

Russian Principalities in the Eastern European Sources, 1250–1350

7.1 The Papacy, the Mongols, and Rus'

From the mid-13th century onwards a large part of Rus' was under Mongol control. This brought an added dimension to relations between Rus' and its western neighbours, which needs to be explored in greater depth. The campaigns for plunder in Rus', and from there on to Poland and Hungary, led by Batu Khan in 1240–41 are mentioned in many contemporary Western European sources. Princes Daniil of Volhynia and Mikhail of Chernigov fled to Hungary in the face of the Mongol advance. Only the fact that Batu's army unexpectedly turned back at the beginning of 1242¹ saved even larger areas from being devastated. Western sources often mention that Russian territories were among those that lay within the Mongol path of destruction.² Although the events mainly affected the southern regions, the impact on Rus' was certainly known in Livonia, becoming another factor to be taken into account. As far as the territories of Pskov, Novgorod, Polotsk, and Smolensk are concerned, however, the incursions had no more than indirect consequences. Novgorod and Smolensk were later encumbered with the duty to pay the Mongol tribute—as a result of the policy of the Russian princes—while neither Pskov nor Polotsk were directly affected by the tax collection.

The danger from the Mongols was also felt in the Catholic world, primarily in Poland and Hungary.³ In the second half of the 13th century a significant aspect of papal policy was the crusade against the Mongols, but the popes' repeated calls to crusade ultimately found little support. There is no evidence that there was even an awareness of these calls in Livonia and Prussia in any case. During the vacancy at the Holy See that lasted from the death of Pope Gregory IX in 1241 until 1243, the preaching of the crusade against the 'Tatars' lost its intensity. This was followed by the dispute over supremacy between the pope and

1 See Kosztolnyik, *Hungary*, pp. 133–83.

2 For example, the north German *Annales Stadenses auctore Alberto*, ed Johannes M. Lappenberg, in MGH SS, vol. 16 (Hanover, 1859), p. 367.

3 Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the West, 1221–1410* (Harlow, 2005), pp. 87–112.

Emperor Frederick II, which overshadowed everything else.⁴ Meanwhile the Mongol raids continued in Catholic Europe. The Mongol governor Quremsa took retaliation on Galicia and Volhynia during 1254–55; the emirs Burundai and Noghai laid waste to Poland in either 1258–59 or 1259–60. The Mongol military campaigns also extended as far as Lithuania. Against the background of these attacks the papacy ordered the preaching of the crusade against the Mongols on repeated occasions throughout the period from 1250 to 1280.⁵ The Teutonic Order in Prussia, which was to take part in the planned crusades, also played a key role in these endeavours.⁶

Since during this period the Mongol invasions also included the participation of their Russian subordinates, among whom were the rulers of Galicia and Volhynia, it became possible from the second half of the 13th century to regard Rus', like the Mongols, as an enemy of Latin Christendom. The crusades themselves were proclaimed not only against the 'Tatars' but also the Russians. The most urgent of these calls occurred around 1260, when one of the strategies adopted by King Ottokar II of Bohemia (d. 1278) to enhance his power and prestige was to assume leadership of the crusade. He had already gone on crusade to Prussia in the winter of 1254–55. Ottokar's enmity with the king of Hungary, who was allied with Galicia, intensified the language he used against Rus' and the schismatics. In 1260 when Ottokar fought against Hungary he went to war, in his own words, against the Hungarian kings Béla and Stephan (d. 1272), the Russian king Daniil and his sons, "and the other Russians and Tatars who did come to the aid of him", as well as against princes Bolesław the Chaste of Krakow (d. 1279), Leszek the Black of Łęczyca (d. 1288), "and against a countless crowd of inhuman people, against the Cumans, Hungarians, and all kinds of Slavs, Szeklers, as well as the Vlachs, Muslims, Ismaelites, and the schismatics, namely the Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbs, and the heretical Bosnians".⁷ For the Teutonic Order, King Ottokar was thus simultaneously a source of aid in the war against the pagans and a rival in the conquest of lands and the recruitment of crusaders. Hence, the Order secured privileges from the curia

4 Peter Jackson, "The Crusade Against the Mongols (1241)," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 42 (1991), 1–18; Mikołaj Gładysz, *The Forgotten Crusaders. Poland and the Crusader Movement in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries* (Leiden-Boston, 2012) (*The Northern World* 56), pp. 257–69, 302–03.

5 Altaner, *Dominikanermissionen*, p. 118; Paulus, *Geschichte*, p. 27; Purcell, *Papal Crusading Policy*, pp. 88–92; Kotliar, "Галицко-Волынская летопись," p. 138.

6 Jürgen Sarnowsky, "The Teutonic Order Confronts Mongols and Turks," in *The Military Orders. Fighting for the Faith and Caring for the Sick*, ed. Malcolm Barber (Aldershot, 1994), pp. 256–57. Cf. Forstreuter, "Zur Geschichte".

7 HRM 2, p. 348, no. 5.