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## THE STRUGGLE OF POLITICAL SUBJECTIVITY OF ROSTOV AND VLADIMIR BEFORE 1218: IDEOLOGICAL FEATURES OF URBANISATION OF NORTH-EASTERN RUS'

**Abstract:** The paper deals with the participation of urban communities of the North-East in the political struggle of princes in 1157–1218. The conflict took place between the “old” cities, founded before the 11<sup>th</sup> century, and the new cities that appeared from the early 12<sup>th</sup> century. The dispute of cities was projected onto the conflicts of princes in 1174–1176 and 1211–1218. The struggle of princes contributed to the emergence of the political subjectivity of the cities. The “new” city of Vladimir became the winner in this struggle.

**Keywords:** North-Eastern Rus', Vladimir, Rostov, Andrei Bogolyubsky, Vsevolod the Big Nest, political subjectivity.

This paper examines the history of urbanisation of North-Eastern Rus' in the pre-Mongol times, taking into account *two considerations*.

*The first consideration* concerns the background of the concept of “political subjectivity of cities” in the history of Russia. More recently, it was prominently presented in the thesis of St. Petersburg colleague A. A. Selin about the factor of political subjectivity of various parts of Muscovy in the Time of Troubles of the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. Political subjectivity, expressed as the growth of local self-awareness and initiatives during the period when the political centre – the capital (in that case it was Moscow) – fell into decay, stemmed from the pragmatic need to organise everyday life. This included ensuring security, economic survival in the face of interruptions in trade communications, and developing a strategy in a rapidly

changing political and geographical environment. Some cities entered into independent relations with other lands/cities, political forces and even international counterparties<sup>1</sup> (the application of such a concept, for instance, to Nizhny Novgorod during the Time of Troubles makes it possible to explain Kuzma Minin's appearance not only by personal initiative, but also by the general state of mind in Nizhny Novgorod (people were obliged to obey and heed him), influenced by the already established subjectivity of the city). From this observation it follows that the political subjectivity of a number of Russian cities as district centres appeared in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century in conditions of weakening of the central monarchical power in the already established Russian centralised state. Similar conditions in different eras of Russian history encourage the search for the political subjectivity of cities. One of such eras is the political fragmentation of Rus' in the pre-Mongol times<sup>2</sup>.

After the death of Vladimir Monomakh in 1125, the monarchical power of Kyiv weakened, and fragmentation slowly began. In these processes, individual cities as centres of land could acquire political subjectivity. Sources enable the tracing of such subjectivity in a number of parts of the Old Russian state in the 12<sup>th</sup> – first third of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. One of the reasons for attribution of the concept of cities' political subjectivity to old Russian history is the political vacuum in the conditions of the emerging political fragmentation. In addition to the spread of branches of the expanded Rurik family across the territories of the Old Russian state, the formation of political centres took place in cities of different lands. Their acquisition of political power was ensured by the emergence of boyars – the local nobility. The nobility, along with the princes of one or another branch of the Rurikids, who were consolidated in a certain territory, created the political subjectivity of each territory. Various variants of such subjectivity arose.

A boyar republic was formed in Novgorod, inviting some princes to the throne and expelling them if they became undesirable. In Chernigov, Smolensk, Vladimir-Suzdal and other lands, judging by historical sources, principalities were formed, where the princes played the main role, and the boyars were in the background; political activity of the cities was not noted. In the Galicia-Volhynia principality, after the death of Prince Roman Mstislavich in Poland in 1205 and the beginning of the struggle for these lands by representatives of various princely families, the Galich boyars tried to achieve independence and dominance over the princes. After 15 years of struggle, Daniil Romanovich (Galitsky) managed to restore his power in the territory of South-Western Rus'.

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<sup>1</sup> Селин А. А. *Столбовский мир 1617 года.*, СПб. 2017, 11, 17–18.

<sup>2</sup> In historiography, there are two interpretations of political fragmentation. According to one of them, political fragmentation was the irreversible disintegration of the Old Russian state into independent states – principalities. Another point of view assumes the evolution of the relatively centralised Old Russian state into a (con)federation of individual principalities, united by a single dynasty, a common culture and language. The author of the article adheres to the second – “federal” – point of view.

