

THE CUSTOMS OF WAR IN RUS IN 13TH CENTURY: BETWEEN LEGAL REGULATIONS AND SOCIAL CONFLICTS

OS COSTUMES DE GUERRA NA RUS NO SÉCULO XIII: ENTRE AS REGRAS LEGAIS E OS CONFLITOS SOCIAIS

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Abstract: The aim of the paper is to analyze legal regulations and customs of war in Rus in 13th century. The research incorporated content analysis, focusing on relevant contemporary studies and individual conclusions that formed the basis for understanding development of Galician-Volhynian state in the specified period. In results it is shown, that the evolution of war declarations in Rus is discernible through historical records, revealing a variety of methods used for such announcements. Prince Svyatoslav's 10th-century proclamation, encapsulated in the phrase "I'm coming for you," serves as an illustration of the cultural significance attached to war declarations within the Rus'ian military elite. In diplomatic contexts, war declarations often occurred through ambassadors, with diplomatic envoys enjoying inviolability. During local wars the Prince of Kyiv emerged as an arbiter, but disorder persisted. Prince Roman Mstyslavovych proposed a reform in the 13th century, advocating the election of the Kyiv prince to enforce peace, but it was not implemented. In medieval Rus'ian warfare, the capture and acquisition of booty played a pivotal role, shaping relations between factions. The fate of captives shifted from free individuals to slaves, reflecting economic changes. Moreover, it is evident that plague

and famine did not significantly hinder conflicts among the Galician-Volhynian princes and their neighbors. In conclusions it is indicated that the medieval elite persisted in pursuing their interests, only deviating from plans when the consequences of the prevailing war reached truly critical proportions.

Keywords: Galician-Volhynian state. Rus. War. Plague. Customs.

Resumo: O objetivo do artigo é analisar as regulamentações legais da guerra na Rus no século XIII. A investigação incorporou a análise de conteúdo, centrando-se em estudos contemporâneos relevantes e em conclusões individuais que serviram de base para a compreensão do desenvolvimento do Estado Galego-Volhyniano no período especificado. Nos resultados mostra-se que a evolução das declarações de guerra na Rus é discernível através de registros históricos, revelando uma variedade de métodos utilizados para tais anúncios. A proclamação do Príncipe Svyatoslav no século X, resumida na frase "Estou indo atrás de você", serve como uma ilustração do significado cultural atribuído às declarações de guerra dentro da elite militar russa. Em contextos

diplomáticos, as declarações de guerra ocorriam frequentemente através de embaixadores, gozando os enviados diplomáticos de inviolabilidade. Durante as guerras locais, o Príncipe de Kiev emergiu como árbitro, mas a desordem persistiu. O príncipe Roman Mstyslavovych propôs uma reforma no século XIII, defendendo a eleição do príncipe de Kiev para impor a paz, mas esta não foi implementada. Na guerra russa medieval, a captura e aquisição de butim desempenhou um papel fundamental, moldando as relações entre as facções. O destino dos cativos passou de indivíduos livres para escravos, refletindo mudanças económicas. Nas conclusões indica-se que a elite medieval persistiu na prossecução dos seus interesses, só se desviando dos planos quando as consequências da guerra prevaemente atingiram proporções verdadeiramente críticas.

Palavras-chave: Estado Galega-Volhyniana. Rus. Guerra. Peste. Costumes.

1. Introduction

In the intricate tapestry of global history, certain regions have borne witness to the ebb and flow of conflict, each leaving behind a unique set of rules and principles governing the conduct of warfare. One such region that has experienced the crucible of historical turmoil is the Galician-Volhynia, nestled at the crossroads of Eastern Europe. As we delve into the nuanced landscape of military engagement in this historically rich territory, it becomes imperative to explore the rules of waging war that have evolved over time.

Around the year 1199, the formation of the Galician-Volhynian state took place in the western territories of Rus. This state encompassed the influential Galician and Volhynian principalities, united under the rule of the Romanids dynasty (successors of Prince Roman Mstyslavovych), a branch of the Kievan Monomachos family (HRUSHEVSKYI, 2016; KOTLYAR, 2021). In the context of modern Ukrainian history, the Galician-Volhynian state holds extraordinary significance. Some scholars have posited that this entity served as the first Ukrainian state in a general sense (TOMASHIVSKY, 1919). Nevertheless, irrespective of such overarching claims, the study of this formidable medieval power remains highly relevant for historians. It is noteworthy that the Romanids had connections with various European dynasties, including those of Poland, Hungary, and Germany (VOLOSHCHUK, 2019). These affiliations predisposed them to adopt certain household, military, and political practices from the Western European Middle Ages.

The Galician-Volhynian state, characterized by its diverse cultural heritage and strategic significance, has been a stage for various conflicts, ranging from medieval battles to modern warfare. The rules governing the conduct of war in this region are deeply rooted in a complex interplay of historical, cultural, and geopolitical factors. Understanding these

rules not only provides insight into the dynamics of conflict resolution but also sheds light on the resilience of communities in adapting to the challenges imposed by war.

