

TRADE AS A FACTOR OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN RED RUS' (GALICIA-VOLHYNIA PRINCIPALITY)

1. Talking about borderlands it is necessary to clarify what kind of borderland represented medieval Red Rus' - presently the western part of Ukraine. Interesting that the toponim "Ukraine" was derived from the word "okraina" that is a border, an edge, frontier territory. Contemporary studies on Ukrainian history (by Y.Dashkevych, I.Sevcenko, N. Yakovenko etc.) viewed the whole territory of today's Ukraine as a broad borderland "between East and West". However this current concept of social, political and cultural history of Ukraine is biased towards west-European points of view and, as a result, correct orientation in the parts of the world was distorted in Ukrainian scholarship. For instance, for Ukrainian historians Byzantium represented the East, while North and South are absent at all. Nevertheless, it is evident from any map that for Kievan Rus' (and later Ukraine) Byzantium is on the south, even more - on western south. From geographical, political, cultural, etc., points of view the place of Kievan Rus' was rather between the North and the South (between Scandinavia and Byzantine Empire). As follows from the chronicles, the trade route "from Varrangians to Greeks" was the principal axis around which grown the territory of Rus'. Byzantium was the "East" only from the west-European point of view: as evident from "western-centric" historical writings starting from the 18th c. Therefore it is doubtful that cultural orientation created much later and for other regions could adequately reflect medieval history of Ukrainian lands.

Despite this, the concept became widely spread, and is referred to in almost every introductory lecture on Ukrainian history. It has been interpreted as a "natural" (ever-existing) framework for this history and seems to precede the history itself. Represented as unique historical experience, the existence "between East and West" appeared to be a specific Ukrainian way in the history. Every historical phenomenon was easily explained by a frontier status of the territory.

Materials I used for the preparation of the paper demonstrated the necessity to be more opened in defining cultural orientations and that history of the region not always went "between East and West". Moreover, my understanding of "the East" and "the West" has less global scale: the East will be the eastern parts of Kievan Rus' (the hinterland), while the West - mostly the territory of Polish kingdom.

2. The region of Red Rus, typically for a borderland, changed from time to time its "centre of gravity" and was either the western border of Kievan Rus' (Ukraine for later times) or the eastern of Poland. After the "Great Schism" of 1054, Kievan Rus' was within the orbit of Constantinople, while its western neighbours, like Poland, tended to Rome. This made Galicia and Volhynia a border between the Latin and Orthodox Christianity. At first confessional differences were of minimal importance for dukes of Poland and Rus'. However, the 13-14th cc. was the time, when religious problems became more and more evident.

"Borders" can be observed in the scholarship itself: being more concerned with the situation in the centre (i.e. wide spread or most prominent cases) scholars often neglected specific features of the borders that do not go along with established schemes. Urban development of Galicia and Volhynia was studied mostly in a broad context of the town history of medieval Poland (especially Lesser Poland) or Kievan Rus': in both cases the subject appeared to be on the margin of a general historical picture. Ukrainian and Russian scholars has ended the urban history of the whole Kievan Rus' by the mid-13th c. seeing it a result of Mongol attacks. Polish authors have been usually concerned with the later period that is from the mid-14th c. onward, when this territory was incorporated into Polish kingdom. "Bordered" in this way studies (either from the "western" or "eastern" perspectives), do not adequately represent the nature of urban development of the region. For instance, it is accepted in Ukrainian scholarship that it is hardly possible to study legal aspects of the history of Kievan Rus' towns, because it they do not experience any form of urban law. However, this is not correct concerning towns of Red Rus' where a gradual process of adoption of the urban law started in the second half of the 13th c.

It is necessary to mention that Ukrainian scholarship from soviet and contemporary times, influenced by the same Marxist ideology, arrived at a commonly accepted conclusion that “towns grew from the surplus product derived from their hinterland.” In some studies, towns of Kievan Rus’ were presented as an extension of feudal society; their emergence and evolution were assumed to be connected to the development of centralised state. The general picture drawn by these studies represented the “natural” growth of towns seeing it as an evolutionary and progressive process. In this way attention was paid mainly to internal factors of the development and not so much to external. One of the external factors often neglected by Ukrainian scholars is long-distance trade.

