

The origin of the name Rus'

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I

The problem of the origin of the name Rus' and that of the origin of the people Rus' are among the most controversial questions in historical scholarship. No consensus of opinion has been reached so far in regard to either.

The main purpose of the present study is to attempt to clarify the origin of the name Rus' but a few remarks on the background of the people Rus' will also be submitted to the reader's judgement since the two problems are closely interrelated. Three main currents of thought may be discerned in the literature of the subject¹).

1) The assertion that the name Rus' was brought to South Russia from the North by the Norsemen through the intermediary of the Finns (derivation of Rus' from Ruotsi).

2) The view that the name Rus' existed in the South long before the coming of the Varangians.

3) The opinion that the name Rus' was given to the Varangians, after their arrival to the south, on account of their physical characteristics.

The first theory is supported by an influential group of philologists and a number of historians following in the wake of the philologists²).

In my opinion, the supporters of the theory have failed to explain why a name given the Norsemen by the Finns should have been adopted by the Norsemen and carried by them to the South. For this and other reasons the theory is unacceptable to me.

The opinion that the name Rus' derives from the color of the hair of the Norsemen has been recently presented by Roman Smal-Stocki and Henryk Paszkiewicz³). Both of them derive Rus'

¹) For a historiographical survey of the Russo-Varangian question see V. A. Mošin, *Varjago-russkij vopros*, *Slavia*, 10 (1931), pp. 109—136, 343—379, 501—587; Id., *Načalo Rusi*, *Byzantinoslavica*, 3 (1931), pp. 38—58, 285—307. Cf. G. Vernadsky, *Ancient Russia* (New Haven, 1943), 261—265 and 275—286.

²) Among the recent publications of the exponents of this theory see especially Ad. Stender-Petersen, *Varangica* (Aarhus, 1953).

³) R. Smal-Stocki, *Slavs and Teutons* (Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1950), pp. 87—106; H. Paszkiewicz, *The Origin of Russia* (New York, 1954), p. 143.

from the Greek rousios and the Slavic rusyj. According to S m a l - S t o c k i this means „blond“; according to P a s z k i e w i c z , „reddish“. Whether the Norsemen who came to South Russia were blond or red-haired, it would be hard to explain why they made a nickname allegedly given them by the Greeks and the Slavs, their official name, in fact, their only name.

In my opinion, the only explanation of the origin of the name Rus' warranted by the general historical background would be that which takes into account the fact of the existence of the name in the South since the early times.

II

The name Rus' was rendered by Constantine Porphyrogenitus as Ros (Rhos, Ῥῶς); in the sense of the name of the country, Rosia (Rhosia, Ῥωσία)⁴). Five centuries before Constantine Porphyrogenitus the name Ros was recorded by a Greek geographer as that of the Volga River⁵). Furthermore, in the Syriac compilation of the middle of the 6th century, the so-called „Church History“ by Zechariah the Rhetor, a people called Hros is mentioned as living in the Don region⁶). According to A. P. D j a k o n o v this is an exact Syriac transliteration of the Greek Rhos⁷). The list of peoples of the North Caucasian and Don areas (to which Hros belongs) was inserted into Zechariah's chronicle on the basis of the reports of the Amidans who had been captured by the Persians in 503 and then sold into slavery to the Huns; they returned home after a sojourn of about fifty years in the land of the Huns, i. e. in the North Caucasian and Azov areas. Their reports may be considered basically

⁴) Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio*, ed. by Gy. Moravcsik, transl. by R. J. H. Jenkins (Budapest, 1949), Index, p. 307, s. v.

⁵) K. Müller, *Geographi Graeci Minores*, II (Paris, 1882), p. 502. In the text as printed, Rhas (Ῥᾶς). This, however, is the editor's emendation. In the explanatory note it is said: „Ῥῶς codd. et edd.“ Cf. P. Smirnov, *Volz'kyi Šljakh i starodavni Rusy* (Kiev, 1928), p. 8. See also Georgius Horn, *Arca Noae sive Historia imperiorum et regnorum a condito orbe ad nostra tempora* (Lugdunum Batavorum, 1666), p. 182.