But how common were these processes in the lands of the vast Old Russian state? In Russian historiography there is a current represented by the historical school of St Petersburg University, first of all by I. Yu. Froyanov and A. Yu. Dvornichenko. According to their conclusions, the political subjectivity of old Russian cities can be found in the activity of urban communities across the territory of Old Rus' and throughout its history. This subjectivity served as the basis not of the oligarchic power of boyars, but of the communal cohesion of the urban population. As indicated by the above historians, this was shown in veche assemblies, their challenging or supporting princely actions, etc. A subtle source analysis allowed historians to find examples of this and offer a universal explanation of the political history of Old Rus' in the 12<sup>th</sup> – first third of the 13<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>3</sup> But how suitable is this for studying the political history of the Vladimir-Suzdal principality (Zalessky land, North-Eastern Rus', Rostov or Suzdal land), where political subjectivity is found (see below)?

In North-Eastern Rus' of the 12<sup>th</sup> – first third of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the political subjectivity of cities was determined by the presence of a kind of frontier in the east of the Zalessky land, surrounded by the left bank of the Klyazma, Oka from the mouth of the Klyazma to the confluence with the Volga, and the right bank of the Upper Volga to the mouth of the Oka. There the interests of the Vladimir, Murom and Ryazan principalities, and Volga Bulgaria converged and affected the fate of the Finno-Ugric peoples living there. Therefore, it was impossible to immediately establish direct princely sovereignty and draw a clear military-political border. Certain territories were controlled from specific cities. But the question is how did this administration relate to the princely power that was establishing itself in the region, was it controlled by the princes or simply accepted by them?

*The second consideration* concerns the nature of the urbanisation of North-Eastern Rus' in the pre-Mongol times. It developed in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, in several stages and steadily. The stages were largely determined by specific princes, i.e. by a subjective factor. The starting point was an enclave of cities in the Upper Volga basin (Rostov, Yaroslavl, Uglich, Beloozero, etc.).

The cities stretching towards the Upper Volga – Rostov, Yaroslavl, Pereyasavl, Uglich – were quite old. Rostov, for example, seems to be originally created there. In 862 – according to the *Povest' vremennykh let* (Russian Primary Chronicle), Rostov in the Meryan land was given by Rurik to "his man"; Rostov appeared in the calculation of the Byzantines' ransom to Oleg in 907; Saint Prince Vladimir appointed first Yaroslav, then Boris, governor in Rostov<sup>4</sup>. The city of Yaroslavl was mentioned for the first time in 1071. It is mentioned as an already existing city<sup>5</sup>. Uglich was first

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<sup>3</sup> For more details see: Фроянов И.Я., Дворниченко А.Ю. *Города-государства Древней Руси*, Л. 1988; Фроянов И.Я. *Древняя Русь. Опыт исследования истории социальной и политической борьбы*. М.–СПб. 1995.

<sup>4</sup> *Лаврентьевская летопись* // Полное собрание русских летописей. Т. I. М 1997, Стб. 20, 31, 121.

<sup>5</sup> *Лаврентьевская летопись* // Полное собрание русских летописей. Т. I. М 1997, Стб. 175–178.

mentioned in 1148/1149<sup>6</sup>. The year 1152 saw the “translation” by Yuri Dolgorukiy of Pereyasavl from Kleshchin<sup>7</sup> to the place where the city stands to this day.

In 862, Rostov featured the Sarskoye Gorodishche on the shore of lake Nero in the 8–10<sup>th</sup> centuries, which fell into decay due to the growth of present-day Rostov on the opposite bank. Yaroslavl was preceded by settlements of the 9–10<sup>th</sup> centuries, which were named after the modern villages of Timerevo, Mikhailovskoye, Petrovskoye. Before its transfer, Pereslavl was the village of Gorodishche of the 9–10<sup>th</sup> centuries – a dwelling of a *druzhina*. Ugleche Pole contained settlements of the 10–11<sup>th</sup> centuries. These settlements, which preceded the emergence of genuine cities, were called proto-cities by archaeologists<sup>8</sup>. This term, taken from the study of the outdated concept of the Neolithic Revolution, when applied to the settlements of Eastern Europe on the banks of large rivers, turns out to be unsuitable, since these proto-cities did not grow into cities, but gave way to them as full-fledged political, social and cultural centres. Proto-cities were founded at key points along the major rivers of Eastern Europe by the Varangians. Proto-cities were places of wintering, ship repairs, inns and points of attack on the local population – Finno-Ugrians, Balts, Slavs. Without being rooted in the environment, proto-cities had no chance of becoming cities. But these same key points also attracted princely power, which consolidated in the second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century. One of the reasons for the interest was the lack of direct communication between the metropolis of Kiev and the north-eastern periphery, with access to the Volga. Until the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the path from Kyiv ran up the Dnieper to Smyadyn (it was there that Gleb Vladimirovich, who was going to Kyiv from Murom, was killed in 1015), and from there a system of portages led to the upper Volga.

