

MÁRTA FONT

The Kings of the House of Árpád and the Rurikid Princes



MÁRTA FONT ■

The Kings of the House of Árpád and the Rurikid Princes

Cooperation and conflict in medieval Hungary and Kievan Rus'

ARPADIANA VIII.

Series editors:

PÁL FODOR AND ATTILA ZSOLDOS



ELKH | Eötvös Loránd
Research Network

Research Centre for the Humanities
Budapest, 2021

MÁRTA FONT ■

The Kings of the House of Árpád and the Rurikid Princes

Cooperation and conflict in medieval Hungary and Kievan Rus'

ELKH | Eötvös Loránd
Research Network



Research Centre for the Humanities
Budapest, 2021

This book has been published with the support of The House of Árpád Programme.



Translated by Jason Vincz

© Research Centre for the Humanities, 2021

© Márta Font, 2021

ISBN 978-963-416-278-0, ISBN 978-963-416-322-0 (PDF)
ISSN 2677-0881

Cover illustration:

Discussion of King Géza II of Hungary with allies in Rus': Iziaslav Mstislavich, grand prince of Kiev, brother-in-law of the king, Mstislav Iziaslavich, son of the prince, and Vladimir Mstislavich, brother of the prince. In the background Vladimirko, prince of Galicia with his escaping troops. Radziwill Chronicle, end of the 15th century (St Petersburg, Library of the Academy of Sciences)

Back cover:

Troops of King Géza II and Prince Iziaslav Mstislavich prevails. Vladimirko sends delegation to sue for peace. Radziwill Chronicle, end of the 15th century (St Petersburg, Library of the Academy of Sciences)

Research Centre for the Humanities,
Budapest, Hungary
Prepress preparation: Institute of History, RCH
Research Assistance Team
Head: Éva Kovács
Cover design and page layout: Ildikó Balázs
Maps: Béla Nagy
Technical editor: Judit Lakatos
Printed in Hungary by Prime Rate Kft.

■ CONTENTS

FOREWORD TO THE ENGLISH-LANGUAGE EDITION	9
INTRODUCTION	13
I. SOURCES	19
1. Old East Slavic chronicles	21
1.1. The <i>Primary Chronicle (PVL)</i>	23
1.2. The <i>Kievan Chronicle (KC)</i>	43
1.3. The <i>Galician–Volhynian Chronicle (GVC)</i>	63
2. Latin-language sources	76
2.1. Hungarian narrative sources	76
2.2. Hungarian charters	88
2.3. Polish sources	96
II. MARRIAGES, ALLIANCES, MILITARY CAMPAIGNS	101
1. Early connections, scarce data	101
1.1. The Hungarian conquest of the Carpathian Basin and Sviatoslav’s coalition	104
1.2. Marriages and requests for assistance	106
1.2.1. King Saint Stephen (997–1038) and Prince Vladimir (978–1015)	107
1.2.2. King Andrew I (1046–1060) and Yaroslav the Wise (1019–1054)	110
1.2.3. The career of Duke Ladislaus and his diplomacy as King Ladislaus I (1077–1095)	115
1.2.4. King Coloman (1095–1116) and the marriages of the early 12th century	117
1.2.5. King Géza II (1141–1162) and Grand Prince Iziaslav Mstislavich (1146–1154)	119
1.2.6. Princesses and aristocrats	120