In my paper I will focus on the connection between long-distance trade and urban reform in Red Rus’ during the 13 – 14th cc. The nature of the reform was the process of gradual adoption of urban law that resulted in spatial and social transformations. Moreover, it will be demonstrated that the adoption of the urban law in Red Rus’., which distinguished towns of this region from more eastern parts of Rus’ was not a result of a frontier status of the territory. In contrast to existing ideas that urban law here was developed “under Western influences” from the local law; and, similarly, that spatial changes and emergence of a regular check-board type of town plans was a result of “acquaintance of the local rulers with new model of town planning in the West”, I would draw attention to more clearly defined and influential factors in town history of Red Rus’. The process of urban development in the region during the 13-14th cc. will be illustrated with the example of medieval Lviv (Lemberg, Lwow).

3. Galicia-Volhynia principality started its history in the very late 12th c. during the process of partition of Kievan Rus’, when more than 10 separate duchies or principalities appeared. Galicia in the south-western part of Rus’ was among them. It was united with Volhynia in 1199 by the prince Roman Mstyslavovich into a state formation called Galician-Volhynian principality. These lands were ruled by his successors, the Romanovychi dynasty, until the mid-14th c.: this time is usually called the Princely era. The Romanovychi dynasty came to the end in 1340, when local nobility (boyars) poisoned Prince Yuriy II Boleslav and the struggle among the rulers of Poland Lithuania Hungary and the Mongols for the possession of this territory started. The king of Poland, Casimir the Great seized Lemberg in 1340. However, Ruthenian boyar oligarchy under the leadership of Dmytro Detko ruled Red Rus’ until 1349, when Casimir again invaded Galicia and progressively occupied it, while most of Volhyn’ territory was under Lithuanian control. In 1370 Casimir’s Louis II of Hungary became the king of Poland; he appointed Duke Wolodyslaw Opolski to govern Red Rus’ (1372-1378). After the marriage of grand duke Jagiello of Lithuania and Louis’s daughter queen Jadwiga this territory was acquired from Hungary by Poland. The territory of Galicia and a part of Volhynia were later organised in a Polish administrative unit called Rus’ Palatinate or Red Rus’. The history reveals two major periods. The first one (from 1199 till 1340) is the so-called “Princely era” during which the region was within the orbit of Kievan Rus’. The second one started in the mid-14th c. with incorporation of Red Rus’ into Polish kingdom. With the exception of the time 1370 – 1387, when Red Rus’ was ruled by Hungary, the region remained uninterruptedly a part of Poland till the early 20th c.

Most of the later towns in the territory in question began their life as aristocratic or princely strongholds (*grad's*) with an associated *suburbium*, in some cases – as market places. The defence were often constructed on a massive scale, the basic materials being earth and timber. The whole complex was subordinated to a stronghold, the centre of authority, mostly standing out because of its fortifications and the ducal or castellan’s residence within. However, the market was gradually becoming the second, after the centre of authority, place focusing the life of the whole early-urban community. Generally speaking, a stronghold was inhabited by representatives of governmental power, attached inner quarters – by dependant of the authority people, while suburbs housed both dependant and independent people whose activity was connected to the life of an early town. By the 13th c. urban development in the borderland of Kievan Rus’ (i.e. Galicia and Volhynia) was similar to that of the hinterland: early towns did not possess self-government, regular planning or clearly defined borders. There was also a lack of legal distinction between the town and countryside.

Occupation that was more typical for urban dwellers rather than to villagers was trade, especially if one talks about long-distance trade and not local one. In fact, both types of trade were usually connected to urban settlements. While participation in local trade could be combined with agricultural works or hunting, taking part in long-distance trade (importing goods or organising exchange) demanded specialisation unknown in villages. Only people with necessary finance and time were able to participate in it and those belonged mostly to ruling elite or “professional” merchants. Emerged centres for long-distance trade, distinctive not only from economic but also from social point of view, were those “old towns” that existed before the urban law was spread and a “new town” came into being.

The Mongol invasion badly affected the town development in Rus’ and ruined the position of Kiev as an important trade center. However, in the second half of the 13th c., urban centres of Red Rus’ gradually took the role of Kiev as commercial mediators between North and South. The region, being crossed by a new south-north trade route (it connected the North Western Europe with the South-East and went from Italian colonies at the Black and Azov Seas, namely Caffa and Tana via the territory of Red Rus’ to German towns) experiences economic and cultural growth. Urbanisation did not stop here: on the contrary, it entered a new phase of development and was related to long-distance trade. As was stated by I.Blanchard regarding Poland, Bohemia and Hungary: “Urban development was largely confined to the foreign trade-sector of Central-east European economies. Merchants... grew rich and disbursing their funds created a new “urban” complex in East-Central Europe.”¹ The same is true for Red Rus’ that was strongly connected to region and can be seen as a part of it.