In order to gain a foothold on the upper Volga, the Kyiv princes (primarily Vladimir Svyatoslavich, who baptised Rus’ in 988), turned their attention to the existing proto-cities, which were to be subjugated or destroyed. In relation to the four above proto-cities in the future North-Eastern Rus’, preceding Rostov, Pereslavl, Uglich and Yaroslavl, there was a transfer of settlements to a new location at the expense of the resources of the princely power. Literally, the transition to the sovereignty of the Kyiv prince occurred due to the opposition to the proto-cities of genuine political centres that were subordinate to the authority of the Kyiv prince. First Rostov, then Yaroslavl became cities established by the power of the princes who ruled from Kyiv. They did not need independent Varangians, but were quite satisfied with the Varangians who recognised the power of Kyiv and joined the *druzhina* of the Kyiv prince. Uglich and Pereslavl followed suit. This was the first period of urbanisation, its first wave in North-Eastern Rus’ – in the last third of the 10<sup>th</sup> – second third of the 11<sup>th</sup> century.

During the division of spheres of influence in 1024, North-Eastern Rus’ went to the vanquisher of Yaroslav the Wise – his brother Mstislav Vladimirovich

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<sup>6</sup> *Лаврентьевская летопись* // Полное собрание русских летописей. Т. I. М 1997, Стб. 320.

<sup>7</sup> *Рогожский летописец* // Полное собрание русских летописей. Т. XV. М 2000, Стб. 21.

<sup>8</sup> For more details see: Дубов И. В. *Города, величием сияющие*, Л 1986.

(Tmutarakansky)<sup>9</sup>, and even later began to change hands, depending on who reigned in Kyiv. It went to Svyatoslav Yaroslavich and his descendants, whose principality, ultimately, became the Chernigov land. North-Eastern Rus' then passed to the descendants of Vsevolod Yaroslavich and his son Vladimir Monomakh with very undefined borders in the east. Pereslavl-Yuzhny was also the possession of Vsevolod and Monomakh, with which the Zalesky land was connected<sup>10</sup>. And when Oleg, the son of Svyatoslav, began to bring together all the lands that were under the rule of his father and laid claim to the Zalesky land, in the early 1090s he faced resistance near Rostov from the son of Monomakh, Mstislav. Mstislav advanced to Rostov from Novgorod<sup>11</sup>. As a result, the Zalesky land remained with Vladimir Monomakh and his descendants.

The constant struggle of the princes for North-Eastern Rus' led to the strengthening of the city nobility, primarily of Rostov. That is why the land was called Rostov and was geographically closer to the Upper Volga.

From the 1090s it became the possession of Monomakh. In 1108 after the raid of the Volga Bulgars<sup>12</sup>, Vladimir-on-the-Klyazma was built on Suzdal<sup>13</sup> and North-Eastern Rus' began to move towards the Oka and the Middle Volga. At the same time, the son of Monomakh, Yuri (Dolgorukiy), was sent to North-Eastern Rus'<sup>14</sup>, and the land got its own dynasty. Yuri himself began to promote Rostov as the capital: in historiography there is an opinion that he moved his residence to Suzdal. The political significance of Rostov was diminished. The increase in the political weight of Vladimir happened later and was associated with a shift in the emphasis of the prince's attention to advancing to the East.

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<sup>9</sup> *Лаврентьевская летопись* // Полное собрание русских летописей. Т. I. М 1997, Стб. 149.

<sup>10</sup> Кучкин В. А. *Волго-Окское междуречье и Нижний Новгород в средние века*, Нижний Новгород 2010, 9–15.

<sup>11</sup> *Лаврентьевская летопись* // Полное собрание русских летописей. Т. I. М 1997, Стб. 237–240.

<sup>12</sup> The Volga Bulgars are representatives of the state of Bu(o)lgaria, which arose in the early 10<sup>th</sup> century on the lands of the Middle Volga region and the Kama basin and existed until the Mongol invasion in the 1230s. In 922, Islam was adopted as the state religion in Volga Bu(o)lgaria. The names "Bu(o)Lgars", "Bu(o)Lgaria" are associated with the military-political unification of the nomadic Bulgars in the second third of the 7<sup>th</sup> century in the southern Russian steppes in the northeastern Black Sea region and along the ridges of the North Caucasus. Under the attacks of the Khazar Khaganate, in the 660–670s, a part of the Bulgars, led by Khan Asparuh, went to the Slavic lands of the eastern Balkans, gave their dynasty to Danube Bulgaria, and the other part moved north and founded (Volga) Bulgaria in the Middle Volga region. During the 10–13<sup>th</sup> centuries, Rus' and Volga Bulgaria traded and acted as military-political rivals in the Volga region and the Northern Urals.