This exploration invites us to consider the military law of the Galician-Volhynian state, examining the impact of external influences, internal dynamics, and the evolving nature of warfare on the rules that govern armed conflict. Examining the rules governing warfare in the Galician-Volhynian state necessitates a specialized focus on military jurisprudence. The study of the rules of warfare in the Galician-Volhynian state requires special attention in the context of military jurisprudence. This analytical approach aims to elucidate the intricacies of the normative framework that governed military behavior in the region, drawing methodological conclusions from a careful study of historical sources. Thanks to a systematic study of the relevant primary sources, this study aims to contribute to our scientific understanding of the nuances of the legal norms governing the armed conflict in the Galician-Volhynian state.

2. Framework of Theoretical Concepts and Review of Literature

Concept of war in medieval society

The role of warfare in medieval society was multifaceted and integral, influencing the political, economic, and social fabric of the time. This intricate relationship has been elucidated through the meticulous examinations of scholars (KEEN, 1999; FRANCE; KAGAY; VILLALON, 2000; NICHOLSON, 2003). The medieval period, spanning roughly from the 5th to the 15th century, was characterized by a feudal system, regional conflicts, and power struggles. *Ab ovo* the normative framework governing warfare during the medieval period was characterized by a set of widely accepted principles. Key among these principles was the prohibition of initiating hostilities without a formal declaration, emphasizing the importance of transparent communication before engaging in armed conflict. Additionally, the integrity of negotiators was to be respected, and oaths were deemed inviolable, constituting foundational elements of the evolving law of war.

The legal landscape of war during this time period bore the hallmarks of a “legal process”. This concept encapsulated the notion that resorting to war was permissible only in defense of one’s rights, and only after the adversary had rejected the opportunity to provide the satisfaction demanded. The declaration of war itself was subject to regulations, adding a procedural layer to the initiation of hostilities. Moreover, agreements made with the enemy, such as truces or surrenders, were considered sacrosanct, with violations

carrying severe consequences. The adherence to these agreements was often secured by the use of hostages, reinforcing the commitment to the prescribed norms.

This legal framework not only established guidelines for the conduct of war but also sought to bring a sense of order and structure to armed conflicts. It underscored the idea that war, though a drastic measure, should be governed by principles rooted in justice, fairness, and a commitment to upholding agreements, thereby shaping the contours of a nascent system of international law during the medieval era.

Rus in the 13th century – Galician-Volhynian state

The term Galician-Volhynian State used in the paper is a historiographical construct. Its use is quite controversial, since this name is not confirmed in historical sources. For this reason, many researchers use other names. The most popular among them are Galician Rus, Galicia-Volhynian Rus, Galicia-Volodymyr Rus, Principality of Galicia, Principality of Galicia and Volhynia, Principality of Galicia-Volodymyr, Southern Rus, South-Western Rus, Galicia-Volhynian State *etc.* Currently, confusion in the exploit of terms persists. Each historian uses one or another name in accordance with his own preferences and traditions, without delving too deeply into its meaning, although at the subconscious level he understands the same thing by each of the above terms. It is about the state of the Romanovids, their possessions, where the elites and residents somehow recognized them as their suzerains (VOLOSHCHUK, 2018).

The establishment of Galician-Volhynian state marks a pivotal chapter in Ukrainian history. Around 1199, Prince Roman Mstyslavovych (c. 1152–1205) of Volodymyr (Volhynia) seized Galich (Halych), the capital of the Galician principality, consolidating suzerainty over two principalities (KOTLYAR; LYMAR, 2023). Consequently, his descendants, known as the Romanids – comprising Rus' king Danylo (1201–1264) (his monarch title is verified by ISAIEVYCH (2004), FONT (2022) and many other historians), his brother Vasylko (1203–1269) and son Lev (c.1228–c.1301), and others – engaged in a protracted struggle against rival claimants for the Galician throne. Emerging as one of the largest among Rurikid principalities, the state boasted a strategic location intersecting multiple trade routes (VOITOVYCH, 2010; VOLOSHCHUK, 2021). Local rulers actively participated in the political landscape of Central and Eastern Europe during the 13th and 14th centuries (See Figure 1).