The most important way originally ran through Volodymyr in Volhynia, but starting from the mid-14th c. switched to Lemberg. Volodymyr, located on an old trade route from Kiev to Europe, held its dominant position in Galician – Volhynian principality during 13th - early 14th cc. The presence of foreign merchants here is evident from the Galician-Volhynian Chronicle. The entry dated to 1268 informs about a German merchant who organised a reception for local rulers. Under the year 1288 the Chronicle narrates about the death of Prince Volodymyr Vasylykovich, mentioning that “lots of Volodymyrians were crying for him – men and women, and children, Germans and Soldayans, Novgorodians and Jews.” Doubtless that foreigners listed here were merchants staying in the town for business purposes. Another entry under the same year informs about “Ruthenian and German citizens” of Volodymyr summoned by the successor of the dead Prince.

Polish scholar S. Kutzeba emphasised that medieval Volodymyr was an important market for merchants from Prussia. The earliest traces of contacts with the Teutonic Order are dated to the time of King Daniel of Galicia, more precisely – to 1254. The contacts were continued by his successors as is evident from charters issued by Ruthenian Princes in 1316, 1325, 1327, 1334, 1335. They were concerned with renewal of friendly relationships with magisters of the Order. In one of the earliest charters (1316), as well as in the agreement of 1254, rulers of Red Rus’ promised the Order protection against the Tartars and other enemies. As rightly pointed by S.Kutrzeba, agreements between the Order and Ruthenian rulers played a role of political warranties for commercial contacts between Prussia and Red Rus’.

Interesting that the agreement of 1316 was supported by a person whom the Ruthenian Princes called in the charter “frater Sygerhardus de Swarzburg, consaguineus noster dilectus.” For a long time this phrase was quite enigmatic for Ukrainian scholars, because details of dynastic relations between Romanovychi and the Swarzburgs were not known. Studies conducted by W.von Isenburg clarified that a daughter of Daniel Sophia was married to the Turingian count Heinrich V (died 1285): they had nine children and two of their sons entered the Order. One of the sons appeared to be Sigerhardus mentioned in the charter. Apparently, good relationships with the Order were important for Ruthenian rulers. According to P.Dollinger, “In Lemberg the Teutonic Order owned an amber depot, and in 1400 its assets in the town in property and outstanding debts, represented a value of 3,200 Prussian marks. The Order sold its property in Lemberg in 1400.” Moreover, the author stated that up to 1400 amber was sent not only to Lubeck and Brugge, but also to Lemberg. Unfortunately he did not provide a

¹ Ian Blanchard, “Central- and South-Eastern Europe and the International Economy 1280-1520” in *The Mediaeval Economy in its Prime* (Materials of the seminar), (Budapest: CEU, 2000).

reference to the source of this information. At the same time, available written and archaeological sources from Lviv do not confirm that the town was such a great amber market.

The development of long-distance trade in the region had different consequences, one of which was the rise of importance of money. Local rulers faced the necessity to turn to monetary system of exchange and taxation. Similarly to rulers of Hungary and Poland, they started to invite foreign settlers. The Chronicle recalls under the year 1257 how Daniel of Galicia called settlers to newly founded Kholm: “when he built the town, he started to invite people: Germans and Ruthenians, infidels and Poles”. Due to the trade route that connected the Baltic and the Black seas, Red Rus’ became very attractive for people looking for new possibilities and fortune. These people, receiving legal immunity, could increase incomes of local rulers. Without legal immunity urbanisation was hardly possible: it was always about exclusion of a group of free and relatively rich people (or the whole settlement – in later times) out of jurisdiction of ducal (or local) legal system (*ius Ruthenicale*).

Remarkably, Germans were mentioned among the first who was invited by the King. Their colonies or communities were usually granted a large degree of autonomy based on the German law and temporary tax exemptions. As a rule, colonists received land property and were settled near existing urban centres. Newly established communities were governed by *advocatus* or “Voight” who was at the same time a member of the colony and a representative of a landlord. A position of Voight was not an element of real self-government, because he was a dependant person of the landowner. Still, it is often emphasised that from the moment of emergence of legally independent social group the office of *advocatus* contributed greatly to the formation of communal self-government. The main task of gradually developing self-government was to conduct certain functions independently from state or a landlord to satisfy needs of a community members.

As a result a system of “double-towns” (Doppelstädten – O.Pritsak) developed in Red Rus’ during the 13 – 14th cc. Such a town consisted of an old Ruthenian settlement under the local or Ruthenian law (an “old town”) and an independent German colony (a “new town” or a “colonial town.”) Who were colonists? Although we do not have detailed information on this account, it is most likely that colonists were people involved in long-distance trade. It is evident from the fact that such communities emerged first of all in the main trade centres of Red Rus’. Moreover, trade centres were the first to receive Magdeburg law privileges. The essence of the privilege was granting legal immunity to the whole town, giving clearly measured land property to citizens and (in some cases) tax exemptions for a certain period. In this way the merchant colony bridged the gap between the Slavic settlement with certain urban functions and the fully-developed medieval town.