<sup>13</sup> Кучкин В. А. *Волго-Окское междуречье и Нижний Новгород в средние века*, Нижний Новгород 2010, 12.

<sup>14</sup> *Киево-Печерский патерик* // Древнерусские патерики. Киево-Печерский патерик. Волоколамский патерик. М 1999, 10.

This reorientation of military-political vectors is associated with Andrei Yuryevich (Bogolyubsky) (Vladimir reign: 1157–1174). After the death of his father Yuri Dolgorukiy, he made relatively young Vladimir the main city, i.e. the capital of the Zalesky land. This happened in 1157, when Andrei Yuryevich was elected Grand Duke of the Zalesky land. In addition to Vladimir residents, Rostov, Suzdal and Pereyasavl residents chose him<sup>15</sup>. Perhaps the participation of the Vladimir people in the choice of the prince was due to the fact that Andrei Yuryevich was in Vladimir, where he, having left his father in Southern Rus', fled in 1155 (see below). And if so, then before the eyes of researchers, Vladimir was included among the ranks of cities, whose population or nobility recognised themselves as bearers of political subjectivity.

The city of Vladimir, under the reign of Grand Prince Andrei Bogolyubsky, grew rapidly: through the efforts of the Prince, the Cathedral of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary was erected as a consolidation of the Theotokos' cult (where the icon of the (Vladimir) Mother of God, taken by Andrei Bogolyubsky during his final departure from Southern Rus' in 1155, played an important role), and the Golden Gate was erected<sup>16</sup>. The development of Vladimir as a new centre of political subjectivity also implied the choice of a new military-political direction – movement along the Middle Volga (Gorodets), the Oka (Gorokhovets) to the east. Vladimir is located on the Klyazma, a tributary of the Oka. Before Andrei Bogolyubsky, the principality had no access to the Oka. The movement towards it began precisely under Andrei Bogolyubsky. Thus, it became possible not only to subjugate the lower course of the Oka, but also to reach the junction of the upper and middle courses of the Volga.

Prince Andrei Yuryevich Bogolyubsky took care of the settlement founded at the confluence of the Klyazma and the Oka near Gorokhovets<sup>17</sup>, and on the left bank of the Volga 80 km north of the mouth of the Oka – near Gorodets (first mentioned in the winter of 1171/1172 during the campaign of the son of Andrei Bogolyubsky – Mstislav – against the Bulgars<sup>18</sup>). The prince's choice of the direction of military-political development, coupled with urbanisation, changed the history of the Zalesky land. This was all due to the merits of Andrei Bogolyubsky. They predetermined the further formation of the territory of North-Eastern Rus' to the East and in the Volga region, where there were territories that were scattered in the political sense. In other old Russian principalities, such opportunities were limited. But everything could have ended after the death of Andrei Bogolyubsky. In 1174 he was killed<sup>19</sup>. The

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<sup>15</sup> *Ипатьевская летопись* // Полное собрание русских летописей. Т. II. М 1998, Стб. 490–491.

<sup>16</sup> *Лаврентьевская летопись* // Полное собрание русских летописей. Т. I. М 1997, Стб. 348, 351.

<sup>17</sup> Насонов А. Н. *“Русская земля” и образование территории Древнерусского государства. Монголы и Русь*, СПб. 2006, 173; Кучкин В. А. *Волго-Окское междуречье и Нижний Новгород в средние века*, Нижний Новгород 2010, 24.

<sup>18</sup> *Лаврентьевская летопись* // Полное собрание русских летописей. Т. I. М 1997, Стб. 364.

<sup>19</sup> *Лаврентьевская летопись* // Полное собрание русских летописей. Т. I. М 1997, Стб. 367–371.

circumstances of the death and the driving forces behind this misdeed are unknown to this day<sup>20</sup>.