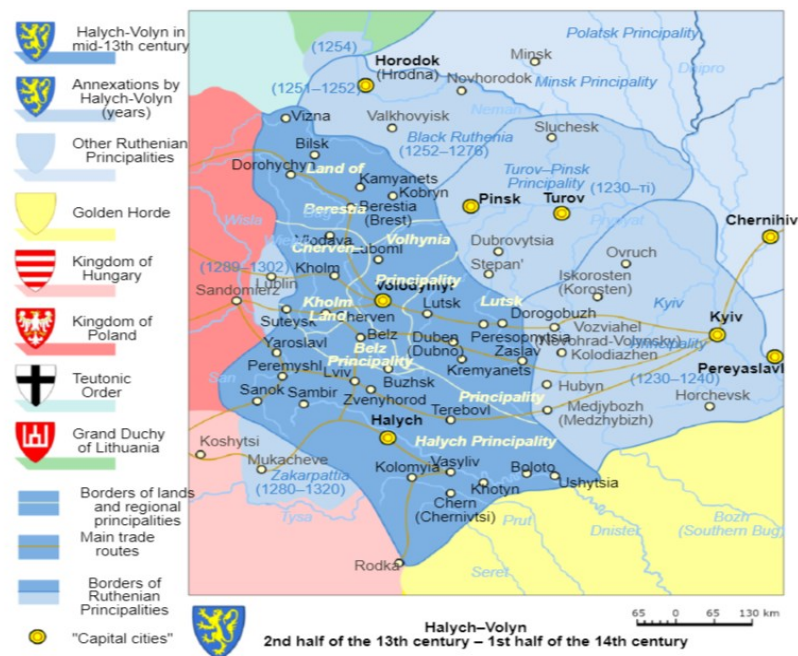


Figure 1

Map of Galician-Volhynian state 2nd half of 13th century – 1st half of the 14th century

The primary historical source of the study is the third part of the Hypatian Chronicle, also known as the “Galician-Volhynian Chronicle,” exclusively detailing events from 1205 to 1292. The Galician-Volhynian Chronicle serves as a mirror reflecting the political agenda of the Romanovids dynasty, which held sway over Galicia–Volhynia. Positioned in rivalry with other successor states of Kievan Rus, particularly Vladimir-Suzdal, Galicia–Volhynia aggressively staked its claim to the Kievan inheritance. According to the narrative presented in the Galician–Volhynian Chronicle, King Daniel of the Kingdom of Rus was the final sovereign of Kiev preceding the Mongolian invasion.

Consequently, the rulers of Galicia–Volhynia asserted themselves as the sole legitimate successors to the Kievan throne. Throughout the existence of the Galician-Volhynian state, its rulers consistently pressed their claims to *all the land of Rus*. This assertion was symbolically encapsulated in the seal of King Yuri I (1301–1308), featuring the Latin inscription *domini Georgi Regis Rusie* (VOITOVYCH, 2015). In the annals of Ukrainian historiography, Galician-Volhynian state (or the Kingdom of Galicia-Volhynia) assumed a pivotal role, serving as a unifying force for the western and southern branches of the East Slavs. In doing so, it played a crucial role in consolidating their collective identity, emerging as a new epicentre of political and economic life subsequent to the decline of Kyiv. The historical significance of Galicia-Volhynia extended beyond its

territorial boundaries, contributing to the shaping of the broader narrative of East Slavic history.

This scientific paper draws its foundation from the extensive research conducted by Ukrainian and European historians. HRUSHEVSKYI (2016) crafted a comprehensive narrative tracing the historical journey of the Ukrainian people, from its inception to the dissolution of statehood in the 14th century. The focus of this study is on a relatively enigmatic and less-explored period within this historical account – the ascendancy of the Galician-Volhynian state and the spread of Tatar (Mongol) rule across Ukrainian territories. Military skills of Rus’ian boyars and princes have been scrutinized by VOITOVYCH (2010) and FEDORUK (2014). However, the comparative analysis of the skills of medieval chivalry and the Rus’ian elite remains insufficiently studied, primarily due to the scarcity of historical sources (MERENIUK, 2022). Commonalities comprise the potential presence of an honor code, a focus on the significance of martial skills, an intrigue in military exercises, and a stress on the value of self-esteem and family dignity. Both European chivalry and boyars of Rus may shape their lives based on ideals of heroism and glory (KOTLYAR, 2009; KOTLYAR, 2010; KRYPIAKEVYCH, 1994). Simultaneously, a rigorous examination of primary sources and their nuanced interpretation has unveiled disparities in the rules of warfare between Rus’ian warriors and their European counterparts in the 13th century (PYLYPIV, 2023). The chivalric traditions within the Galician-Volhynian state bore the imprints of its engagements with neighboring regions such as Poland, Hungary, the Teutonic Order, and the Holy Roman Empire. This observation holds true not only for military practices but also for shared cultural elements, as underscored by scholarly works (CHUYKO, 2020a; CHUYKO, 2020b). These interactions occasionally facilitated cultural exchanges, manifesting in the assimilation of specific chivalric practices from diverse regions.

Marriage alliances between Mazovian Piasts and Rurikids were thoroughly investigated by JEŽ (2021), shedding light on the intricate interplay of familial connections in medieval Eastern Europe. Concurrently, SKOCZYŃSKI (2020) delved into the realm of military alliances between Polish and Rus’ian elites, offering valuable insights into the strategic collaborations that shaped regional dynamics. JUSUPOVIĆ’s (2021) meticulous examination of the progress in Polish historiography pertaining to medieval Rus, with a specific focus on the Galician-Volhynian Chronicle, enriches the understanding of the evolving scholarly discourse. Additionally, it is crucial to highlight PERFECKY’s (1973)

significant contribution to this field by translating the Galician-Volhynian Chronicle into English. This translation not only facilitates broader accessibility but also plays a pivotal role in advancing the study of Rus and medieval Ukraine, providing an essential resource for scholars and enthusiasts alike.