The presence of legally independent German colony in Volodymyr is evident from the letter 1324 written by local “consules” to the town council of Starlsund. It was written from “*consules ac universitas civitatis Ladimiriensis*.” There was an opinion that already at that time the whole town of Volodymyr was transferred under the German law and a colony only. A remnants of the seal from this letter with the image of St. George implies that this transformation could have happened during the reign of Prince Yuriy (George) I in the early 14th c. A suggestion was expressed that Volodymyr was the first urban centre to receive Magdeburg law and it possibly happened in 1305. This fits very well to a dominating role of Volodymyr in long-distance trade, when the new trade route from the Black for the Northern Sea was established.

To the first half of the 14th c. belonged the earliest notions of colonies under the German law in other centres of Galicia – Volhynia. For instance there is copy of a charter that informs us about selling of *advocati* in Peremyshl by Prince Leo to a certain Johann in the late 13th or early 14th cc. Similar situation can be observed in the case of Lviv. The first traces of German law in this place came from the charter of Polish King Kazimir the Great issued in 1352. The king confirmed possessions of members of the Steher’s family, which their grandfather Bertold Steher, *advocatus* in Lviv, obtained from Prince Leo.

In both cases the German law was probably granted to a colony of merchants. The earliest preserved charter granting the German law (*theutonico iure id est iure magdeburgensi*) to the whole town dates to 1339 and was issued by the last

Ruthenian ruler – Yuriy (George) II. Here it was clearly stated that the whole town and not a separate colony only was to receive the new legal system. The charter listed the recipients: “*Theutunicos, Polonus, Ungarus et Ruthenus*”. This indicates also multi-ethnic character of urban community – a feature that became typical for towns of Red Rus’.

4. The history of Lviv is a clear-cut example of how a princely stronghold being involved in the system of long-distance trade was developed into a fully-fledged town during the 13 – 14 th cc. It was found as a fortress against the Tartars by King Daniel of Galicia in the mid-13th c. and was first mentioned in the Chronicle under the year 1256. This site took the role and power from another centre of Red Rus’ – Zwenyhorod, which, being destroyed by the Tartars in 1241, declined. The topography of Lviv in this period was typical for that of other fortified settlements of Kievan Rus’. The “old town” space consisted of the stronghold on a hill (today’s High Castle Hill) with attached inner quarters; and the outer area (*posad*) the least fortified suburb stretching as far as the Poltwa river. It is clear that the whole “old town” was subordinated to the stronghold at the north-east side of the settlement – the palace of prince – a centre of power. Apart from the seigniorial centre, there was a market place (called Old Market) situated inside the built – up area (most likely developed in later time).

There is an assumption that foreign merchants settled in Lviv immediately after the founding. However, as was proved by Polish historians L.Charewicz and S.Kutrzeba already at the beginning of the 20th c. Lviv was founded first of all as a stronghold and existing trade routes were not taken into account by its founder. Therefore the presence of merchants here should be dated to later times. The earliest traces of foreign settlers are those of Armenians: a tombstone dated to 1298 serves as terminus *ante quem* for their presence in Lviv. The mentioned charter of Kazimir the Great from 1352 referring to prince Leo and first *advocatus* Berthold Steher was often used as evidence for the presence of judicially organised German colony already in the mid-13th c. However, the fact that Lviv at that time was not included in the network of trade routes contradicts this idea. Most likely, Germans appeared here in the early 14 th c. during the reign of Leo II that is in the early 14th c. German settlers in Lviv were favoured by local rulers: it can be seen from the charter of Dmytro Detko (1340) to “*famosis viribus et mercatoribus in Thorun*” inviting them to the town. Those who would like to settle in Lviv were promised tax exemption for a year “as used to be before”. Such a reference to the past suggests that inviting settlers to Lviv was a regular practice.