The murder of Prince Andrei Yuryevich Bogolyubsky gave Rostov a chance to restore its former greatness. In 1174–1176, the struggle between the sons of Yuri Dolgorukiy – Mikhalko and Vsevolod Yuryevich and his grandchildren – Mstislav and Yaropolk Rostislavich unfolded. In this struggle, the Rostislavichs were at first successful as they were supported by Rostov and Pereyaslavl (the princely *druzhina*, another political force, was concentrated in this city). In this confrontation, Rostov behaved as the main and capital centre of North-Eastern Rus'. Young Vladimir-on-the-Klyazma supported Mikhalko and Vsevolod. The Rostislavich princes were not independent and pursued the policy of the Rostov boyars, including in relation to Vladimir. Rostov tried to regain the status of the capital by diminishing the importance of Vladimir. The policy of the Rostovites should be viewed as an attempt at revenge. An ally of the Rostislavichs, Ryazan prince Gleb, even robbed the Assumption Cathedral of Vladimir<sup>21</sup>. The desecration of the newly created shrine was to the benefit of the Rostovites: the cultural devaluation of young Vladimir was to lead to its further political desacralisation. Moreover, the Rostov boyars in every possible way encouraged the Rostislavichs to rob/confiscate the property of Vladimir's Assumption Cathedral<sup>22</sup>. But this did not happen, since the residents of Vladimir turned to Mikhalko and Vsevolod Yuryevich for help. They defeated their nephews, who were forced to leave the Zalesky land, and Mikhalko and Vsevolod began to rule in a kind of duumvirate. In this regard, the Vladimir chronicler, expressing the opinion of both the victorious brothers and Vladimir, allowed himself to denounce the Rostov and Suzdal residents. In the victory of the residents of Vladimir and the princes of Yuryevich, the intercession of the Mother of God was seen; under her patronage, the people of Vladimir were not afraid to confront the two princes of Rostislavich, and Rostov; Rostov and Suzdal, likening the boyar power to the *veche* orders of Novgorod, Kyiv (?) and Smolensk, tried to impose their will on the entire Zalesky land, thereby "not wanting to create all the truth of God"<sup>23</sup>.

Thus, the chronicle records two ideologies of two different political subjects – Vladimir and Rostov. Vladimir's subjectivity is presented as monarchical, confirmed by the patronage of the Mother of God, with whom "God's" truth is associated. Another version of subjectivity – partial ("I don't want to create all the truth of God") – was revealed by Rostov and Suzdal. In them, the boyars, through the *veche*, controlled the entire land, and, therefore, the princely power. Perhaps the "old" cities of North-Eastern Rus' – Rostov and Suzdal – reproduced the administration model

<sup>20</sup> Кузнецов А. А. "Родственники Андрея Боголюбского в аспекте изучения обстоятельств и последствий его гибели", *Вестник Нижегородского университета им. Н.И. Лобачевского* 1 (2009), 135–139.

<sup>21</sup> *Лаврентьевская летопись* // Полное собрание русских летописей. Т. I. М 1997, Стб. 379.

<sup>22</sup> *Лаврентьевская летопись* // Полное собрание русских летописей. Т. I. М 1997, Стб. 375.

<sup>23</sup> *Лаврентьевская летопись* // Полное собрание русских летописей. Т. I. М 1997, Стб. 377–378.

adopted in Novgorod. This is how some kind of genetic connection could manifest itself: at the time of the formation of the Old Russian state in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, according to the Tale of Bygone Years, Novgorod and Rostov represented one whole; communication with the Upper Volga region, dominated by Beloozero and Rostov, went through the Novgorod land; from Novgorod, where the Varangians of Rurik settled, they sent Varangian men, apparently governors, to Beloozero and Rostov. Thus, the reader of the chronicle sees the process of changing the power ideology – from the boyar oligarchy, the *veche* republic, which subordinated the prince, to the princely monarchy, which enjoyed the support of the people, from the primacy of Rostov to the capital of Vladimir. The paradigm shift took place in a dramatic atmosphere.

In 1176, Mikhalko died and his death served as a signal for the Rostislavichs to try to take revenge and regain power over North-Eastern Rus'. The role of a provocateur in this case was played by the Rostovites, who obviously wanted to regain their lost political weight and status. They attracted the Rostislavichs to their side. In this final round, Prince Vsevolod Yurievich won, relying on Vladimir. The decisive battle in this struggle is noteworthy – the battle of Yuryev in 1176. Before it, Vsevolod proposed to the rival Rostislavichs to divide the land and end the matter peacefully on the following conditions: Vsevolod would receive the Vladimir part, and Mstislav and Yaropolk Rostislavichs would get the Rostov part<sup>24</sup>. However, the Rostislavichs needed power over the entire land, and they decided to uncompromisingly go to the end. And they lost the battle of Yuryev.