2. Kievan Rus' and Galicia in a tangled web	
of conflicting interests	124
2.1. King Coloman of Hungary (1095–1116) and the grand prince of Kiev	124
2.2. The formation of the Hungarian–Galician alliance: Kings Stephen II (1116–1131) and Béla II (1131–1141) of Hungary	128
2.3. King Géza II of Hungary (1141–1162) and the European political system	137
2.4. The effort of King Béla III (1172–1196) to conquer the Principality of Galicia	153
3. King Andrew II (1205–1235) of Hungary and his campaigns in Galicia	160
3.1. The modalities of the Hungarian–Polish alliance	164
3.1.1. Support for the claims of Daniel and Vasilko Romanovich	164
3.1.2. The Hungarians' deal with the Igoreviches	169
3.1.3. Young Daniel on the Galician throne	173
3.1.4. The Agreement of Szepes (Scepus) County and its consequences	177
3.1.4.1. Coloman's coronation as king of Galicia and his subsequent marriage	179
3.1.4.2. Coloman's reign as king of Galicia	185
3.2. Duke Andrew's reign in Galicia	191
3.3. An evaluation of King Andrew II's Galicia policies	198
4. A departure from his father's approach: King Béla IV (1235–1270) and Galicia	203
4.1. Béla IV and the rival Rurikid princes	203
4.2. The Mongol invasion of Hungary as a turning point	208
4.3. Rostislav Mikhailovich and his role in the Árpád family	214
4.4. Western interests and an eastern ally	220
4.5. Dissension	225
5. The elites who supported Hungarian rule in Galicia	230
5.1. Known participants in the military campaigns of the late 11th and 12th centuries	230
5.2. 13th-century supporters of Hungarian rule in Galicia	233
5.2.1. Hungarians with an interest in controlling Galicia	233
5.2.2. Galicians who sided with the Hungarians	240
5.3. These campaigns' influence on Hungarian society	244
III. CONCLUSIONS	249

SOURCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY	255
Abbreviations	255
Primary sources	262
Secondary literature	266
ILLUSTRATIONS	307
Maps	309
1. The Kingdom of Hungary and its surrounding territories in the 13th century	309
2. The Principality of Galicia–Volhynia and its vicinity in the 12th and 13th centuries	310
3. 12th-century Hungarian military campaigns in Eastern Slavic territories	311
4. The Galician campaigns of Andrew II (1205–1235) and Béla IV (1235–1270)	312
5. Halych, the administrative centre of the Principality of Galicia	313
6. A regional catastrophe: the Mongol invasion	314
Genealogical tables	315
Hungarian kings and their marriages to Rurikid princesses	315
Rurikid princes of Kiev, Galicia and Volhynia	321
INDEX	327
Index of names of persons, kindred and peoples	327
Index of geographic names	346
LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES	353

■ FOREWORD TO THE ENGLISH-LANGUAGE EDITION

The present volume is based on a monograph I published in Hungarian in 2005.¹ I have since augmented that text with the results of the research I have conducted over the course of the intervening decade and a half, and thus this book serves as a complete reevaluation of the connections between the Hungarian kings of the House of Árpád and the Rurikid princes of Kievan Rus'. Given the limits of the surviving documentation, the bulk of the information presented here is derived from narrative sources written in Old East Slavic. There are fewer relevant Latin-language source materials, though they are more diverse in content, given that the Chancellery of the 13th-century Kingdom of Hungary produced a significant quantity of charters.

Since the publication of my original monograph in 2005, I have continued to study the history of Kievan Rus' and its princes' connections to Hungary. Crucially, I was a member of the research team that produced the Hungarian edition of the *Primary Chronicle* or *Tale of Bygone Years* (generally known as the *PVL*, an abbreviation of its Slavic title, *Pověst' vremennykh lét*); I participated in the preparation of the commentary on this text and wrote two studies which were included in the published volume.² For the purposes of another text collection, I edited an abbreviated compilation of the portions of the *Kievan Chronicle* (*KC*) which are relevant to Hungarian history, and prepared additional explanatory notes on these passages;³ it was within the framework of another sponsored research project that I began working on the *KC*.⁴ Furthermore, I co-authored a monograph on Duke Coloman of the House of Árpád, who was crowned king of Galicia in the early 13th century;⁵ I also wrote a study of Prince Rostislav Mikhailovich of Chernigov (born circa 1223/1225–1262) and his role as a Hungarian dignitary,⁶ as well as an analysis of the

1 Font, *Árpád-házi királyok*.

2 *RIE*; Font, "A Poveszty vremennih let, mint történeti", pp. 249–278; Font, "A Kijevi Rusz és a Magyar Királyság", pp. 303–316.

3 *MKE*; *KE*

4 PTE Történelem Kiválósági Centrum 480144. For the results of this project, see *KE*; Font, "Die Struktur der Kiever Chronik", pp. 49–60.