These collective scientific works collectively form an indispensable foundation for the ongoing exploration of the history of Rus and medieval Ukraine. They set the stage for future historical inquiries, with diplomacy and everyday practices emerging as central topics deserving further scholarly attention. The collaborative efforts of these researchers contribute to a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted aspects that shaped the historical landscape of medieval Eastern Europe.

3. Research design and methods

The study progressed through distinct stages: source material collection and problem identification, elaboration of scientific literature, investigation of existing concepts justifying social conflicts, detailed consideration of examples showcasing the incorporation of knightly culture elements, and the subsequent generalization through the formulation of conclusions and proposals for further research¹ (See Table 1).

Table 1. The process of studying the issue of customs of war in Rus in 13th century through the prism of legal regulation

First stage: Problem Identification and Source Material Collection	
Objective:	To identify key issues related to war customs in 13th-century Rus.
Methods:	- Conducted a meticulous examination of the Hypatian Chronicle, the primary source for this study.
	- Identified instances, events, and descriptions related to war customs in 13th-century Rus.
	- Evaluated the legal norms depicted in the source material.

¹ *Note:* the methodology follows a structured approach, progressing from problem identification to a comprehensive analysis of source material, scientific literature, existing concepts, and concluding with generalizations. The primary source, the Hypatian Chronicle, serves as the cornerstone of the study.

Second stages: Elaboration of Scientific Literature	
Objective:	To familiarize with existing scholarly works on medieval Rus, with a focus on war customs, legal frameworks, and societal conflicts.
Methods:	- Conducted a content analysis of literature on medieval Rus, specifically addressing war customs during the 13th century.
	- Analyzed scholarly articles, books, and historical research dedicated to legal aspects and societal conflicts of this period.
	- Synthesized relevant information to establish a foundation for the study.
Third stage: Generalization and Formulation of Conclusions	
Objective:	To draw overarching conclusions based on findings from source material, literature review, and investigations.
Methods:	- Generalized data collected from the Hypatian Chronicle and scientific literature.
	- Formulated conclusions regarding the role of legal norms and societal conflicts in shaping war customs.
	- Identified patterns and trends in the incorporation of elements of knightly culture.

4. Results and discussion

In medieval Rus, the concept of war was deeply entrenched in the political and social fabric, reflecting the challenges and complexities of the time. In Rus, as in other regions, the pursuit of territorial expansion through military means was a prevalent theme. Rulers engaged in *bellum territorialis* to acquire strategic lands, control trade routes, and assert dominance over neighboring principalities. At the same time, the vast territories of medieval Rus necessitated a focus on *custodia finium*, - the guardianship of borders. Given the numerous principalities and the potential for external threats, the defense of borders and the establishment of fortified positions played a vital role in maintaining the security of the realm. The success of these campaigns often determined the extent of a principality's influence. Therefore, the medieval Rus period witnessed a state of near-constant warfare, shaping the geopolitical landscape. *Status belli et ordinem*, the state of war and order,

underscores the intrinsic connection between conflict and the establishment of political and social order in medieval Rus. Wars determined the balance of power among the principalities and influenced the overall stability of the region.

Medieval Galicians and Volhynians were no strangers to war or armed conflict, a reality that, while not an everyday occurrence, held a certain familiarity for them. This aspect held a distinct place in the historical imagination of the scribes of that era, evident in their works. The Galician-Volhynian chronicle, particularly its Galician section, has long been recognized for exhibiting traits akin to a military novel or a diary recounting military campaigns. Throughout the entire Galician-Volhynian chronicle, one can observe the presence of images and stereotypes associated with armed conflict, with war sometimes taking on a primary role. Notably, within the text of the Galician-Volhynian chronicle, particularly in its Galician segment, a quasi-annotation or epigraph pertaining to the life of Prince Danylo Romanovych emerges, emphasizing the prince's activities as predominantly centered on armed conflicts. This recurrent theme strives to encapsulate the entirety of the prince's endeavors within the framework of military engagements (HOLYK, 2011). Simultaneously, when depicting "warfare," the authors or editors of the annals sought to craft a defined image of war and its beginning in the minds of their readers.

Declaration of war in Rus in 13th century

The declaration of war encompasses a critical facet in the onset of military campaigns, and historical sources offer insights into varied methods employed for such declarations. Notably, the tradition of announcing the intent to wage war found resonance in the practices of the Rus'ian military elite, as exemplified by Prince Svyatoslav's proclamation before initiating hostilities in 10th century. A characteristic phrase, *I'm coming for you*, encapsulated this declaration, demonstrating its cultural significance. In the 13th century, the conspicuous absence of a formalized declaration of war marked a notable distinction. Military engagements typically commenced abruptly without the explicit announcement prevalent in contemporary times. Nevertheless, the chronicle tradition played a pivotal role in encapsulating the martial exploits, particularly exemplified by the historical account of Prince Svyatoslav. Within Rus'ian sources, the initiation of warfare found expression through phrases denoting a directional intent, employing constructs such as *go to* or *march against*, frequently articulated in the imperative form: *Then Danylo came to Mstyslav in city Gorodok with his brother Vasylko, and they were accompanied by Gleb. They advised*

Prince Mstyslav to march against the king who was then on the Loxta, but Sudyslav held him back, for he had treachery in his heart... (PERFECKY, 1973, p. 32).