Thus, the Zalesky land came entirely under the rule of Vladimir, where Vsevolod Yurievich the Big Nest ruled. The Rostislavichs, together with Ryazan prince Gleb and his son, who supported them, were taken to Vladimir and were blinded there (Gleb died in the Vladimir prison). The initiative for blinding came from the people of Vladimir, who demanded that the prince deal with his relative, and the young, 22-year-old Vsevolod could not restrain them<sup>25</sup>. Vladimir regained the lost supremacy in North-Eastern Rus', Vsevolod Yurievich emerged victorious, and the land remained united. From that time on, Pereyaslavl ceased to be mentioned as a *druzhina* centre; apparently, the *druzhina* moved to Vladimir and, obviously, submitted to Prince Vsevolod. From this time – the late 1170s, the *druzhina* factor, judging by the available sources, lost its independent significance in the Vladimir land. But the same cannot be said about the political subjectivity of the cities of North-Eastern Rus'. It appeared in a slightly modified form after the death of Vsevolod Yurievich in 1212.

The entire subsequent reign of Vsevolod was marked by the strengthening and reinforcing of the capital status of Vladimir in North-Eastern Rus'. However, 30 years after Vsevolod Yurievich's victory over the Rostislavich nephews, a project for dividing

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<sup>24</sup> *Лаврентьевская летопись* // Полное собрание русских летописей. Т. I. М 1997, Стб. 379–380.

<sup>25</sup> *Лаврентьевская летопись* // Полное собрание русских летописей. Т. I. М 1997, Стб. 384–385.



the Zalessky land into cities suddenly “surfaced”, including, first of all, Rostov and – de facto, by default – Vladimir. Vsevolod gave the Rostov land with five cities (Uglich, Yaroslavl, Beloozero) to his eldest son Konstantin and his sons in 1208<sup>26</sup>. The Rostov land was a part of the Zalessky land, where there were “old” cities associated with the proto-cities.

The opinion established in historiography about the tendency in the Vladimir principality towards autocracy, the confirmation of which was found in the reigns of Andrei Bogolyubsky and Vsevolod the Big Nest, did not allow us to see a course towards fragmentation of the principality in assigning of Rostov and several cities in 1208 to Konstantin Vsevolodovich. It turned out that the eldest son of Vsevolod the Big Nest was given the oldest city. In this regard, the question arises about Vsevolod's will in 1212. The study of this issue led to a somewhat paradoxical conclusion: he wanted to divide all the land among his six sons.

In April 1212, the Grand Duke of Vladimir Vsevolod-Dmitry Yuryevich (the Big Nest) died, and a strife broke out among his sons. Different sources suggest different explanations for these events. According to the Moscow chronicle of the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, back in 1211, Vsevolod Yuryevich, angry with the eldest son of Konstantin because of his disobedience, transferred power in the principality and over the entire “brotherhood” to his second son George (Yuri). This decision was confirmed by the approval of a specially convened council of representatives of the Zalessky land. Konstantin Vsevolodovich became angry, which became the starting point for the subsequent struggle<sup>27</sup>. However, the Moscow Chronicle of the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, in this case – for 1212 – is not a source, but only a later literary narrative interpretation. In it, the story about the death and funeral of the Vladimir prince is an episode in a large text about the will, the disobedience of the eldest son and granting to the second son everything that was possible... The chronicles, which reflected the Rostov chronicle (Ermolinskaya, Lvovskaya, Kholmogorskaya, Tver collection), are indicative of formation of this narrative. And, contrary to the opinion of A. N. Nasonov, in the Moscow Chronicle, when the events of 1211–1218 are covered, the influence of chronicler Yuri Vsevolodovich (the term was proposed by A. N. Nasonov to designate a hypothetical chronicle collection kept in Vladimir in the first decades of the 13<sup>th</sup> century), confirming this information, is not traceable<sup>28</sup>. Clarity is brought by other sources, which turn out to be more reliable when reconstructing the events of North-Eastern Rus' in 1212–1218.

First of all, this is the news of the chronicler of Pereslavl-Suzdal and the concise summary of the Laurentian Chronicle. After describing the death of Vsevolod, at which his sons George, Yaroslav, Vladimir, Svyatoslav, Ivan were present (Konstantin did

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<sup>26</sup> *Лаврентьевская летопись* // Полное собрание русских летописей. Т. I. М 1997, Стб. 434.

<sup>27</sup> *Московский летописный свод конца XV в.* // Полное собрание русских летописей. Т. XXV. М. – Л. 1949, 108, 109.

<sup>28</sup> For more details see: Андрей Кузнецов, “Политическая история Северо-Восточной Руси в 1211–1218 гг.: источниковедческий аспект”, *Ruthenica* 8 (2009), 66–89.

not manage to arrive), it says: “Then during his life he bestowed power to his children: to great Konstantin – Rostov, to George – Volodymyr, to Yaroslav – Pereyaslav, to Volodymyr – Gyurgev, and to little Svyatoslav and John – Gyurgy on the river, saying: “May you be instead of their father, and be there for them, as I have been. And may you not fight among yourselves, but if someone else rises up against you, take up arms against them”<sup>29</sup>.