⁶) K. Ahrens and G. Krüger, *Die sogenannte Kirchengeschichte des Zacharias Rhetor* (Leipzig, 1899), p. 253, transliterate the name erroneously Heros (instead of Hros).

⁷) A. P. Djakonov, *Izvestija Psevdo-Zacharii o drevnikh Slavjanakh*, *Vestnik Drevnej Istorii*, 4 (1939), pp. 86—87.

sound⁸⁾. In the geographical treatise of Ravennas Anonymus a city by the name of Malorosa is mentioned among the Bosporan towns (of the Cimmerian Bosphorus, i. e. the Strait of Kerch). In my opinion the name is to be interpreted as Mal-Ros, the „Swamp of the Ros“⁹⁾. Finally in the same connection, the name of a river in Ukraine, Ros', should be mentioned here. Ros' is a tributary of the Dnieper (discharging into the Dnieper south of Kiev).

To the readers not sufficiently familiar with the geographic and historical background of the Pontic area it may seem that these few names recorded in different centuries and referring to places far apart one from the other hardly could constitute a solid historical evidence. It may be argued, perhaps, that the names are casually mentioned and not connected one with the other in any way. However, the historian who would take the trouble of studying the interrelations and movements of peoples in the Pontic Steppes in the pre-Byzantine era would be inclined to take a different view on the significance of the above mentioned names.

The historian should ask himself whether these scattered names are not so many remnants of some original basic term — that denoting a people, or peoples, who, in the earlier periods, overran and controlled the vast territory stretching from the lower Volga basin and the Azov region westward to the Dnieper River, and beyond it. This is precisely the view I hold in regard to the problem. To me it seems obvious that all these names are but a few fragments of the Sarmatian — to be more exact, Alanic — civilisation which once flourished in South Russia as well as in the region of the lower Danube and in the area of present day Hungary.

The Alans and the peoples associated with them, or controlled by them, were known under various names, such as Alani (variant Halani), Alanorsi (Alan-Aors, i. e. „White Alans“), As (Asii, cf. Os, Ossetes), Antes („Outer“ tribes), and Roxolani (Ῥωξολανοί)¹⁰⁾. This latter name is of particular interest for our theme. Roxolani is undoubtedly to be explained as Rukhs-Alani. Rukhs, in Ossetian, means „light“, „radiance“. The name „Rukhs-Alan“ occurs in Osse-

⁸⁾ N. V. Pigulevskaja, *Imja Rus v sirijskom istočnike VI veka*, Akademiku B. D. Grekovu: Sbornik statej [B. D. Grekov Festschrift] (Moscow, 1952), p. 47.

⁹⁾ Ravennas Anonymus, *Cosmographia*, ed. J. Schnetz, *Itineraria Romana*, II (Leipzig, 1940) p. 45.

¹⁰⁾ See M. Vasmer, *Die Iranier in Südrussland* (Leipzig, 1923), pp. 31—33, 49.

tian folklore¹¹). A parallel form to Rukhs-Alan apparently existed, namely Rukhs-As. In my opinion, V. F. M i n o r s k y's emendation of Ibn-Rusta's „Dukhs-As“ to „Rukhs-As“ is to be accepted without any reservations¹²). I also think that Rocas (Roc-As) and Rogas (Rog-As) in Jordanes are variants of the same name¹³). It may also be mentioned that in Ossetian folklore we find Rukhs-Aza as the name of a princess¹⁴).

The name Rukhs-Alan may be explained either as a compound name of one people („the Radiant Alans“) or as the name of a combination of two peoples, or two clans (Rukhs and the Alans). According to Ibn-Rusta (as emendated by M i n o r s k y) the noblest of the four Alan tribes, the one to which the king belonged, was called Rukhs-As. This seems to indicate that Rukhs were a clan, not an appellation of the Alans as a whole¹⁵). It is noteworthy that in a 12th century Persian poem, Nezami's „Iskander-namah“, where Alexander the Great wars in North Caucasian area are described, Rus are mentioned alongside of the Alan and the As, as a separate tribe¹⁶). Obviously, Nezami considered the Rukhs and the Rus one people. In the Chinese sources of the Mongol period the name Oros (Turkish Urus for Rus) was applied to both Russians and Alans¹⁷). In the latter case it undoubtedly corresponded to Rukhs.

