

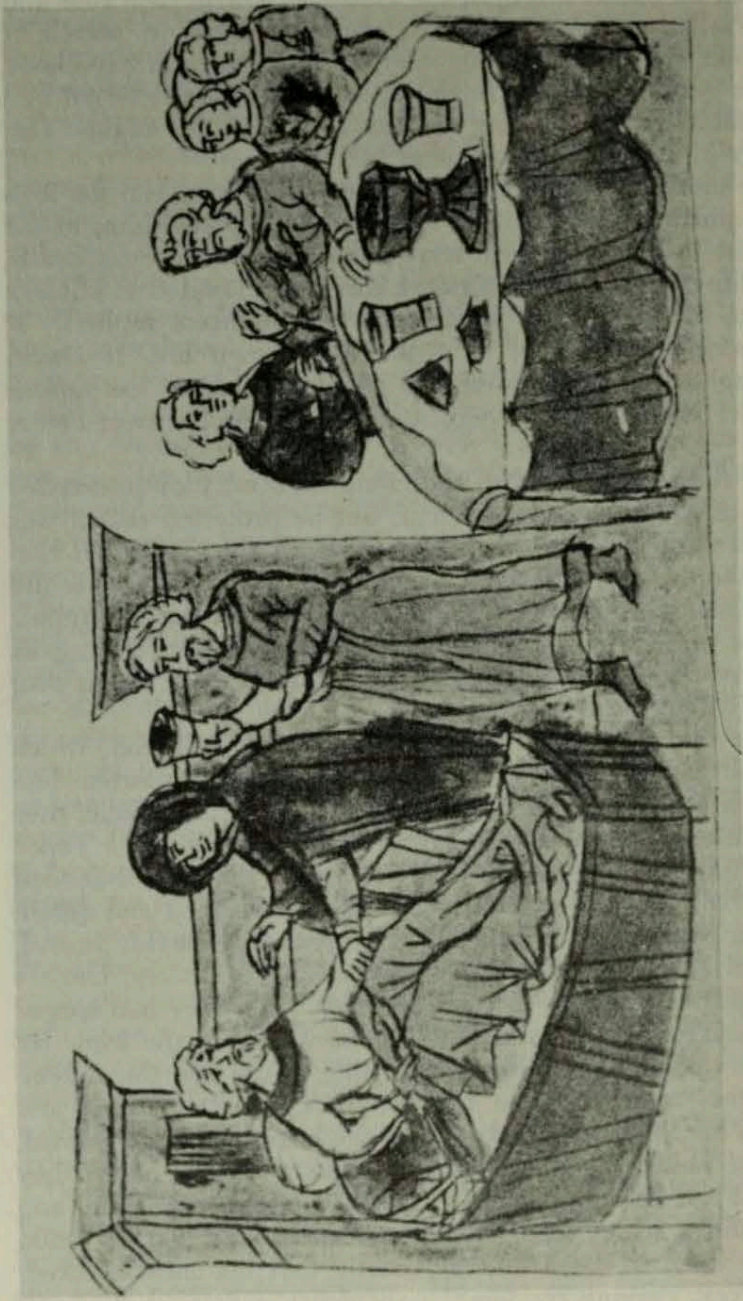
to this day. Afterward, however, he struck him in one eye, and took out the pupil, and then in the other eye, and also removed the pupil of the latter.

At that moment Vasilko lay as if dead. They raised him in the rug, laid him fainting in the wagon, and carried him off to Vladimir. While he was being thus transported, they happened to halt with him at a marketplace after they had crossed the bridge at the town of Zvizhden. They took off his bloody shirt, and gave it to a priest's wife to wash. After she had washed it, the woman put it on him while the others were eating, and she began to weep, for he was as if dead. He heard her weeping, and inquired where he was. They replied that the town was Zvizhden. He then begged for water. They gave him some, and after he had drunk the water, full consciousness returned to him. He remembered what had occurred, and feeling his shirt, he lamented: "Why did you take it from me? I had rather have met my death and stood before God in this bloody shirt."

When they had eaten, they rode on swiftly in the cart with him, and over a rough road, for it was then the month of *Gruden*, called November. They arrived with him at Vladimir's on the sixth day. David accompanied them, and behaved as if he had captured some prize. They quartered Vasilko in the Vakeev palace, and placed over him a guard of thirty men, as well as two servants of the prince named Ulan and Kolchko.

