Ol'govichi who not long ago, under Yaroslav's command, had been the bitter enemies of the Rostislavichi. Ryurik's resolve to seek assistance from his erstwhile rivals for Kiev may have alienated his Monomashichi relatives and the Kievans.

In face of the opposition from the townspeople and Roman's troops, Ryurik and Oleg surrendered. Roman permitted Ryurik to withdraw to his patrimony of Vrchiiy and Oleg to return to Chernigov. From a late chronicle we learn that, before marching against Ryurik, Roman had sent messengers to Suzdalia advising Vsevolod that he proposed to expel Ryurik from Kiev. In this way he sought approval for his action from Vsevolod out of deference to his seniority in the House of Monomakh. Vsevolod concurred with Roman's plan and the two concluded an agreement.<sup>123</sup> Thus, after Ryurik departed from Kiev Vsevolod and Roman appointed Ingvar' Yaroslavich of Lutsk to Kiev.<sup>124</sup>

Two years later Ryurik punished the Kievans for betraying him. On 2 January 1203 he, with the help of Oleg and the Ol'govichi, sacked Kiev. We are told that the Polovtsy from the entire Polovtsian land were especially brutal in massacring the inhabitants. In this way Ryurik ruthlessly avenged himself against the Kievans who had expressed their hostility to him by opening the town's gates to Roman. According to the chronicler the evil meted out that day on the inhabitants of Kiev was unparalleled since the introduction of Christianity to Rus'.<sup>125</sup> According to this statement, we may conclude that Ryurik's devastation exceeded all previous ones including the one in 1168 inflicted by Andrey Bogolyubskiy's coalition. It is noteworthy that whereas in the 1180s the Polovtsy were Svyatoslav and Ryurik's fiercest enemies, by the turn of the thirteenth century many tribesmen had been subdued sufficiently to serve Ryurik as auxiliaries in his battles against other princes.

After Ryurik let his troops pillage the town and massacre the populace, he prudently refrained from occupying it. He had no desire to face the hostility of its survi-

122 Tat. 4, 341; Tat. 3, 184–185.

123 See under the year 1201: *PSRL* 10: 34. See also under the year 1202: Tat. 4, 327; Tat. 3, 167.

124 See under the year 1202: *PSRL* 1: 417–418; Gust., 327–328; *PSRL* 25: 160. Concerning the date, see Berezhkov, *Khronologiya*, 86–87. Ingvar was Roman's junior cousin, see, Baumgarten, *Généalogies*, XIV, 1. See also Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 241–242.

125 *PSRL* 1: 418–419; *PSRL* 25: 100. According to the Novgorod chronicler the attackers captured Kiev on 1 January, on the Feast of St. Basil (NPL, 45, 240). Concerning the date, see Berezhkov, *Khronologiya*, 87, 247. For a more detailed examination of the sack of Kiev, see Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 243–245.

vors. Nevertheless, lest Kiev fall into Roman's hands once again he appointed Oleg's younger brother Vsevolod Chermnyy as its prince.<sup>126</sup> Presumably, the appointment would serve as an interim measure until such a time when he himself could return as the town's prince. His selection of an Ol'govich was calculated. He could not appoint one of the Monomashichi since all the junior princes ruling Kievan towns had deserted him for Roman. Rurik also refused to ask Oleg because as the senior prince of the Ol'govichi he could have threatened his own claim. Vsevolod Chermnyy, the second Ol'govich in seniority after Oleg, was a safer choice. Paradoxically, therefore, whereas in 1196 Rurik had demanded that the Ol'govichi, as a dynasty, relinquish their claim to Kiev forever, he himself was now forced to appoint an Ol'govich to rule it as his lieutenant. In the meantime he returned to Vrchy.

Since Rurik and Oleg had sacked Kiev in retaliation for Roman's raids on Rurik's lands, Roman took it upon himself to mediate reconciliations between the princes. First he approached Vsevolod of Suzdalia and Oleg. Thus, in February of 1203 the two sent delegations to each other and concluded peace.<sup>127</sup> Roman himself was also pacified with the Ol'govichi. Meanwhile, on 16 February he marched against Rurik in Vrchy who capitulated without opposition and promised to break off relations with Oleg and the Polovtsy. Furthermore, Roman advised him to petition Vsevolod to reinstate him in Kiev and promised to intercede on his behalf. Rurik did as Roman advised him and, the chronicler reports, Vsevolod forgave him for the atrocities that he had perpetrated against the Kievans and reinstated him in Kiev.<sup>128</sup>