III

The clan name Rukhs indicates that the clan's religion consisted essentially of the worship of the Radiant Light and of the Sun as its source. Presumably, the Sun-god was considered the clan's progenitor and protector.

¹¹) The Rukhs-Alan are often mentioned in the Ossetian tale (Kadäg) „Iry Dada“. I am greatly indebted to Dzambulats Dzanty for his sending me the Ossetian text of this tale (forthcoming in the *Journal of the American Folklore*). Iry Dada means „Father of the Iron“ (Ossetians). In the *Povest' Vremennykh Let* the name appears in the distorted form „Rededja“.

¹²) V. F. M i n o r s k y, *Hudud al-Alam* (London, 1937), p. 445, note 5.

¹³) G. V e r n a d s k y, *Ancient Russia*, p. 107.

¹⁴) Dzambulats Dzanty, *Uariy Zard, Oss-Alanes* (Institut d'Ossétologie, Clamart, Seine, France), No. 5—6 (1954), pp. 55—57.

¹⁵) This view was expressed by N. A. R a s t in his letter to me of July 10, 1952. Horn, *Arca Noae*, p. 182, says that the Rhossi (Rhos) „Alanis permixti Rhoxalanorum gentem constituerunt“.

¹⁶) See N. A. R a s t, *Russians in the Medieval Iranian Epos*, *American Slavic and East European Review*, XIV, 2 (1955), pp. 262—263.

In this sense the name Rukhs is similar to the name Khorvat (Horvat, Croat), which Paul Tedesco is inclined to interpret as the Iranian *xvarva* from the stem *xvarvan*, equivalent to *xvarvant*, „sun-like“ („sonnenhaft“)¹⁸). It should be mentioned in this connection that the name Khorezm (Chwarizm) likewise derives from the root *xvar*: *Khvar-zem*, The Land of the Sun¹⁹). Khorvat, as a tribal name, means „the Sun-people“. Apparently the Khorvat were the aborigines of Khorezm. Eventually they migrated westward and in the 7th century reached the northwestern Balkan Peninsula, the present day Croatia. The story of the Serbs is similar. They were mentioned by Ptolemy as residing in the Volga region from where they moved west. At the western end of their journey both the Khorvat and the Serbs appeared as Slavic-speaking peoples. Presumably, both of them in the course of this migration became associated with, or obtained control of, Slavic tribes, as the result of which both were gradually Slavicized²⁰).

Such is also the case of the Antes. The name Antes derives from the Alanic (Ossetian) *ändä*, „outside“; „ändag“, „outer“. The Antes were the „outer“ or peripheral tribes of the Alans²¹). In many cases, these peripheral tribes represented a mixture of Alans and Slavs. An Alanic clan might rule a Slavic tribe, or a Slavic tribe would be subordinated to an Alanic tribe. Such was the case of the combination of two tribes in the Middle Danubian region (area of modern Hungary) in the 4th century: the *Acaragantes* (*Äqäräg*-Antes) and the *Limigantes* (*Lämäg*-Antes). The former were Sarmatians (Alans); the latter, Slavs. The *Limigantes* were a „serf-tribe“ (serfs of the

¹⁷) H. Franke, *Europa in der ostasiatischen Geschichtsschreibung des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts*, *Saeculum*, 2 (1951), pp. 72—73.

¹⁸) Paul Tedesco's letter to me of June 3, 1953. The final — at in Khorvat is the plural suffix.

¹⁹) S. P. Tolstov, *Drevnij Khorezm* (Moscow, 1948), pp. 222—223.

²⁰) See F. Dvornik, *The Making of Central and Eastern Europe* (London, 1941), pp. 273—276.