In the context of diplomatic formalities, war declarations were often channelled through ambassadors (CHUHUI, 2019). An illustrative instance unfolded during the tensions between the Olegovych princes and Izyaslav Mstyslavych in 1147. Prince Izyaslav, seeking to assert his claims, dispatched an ambassador to remind the Olegovychs of their previous oath to coexist peacefully. When met with ambiguity in their response, the ambassador revisited them, presenting charters bearing their sworn oaths. The ambassador, acting on behalf of Prince Izyaslav, eloquently emphasized the sacred commitment: prince kissed the cross and gave an oath until the end of his life, but his brothers and he began to devise treason. The dramatic act of throwing the charters at them symbolized the rejection of peace and the declaration of war (SPORA, 2023). Some similar episodes we can find in 13th century: *When summer came Mykhalo of Chernihiv and Izyaslav of Smolensk began sending threatening messages to Danylo stating that if he didn't release their brethren (the Boloxovian princes), they would wage war against him* (PERFECKY, 1973, p. 44).

Diplomatic envoys enjoyed a status of inviolability during this era, rendering them immune to punitive measures even when their concealed intentions were discerned. The sacrosanctity of ambassadors mandated a prohibition on their execution or capture, with very few exceptions (HRUSHEVSKYI, 2016). An anomaly transpired in the early 1220s when the Northern Black Sea coast faced imminent encroachment by Mongolian forces. Seeking assistance, the Polovtsians implored aid from Rus'ian princes. However, a stark deviation from diplomatic norms unfolded when Mongol envoys arrived in Kyiv; they were summarily executed at the behest of the Polovtsians. This breach of diplomatic etiquette proved calamitous for the Rurikids, culminating in a tragic aftermath subsequent to the defeat near the Kalka River in 1223, wherein the apprehended princes and boyars met a gruesome fate at the hands of the Mongols.

Captives

In the intricate realm of medieval warfare on Rus'ian lands, the acts of capture and the acquisition of booty held pivotal significance, delineating the course of subsequent relations between the embroiled factions. An illustrative episode unfolded during a border skirmish in 1225, where Princes Danylo and Vasylo, in alliance with the Poles (Rus'ian chroniclers used *Liakhs – Ляху*, as a synonym of Poles (NAGIRNYI, 2019)) engaged in a

campaign that resulted in the capture of a considerable number of prisoners (SKOCZYŃSKI, 2020). Prince Danylo, exhibiting his military prowess, laid waste to the Galician land and the surrounding city of Lyubachov. Meanwhile, he plundered the entire expanse of Belz and Cherven (cities in Galician land) down to the last parcel. Concurrently, Prince Vasylo amassed a substantial booty, including herds of horses and mares.

The aftermath of such campaigns often involved intricate negotiations for the division of spoils. In this particular instance, envoys were dispatched from both sides – the Lyakhs (Poles) and the princes, Lestko and Danylo. Representatives, including boyar Demyan and courtier Andriy from Prince Danylo, engaged in negotiations to apportion the seized wealth (HRUSHEVSKYI, 2016). The dynamics of these negotiations were not only shaped by the desire for equitable division but also fueled by envy, with the Poles expressing their discontent.

In 1229, during their expedition to the city of Kalish, Princes Danylo and Vasylo resorted to devastation, allowing their troops to plunder Polish territories. However, the conflict took an unexpected turn when the rebellious citizens of Kalisz reached an agreement with the Rus'ian princes. This led to the formulation of a distinctive accord, wherein both Rus'ian and Polish authorities pledged not to take free individuals captive (PERFECKY, 1973).

The cruelty inherent in medieval warfare found expression in conflicts beyond Polish territories, notably in the war with the Yatvyags in 1256. During this campaign, Danylo's army displayed a ruthless approach, burning houses and devastating villages. These instances underscore the multifaceted nature of medieval warfare on Rus'ian lands, where capture, booty, and negotiated agreements shaped the intricate fabric of conflict and diplomacy.

The perpetuation of what were deemed *harsh customs of war* in their treatment of civilian populations during medieval conflicts can be elucidated by the intricacies of military organization prevalent at the time. In this historical context, military campaigns were initially perceived as acts of retribution for perceived *injustices*, structured along traditional models of revenge designed to inflict maximum harm upon the alleged wrongdoer. The primary objective of such campaigns was to instill fear in the power of the campaign organizer, thus ensuring the safeguarding of their interests in the future.

Within this framework, the practice of killing prisoners persisted. Chronicled events from 1256 vividly depict the brutality of such wartime actions. An account reveals such

scenario: *Danylo and Lev bound some of the Jatvingians while the others they led out of the brushwood and killed them.* (PERFECKY, 1973, p. 71).