### b. Tales from the *Novgorodian Chronicle*

IN southern and central Russia the princes eventually established their undisputed rule over the Russian cities and principalities, and the ancient people's assembly, the *Veche*, which had played an important role in many Russian cities before the twelfth century, gradually declined in importance. But in the cities of Novgorod and Pskov, in northwestern Russia, the power of the princes was curbed and the *Veche* became the principal ruling institution. The princes, who served as commanders of the army, the *posadniks*, who headed the civil administration, other administrators, and the bishops were all elected by the *Veche*, and often removed by it if its members became dissatisfied with them. Like such European merchant cities as Venice, Genoa, Hamburg, and Lübeck, both Pskov and Novgorod had a powerful merchant class. Novgorod became a member of the Hanseatic League and maintained lively trade relations with Germany and other nations of northern Europe.



Blinded Prince Vasilko asks for water.  
A miniature from the Radzivil Chronicle of the fourteenth century.



The style of the *Novgorodian Chronicle* strongly reflects the commercial atmosphere that prevailed in these two cities. The entries tell little about political events, but furnish details concerning matters of commerce, such as the state of the harvest, the prices of merchandise, trade activities, and climatic conditions that might have a bearing on the economic situation. Most of the longer stories in these northern annals are of southern origin, have been taken from the Kievan or central Russian chronicles.

The translation of the *Novgorodian Chronicle* presented here is based on *Novgorodskaja pervaja letopis*, Second Version, published by the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., Moscow and Leningrad, 1950.

#### 14. LIFE IN THE CITY OF NOVGOROD

6636 (1128) Kiriak, the Abbot of St. George, died. In the same year John, son of Vsevolod, grandson of Mstislav, died on the 16th of April. In the same year Zavid Dmitrevich was made *posadnik* in Novgorod. This was a cruel year: an *osminka* of rye cost a *grivna*; the people ate lime leaves, birchbark; they ground wood pulp and mixed it with husks and straw; and some ate buttercups, moss, and horseflesh. And the corpses of those who had fallen from starvation were in the streets, the marketplace, the road, and everywhere. And they hired men to carry the dead out of town, for the stench was poisoning the air. Sorrow and misery befell all. Fathers and mothers would give their children as gifts to merchants or put them to death. And many people went to other lands. Thus a blight was brought upon our land for our sins. And this year the water of the river Volkhov was very high, and it carried away many houses. And Prince Boris Vsevolodovich of Polotsk died, and Zavid Dmitrevich, *posadnik* of Novgorod, died.

6651 (1143) All this autumn was rainy; from Our Lady's Day of Nativity until the winter solstice it was warm and wet. The water was very high in the river Volkhov, and it carried away hay and wood. The lake froze, and there was great coldness in the night. And the wind broke up the ice and carried it into the river Volkhov, where it broke the bridge and carried away four of the bridge piles. In the same year Sviatopolk married in Novgorod. He brought his bride from Moravia between Christmas and Epiphany. And in the same year the Korelians campaigned against the Yamians, but were forced to retreat.

6664 (1156) The Novgorodians expelled Sudilo, the *posadnik* of the city, and he died five days later. And they gave the position of *posadnik* to Yakun Miroslavovich. In the same spring, on April 21st, Archbishop Nifont passed away. Before he died he went to Kiev to oppose the metropolitan bishop, but many people say that he went to Constantinople after having plundered the Cathedral (St. Sophia in Kiev). They say many things about him, but it is their sin for doing so. We should remember that he was the one who embellished the Cathedral (St. Sophia of Novgorod), who decorated the porches, who made the icon case, and who adorned the church on the outside. He also built the Church of the Holy Savior in Pskov and the Church of St. Clement in Ladoga. I believe that God, because of our sins, did not desire that we should have his grave for our consolation and so he sent him to Kiev, where he died. And he was buried in the Crypt Monastery.

In the same year the whole populace of the city gathered and decided to elect as bishop a holy man, Arkady, who was chosen by God. And all the people went to the Monastery of the Holy Mother of God and took him, Prince Mstislav, the entire clergy of the Cathedral of St. Sophia, and all the priests, abbots, and monks of the city and brought them to the court of St. Sophia. And they entrusted the bishopric to Arkady until the Metropolitan of Russia should arrive and consecrate him. And in the same year the merchants from over the seas erected the Church of Good Friday on the market square.

6665 (1157) There was malice among the people, and they rose against Prince Mstislav Yurievich and began to drive him from Novgorod, but the merchants took up arms for him. And brother quarreled with brother. The bridge over the river Volkhov was seized. Guards took their stand on either side of the town gates, and it nearly came to the shedding of blood between them. And then Sviatoslav Rostislavich and David Rostislavich arrived. That very night Mstislav fled from Novgorod. And in three days Rostislav himself arrived. And the brothers came together, and no harm came of it.