²¹) G. Vernadsky, A note on the Name Antes, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 73 (1953), p. 192. In my previous works I had suggested a different derivation of the name Antes (interpreting the name as the plural form of *As*). I arrived at my new interpretation (which seems definitive to me) in the process of my work on the Sarmatian background of the *Völkerwanderung* (see next note). After the publication of my Note in *JAOS* Roman Jakobson informed me that Max Vasmer offered a similar explanation of the name Antes, see M. Vasmer, *Russisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, 4. Lieferung (Heidelberg, 1951), p. 246 (s. v. *Vjatiči*).

Acaragantes)²²). It is in the light of this comparative evidence that we may best attempt to reconstruct the history of the clan, or tribe, Rukhs.

There is no doubt that originally the Rukhs belonged to the Alanic group of peoples. While many of them remained solely in the Alanic fold, others became associated closely with the Slavic peoples. This is seen in the connection between the Rukhs and the Hros, the Slavic people mentioned by Zechariah the Rhetor as living in the Don region. He states that the Hros were people with such large limbs that horses cannot carry them. It can be concluded as N. V. Pigulevskaja has done quite plausibly that they were not horsemen²³). On the other hand, the Alanic Rukhs undoubtedly were horsemen since the Alans were famous for their cavalry. We may assume that the Alanic Rukhs dominated this Slavic group known as Hros — one of the cases wherein a settled people becomes subject to steppe nomads. The name Rukhs recorded by Zechariah the Rhetor in the form of Hros, was obviously pronounced in Slavic as Rus'²⁴).

A similar symbiosis of the Alanic Rukhs and the Slavic Rus' may be found in Hungary. As has just been mentioned, the Sarmatians and the Slavs lived side by side in the area of Hungary in the 4th

²²) G. Vernadsky, *Der Sarmatische Hintergrund der germanischen Völkerwanderung*, *Saeculum*, 2 (1951), pp. 345—346. Āqārag-Antes means „Voiceless Antes" (for the explanation of the term see my above article); Lāmāg-Antes means „Weak Antes".

²³) Pigulevskaja (as in Note 8), p. 46.

²⁴) According to Pigulevskaja, p. 47, the name Hros in the Syriac text may be read Hrus as well. Recently, Ad. Stender-Petersen has voiced his objection to the possibility of the derivation of Rus' (Greek Rhos) from Rukhs. He says: „Even if we admit that the name of the people Roxolani consists of two etymological elements rukhš and alan in the sense of „Light Alans" (in which case rukhš would derive from the older Iranian stem raokhš), even in such case we would expect to find on the Russian soil the form ruš' and not rus'", Ad. Stender-Petersen, *Četyre etapa russko-varjažskikh otnošenij*, *Varangica*, pp. 243—244. Stender-Petersen's argumentation does not seem convincing to me. In the first place, he operates with the hypothetical rukhš, but in Ossetian we have rukhs, not rukhš. Secondly, we have the form Rhos (Greek for Rus') as the name of the Volga River, in the anonymous geographer of the 5th century, which undoubtedly is to be connected with the name Rukhs. Before their migration westward, the abodes of the Rukhs or Roxolani had been in the Volga region, see Vernadsky, *Saeculum*, 2, p. 344;

century. New groups of both peoples migrated to Hungary in the Hunnish area. More followed in the wake of the Avars and then, of the Magyars. As Michael de Ferdinandy has recently shown, the 11th century Hungarian title „Dux Ruizorum“ refers to the Rukhs groups settled in Hungary²⁵). In the Hungarian chronicles Russia is called Ruscia or Ruthenia (this latter name denotes specifically the Kievan area). In a 14th century Hungarian chronicle it is related that two princes, descendants of St. Stephan, being banned from Hungary, went to Russia (Ruscia)²⁶). The same episode is mentioned in the *Legenda S. Gerardi Episcopi* of the 11th century. There instead of Russia we have Roxolania²⁷).