Roman had a number of reasons for placating Rurik and returning him to Kiev. As long as he was denied Kiev he would inevitably continue raiding Roman's lands and the Kievan lands with the Ol'govichi and the Polovtsy. Moreover, it would be futile to appoint another prince to Kiev in Rurik's stead as appointing Ingvar' had proven to be. Rurik would inevitably challenge any prince of Kiev whether he was an Ol'govich or another Monomashich. Therefore, if Roman could not appoint a substitute for Rurik to rule Kiev, the most logical solution appeared to be to reappoint Rurik himself but under controlled conditions as a subservient lieutenant. Roman sought to accomplish this by making Rurik break off his pacts with the Ol'govichi and the Polovtsy and by making him dependent on Vsevolod Bol'shoe Gnezdo and himself. In this way Rurik would be a pawn in Vsevolod and Roman's hands.

In reappointing Rurik to Kiev Roman restored temporary peace to the land. That winter (1203/1204) in a gesture of solidarity, Rurik, Roman, and other princes conducted a successful campaign against the nomads from whom they seized much booty. On returning from the steppe they assembled at Tropol' to allot towns as pay-

126 "Novgorodskaya chetvertaya letopis'," *PSRL* 4 (Petrograd, 1915), 180; "Novgorodskaya pyataya letopis'," *PSRL* 4(ii) (Petrograd, 1917), 180. Compare Fennell who believes that only the "Novgorodskaya chetvertaya letopis'" gives this information. He identifies this reference as an error and suggests that Vsevolod's name was taken from a later entry (*The Crisis*, 41, n. 28).

127 Ipat. has no information for the years 1199 to 1205, and the text in Lav. for the years 1203 to 1205 is corrupt. However, circumstantial evidence suggests that the princes were reconciled in February of 1203 (*PSRL* 1: 418–421; concerning the date, see Berezhevskiy, *Khronologiya*, 87).

128 See under the year 1203: *PSRL* 1: 419; under the year 1202: *PSRL* 25: 100. For a more detailed examination, see Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 246–247.

ment to the princes according to the services that each had rendered. But their collaboration was shattered because they disagreed over the allocations. Roman quarrelled with Ryurik, took him captive, and had him tonsured as a monk in Kiev.<sup>129</sup> By incarcerating Ryurik in a monastery he followed the precedent set in 1059 by the triumvirate – Izyaslav, Svyatoslav, and Vsevolod — who forced their uncle Sudislav to adopt a monk's habit and to give up his political rights.<sup>130</sup> In like manner, after taking ecclesiastical vows Ryurik relinquished his political rights and became, as it were, politically dead. After deposing Ryurik for the second time and removing him from the political arena, Roman, with the approval of Vsevolod in Suzdalia, appointed Ryurik's son Rostislav to Kiev.<sup>131</sup>

On 19 June 1205 Roman was killed in battle with the Poles; he was survived by two sons, Daniil and Vasil'ko, who were minors.<sup>132</sup> On learning of Roman's demise Ryurik discarded his monk's habit and seized control of Kiev. He sent for Vsevolod Chernnyy, now the prince of Chernigov, and formed an agreement with him to capture Galich.<sup>133</sup> Their pact resembled the one that Ryurik and Vsevolod's father Svyatoslav had made in 1188, when they had campaigned unsuccessfully against King Béla III.<sup>134</sup> Ryurik and Vsevolod's campaign was also a failure. Since the chronicler reports that the Ol'govichi achieved nothing they were most likely the ones who had hoped to occupy Galich. In return for letting the Ol'govichi take possession of Galich, Vsevolod undoubtedly promised Ryurik to defend his rule in Kiev.

Ryurik's rule in Kiev was vulnerable on two counts. On the one hand, by replacing his son Rostislav in Kiev he would have provoked Vsevolod in Suzdalia who had made the appointment in conjunction with Roman. On the other hand, as an erstwhile monk his right to rule Kiev was controversial. As has been noted, it was unknown in Rus' for a prince who had become a monk to leave his monastery and reenter political life. Ryurik therefore needed a powerful ally to help him confront any rivals and Vsevolod Chernnyy evidently promised to give him the needed backing. Ryurik expressed his gratitude by giving Vsevolod his Kievan outpost of Belgorod.<sup>135</sup>

In the early summer of 1206 Ryurik and Vsevolod organized a second campaign against Galich but once again failed to capture the town. Instead the townspeople took matters into their own hands and invited Vladimir Igorevich from the Igorevichi, the cadet branch of the Ol'govichi, to become prince of Galich. On his return journey to Chernigov, Vsevolod Chernnyy seized the opportunity to use the troops at his disposal to betray Ryurik. He occupied Kiev and forced Ryurik to flee to his patrimony

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129 *PSRL* 25: 101.