It is proven in numerous studies that Lviv became the main trade centre of Red Rus’ from the mid-14th c. acting as a mediator on the trade route between the two seas. The earliest preserved Magdeburg law privilege is dated to 1356 and was issued by Kazimir the Great. However, urban law was adopted here before and this privilege was interpreted as a repetition of the previous one granted by Ruthenian princes. Catalan map of 1375 called Lviv (*cuitat de Leo*) a place to which “merchants from the South were going and from where they went further to Flandria via the German sea”. Its highday came with obtaining a full staple right in 1380 from the Hungarian king Luis II. As a result, the town became a literal border on the North-South trade route. Here German merchants met Venetian and Genes coming from their factories on the Black Sea. They sold cloth, hides and herrings and bought from Italians silk and spices. Most of the medieval religious foundations of the town (these were Franciscan and Dominican convents, a hospital, and a new parish church) belonged to the late 14th – early 15th cc. Besides, town fortifications were also built in the second half of the 14th c.

In the mid-14th c. the town centre shifted from the “old town” to the “new” German town. The “new town,” preserved until the present day, is oriented on the centrally located market and no longer on the stronghold: the market turned to be the most important function of the new centre. The ground plan of the new town represents a picture of unified check-board with a spacious square in the centre and the main parish church at the south-west corner of it. By building the enclosing walls in the second half of the 14th c. and introducing the town council, medieval Lviv became fully-developed in topographical and legal respects. Late medieval Lviv developed on the site, where German colony was settled, while the “old town” (living under the local law) gradually lost its importance and was transformed into a suburb usually called Cracovian suburb.

However, the Catholic kingdom (i.e. Poland) received the territory with different political and cultural traditions, so to say “connected to the sphere of different civilisation” which was Christianity of Eastern rite or Orthodoxy. The German law developed within Latin civilisation and connected to Catholic Christianity – was spreading in the territory dominated by Orthodoxy. This fact implied a strong possibility for conflicts in the situation, when this legal system became applied to such multi-ethnic formation as urban centres in Red Rus’. The German law gradually became a privilege for a certain part of population, the Catholics, while the other groups were often subjected to discrimination. The first privileges issued by Kasimir the Great did not have particularly discriminative character. For instance, according to the privilege of 1356 for Lviv, Magdeburg law was granted to the whole town, but non-Catholic citizens (*Judei, Armeni, Saraceni, Rutheni et alias*) were able to use their own law if they wanted to. Still, Magdeburg law had supremacy.

5. Conclusion. The development of long-distance trade in Red Rus’ and changes in economy were the factors that caused urban reform here during the 13-14th cc. The nature of the reform was gradual adoption of the new legal system – the German law – and emergence of independent urban communities. The reform went through two main stages. The first stage demonstrates the presence of German law as legal system of a separate colony, while in the second stage it became the law of the whole town resulting in profound transformation of the settlement fabric and social milieu. Spatial transformations of Ruthenian towns was a result of economic and social changes (emergence of a new social group – burghers, or burghers-merchants) and could not be interpreted as “Western influences” on local planning systems. From irregular forms of stronghold/suburb settlements it changed to a regular (check-board) type of town planning with clearly defined borders. A Market Square dominated the space of the new town. At this point one should be concerned not only with forms and sizes of squares and plots or density of buildings, but also with the fact that in different periods different social groups were forming the town, making different investments and in a different way using the space.

German law supplied favoured conditions for monetary economy. Urban self-government that emerged on the basis of this legal system was connected first of all to administration in the field of long-distance commerce and later in the field of market production. The town reform in Red Rus’ and the process of adoption of urban law went under the condition of economic changes and turn to monetary exchange. Old legal system (the ducal law or *ius Ruthenicale*) was not able to meet new economic requirements and was an obstacle for urbanisation. Without legal immunity urbanisation process was impossible. Therefore it is not reasonable to interpret the urban law of the late medieval town in Red Rus’ as modified local law: *ius Ruthenicale* was an antagonism to *ius Theutonice*, as follows from urban law privileges.

Towns of Red Rus’ received the same type of urban law – the law of Magdeburg – the same that was granted to most of Polish towns. In the course of the urban reform towns of Red Rus’ were included into the process that lead to evolution of a new social group – citizens, when not a separate person but the whole community was able to contract with a landlord and thus becoming his political and economic counterpart. This made the urbanising process of Red Rus’ similar to that of Central Europe and different from more eastern parts of medieval Kievan Rus’. Still, even though spatial and social types of Ruthenian towns were modelled on the universal type of urban law, in reality local condition and specific features (such as ethnic, religious and cultural differentiation of urban population) resulted in modifications and determined a specific character of those towns. The example of medieval Lviv showed maximum complexity of urban community, which included different nations and religions, however dominated by Latin Christianity and German language. Multi-ethnic urban communities were alien to ethnically and religiously homogenous surrounding countryside. A dominant position of Catholicism led to religious conflicts especially between Catholics and indigenous Orthodox – a situation rather unknown in Polish towns. In this way a borderland indicated its presence.