IV

Let us now turn to the Norsemen. In my opinion, when they came to South Russia, they must have found there the Slaviced tribe of Rus' which was unable at that time to withstand the attacks of their southern and eastern enemies and needed protection. The Rus' therefore must have engaged a band of Norsemen (apparently, Swedes) to reënforce their own troops. The commander of the Norse guardsmen was then given the princely authority, or perhaps seized that authority by force. The story must have been similar to that of Rjurik as described in the early Russian annals (*Povest' Vremenykh Let*)²⁸). Eventually, the ruler of the Rus' assumed the title

cf. Horn, *Arca Noae*, p. 182. As regards the derivation of rhos (ῥωσ-) from the stem rukhs — raokhs, the name of the satrap of Lydia and Ionia, mentioned by Diodorus (12, 47) deserves attention. The name is Rhosakes (Ῥωσάκης). Both J. Marquart and P. Kretschmer derive it from the old Persian raucāh (rauča), „light“, „day“, see J. Marquart, *Die Assyriaka des Ktesios*, *Philologus*, Supplementband 6 (1891—1893), p. 636; P. Kretschmer, *Einleitung in die Geschichte der griechischen Sprache* (Göttingen, 1896), p. 227. According to Roland G. Kent, *Old Persian* (New Haven, 1950), p. 205, raucāh corresponds to the Avestan raočah, „light“.

²⁵) Michael de Ferdinandy, *Dux Ruizorum, Oss-Alanes*, No. 5—6, pp. 28 to 34. These Rukhs presumably were a mixture of Alans and Slavs. It should be noted that those Slavs who had been conquered by the Magyars at the time of Landnahme are called in Hungarian sources Sclai, never Rutheni, M. de Ferdinandy's letter to me of January 10, 1955.

²⁶) *Scriptores Rerum Hungaricarum*, I (Budapest, 1937), p. 336.

²⁷) *S. R. H.*, II (B. 1938), p. 501.

²⁸) See G. Vernadsky, *Ancient Russia*, pp. 269—272.

of Kagan, which undoubtedly was borrowed from the Khazars²⁹). We know that this event took place before 839, since the Rus' kagan is mentioned in the Bertinian Annals under that date.

The Rus' kagan apparently adopted the tamga (clan emblem) of the Rukhs clan, perhaps by marrying a Rukhs princess³⁰). That tamga — the trident (variant, two-pronged spearhead) — was found on objects of the Alanic-Bulgar antiquities of the 4th to the 6th centuries; in the sites of western settlements of the Khazars (7th to 9th centuries); and in the antiquities of the Kievan region as well as in those of the land of the Vjatiči in the upper Oka region (6th and 7th centuries). The design is strikingly similar to that used by the rulers of the Bosporan Kingdom of the second and third centuries as well as to that of the Khorezmian tamgas. Of the same design are the emblems of the Russian princes of the Kievan period, the so-called Rjurikids³¹).

²⁹) There is no consensus of opinion concerning the area of the first Russian Kaganate. P. Smirnov, *Volz'kyj šljakh*, pp. 118—132, places its center in the upper Volga — Oka region; A. A. Vasiliev, *The First Russian Attack on Constantinople*, Mediaeval Academy Monographs, No. 46 (Cambridge, Mass. 1946) pp. 169—175, centers it in Kiev. In my opinion, it centered around Tmutorokan', see *Ancient Russia*, pp. 278—286.

³⁰) According to „Iry Dada“, when Prince Mstislav of Tmutorokan' married an Alanic Princess, Nado of the Burgalty clan, he put the Alanic tamga on his standard (around 1022). (According to the *Povest' Vremennykh Let*, Mstislav married a Kasogian [Cirkassian] princess). Dzambulat Dzanty (in his letter to me of February, 1955) informed me that, around 1910, he saw the tamga of the Burgalty clan in the home of a descendant of the clan in the village Senkhay, about nine miles from the town of Mozdok. The tamga is of bronze and has the following form: 

According to B. A. Rybakov a tamga used as a top of standard (found in the Nalčik district in the North Caucasian area) resembles the trident. A bow-case with a design of Mstislav's tamga was found in Tmutorokan', see B. A. Rybakov, *Znaki sobstvennosti v knjažeskom khozjajstve Kievskoj Rusi X—XII vv.*, *Sovetskaja Arkheologija*, 6 (1940), pp. 241—242 and figures 41 and 42 (p. 242). Mstislav's tamga is similar to the emblem (trident) of his father, Vladimir the Saint.