5 Font and Barabás, *Coloman*. The Hungarian version of this monograph was published two years earlier.

6 Font, "Prince Rostislav in the Court of Béla IV", pp. 486–504.

Battle of the Kalka River in 1223.⁷ I cannot deny that my investigations of these various thematics have changed my perspective on the history of the relationships between Hungary and Kievan Rus', and my understanding of certain peripheral questions has certainly evolved as well, all of which is reflected in the present monograph. Even so, the structure of this study has not changed, nor have the original conclusions which I continue to regard as valid.

I would like to begin here by calling the reader's attention to the manner in which I have made use of certain important concepts which regularly arise in discussions of medieval themes, given that some of these terms have been employed in an inconsistent, ambiguous, or confusing fashion. The first such concept is the *state*, which is by now generally regarded as an inappropriate descriptor for the political arrangements of the early medieval period,⁸ insofar as the fundamentally personal nature of dynastic rule and the inchoate or evolving system of institutions associated with it are inconsistent with modern notions of the state.⁹ The structure which controlled the institutional system in question is sometimes distinguished from concept of the state by substituting the notion of *statehood*, or by appending a descriptive phrase to alert readers to the divergent content of this usage. Nevertheless, one also encounters the use of the word *state* without any caveats or reservations. Furthermore, in recent years, scholars seem to have returned to discussing the system of relationships known as *feudalism* in a manner consistent with the criteria of its original conceptual framework, in which heritable property rights (a fief or *feudum*) were tightly connected to the feudal landholding structure; we cannot speak of *feudalism* in the absence of these two fundamental institutions. From this it follows that one should avoid using the terms *feudalism* and the *feudal state* in their once-common sense. My colleagues and I have elsewhere demonstrated that applications of the term *feudalism* to the conditions of early medieval Kievan Rus' are wholly inappropriate. Likewise, the process by which the Rus' disintegrated cannot be described as *feudal*, either; the origins and causes of this disintegration must be sought elsewhere.¹⁰ Moreover, *Kievan Rus'* and its constituent principalities were the historical antecedents not only of Russia, but of Ukraine and Belarus as well, for which reason I have followed the sources of the period in referring to this political entity and its components as the Rus', Galicia, Chernigov, etc.

7 Font, "A Kalka menti csata", pp. 45–64.

8 See, for example, "several local governments" in Ostrowski, "System of Succession in Rus'", p. 30.

9 For more on problems with the concept of the medieval state, see Sedlar, *East Central Europe*, p. 14; McKitterick, *The Early Middle Ages*, p. 56; Canning, *A középkori politikai gondolkodás*, pp. 11–12; Lübke, *Fremde in östlichen Europa*, pp. 178–198; Ostrowski, "System of Succession", pp. 29–30; Font, *Im Spannungsfeld*, pp. 18–20; *Dinasztia, hatalom, egyház*, pp. 15–18; and most recently, Sashalmi, *A hatalom és az állam*.

10 Font, *Oroszország, Ukrajna, Rusz*, pp. 52–70; *Dinasztia, hatalom, egyház*, pp. 67–71.

It is not by chance that I have also avoided the expression *foreign policy*, insofar as this is another notion characteristic of modern states. In the conditions of the Middle Ages, particularly the early Middle Ages, steps which might today seem like foreign-policy initiatives were another means of advancing the interests and increasing the power of the ruling dynasty, just as much as those which we would now likely categorize as domestic policies. In my opinion, the steps individual rulers took were determined exclusively by dynastic concerns – that is, consolidating the position of the clan which had seized power, increasing its wealth, expanding the territory under its control, and transferring all these advantages to its descendants. Marriage alliances, offers of military assistance, and territorial expansion – that is, all the measures which might be characterized as “foreign-policy” initiatives – were tools with which to consolidate the power (and ensure the continued survival) of the ruling dynasty. Thus it is not my intention to present the reader with a system of relationships linking two countries, but rather two dynasties. The Árpád and Rurikid dynasties differed in a number of ways (including their origins, organization, and methods of exercising authority), and while the geographical proximity of their territories created a neighborly relationship that lasted for centuries, the content and objectives of this association shifted over time.