130 Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov, 1054–1146*, 44–45.

131 Concerning Ryurik's deposition, see under the year 1203: *PSRL* 25: 101; under the year 1204: Gust., 328–329; under the year 1205: *PSRL* 1: 420–421. See also Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 247–248.

132 See under the year 1206: *PSRL* 1: 425; under the year 1205: *PSRL* 25: 104. Concerning the date, see Berezhevskiy, *Khronologiya*, 88.

133 See *PSRL* 25: 104; under the year 1206: *PSRL* 1: 425–426.

134 See footnote 76 above.

135 *PSRL* 25: 104; under the year 1206: *PSRL* 1: 426. See also Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 251–252.

of Vrushch. Vsevolod also scored a second victory against Rurik by doing what his father Svyatoslav had been unable to do. He seized control, albeit fleetingly, of the Kievan towns over which Rurik had jurisdiction.

Why did Vsevolod violate the oath that the Ol'govichi had taken on several occasions to Rurik promising not to evict him from Kiev? According to the information given by a number of chronicles, Vsevolod argued that it was improper for a monk to wield political power.<sup>136</sup> In his opinion becoming a monk had disqualified Rurik from being a rightful claimant to Kiev. At the same time by entering a monastery he had also released the Ol'govichi from their oaths to him that they would not depose him. Finally, although Vsevolod antagonized Rurik by seizing Kiev it should be noted that after successfully occupying the town he also alienated Vsevolod Bol'shoe Gnezdo by evicting his son Yaroslav from Pereyaslavl'.

Despite Vsevolod's seemingly easy victory over Rurik his rule in Kiev was made vulnerable after he disbanded the troops which he had assembled to attack Galich. Soon after he occupied Kiev the one-time monk attacked him and removed him ostensibly without difficulty. Vsevolod was unable to repel Rurik's siege with only his personal retinue and the town's militia. Indeed, the loyalty of the town's militia may have been divided owing to the citizens' age-old hatred of the Ol'govichi and love of the Monomashichi. It is true that in 1201 the Kievans had deserted Rurik and opened the town's gates to Roman but at that time they were choosing between two Monomashichi. In 1206 the townspeople were faced with backing either Vsevolod an Ol'govich or Rurik a Monomashich. Many would have sided with the Monomashich. Nevertheless, the determining factor for Vsevolod's expulsion may have been the fact that the two Rostislavichi, Mstislav Romanovich of Belgorod and Rostislav Rurikovich of Vyshgorod, to whom Vsevolod Chernnyy had evidently given those outposts and in return expected their military backing, deserted him and sided with Rurik. Consequently, Vsevolod had no choice but to hand back Kiev to Rurik.<sup>137</sup>

At the beginning of 1207 Vsevolod made what appeared to be a perfunctory effort at evicting Rurik. Not only was the latter probably expecting an attack but Vsevolod besieged Kiev with a small force consisting only of Ol'govichi troops and the nomadic Polovtsy. After Rurik repelled the attackers Vsevolod commanded his men to pillage the surrounding area of Kiev for three weeks and then returned home.<sup>138</sup> In the summer he launched a more serious attack for which he marshalled troops from the Ol'govichi, the nomads, the princes of Turov and also Vladimir Igorevich from Galich. On this occasion he caught Rurik by surprise probably because he advanced on Kiev via Tropol' in the south rather than from Vyshgorod in the north from where Rurik normally would have expected the Ol'govichi to attack him. On learning of Vsevolod's approach Rurik fled to his patrimony of Vrushch. Vsevolod then expelled Mstislav Romanovich from Belgorod and the latter's cousin Mstislav Mstislavich

136 "Tipografskaya letopis'," *PSRL* 24 (Petrograd, 1921), 85; "Piskarevskiy letopisets," *PSRL* 34 (M., 1978), 81.

137 *PSRL* 1: 426–428; *PSRL* 25: 104–105; Gust., 330. For a more detailed examination, see Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 253–257.