The same brutality extended to the treatment of the spoils of war. Chronicles document the destruction spoils of war: *[Then] they made camp in the village of Korkovici. And it was indeed amazing that such a multitude of soldiers and horses could be fed by the supplies of two households. But since they and their horses could not eat everything, they burned what was left.* (PERFECKY, 1973, p. 71). The morning after such devastation, the Yatvyags, seeking reconciliation, approached the perpetrators with hostages, pleading for peace and requesting the preservation of the captives' lives.

This harrowing narrative underscores the ruthlessness inherent in the military campaigns of the time, where retribution, fear, and the preservation of interests converged to form a brutal calculus. The chronicled events not only illuminate the grim realities of medieval warfare but also offer insights into the prevailing mindset that justified such *harsh customs of war* in pursuit of military objectives.

Moreover, as economic structures evolved, the fate of the majority of captives underwent a transformation into a state of servitude, marking a shift from free individuals to slaves. They bereft of their freedom, found utilized by the victorious forces. A notable avenue for the release of prisoners of war was through ransom. The defeated party could secure the freedom of their captives by offering a substantial contribution, often coupled with a regular tribute.

A revealing glimpse into these dynamics emerges from the chronicles detailing Prince Danylo's intentions to engage in warfare against the Yatvyags in 1256 (SKOCZYŃSKI, 2020). In a bid to avert hostilities, the Yatvyags adopted a diplomatic approach, sending ambassadors along with their children. They not only presented tribute but also pledged obedience, demonstrating a nuanced negotiation strategy to appease the potential aggressor. This strategic use of diplomacy and tribute payments highlights the multifaceted nature of medieval geopolitical interactions. In essence, the transformations in the economic fabric not only altered the destiny of captives but also intricately influenced the delicate interplay of diplomacy and tribute payments.

Instances are documented where Rus'ians, initially captured by adversaries, later experienced release. A noteworthy occurrence transpired in 1213 when the Polish prince Lestko the White sought to oust the boyar Vladyslav, who had assumed control of the

Galician land. Volhynian boyar detachments, displaying unwavering loyalty to the family of Roman Mstyslavovych, played a crucial role in supporting Lestko's endeavors.

However, in 1219, a pivotal chapter unfolded when Danylo Romanovych, having recently come of age and assumed control of a portion of the Volhynian land, engaged in successful combat against Poland. The chronicle provides a descriptive tableau of this episode: *Because of this Lestko was very angry with Danylo, and when spring came, the Poles came on a marauding expedition. They sacked the settlements on both sides of the Bug river. Danylo sent boyars Gavrylo Dusylowych, Semen Olujevych, and Vasylko Gavrylovych after them. They pursued the Poles, cutting them down, as far as the Suxaja Dorogva. Then they took prisoners and returned to Volodymyr with great honor* (PERFECKY, 1973, p. 25). Crucially, this military engagement served as a form of redemption, as Danylo Romanovych's forces recaptured the slaves previously taken by the Poles during raids on Volhynia.

Some Warfare Customs in Medieval Rus

However, in the medieval world, war approached a state of normalcy and acceptability. While many contemporary individuals view war as a tragic mistake, most medieval people believed that the first war took place in heaven (when God and His angels expelled Satan and his rebels). As Honoré Bonet wrote in the late 14th century in his "Tree of Battles" (summarizing many earlier discussions), it would be unnatural for the world to be at peace because war emanates from God, who awards victory, and it can only be evil in its application, not its fundamental nature. If the innocent suffer, perhaps divine will allows them to repent for their sins before death sends them to final judgment. Moreover, medieval warfare took on greater diversity in forms and allocations of personnel and resources. Two lords disputing ownership of a village and its revenues could, without hearing dissenting voices, characterize their conflict as war. The exercise of legitimate violence on any managed scale represented the realization of rights, a symbol and possession of a status high enough to warrant the right to wage war (KAEUPER, 2016a).

Moreover, through this feedback process, state boundaries solidified, and internal state institutions evolved. Warfare played a pivotal role in driving urbanization, as individuals sought sanctuary from conflict within the secure confines of cities. The resultant "warfare to welfare" effect encompassed economic agglomeration, the accumulation of human capital, and the establishment of local privileges, including self-governance and property rights protections. Additionally, warfare contributed to the spread

of disease, diminished the labor supply (resulting in increased wages), heightened the demand for urban-manufactured goods, and facilitated trade (GRZYMALA-BUSSE, 2020). These explanations anticipate the formation of larger consolidated states, driven by the benefits of trade across a broader area and the decline in per capita defense costs.