In the spring Prince George died at Kiev, and the people of Kiev set Iziaslav Davidovich on the throne. In the same year Andrew, Abbot of the Church of the Holy Mother of God, died. And Alexis was appointed in his place. And in the fall the weather was fearsome with thunder and lightning, and on November 7th, at five in the night, there was hail of the size of apples.



## 15. NOVGOROD AT WAR WITH SUZDAL

The chronicle entries for the years 1169 and 1170, which follow below, give a clear picture of the struggle between the princes of Novgorod and those of central Russia. First the princes of Suzdal and later those of Moscow tried to unify all Russia and to bring the prosperous merchant city of Novgorod under their sway. The struggle described in these two entries is against the armies of Suzdal, led by the autocratic Prince Andrey, and their allies, led by Prince Roman and Prince Mstislav. At this time the troops of Novgorod were commanded by young Prince Roman. These entries are written in short, telegraphic style. For a better understanding of the text some explanatory notes have been added in parentheses.

6677 (1169) Danislav Lazutinich went with his troops beyond the Volok<sup>1</sup> to collect tribute, but (Great Prince Andrew) sent his army against them. And it came to a battle. There were only four hundred men of Novgorod against seven thousand soldiers from Suzdal, but God helped the Novgorodians, and the Suzdalians suffered thirteen hundred casualties, while Novgorod lost only fifteen men. Novgorod retreated, but then returned and collected tribute (beyond the Volok), and received tribute also from the peasants of Suzdal. And all returned home in good health.

In the same year in the winter the army of Suzdal, under the command of the son of Prince Andrew, Prince Mstislav, and Prince Roman, and with troops from Smolensk, Toropets, and Murom; the armies of Riazan led by two princes, the Prince of Polotsk with his armies, and men from the entire Russian land all approached the city of Novgorod. But the people of Novgorod were firmly behind their leader, Prince Roman, and their *posadnik*, Yakun. And so they built fortifications about the city. On Sunday (the emissaries of the princes of Suzdal) came to Novgorod to negotiate, and these negotiations lasted for three days. On the fourth day, Wednesday, February 25th, the day of St. Tarasy, Patriarch of Constantinople, the Suzdalians attacked the city and fought the entire day. Only toward evening did Prince Roman, who was still very young, and the troops of Novgorod manage to defeat the army of Suzdal with the help of the holy cross, the Holy Virgin, and the prayers of the Right

<sup>1</sup> Volok (Portage) was the name of the region that formed the watershed between the West Dvina and Dnieper.

Reverend Bishop Elias. Many Suzdalians were massacred, many were taken prisoner, while the remainder escaped only with great difficulty. And the price of Suzdalian prisoners fell to two *nogatas*.

6678 (1170) There were high prices in Novgorod. A barrel of rye cost four *grivnas*, bread cost two *nogatas*, and honey ten *kunas* a *pood*. After deliberations, the Novgorodians decided to renounce Prince Roman. And they sent their emissaries to Great Prince Andrew Bogoliubsky (of Suzdal), suing for peace. They asked Prince Andrew to give them another prince who would preserve their liberties. In the same year on the 4th day of October, St. Erofey's day, Prince Rurik Rostislavich (the prince sent to Novgorod by Prince Andrew) arrived in Novgorod. This same year the God-loving Archbishop Elias and his brother, Gabriel, founded a monastery and erected the Church of the Annunciation of the Holy Mother of God. And this year Prince Mstislav Iziaslavich, the grandson of Vladimir, died. In the same year Prince Gleb Giorgivich died at Kiev, and (the Kievans) put in Vladimir Mstislavovich.

16. THE ELECTION OF ARCHBISHOP MANTURY,  
AND NOVGOROD WARS AGAINST THE UGRIANS

The entry for the year 1193 gives an interesting account of the election and consecration of a new archbishop. The second part of the entry is concerned with the description of a Novgorodian campaign against the people of Ugra (kinsmen of the present-day Hungarians) who occupied the area both east and west of the northern Urals. The Novgorodians began building their colonial empire in what is now northern Russia. By the fifteenth century, when this empire was nearing its end, it extended into Siberia and covered an area the size of present-day France, Germany, and Italy combined.