The comparison of information from the chronicler of Pereslavl Suzdal and the Laurentian Chronicle allows us to propose the following reconstruction. Vsevolod Yurievich died suddenly aged 57–58. The abruptness explains the fact that Konstantin simply did not have time to come from Rostov to his dying father. With his health rapidly deteriorating, he hurried to give the last orders: he gave Vladimir to George, Pereslavl (Zalessky) to Yaroslav, Yuryev to Vladimir and took care of George’s guardianship over the younger brothers, and Konstantin and his descendants retained possession of previously obtained Rostov part of the Zalessky land. Dying Vsevolod Yuryevich was most concerned about peace among his sons. Such a fragmentation of the principality in 1212 contradicts the widespread idea in historiography about strong princely power in North-Eastern Rus’. Vsevolod Yuryevich divided the principality among his sons, without designating a political centre (the guardianship of Prince George of Vladimir over his younger brothers was obviously temporary). But at the same time, the city of Vladimir was lower than Rostov; the second son of Vsevolod, George, reigned in Vladimir.

However, this division of the principality led to a struggle among Vsevolod’s sons, primarily George, Yaroslav and Konstantin, and it ended only in 1218. Konstantin opposed his father’s project with the principle of political seniority of the great Vladimir prince, which coincided with the seniority of his brothers. Relying on Rostov – Prince Konstantin also built churches there – he began to fight for the supreme power in all of North-Eastern Rus’. Having lost the first round to brothers George and Yaroslav, he, with the help of the Smolensk princes and Novgorod, led the Rostov troops to Lipitsa – the second battle in 1216. George offered him the same exchange: if you want Vladimir, give me Rostov<sup>30</sup> – approximately according to the same patterns that Vsevolod Yuryevich proposed to his nephews and rivals, the Rostislavichs. Konstantin won. The important thing is that in the First Novgorod Chronicle the Battle of Lipitsa is presented as a victory of the Rostovites, together with the Novgorodians, over the inhabitants of Vladimir. So Rostov took revenge over Vladimir (for a short time). And... Konstantin became the Grand Duke of Vladimir. He restored the unity of the principality, the supreme power, going against the will of his father. The events of 1212–1216 were the last manifestation of the political subjectivity of cities.

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<sup>29</sup> *Летописец Переяславля-Суздальского* // Полное собрание русских летописей. Т. XL, М 1995, 129.

<sup>30</sup> *Летописец Переяславля-Суздальского* // Полное собрание русских летописей. Т. XL, М 1995, 129.

Konstantin Vsevolodovich managed to establish a new order after the defeat of George at Lipitsa in 1216. In 1218 Konstantin Vsevolodovich died<sup>31</sup>. But he managed to propose a new outline for the organisation of power: power belonged to the prince who ruled in Vladimir, his brothers and nephews reigned in some cities, recognising the power of the Vladimir prince. Having reigned for the second time after the death of Konstantin in 1218, George did not change the established political model, which does not seem advanced, as historiographers sometimes tried to present it. The same George Vsevolodovich had to respect the rights of the sons of Konstantin – they reigned in Rostov. The result was some kind of autonomy of the Rostov land with its own dynasty, which recognised the Vladimir prince. The autonomy is observed both in relation to Yuryev, where Svyatoslav Vsevolodovich reigned, and in relation to Pereslavl-Zalessky, where Yaroslav reigned.

Moreover, even in relation to the tendencies of autocracy of Andrei Bogolyubsky, the political model that emerged in the Zalessky land in 1216–1218 looks like a step back in the centralisation of power and, rather, corresponds to the all-Russian trends of political fragmentation. However, the political legacy of Andrei Bogolyubsky was preserved and maintained owing to the subjectivity of cities. It manifested itself in North-Eastern Rus' during a period of political fragmentation, when the Rurikovich family established themselves in the regions. Moreover, during the period of political fragmentation – the second third of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, this was due to the revival of dormant traditions of the "old" cities as opposed to the newly acquired capital status of Vladimir. The obtainment of political subjectivity by the cities of the region followed the model of Novgorod, whose characteristic feature was the boyar oligarchy. However, the *veche* order did not develop in the region. *Veche*s took place during the period of vacuum of princely power – in 1157, 1174–1176, whereafter no *veche*s were noted. If it is characterised as a passive factor, as a given fact that must be taken into account, then it entered into interaction with a constant factor of old Russian political history, which was princely power. In the 12<sup>th</sup> and the first third of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, it was the only initiator of urbanisation in North-Eastern Rus'. Princes founded and even moved cities depending on their military and political interests. Therefore, the historiographical dispute about the nature of the colonisation of North-Eastern Rus' – folk-peasant (V. O. Klyuchevsky, M. K. Lyubavsky) or princely-political (A. E. Presnyakov) – the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, decided in favour of the latter<sup>32</sup>.