³¹) See P. N. Tretjakov, *Anty i Rus'*, *Sovetskaja Etnographija*, 1947, 4, pp. 71—83; B. A. Rybakov, *Znaki sobstvennosti* (see Note 30); B. A. Rybakov, *Drevnie Rusy*, *Sovetskaja Arkheologija*, 17 (1953), p. 96 and fig. 25 (p. 97); S. P. Tolstov, *Drevnij Khorezm* (Moscow, 1948), pp. 184—185. On the emblem of the Rjurikids see Baron Michael de Taube, *Zagadočnyj rodovoj znak sem'i Vladimira Svjatogo*, *Sbornik statej posvjaščennykh P. N. Miljukovu* (Prague, 1929), pp. 117—132, and *Rodovoj znak sem'i Vladimira Svjatogo*, *Vladimirskij Sbornik* (Beograd, 1938), pp. 89—112.

Furthermore, the Rus' kagan must have adopted the Sun-worship of the Rukhs. Two names of sun-gods are known in the pantheon of the old Russian paganism, Khors and Dažbog. It is generally agreed that Khors is a name of Iranian origin. In Ossetian „Sun“ is „Khur“. The name Dažbog is explained in two different ways. Some scholars, like A. N. Afanas'ev, derive it from the Sanskrit dah (Avestan dag) „to burn“. Others prefer the derivation from the Slavic verb dati („to give“). According to them, Dažbog (Dažd'bog) is „the Giver of wealth“³²). Recently, Roman Jakobson has suggested that Dažbog (which name he explains as „Giver of wealth“) is not a name of a separate god, but an epithet of Khors³³).

While at the time of the coming of the Norsemen the Rus' were apparently a separate tribe, they must have eventually merged with some of the other Antian (East Slavic) tribes, especially with the Poljane and the Severjane. It is the region of these two latter tribes which is called Rus' in the specific sense in the old Russian chronicles³⁴). It is obvious that while the princely clan of the Rus' of the Kievan period was of Norse extraction, the bulk of the people were Slavs. Because of this the Norsemen settled in Russia soon adopted the Slavic language and were gradually slavized. According to the *Povest' Vremennykh Let*, „the Slavs and the Russes are one people“ (A slovenskyj jazyk i ruskyj odno est')³⁵).

Following Vladimir's conversion Christianity became the official religion of both the Rus' princely clan and the Russian people. However, the old pagan beliefs were not discarded at once. Deep in their hearts and minds, many of the Russians still clung to their old notions and, especially in the remote rural districts, even practiced the old rites. Christianity in the Kievan period at first struck roots only at the princes' courts and in the cities. However, even among the princely retinue (*družina*) in the late 12th century, there were men permeated, subconsciously at least, with the old beliefs. Such, among others, was the author of the famous poem, *Slovo o polku*

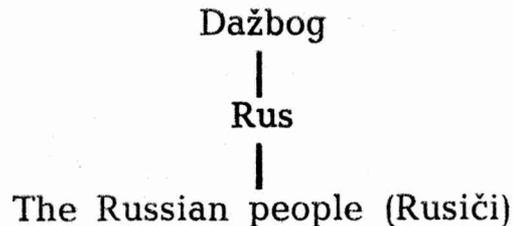
³²) See G. Vernadsky, *Kievan Russia* (New Haven, 1948), p. 51.

³³) R. Jakobson, *Slavic Mythology*, Fund and Wagnall's Standard Dictionary of Folklore, II (New York, 1950), p. 1027.