138 *PSRL* 1: 428; *PSRL* 25: 105.

from Torchesk. His success in evicting the Rostislavichi from the Kievan towns forced the Kievans to submit to him.<sup>139</sup> Thus it would seem that in the seesaw battle for Kiev Ryurik appeared to be losing ground against Vsevolod and the Ol'govichi who were powerful enough to successfully challenge him especially since he could not ask the now hostile Vsevolod of Suzdalia for military support.

Nevertheless, Vsevolod Bol'shoe Gnezdo was not ignoring his namesake's victories in southern Rus'. He accused Vsevolod Chermnyy of seizing domains to which only the Monomashichi and he in particular had a rightful claim, and organized a campaign against him. According to the chronicles his objective was not to attack Vsevolod Chermnyy in order to defend Ryurik's right to rule Kiev as he had done in 1196 when he had marched against Yaroslav of Chernigov. His intention was to attack Chernigov in order to reclaim Pereyasavl'. That is, he proposed to avenge himself against Vsevolod Chermnyy because the latter had taken possession of Pereyasavl' and evicted his son Yaroslav from that town which he looked upon as his patrimonial inheritance.<sup>140</sup> Significantly, his antagonism towards Vsevolod Chermnyy did not mollify him towards Ryurik.

After Ryurik was informed that Vsevolod Bol'shoe Gnezdo had set out to attack Chernigov, he quickly assembled a force, marched against Kiev, and forced Vsevolod Chermnyy to abandon it a second time.<sup>141</sup> According to Tatishchev who alone gives this explanation, Ryurik succeeded in evicting Vsevolod because he summoned the Polovtsy and with them conducted a surprise attack. Vsevolod was unable to drive off the enemy with the small force at his disposal because he had sent off the majority of his retinue to help defend Chernigov against the impending attack from Suzdalia.<sup>142</sup> Although the surprise of the attack may have been a salient factor in Ryurik's victory, the conduct of the citizens may have also worked against Vsevolod. As already noted the Kievans preferred the Monomashichi to the Ol'govichi and thus may have rallied to Ryurik's support. Moreover, they realized that if they did not submit to Ryurik he would let loose the Polovtsy to pillage their lands. The advisable thing to do, therefore, was to let Ryurik occupy Kiev. Ironically, Vsevolod Bol'shoe Gnezdo's planned siege of Chernigov never took place. While on his march south he discovered that his alleged allies, the princes of Ryazan' who were accompanying him, were plotting against him with the Ol'govichi so he diverted his attack against the lands of Ryazan'.<sup>143</sup>

In February of 1208 Vsevolod Chermnyy made a feeble effort to regain control of Kiev. Not only did he have too small a force but on this occasion, unlike in the previous summer, Ryurik must have been prepared for the attack. Since his troops were insufficient to capture Kiev Vsevolod's main objective may have been simply to

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139 *PSRL* 1: 429; *PSRL* 25: 106; Gust., 330. For a more detailed examination, see Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 258–260.

140 *PSRL* 10: 54.

141 *PSRL* 1: 432–433; *PSRL* 25: 106.

142 Tat. 4, 337; Tat. 3, 181.

143 *PSRL* 1: 429–432.

plunder Kievan lands to appease his exasperation with the Kievans.<sup>144</sup> This was to be Vsevolod's last campaign against Rurik.

There is much conflicting chronicle information and disagreement among historians concerning the date of Rurik's death. According to two minor chronicles, which we believe have the correct information, Rurik died in 1208 in Kiev and Vsevolod Chermnyy succeeded him to the throne.<sup>145</sup> According to Tatishchev, Rurik's last recorded action in 1208 occurred on 4 September when, as prince of Kiev, he helped his son Rostislav occupy Galich. Nevertheless, Rostislav was evicted from the town later that autumn. This most likely occurred after he lost the backing of his father who probably died soon after 4 September.<sup>146</sup> Rurik would have been some seventy years of age at the time of his death. It is ironic that for a prince who was particularly prominent in the politics of Rus' and was a popular subject for chroniclers for some fifty years, there is an inordinate amount of seemingly unexplainable confusion concerning the date of his death. And yet, to judge from the straightforward reports of it given by the *Piskarevskiy letopisets* and the *Tipografskaya letopis'*, there appeared to be no irregularities surrounding his death that might have created the confusion.