6701 (1193) The Archbishop of Novgorod, Gabriel, passed away on May 24th, the day of our holy Father St. Simon. And he was solemnly buried in the porch of the Cathedral of St. Sophia next to his brother whose name was George after he took the holy vows. And then the people of Novgorod, the abbots, the Chapter of St. Sophia, and the clergy began their deliberations as to who should be the new archbishop. Some wanted to elect Mitrofan, while others wanted to elect Mantury, and still others wanted Grichina in this office. There was a great feud among them, and they decided to cast lots after High



Mass in the Cathedral of St. Sophia. And they prepared the lots, and after the service they sent for a blind man and he was given to them by God. And with the help of Divine Grace the blind man cast, and Mantury was chosen. And they sent for Mantury and they brought him to the court of the Archbishop.

And they announced his election to the Metropolitan of Kiev, and he sent for Mantury with great honors. And Mantury went to Kiev with the patricians of Novgorod. And he was received there with love by Prince Sviatoslav and the metropolitan. He was consecrated on the 10th day of December, the day celebrated for the deaths of the holy martyrs Mina, Hermogen, and Eugraph. And Mantury returned to Novgorod on January 16th, the day of the Falling Off of the Fetters of the holy Apostle Peter.

In the same year the Novgorodian troops under *Voevoda* Yadreik reached the land of Ugra and took a town. And they went to another town and besieged it. And they remained there five weeks, and the people of Ugra sent the Novgorodian forces a deceitful message saying the following: "We are collecting silver and sables and other valuables for you, so that you should neither destroy us nor your own tribute." And in the meantime the Ugrians began collecting their forces, and when their army had been gathered, the city sent a message to *Voevoda* Yadreik saying the following: "Come to the city bringing with you twelve men."

And *Voevoda* Yadreik went to the city, taking with him the priest John Legena and other leading men, and they were cut to pieces by the Ugrians on the eve of St. Barbara's day. And then they took thirty of the best Novgorodian warriors prisoner and cut them to pieces. And later fifty more Novgorodian warriors were cut down by the Ugrians.

And then Savka (apparently a Novgorodian) came to the Ugrian prince and said: "Prince, if you don't kill Jacob Prokshenich (presumably the second-in-command of the Novgorodian forces), but let him live to reach Novgorod, he will bring more warriors and will devastate your land." And the Ugrian prince called Jacob Prokshenich before him and ordered that he be killed, but Jacob said to Savka: "Brother, God and Holy Sophia will judge you if you have in mind the spilling of your brothers' blood. And you will appear before us and God, and you will be responsible for our blood." And after he said this he was killed, for Savka had secret connections with the Ugrian prince.

And then the army of Novgorod was starving because they had remained for six weeks, being induced to do so by Ugrian deceit. And on the Holy Day of St. Nicholas they broke camp

and were all cut to pieces by the Ugrian army. And there were sorrow and misery among those who remained alive, and there were only eighty of them. During the whole winter there was no word in the city of Novgorod as to whether the men of the army of *Voevoda* Yadreik were dead or alive. And in Novgorod the prince, the archbishop, and the entire people of the city grieved.

In the same year a son, Rostislav, was born to Yaroslav in Novgorod. And they built a wooden church called Zhivoglozha to the holy Apostles, and another church to St. Joan the Merciful at the Gates of Resurrection.

### c. Stories from the *Galician-Volynian Chronicle*

#### 17. PRINCE ROMAN, KHAN OTROK, AND THE WORMWOOD

THE *Galician and Volynian Chronicle*, from which this tale is taken, gives a rather detailed account of the fate of southern Russia in the thirteenth century. The authors of the first part demonstrate an unmistakable talent for narration and some poetic inclination. The present excerpt gives a short but poetic account of the circumstances under which Khan Otrok returned to his native land.

The text upon which this translation is based is the *Ipatiev-skaia letopis*, P.S.R.L., Volume II, St. Petersburg, 1908, pages 715-716.

Great Prince Roman, the unforgettable ruler of all Russia, died. He was the one who conquered all the heathen nations and with wisdom fulfilled all the divine commandments. He would strike against the infidels (Kumans) like a lion. He could be as full of wrath with them as is a lynx. He annihilated them like a crocodile. Many were the times he crossed their lands like an eagle. He was as courageous as an aurochs. He continued the deeds of his grandfather, Prince Vladimir Monomakh, who destroyed the infidel sons of Ishmael, who are usually called Kumans. He drove Khan Otrok from the steppes to beyond the Iron Gates (of the Caucasian Mountains) into Abkhasia.<sup>1</sup> Only the horde of Khan Syrchan remained on the river Don, and he had only fish for food. It was that time when Prince Vladimir

<sup>1</sup> A small nation on the eastern shores of the Black Sea.