By the Middle Ages, monks in Kievan Rus’ and its principalities were already producing documents in an East Slavic variant of Old Church Slavonic, a language closely related to the Old East Slavic which was spoken in these territories. Even so, it would appear that linguistic differences were not an obstacle to maintaining relationships with the people of the neighboring Kingdom of Hungary, where official communication was composed in Latin and the language of everyday speech was Hungarian (along with the tongues spoken by other peoples who had settled in the Carpathian basin).

For the publication of this English-language edition, I owe a debt of gratitude to the *Árpád Dynasty* program, and in particular to Attila Zsoldos, who encouraged me to rewrite my 2005 volume on this subject, and to Pál Fodor, the director of the Research Centre for the Humanities at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. My career as a researcher, which now spans several decades, began with the support of my former professors Gyula Kristó, Imre H. Tóth, and István Ferincz. I am also especially grateful to those who offered me help and advice during my time abroad as a research fellow, including: Nikolay F. Kotliar in Kiev; Yaroslav N. Shchapov, Aleksandr Nazarenko, and Vladimir Shusharin in Moscow; Yaroslav Isaievich in Lviv; Jerzy Wyrozumski in Kraków; Harald Zimmermann in Tübingen; and Christian Lübke in Leipzig. Other indispensable sources of assistance include the two everyday work environments which have always provided me with energy and momentum: first at the University of Szeged’s Institute of Slavic Studies (under the direction of István Ferincz, and later, of my former student Mihály Kocsis), and then for almost four decades in the Department of Medieval and Early Modern History

at the University of Pécs, which department is now staffed exclusively by my former students (professors Endre Sashalmi, Dániel Bagi, and Tamás Fedeles; associate professor Gergely Kiss; adjunct professors Gábor Barabás and Ferenc Végh; and research fellow Péter Báling).

Last but not least, I would like to thank my family for their love and patience, which are the fundamental preconditions of creative work.

Márta Font

Pécs, summer of 2020

■ INTRODUCTION

The period in which the medieval Kingdom of Hungary was ruled by the kings of the House of Árpád is unequivocally definite – from the coronation of King Saint Stephen¹ in the year 1000 to the dying out of the dynasty's male line in 1301. However, if we take into account the antecedents of the Kingdom of Hungary, then the Árpáds' reign extends back to the late 9th century, when the Hungarians conquered the Carpathian basin. The sparse data in the surviving sources justify beginning with this earlier date. The site in which the events of this period took place was a well-defined geographical unit; the basin encircled by the Carpathian mountains provided the Árpáds with a central location from which to rule the region. Even so, investigations of the territory under the control of the Árpád dynasty sometimes require us to abandon this assumption, given that borders as they are now understood did not exist in the Middle Ages; the political boundaries of that era were comparatively fluid and shifted regularly.²

There is significantly more uncertainty with regard to the extent of the territories ruled by the Rurikid princes, insofar as most of Eastern Europe is not subdivided by natural geographical frontiers like the Carpathian mountains.³ The territorial evolution of Kievan Rus', which came into being at roughly the same time as the Kingdom of Hungary, was slower than – and substantially different from – the process by which Hungary's territory was organized. In Kievan Rus', the conversion to Christianity (988/989) was not followed by the coronation of a king, nor does the

1 Translator's note: In cases in which Hungarian kings and other dignitaries are already known to Western scholars by English variants of their names, Dr. Font and I have decided to use these established forms (thus Szent István Király is discussed here as King Saint Stephen, László appears as Ladislaus, Kálmán as Coloman, András as Andrew, and so forth). However, where lesser-known figures are mentioned in the sources, we have retained their traditional Hungarian spellings (Dénes rather than Denis, Tamás instead of Thomas, Lőrinc for Lawrence, and so on). Furthermore, given that the territories of the medieval Kingdom of Hungary and Kievan Rus' covered roughly a dozen modern nation-states, we have used parenthetical notes to alert the reader to the present-day place-names of the locations under discussion here.

2 See Wiczynski, *The Russian Frontier*; Font, "The Borders and Dynasties", pp. 25–30; Font, "A Kárpátokon innen és túl", pp. 13–32.