³⁴) A. N. Nasonov, „Russkaja Zemlja“ i obrazovanie territorii drevnerusskogo gosudarstva (Moscow, 1951), p. 29; H. Paszkiewicz, *The Origin of Russia*, p. 7.

³⁵) S. H. Cross and O. P. Sherbowitz-Wetzor, ed. and transl., *The Russian Primary Chronicle* (Cambridge, Mass., 1953), p. 63; V. P. Adrianova-Peretc, ed., *Povest' Vremennykh Let* (Moscow and Leningrad, 1950), p. 23.

Igoreve („The Tale of the Raid of Igor“). Characteristically enough, in the Slovo, the Russian people is called, collectively, „Dažbog's grandson“³⁶). The author of the Slovo apparently thought in terms of the following genealogy:



Irrespective of whether Dažbog was a sun-god on his own right or an epithet of Khors, we obviously have in the Slovo a derivation of the Russian people from the Sun-god through the progenitor of the clan, Rus. This line of thinking corresponds exactly to the meaning of the original name Rukhs.

I would like to point out in this connection that the members of the Kievan princely clan never called themselves Rjurikids. It was only in the Muscovite period that Rjurik was recognized as the name-giver of the dynasty. In the Kievan period that dynasty remained anonymous even though Rjurik was mentioned in the *Povest'* as the first Russian prince, and the „old Igor“ of Kiev as Rjurik's son. When the Russian princes of the Kievan period wanted to emphasize the unity of their clan they invoked their „common grandfather“ without mentioning any particular name. Two such references have been recorded in the Kievan Chronicle. In 1174 Prince Svjatoslav Vsevolodič (of the Olgoviči princely branch), who had a dispute with Prince Jaroslav Izjaslavič (of the Monomašiči branch), said to the latter: „I am not a Hungarian, nor a Pole, but we are both grandsons of the common grandfather“ (Ja ne Ugrin, ni Ljakh, no odinogo deda esmy vnuci)³⁷); In 1195 Jaroslav Vsevolodič and other princes of the Olgoviči branch, in similar circumstances, told Vsevolod Jur'evič of Suzdal (of the Monomašiči branch): „We are not Hungarians, nor Poles, but are grandsons of the com-

³⁶) H. Grégoire, R. Jakobson et al., *La Geste du Prince Igor*, *Annuaire de l'Institut de Philologie et d'Histoire Orientales et Slaves*, VIII (1945-1947), Old Russian text, verses 64 (p. 50) and 76 (p. 52). Cf. verses 13, 36, 52 and 73 for Rusiči.

³⁷) *Polnoe Sobranie russkikh letopisej*, II (St. Petersburg, 1843), p. 110.

mon grandfather" (My esmy ne Ugre, ni Ljakhove, no edinogo deda esmy vnuci)³⁸).

It will be noted that the wording is identical in both cases. Apparently, this is a sacramental formula. The „grandfather" (ded) mentioned in it could not have been the physical grandfather of the contending princes for the simple reason that they had no common grandfather. Svjatoslav Vsevolodič and Jaroslav Vsevolodič were grandsons of Oleg Svjatoslavič of Černigov; Jaroslav Izjaslavič was a grandson of Mstislav (son of Vladimir Monomakh) of Kiev; Vsevolod Jur'evič, grandson of Vladimir Monomakh. The term „grandfather" is apparently invoked in the formula in the more general sense of the progenitor of the whole Rus' clan, of the Russian people as contrasted to the foreign peoples (Hungarians and Poles). In my opinion, this formula should be compared to the ancestry of the Rusiči in the Slovo o polku Igoreve (Dažbog - Rus - Rusiči).

It should be noted that the Slovo was composed around 1187, that is chronologically, in between the two princely statements mentioned above (1174 and 1195 respectively). Furthermore, the Slovo's author, in all probability, belonged to the družina of the Černigov princely branch (the Olgoviči). And both statements quoted in the Kievan Chronicle were made by princes of this branch. We may think, however, that the notion of the mythical progenitor of the Rus' was wide-spread not only among the princes of the Olgoviči branch and their družina but among other Russian princes as well. When the Olgoviči used the sacramental formula in their talks with Monomašiči they apparently expected that the latter would understand and share their views in this matter. In any case, it is obvious that the Slovo's invocation of Dažbog corresponded to the idea of the mythical unity of Rus' prevailing in the political and social milieu in which the author of the Slovo flourished.