This separation subsequently caused a bitter struggle in chronicles – in the article "These are the princes of Russia"<sup>33</sup>. Rostov scribes, contrary to the Vladimir chroniclers, indicated the true date of Vladimir – the year 1108, and not the 10<sup>th</sup> century, diminished the value of Vladimir and its Assumption Cathedral in comparison

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<sup>31</sup> *Лаврентьевская летопись* // Полное собрание русских летописей. Т. I. М 1997, Стб. 442–443.

<sup>32</sup> Пудалов Б. М. *Начальный период истории древнейших русских городов Среднего Поволжья (XII – первая треть XIII в.)*, Нижний Новгород 2003, 198–202.

<sup>33</sup> *А се князи Русьстии* // Полное собрание русских летописей. Т. III. М 2000, 467–468.

with the antiquities of Rostov, devalued the activities of Andrei Bogolyubsky, sang the praises of Konstantin, and exaggerated the scale of the Battle of Lipitsa and the glory of the Rostovites<sup>34</sup>. But this happened later – after the Mongol invasion. And it would be little consolation for Rostov after the loss of its status, since literary reality could not translate into historical reality under different conditions.

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<sup>34</sup> See for example: Кузнецов А. А. “Летописная полемика о числе куполов Успенского собора”, *Вестник Удмуртского университета. Серия 5: История и филология* 1 (2010), 13–23.

**Андрей А. Кузнецов**

**БОРЬБА ПОЛИТИЧЕСКИХ СУБЪЕКТНОСТЕЙ РОСТОВА И ВЛАДИМИРА ДО 1218 Г.:  
ИДЕОЛОГИЧЕСКИЕ ОСОБЕННОСТИ УРБАНИЗАЦИИ СЕВЕРО-ВОСТОЧНОЙ РУСИ**

**Резюме**

В статье рассматривается вопрос об одном из акторов политической истории Северо-Восточной Руси, наряду с князьями, – городах этого региона. Данную роль города играли в первые 50 лет периода политической раздробленности Древнерусского государства – в 1120–1170-гг. Города Ростов, Суздаль выступили конкурентами утверждавшейся династии потомков князя Юрия Владимировича Долгорукого. Одновременно их противником стал Владимир, которого князь Андрей Юрьевич (Боголюбский) сделал столицей. Эти вектора политических стратегий столкнулись поле гибели Андрея Боголюбского в 1174 г. Ожесточенность борьбы в 1174–1178 гг. обуславливалась обретением городами политической субъектности. Разные варианты политических субъектностей Владимира и Ростова основывались на разных идеологических программах, восстанавливаемых по летописям. Владимирская программа связывалась с признанием первенства княжеской власти. Именно она и победила одновременно с утверждением в Северо-Восточной Руси Всеволода Юрьевича Большое Гнездо.

**Андреј А. Кузњецов**

**БОРБА ПОЛИТИЧКИХ СУБЈЕКТА РОСТОВА И ВЛАДИМИРА ДО 1218. ГОДИНЕ:  
ИДЕОЛОШКЕ КАРАКТЕРИСТИКЕ УРБАНИЗАЦИЈЕ СЕВЕРОИСТОЧНЕ РУСИЈЕ**

**Резиме**

У раду се истражују градови Североисточне Русије, који су, поред кнезова, били један од фактора политичке историје овог региона. Градови су играли ову улогу првих 50 година у периоду политичког распада Староруске државе – од 1120. до 1170. године. Градови Ростов и Суздаљ постали су конкуренти династији потомака кнеза Јурија Владимировича Долгоруког, која је настајала. Истовремено, њихов противник постао је град Владимир, који је кнез Андреј Јуријевич (Богољубски) прогласио главним градом. Правци ових политичких стратегија су се сукобили после смрти Андреја Богољубског 1174. године. Жестина борбе између 1174. и 1178. године обезбедила је овим градовима стицање политичког субјективитета. Различити облици политичког субјективитета Владимира и Ростова заснивали су се на различитим идеолошким програмима, који су реконструисани на основу летописа. Владимирски програм оснивао се на признавању првенства кнежевске власти. Управо тај програм је победио, истовремено са утврђивањем Всеволода Јуријевича Великог Гнезда у Североисточној Русији.