From these reasons peace as a phenomenon was undesirable. However, royal powers in Europe decided to limit local wars to assert their authority. For example, a fundamental tenet in medieval warfare pertained to the prohibition of military operations on Sundays, constituting a crucial rule. This regulation, elucidated with various specifications, generally asserted the inadmissibility of conflicts from Wednesday to Monday morning. Such temporal restrictions afforded counts, princes, and knight an opportunity to seek peaceful resolutions for disputes. A prominent advocate and disseminator of this practice were found in the persona of the French monarch, Louis IX, renowned as “the Saint”. His internal policies were strategically aligned to quell feudal fights and redirect chivalric energies towards participating in the Crusades. The envisioned outcome was a substantial reinforcement of contingents in the Holy Land, aiming to alter the unfavorable course of military endeavors for Christian soldiers.

Despite the French ruler’s active pursuit of ambitious goals, it marked a significant phase in opposition to private wars. It is imperative to note that the punishment of violators did not contravene this rule; royal authority retained the prerogative to employ military power against dissenters, thereby consolidating influence in society.

Parallel to these European dynamics, Rus witnessed analogous societal developments. Notably, internal conflicts prominently involved the Rurik family. In the nascent years of Rurik’s reign, princely authority held paramount significance. However, during the 12th to 13th centuries, familial discord among Rurik’s progeny resulted in persistent warfare. Consequently, the Kyiv prince, one of the Rurikids with dominion over Kyiv, emerged as the ultimate arbiter in these familial conflicts. The eldest, in theory, held this esteemed position, yet practical considerations often favored the capture of the capital by the strongest contenders.

In an attempt to address the disorder stemming from family wars, Prince Roman Mstyslavovych proposed a departure from tradition. In the early 13th century, after capturing Kyiv, he ceded it to his uncle, the eldest among the Volhynian Rurikids. Prince Roman envisioned a system of *good order*, suggesting the election of the Kyiv prince from among the six “senior” princes of Rus (CHUHUI, 2019; DOMANOVSKA;

DOMANOVSKYI, 2022). The elected prince would possess the authority to enforce peace and deploy military force against violators. For the other hand, skepticism about political program of Prince Roman Mstyslavovych arises regarding the credibility of this proposal, primarily documented by the 18th-century Russian archeographer Vasili Tatishchev. While linguistically consistent with the 13th-century language, doubts persist concerning the existence of the original annals that Tatishchev referenced.

Contrary to the adherence to Sunday as a day of respite from conflict in medieval Europe, Rus'ian warriors demonstrated a lack of reverence for this custom. Historical accounts, such as the events of 1152, detail Rus'ian princes campaigning against the Hungarian king on a Sunday. The Hungarian king, adhering to his customary practices, delayed engagement until Monday, following the rules of *God's Armistice*. A similar departure from chivalrous norms occurred in the Galician-Volhynian state when, in 1228, princes Danylo and Vasylo initiated a successful siege of city Czartoriysk on Easter Monday night (VOITOVYCH, 2010).

These instances underscore the selective observance of chivalric rules among the military elite of the Galician-Volhynian state, challenging the pervasive influence of the medieval warfare law known as *God's Armistice* on the descendants of Prince Roman Mstyslavovych.

A prospective avenue for future scholarly investigations entails an in-depth comparative analysis of diverse facets encompassing the daily lives and military endeavors of European chivalry *vis-à-vis* Rus'ian princes and boyars (MERENIUK; PARSHYN, 2023). The delineation of shared ideological underpinnings among military figures during the Middle Ages necessitates further scrutiny, not only for its intrinsic academic value but also to contribute to the ongoing evolution of contemporary Ukrainian historiography. Ukrainian historical narratives have been predominantly shaped by Russian (Soviet) historians. Consequently, an expansive exploration of European influences on Rus, stands out as a vital imperative for prospective research endeavors.

Famine and diseases as social ramifications of 13th – 14th centuries of Warfare in Galicia and Volhynia

The significance of prowess and honor in chivalric mentality cannot be overstated, shaping an identity and lifestyle focused on violence, particularly in the assertion, defense, and vindication of individual and familial honor. This monopoly on significant levels of

violence and honor influenced interactions between chivalric practitioners and their surroundings, often leading to substantial and harmful consequences. Conflicts among members of the chivalric elite, united by a notably sensitive sense of honor and propriety and a quick resort to transgressive force, were charged with tension and the looming threat of violence. Chivalric emotions, such as anger, wrath, an unquenchable thirst for vengeance, and fear of shame, further heightened this atmosphere of tension and violence. Similarly, the relationship between the chivalric and non-chivalric segments of medieval society was tainted by the former group's self-perception of their own superiority and a steadfast belief that those lower in the social hierarchy, especially peasants and merchants, lacked honor and were deserving only of contempt. This relationship inevitably led to violence, particularly when the individual and collective honor of the chivalric elite was challenged (KAEUPER, 2016b; SPOSATO; CLAUSSEN, 2019). The elite of Rus in the 13th and 14th centuries had closer ties to European realities (PARSHYN; MERENIUK, 2023). For this reason, in Rus a comparable situation unfolded, characterized by the prejudiced treatment of peasants by princes and boyars. This attitude not only manifested in legal constraints but also affected the broader appreciation of the value of human life and the repercussions of warfare.