3 Niederhauser, *Kelet-Európa története*, pp. 11–12.

historical record bear any trace of such aspirations. At the same time, the conversion to Christianity was a turning point in the political organization of the region; from an economic perspective, the establishment of control over the route from Novgorod to Kiev was similarly significant.⁴ The princes of Kiev initially oversaw only the waterways between the Baltic region and the Black Sea; for roughly a century and a half, their sphere of influence extended from the eastern slopes of the Carpathians to Volga Bulgaria. The Rurikid dynasty's relatively slow process of territorial growth resulted in the establishment of several smaller, more loosely organized political entities which were linked by the dynasty's traditions, legal customs, and ecclesiastical superstructure.

It is my intention here to describe the relationships between the dynasties that ruled these two neighboring entities, the Kingdom of Hungary and Kievan Rus', as well as their connections to the Principality of Galicia (sometimes referred to by the name of its administrative centre, Halych, or, after 1199, as Galicia–Volhynia) which took shape along medieval Hungary's northeastern border when Kievan Rus' disintegrated. In reality, this emphasis is merely the central focus, given that the interests of these dynasties will not be fully comprehensible unless they are examined against the backdrop of their wider context. A genuine understanding will necessitate an exploration of the circumstances of their broader geographical environment, including those of Lesser Poland and Mazovia, the Eurasian Steppe, Byzantium, and occasionally the Holy Roman Empire and the Holy See.

In investigating the history of these relationships, I will begin with the period in which these political entities converted to Christianity, rather than era in which these dynasties began to develop. One reason for doing so is that these conversions to Christianity were historical turning points for these societies; furthermore, there is a great deal of uncertainty about the figures who lent their names to these dynasties, Rurik in particular. My analysis of Hungarian history will begin with King Saint Stephen and his father Grand Prince Géza, who initiated the organized effort to convert their people to Christianity in the late 10th century; in the case of Kievan Rus', I will begin with the activities of Grand Prince Vladimir Sviatoslavich, who converted to Christianity in 988/989. The origins of the Árpád dynasty are relatively uncontroversial, given that we have an almost contemporaneous record of them in the form of the writings of the Byzantine Emperor Constantine (Porphyrogenitus) VII.⁵ Rurik's name, on the other hand, first appears as part of a local tradition recorded centuries later,⁶ and thus there is some doubt whether he was the actual founder of the dynasty or merely a legendary figure. Grand Prince Vladimir Sviatoslavich (978–1015) is generally credited with converting Kievan Rus' to Christianity and supporting the work of Christian missionaries there, though his

4 For a detailed justification of this contention, see Font, *Oroszország, Ukrajna, Rusz*, pp. 26–31.

5 *DAI*, p. 179, chapter 40.

6 *PVL*, vol. I, p. 18.

sparsely documented predecessors in this effort include his grandmother Princess Olga, who served as regent in the mid-10th century.⁷ In Hungary, the spread of Christianity is generally linked to the reign of Grand Prince Géza (c. 970–997), though the territory he ruled did not include the entire Carpathian basin, and conversions began elsewhere independently of his influence. For instance, conversions in regions under the authority of two Hungarian leaders – the chieftain Ajtony, who ruled along the Maros River, and Gyula, who controlled territory in what is now Transylvania – were conducted according to Byzantine-Greek rites. On the Hungarian side, I will begin my discussion of the relationship between these two dynasties with the reign of Hungary’s first king, Stephen (997–1038),⁸ as suggested by the reference to the “kings of the House of Árpád” in this volume’s subtitle. I will also refer to the contents of the narrative sources in discussing a few earlier events.