In the light of the evidence of the Slovo, the progenitor of the princely clan, who was not named in the sacramental formula used by Olgoviči, may be tentatively identified either as Rus or as Dažbog. It will be recalled that in one of the basic Byzantine chronicles of the 10th century, Pseudo-Symeon, it is said that the people Rhos are so called after a certain Rhos, a mighty man of valor³⁹). This in-

³⁸) PSRL, II, p. 146.

³⁹) See A. Soloviev, *Rusiči et Rus'*, *Zametki k Slovu o Polku Igoreve*, 2 (Kondakov Institute, Beograd, 1941), p. 27; R. J. H. Jenkins, *The supposed Russian Attack on Constantinople in 907: Evidence of Pseudo-Symeon*, *Specu-*

formation might have been received by Pseudo-Symeon's source from the Russians themselves. It apparently refers to the mythical Rus. It should be mentioned in this connection that in the literature of other Slavic peoples we also find cases of personification of the progenitor of the clan, the eponym of the people. An evidence of this is the legend of the three brothers — Čekh, Lekh, and Rus — the progenitors of the Czechs, the Poles, and the Russians respectively. According to N. K. Nikolskij, the legend must have originated in Pannonia in the very early times. Nikolskij also believes that the author of the *Povest' Vremennykh Let* was acquainted with it⁴⁰). The legend enjoyed considerable popularity among the Czechs, the Poles, and the Croats. In the early thirteenth century it was recorded by the Polish chronicler Bishop Boguchwal of Poznań. He puts the names in this order: Lekh, Rus, and Czech. Through their respective offsprings these three brothers „possessed, possess at present and will possess as long as it pleases the divine will“ the three realms, Poland, Russia, and Bohemia. (*Et hi tres haec tria regna . . . ex se et ex sua gente multiplicati possederunt, in presenti possedent, ac in posterum possidebunt, quamdiu divinae placuerit voluntati*)⁴¹).

In this statement two elements deserve special attention. Firstly, the pre-Christian notion of the creative force of the clan; and secondly, that of the divine will protecting the clan. If we admit, as Nikolskij apparently does, the pre-Christian origin of the legend, we must connect the aspect of the divine sanction with pagan

lum, 24 (1949), pp. 404—405; A. A. Vasiliev, *The Second Russian Attack on Constantinople*, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, No. 6 (Cambridge, Mass., 1951), pp. 187—195. A. A. Kunik in 1845 and Jenkins in 1949 tentatively identified Rhos of that text as Prince Oleg of Kiev. Vasiliev advanced the same hypothesis in 1951. I would take exception to this interpretation. While Pseudo-Symeon's story apparently refers to Oleg' expedition, Rhos seems to be mentioned in it as the progenitor of the people rather than as the leader of that particular expedition.

⁴⁰) N. K. Nikolskij, *K voprosu o russkikh pismenakh*, *Izvestija po russkomu jazyku i slovesnosti*, I, part 1 (1928), pp. 16—18.

⁴¹) *Monumenta Poloniae Historica*, II (Lwów, 1872), pp. 468—469. A Croatian version of the legend was recorded by Horn, *Arca Noae*, p. 325: „*Petrus Luccari in Annal. Ragusinis Russum fratrem Lechii et Czechii coloniam Slavorum in Roxolaniam duxisse scribit a quibus Russi originem traxerunt*“. On other Croatian versions see G. Januševskij, *Otkuda proiskhodit slavjanskoe plemja Rus'* (Wilna, 1923), pp. 24—29. A. V. Florovskij's study, *Legenda o Čekhe i Ruse v istorii slavjanskikh izučenij* (Prague, 1929) is inaccessible to me.