We also do not know where he was buried. As a Mstislavich he was eligible for burial in St. Fedor's monastery founded by his ancestor Mstislav Vladimirovich.<sup>147</sup> However, as we have seen, on 1 January 1198 he consecrated the Church of St. Basil (Vasily) in Kiev that he had built.<sup>148</sup> Fourteen years earlier, in 1184, Svyatoslav, when he was prince of Kiev, had also erected a church in honour of St. Vasily.<sup>149</sup> To date only one church dedicated to that saint, the so-called *Trehsvyatitel'skaya*, has been identified. According to one view Rurik did not build a new church but repaired the church founded by Svyatoslav after it was damaged in 1196 by an earthquake.<sup>150</sup> According to tradition a prince was frequently buried in the church that he himself had built. Therefore, it is very possible that he was buried in the Church of St. Vasily.

144 *PSRL* 1: 434; *PSRL* 25: 107. Concerning the date, see Berezhkov, *Khronologiya*, 100. For a more detailed examination, see Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 260–263.

145 "Tipografskaya letopis'," 85; "Piskarevskiy letopisets," 81. Compare Tatishchev who says that Rurik died in 1211 in Kiev (Tat. 4, 341; Tat. 3, 184). Other sources say that he died in 1215 in Chernigov (*PSRL* 1: 438; *PSRL* 25: 110) or in 1216 (*Troitskaya letopis'*, *rekonstruktsiya teksta*, editor, M. D. Priselkov [M.–L., 1950], 301). Yet another chronicle gives 1219 as the date of his death (Gust., 334). For an examination of the problem, see Dimnik, "The Place of Rurik Rostislavich's Death: Kiev or Chernigov?" *Mediaeval Studies*, vol. 44 (Toronto, 1982), 371–393. Compare J. Fennell, "The Last Years of Riurik Rostislavich," *Essays in Honor of A. A. Zimin*, ed. D. C. Waugh (Columbus, Ohio, 1985), 159–166, and O. Tolochko, "Pro mistse smerti Riuryka Rostyslavycha," *Ukrainskij istorychnyj zhurnal* (1997, 5), 136–144.

146 *PSRL* 25: 108; "Ermolinskaya letopis'," 62; only one chronicle gives the date of Rostislav's occupation of Galich, namely "Nikonovskaya letopis'," (*PSRL* 10: 60); see also Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 264–265.

147 Concerning St. Fedor's monastery as a mausoleum for the Mstislavichi, see M. Dimnik, "Dynastic Burials in Kiev before 1240," *Ruthenica*, VII (Kiev, 2008), 82–83, 90, 92, 94, 95.

148 See under the year 1197: *PSRL* 2: 707; Gust., 326. Concerning the correct date, see Berezhkov, *Khronologiya*, 208.

149 *PSRL* 2: 634; Gust., 319.

150 See Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov 1146–1246*, 153–156; for the location of the *Trehsvyatitel'skaya* church, see P. P. Tolochko, *Kiev i Kievskaya zemlya v epokhu feodal'noy razdroblennosti XII–XIII vekov* (Kiev, 1980), 54–55.



### Conclusion

We have seen that Ryurik was a man of his day. His father Rostislav gave him Vruchiy as his patrimonial domain. At a later date he also appropriated his brother Mstislav's patrimony of Belgorod in the Kievan lands and made it his permanent possession. Ryurik was a faithful advocate of the tradition of lateral succession according to genealogical seniority which he demonstrated by allowing his elder brother Roman to occupy Kiev ahead of him. In keeping with this tradition he, as David's elder brother, occupied Kiev ahead of David.

Ryurik was an indefatigable champion of his dynasty's claims to Kiev and to the Kievan towns. His dogged determination to defend these claims was revealed in his challenge to Andrey Bogolyubskiy, in his dealings with Svyatoslav, in his rivalries with Roman of Galich and Yaroslav of Chernigov, and in his persistent battles with Vsevolod Chermnyy. By asserting Rostislavichi control over the Kievan outposts, especially Belgorod and Vyshgorod, Ryurik ensured that the Rostislavichi would be in a position to monitor and influence the politics of the prince of Kiev.