An integral facet of historical inquiry concerns the investigation into the social consequences arising from the wars of the 13th and 14th centuries. This inquiry extends to examining the impact of conflict on famine, widespread destruction, and the propagation of diseases. While ruin and devastation can be construed as inherent phenomena of the era, the extant records of wars reveal only a singular reference to a conceivable *war for supplies* in the year 1279. The chronicler of the time observed: *Then there was a famine in all the lands - among the Rus'ians, the Poles, the Lithuanians, and the Jatvyngians* (PERFECKY, 1973, p. 91). Despite the lack of detailed provisions regarding famine in the Galician-Volhynian state, the chronicler did highlight the altruistic action of Volhynian prince Volodymyr Vasylykovich. Despite the adversities in his own lands, Prince Volodymyr dispatched ships laden with rye to the Yatvyags. The valuable cargo, however, fell prey to theft in the Mazovian territories. This episode potentially underscores the Christian piety of Prince Volodymyr, who, irrespective of the Yatvyaz ambassadors' promises to pay for provisions, initiated military operations upon discovering that Polish Prince Boleslav was responsible for the robbery (NAGIRNYI, 2022). Subsequent negotiations led to an understanding, with the Volhynian ruler returning all captured prisoners.

The likelihood of halting military operations due to epidemics or famine is challenging to ascertain. Historical cases from 12th-century Rus'ian history indicate instances where a military campaign concluded due to a plague among horses, rendering the cavalry-based army incapable of continuing. An illustrative example is the epidemic that struck the Galician-Volhynian state during 1285–1286, seemingly associated with the Horde invasion led by Mongol Khan Telebuga (†1291) (PLOKHY, 2006). Polish chronicler Jan Długosz attributed the catastrophic plague to Mongol subterfuge, poisoning Polish prisoners and introducing dangerous bacteria and viruses into water sources.

The absence of immunity, coupled with the prolonged war and related devastation, facilitated the rapid spread of the disease among the local population (from the other hand, merchants from the East contacted with Rus (PARSHYN; MERENIUK, 2022)). However, despite significant losses, Rus'ian princes resumed hostilities against neighbors in 1286, following the retreat of the Mongol army.

Examining the influence of famine and disease on the execution of military operations poses a formidable challenge, primarily due to the inherent complexity of this issue, rendering not all facets amenable to comprehensive study. The interconnectedness of health crises and military endeavors adds a layer of intricacy, and the scarcity of available sources presents a notable obstacle to a thorough understanding of the 14th-century history of the Galician-Volhynian state. Research encounters limitations due to the paucity of written sources, further compounded by the challenges of assessing consequences from the Black Death pandemic during this period. The 1340s and 1350s witnessed power struggles among Lithuanian, Polish, and Hungarian contenders for the possessions of the Romanids family, resulting in extensive destruction. However, the absence of references to the Black Death in various sources raises intriguing questions and necessitates further investigation to comprehend the dynamics of this crisis in Eastern Europe.

5. Conclusion

The declaration of war in Rus has evolved over time, with historical sources illuminating diverse methods employed for such announcements. Prince Svyatoslav's proclamation in the 10th century, encapsulated in the phrase *I'm coming for you*, exemplifies the cultural significance of war declarations within the Rus'ian military elite. In the 13th century, a distinct absence of formalized declarations marked military engagements,

contrasting contemporary practices. In diplomatic contexts, war declarations often transpired through ambassadors. Diplomatic envoys enjoyed inviolability, but an exception occurred in the 1220s when Mongol envoys were executed by the Polovtsians, leading to dire consequences after the defeat near the Kalka River in 1223.

Medieval warfare featured a fundamental prohibition of military operations on Sundays, fostering opportunities for peaceful dispute resolution. Louis IX of France notably championed this practice, redirecting chivalric energies towards the Crusades. In Rus the Kyiv prince emerged as the arbiter, but disorder persisted. Prince Roman Mstyslavovych proposed a reform in the 13th century, advocating the election of the Kyiv prince to enforce peace, but it was not implemented. Contrary to European customs, Rus warriors lacked reverence for Sunday as a day of respite. Similar deviations occurred in the Galician-Volhynian state, challenging the influence of medieval warfare laws on the descendants of Prince Roman Mstyslavovych.

In medieval Rus'ian warfare, the capture and acquisition of booty played a pivotal role, shaping relations between factions. The fate of captives transformed from free individuals to slaves, reflecting economic shifts. Instances of released captives, as seen in 1213 and 1219, highlighted the complex dynamics and strategic roles of military engagements in medieval Rus'ian history. Not only had the war become a great challenge for medieval society.

In a broader context, it is evident that plague and famine did not significantly impede conflicts among the Galician-Volhynian princes and their neighbors. An examination of available sources indicates that the roots of military clashes were diverse, unrelated to the motive of "finishing the weak." Conflicts during famine years stemmed from factors other than famine itself. Notably, even devastating pandemics failed to halt or temper the resolve of warring parties. The medieval elite persisted in pursuing their interests, only deviating from plans when the consequences of the prevailing pandemic reached truly critical proportions.

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