The endpoint of the Hungarian portion of this analysis was an obvious choice: 1301, when the last direct male descendant of the House of Árpád died. The Rurikid dynasty, on the other hand, lived on through the princes and grand dukes of Moscow into the tsarist period, dying out only with the passing of Ivan the Terrible’s son Feodor I in 1598. The Romanov dynasty took over in the early 17th century, and the Rurikid dynasty’s disintegration into various branches accelerated the process of territorial fragmentation in the former Kievan Rus’. And though it may not be obvious in every case, there continued to be connections between certain branches of the dynasty and particular principalities. In Hungary’s neighbors, Galicia and Volhynia, these connections were fairly obvious.⁹ Early medieval Kievan Rus’ slowly disintegrated into separate principalities over the course of the 12th century; this process was complete by the turn of the 13th,¹⁰ and its irreversibility became obvious on 6 December 1240, when Mongol armies occupied Kiev and brought it under their control. In the wake of this campaign, the Principality of Galicia-Volhynia would for a short time become – formally, at least – a kingdom typical of the western half of Europe. After the 1264 death of Prince Daniel, on whom the pope had bestowed a royal crown, Galicia and Volhynia became a battleground where the Mongols, Lithuanians, and Poles fought for control.¹¹ Increasingly susceptible to Mongol influence, the prince of Galicia joined forces with the Mongol troops who laid siege to Kraków in 1285. By the early 14th century, Polish influence was on the

7 Nazarenko, *Drevniaia Rus’*, pp. 219–310; Filippov, “Khristianskaia sviatost”, pp. 73–94.

8 For more on the organization of the Hungarian state, see Györffy, *István király*, pp. 67–292; Kristó, *Magyarország története*, pp. 82–114; Koszta, “A kereszténység kezdetei”, pp. 153–207; For a comparison of the two dynasties, see Font, “Mittelalterliche Herrschaftsbildung”, pp. 1–18; Font, “Ungarn und Kiewer Rus’”, pp. 209–218.

9 Rapov, *Kniazheskie vladenia*, pp. 70–79, 175–176, 188–190; Dąbrowski, *Rodowód Romanowiczów*; Dąbrowski, *Genealogia Mstisławowiczów*.

10 There are several perspectives on this process, for my own views, see Font, *Oroszország, Ukrajna, Rus*, pp. 52–70.

11 Kappeler, *Kleine Geschichte*, pp. 41–53; *Istoria Ukrainy*, pp. 57–76; Font and Varga, *Ukrajna története*, pp. 79–104.

rise, and the Polish king Casimir (III) the Great (1333–1370) ultimately succeeded in annexing Galicia in 1340.¹² Prince Daniel also played a role in the policies of the Hungarian kings Andrew II (1205–1235) and Béla IV (1235–1270). Starting in the 1270s, however, as the power of local oligarchs intensified under the last of the kings of the House of Árpád, it was no longer the interests of the dynasty, but rather those of local oligarchs that determined the particulars of relationships with foreign powers. The relative silence of the surviving sources over the course of the final decades of the 13th century suggests that these relationships were broken off. Thus, the chronology of my historical investigation of these connections will cover the three hundred years from 970 to 1270, though I will occasionally augment the information in the most relevant sources with data from before or after that period.

Given the aforementioned problems with the geography, chronology, and periodization of the surviving information concerning the Árpáds and Rurikids, it is worth asking whether a history of these relationships should be constructed on the basis of dynastic factors. If we construe the territorial changes to these medieval political entities (i.e., the changing borders of the Kingdom of Hungary and the rather fluid boundaries of Kievan Rus' and its constituent principalities) as the organizing principle of their relationship, we encounter another set of problems. In the cases of the Kingdom of Hungary, Kievan Rus', and the principalities which came into being after the latter collapsed, we could define the relevant territory as "the area under the dynasty's control",¹³ which would encompass all the land within the changing borders of the region ruled by the members of the dynasty. In the Middle Ages, however, the preservation of the dynasty and the efforts to maintain its power were more important concerns than territorial continuity. "The interests of the state" were the interests of the ruling dynasty itself, while "foreign policy"¹⁴ was essentially a means of achieving a given dynasty's objectives. An illustrative example of this phenomenon is the fact that dynastic marriages and other inter-dynastic connections regularly served to ratify alliances and guarantee peace agreements. Certain joint military campaigns led by dynasties which had established alliances could be regarded as efforts to advance their mutual interests; this would also include instances in which a dynasty, in hopes of advancing its own interests, responded to a "request for assistance" by sending its army, or some portion of its troops, to an ally's aid. It was also customary for a dynasty (or one of its members) to avenge an insult or injury with a "punitive expedition", which usually involved destroying, looting, or taking prisoners from one or another of the territories along its border; these campaigns generally ended with a peace agreement which restored the *status quo*