Contrary to Tatishchev's claim that Ryurik paid little attention to ruling the land, we find ample evidence of his conscientious concern for the administration of his domains. We learn of his monumental building projects in Kiev where he erected the Church of St. Vasily and funded the construction of the restraining wall below the Church of St. Michael. We also know that he commissioned a chronicle whose author wrote an encomium in praise of his patron. Ryurik expressed his concern for the administration of his patrimony of Vruchiy on a number of occasions when he used this obligation as an excuse for absenting himself from campaigns against the Polovtsy. It was evidently also he who was largely responsible for drawing up the terms of his co-rule with Svyatoslav.

Ryurik collaborated with the other Rostislavichi to maintain harmony among the members of his dynasty. His willingness to allocate Kievan towns to his relatives demonstrated his loyalty and fair conduct towards them. He also showed a readiness to work hand in glove with his brothers against Andrey Bogolyubskiy's heavy handedness and with David in the pursuit of Rostislavichi claims against the Ol'govichi. He came to the defense of his relatives when he sought to obtain Mstislav Romanovich's release from the Ol'govichi and when he prevented Yaroslav of Chernigov from attacking Smolensk and killing David. Moreover, he was loyal to his vassals as, for example, when he intervened on behalf of Khan Kuntuvdey after Svyatoslav took him captive. He allegedly acted out of compassionate concern for his subjects when he insisted that he and Svyatoslav cease fighting for Kiev and become co-rulers because he wished to stop shedding Christian blood.

To judge from chronicle evidence Ryurik was an exceptional military commander from an early age. As a young prince his father sent him on campaigns and placed him in command of Smolensk troops. In his early years he is reported as participating on more campaigns than his brothers Roman, David and Mstislav. Later, Ryurik was most assiduous in defending his Kievan patrimonies from nomadic incursions by joining Svyatoslav on numerous campaigns. He also levied attacks against the Lithu-

anians who evidently pillaged the territories of Vruchiy. He continued to exercise his prowess in war up to the last years of his life in his battles for Kiev against Vsevolod Chermnyy. In addition to waging war, however, he also exhibited skill as a negotiator in concluding peace with the Polovtsy, in pacifying Kuntuvdey, and later in negotiating with the tribesmen to serve as his auxiliaries.

In his quest to secure control of Kiev for the Rostislavichi Ryurik experienced a number of temporary setbacks. In neglecting to give Vsevolod of Suzdalia towns in the Kievan lands he antagonized him as the patriarch of the House of Monomakh. He experienced other setbacks when Roman evicted him from Kiev on two occasions, when Roman forced him to become a monk, and when Vsevolod Chermnyy drove him out of Kiev on two occasions. Having to acknowledge the overlordship of Andrey Bogolyubskiy and later of Vsevolod Bol'shoe Gnezdo limited his freedom of action for a period but ultimately did not weaken the Rostislavichi hold on Kiev and the Kievan towns. Another setback was the Kievans' opposition to him. Nevertheless, the townspeople seemingly had an ambivalent relationship with him. When it was a matter of backing one of two Monomashichi, either Roman or Ryurik, they supported Roman. However, when it came to choosing between Ryurik, a Monomashich, and Vsevolod Chermnyy, an Ol'govich, they sided with Ryurik. Moreover, although the Kievans were antagonistic towards Ryurik the chronicles never report that he was unpopular with the citizens of Vruchiy or Belgorod.

Ryurik also suffered a number of more lasting failures. In 1195 he antagonized his son-in-law Roman when he gave five Kievan towns to Vsevolod in Suzdalia. As a result Roman remained his enemy for the next ten years until his death. In 1196 Ryurik suffered a major failure when he and the Monomashichi were unable to force Yaroslav and the Ol'govichi to renounce their claim to Kiev for future generations of Ol'govichi. Ryurik therewith failed to realize Monomakh's desire to make Kiev the patrimony of the Monomashichi.

In conclusion we have seen that, on the one hand, in agreement with Tatishchev's source, Ryurik suffered much at the hands of his son-in-law Roman, he had no peace from any direction, and the Kievans' love for him was at best ambivalent during most of the last decade of his life. On the other hand, we have seen that contrary to the accusation made by Tatishchev's source that Ryurik paid little attention to the ruling of the land, the latter appeared to be one of his main preoccupations, especially when it came to defending his Kievan domains against Polovtsian incursions. His greatest objectives, however, were to gain permanent possession of Kiev and the Kievan towns for the Rostislavichi. He successfully obtained control of the Kievan towns but failed to secure Kiev as his dynasty's patrimony even though he evidently died in 1208 as prince of Kiev.

### The Rostislavichi of Smolensk