12 Wyrozumski, *Kazimierz Wielki*, pp. 71–101; Szczur, *Historia Polski*, pp. 375–376.

13 Font, *Im Spannungsfeld*, pp. 173–180.

14 Since the 19th century, certain historians have projected the concepts of "state interests" and "foreign policy" back onto the medieval era; for more on this sort of anachronism, see Font, "Slavic Studies and Political Thought", pp. 117–129.

ante. These were not expansionist invasions, insofar as dynasties did not use them to attempt to expand the territory under their control. It was these frontier regions where the dominant dynasty's efforts to advance its interests tended to slacken for one reason or another. Military factors sometimes played a role. In the late 12th century, for instance, domestic power struggles within the Byzantine Empire allowed the territories of the Balkans to establish their independence; however, the new dynasties which arose there did not have the military might to stand up to the Kingdom of Hungary,¹⁵ and thus the result was Hungarian expansion into the Balkans. Another such factor was the "dynastic crisis" which ensued when the male line died out in one dynasty and another attempted to supplant it. A new dynasty could assert its legitimacy by claiming consanguinity or other connections with the old ruling family, or by invading, or by using a combination of genealogical and military means; King Saint Ladislaus I of Hungary (1077–1095), for example, employed both methods in his late 11th-century conquest of Croatia.¹⁶ It is also clear that dynastic ties were prioritized over any other type of connection, though in practical terms, every other kind of bilateral relationship (including commerce, for example) served the interests of the dynasty as well. The territory ruled by the dynasty (its "state") also served as the precondition and framework for cultural connections (e.g., the appearance, reception, and activity of ecclesiastical figures such as the Eastern Orthodox Saint Moses the Hungarian, a monk who lived in the Cave Monastery of Kiev in the early 11th century). This mindset is also conveyed by the chronicles composed at the royal and princely courts of the region, which served primarily as records of the important events and changes which took place in dynastic circles. Put another way, these chroniclers' outlooks reflected a medieval worldview according to which the *ordo mundi* was dictated by the ruling dynasty. (Of course, I would not include here the family chronicles which would appear later, nor the *gesta* which recorded the historical "deeds" of various *nationes*.)

Given my desire to avoid overburdening this discussion with source criticism (and the fact that the genre-based groupings into which I have differentiated these sources do not necessarily correspond to my classifications of the events they describe), I will begin by offering remarks on the relevant sources in a separate section before moving on to my analysis of the relationships between the Árpáds and the Rurikids.

¹⁵ Szeberényi, "A Balkán", pp. 286–330.

¹⁶ Šokčević, *Hrvatska*, pp. 60–67; Font, "A Kijevi Rusz és nyugati szomszédai", pp. 159–176.

■ I. SOURCES

Our understanding of the development of the bilateral relationship between the Árpáds and Rurikids depends above all on the written documentation produced by the two dynasties' chroniclers and the clergy of the Hungarian royal chancellery. The bulk of this information comes from narrative sources which were composed in the late 11th or early 12th century at the earliest; the recording of this data was thus absolutely not contemporaneous with the establishment of the two dynasties' earliest connections. In the case of the narrative sources of the 12th and 13th centuries, the situation is even more complicated, given that original observations and subsequent commentary appear together in the same manuscripts;¹ certain portions of these texts refer to the period under discussion here, but were compiled later. The case is different with the charters produced by the chancellery of 13th-century Hungary; the sections of these charters known as *narrationes* are particularly worthy of attention, as they contain narrative descriptions of historical events. However, in Kievan Rus' (and its constituent principalities with connections to Hungary), we lack sources of this sort for the period from the 11th to the 13th century.² The two sets of sources also differ linguistically: in Roman Catholic Hungary, documents were composed in Latin, whereas in Eastern Orthodox Kievan Rus', events were recorded in Old East Slavic. The latter comprised several dialects, as a local variant of Old Church Slavonic evolved in Kievan Rus' while Old East Slavic developed its own set of regional linguistic peculiarities (the so-called Eastern redaction).³ Another idiosyncrasy of the written documentation of Kievan Rus'⁴ was its incorporation of so-called translated literature, primarily compilations of Greek-language Byzantine

1 For a recent discussion of these issues, see the studies in the 2019 volume *Hungary and Hungarians*.

2 Francsuk's hypothesis about the Rurikid princes' charters cannot be confirmed; see Franchuk, *Kievskaja letopis'*, pp. 180–181.

3 Zalizniak, *Drevniruskyj dialekt*; Agyagási, *Bevezetés*, pp. 6–10. For more on the use of the relatively recent term "Old East Slavic", see Franklin, *Writing, Society and Culture*, p. 86: He asked "whether the Rus version of Church Slavonic and the written derivatives of East Slavonic should be regarded as separate languages", and came to the conclusion that, "the Slavonic tongue is one".

4 Franklin, *Writing, Society and Culture*, pp. 20–21.

sources rendered into Old East Slavic.⁵ This type of source is unknown in the Roman Catholic territories where Latin was in general use.

In addition to their own written documentation, information about the connections between the Árpáds and the Rurikid princes is also hidden in the narrative sources of neighboring territories. The most important of these are Polish sources, insofar as their chronicles may have borrowed elements from Hungarian and Latin-language chronicle literature, and likely incorporated oral traditions. The fact that Poles spoke a Slavic language meant there were few linguistic obstacles preventing them from communicating with their Eastern Slavic neighbors. Byzantine sources are the distinctive element on this list, given that the information in them was not transmitted directly to the territories of Kievan Rus', but arrived in the form of so-called translated literature (Byzantine Greek texts rendered into Old East Slavic),⁶ while no such method of information-acquisition existed in Hungary.⁷ Even so, Byzantine chronicles were very important sources both for the Rus' and the Kingdom of Hungary; I will make use of the research results of Byzantinologists and Latin philologists in citing the relevant sources and associated source criticism.⁸

Old East Slavic written sources feature the dates of the Byzantine calendar, which had two important consequences. First, the starting date of Byzantine history was not the birth of Christ, but rather the (Biblical) creation of the world, which was reckoned to have taken place 5508 years before the beginning of the so-called Common Era. This system was in place all the way up to the reforms of Peter the Great. Its second distinctive characteristic was that the Byzantines marked the new year on 1 September, while the Eastern Slavs did so in March, which required the chroniclers of the Rus' to reconcile two sets of dates. They devised two solutions for doing so, either reckoning dates starting with the prior March (which scholars call "ultra-March" dates) or with the subsequent March (known as "March" dates). No standard rule was ever adopted, and chroniclers were inconsistent in their use of these methods, thus none of the dates in these narrative texts should be used as the basis for a definitive chronology. Moreover, in addition to dates which are 5508 (or 5509) years greater than those of the customary Julian calendar, and the occasional "movement" of the new year from the previous March to the subsequent March, later chroniclers were also rather lax in their handling of these texts, though the latter problem becomes conspicuous only when we can check their data against sources produced elsewhere.

5 Franklin, "O 'filosofakh'", pp. 74–86; *SlovKnizh*, pp. 68–83.

6 Birnbaum, "The Balkan Slavic Component", pp. 3–30; Vodolazkin, *Vsemirnaia istoria*; Rothe, *Was ist "altrussische Literatur"?*

7 Font, "Between East and West", pp. 405–418.

8 *ÁMBF*; Bibikov, "Vizantijskie istochniki", pp. 87–91; *Byzantinorossica*, vols. I–III; *ÁKÍF*; *Írott források 1050–1116*; *Írott források 1116–1205*; *Zarubezhnye istochniki*.

The use of the March and ultra-March systems of reckoning the beginning of the year makes it possible to illuminate the provenance of certain texts (redactions and *svods*). Even so, it also creates problems for dating the information in a given codex, insofar as some chroniclers modified earlier methods of reckoning dates when they were compiling their codices, while others did not. Researchers began to investigate this issue in the early 20th century,⁹ and Berezhkov's analysis of the two methods of reckoning dates became the standard work in the field.¹⁰ The most reliable data for determining chronologies are those dates in which a chronicler recorded the year, month, and day while also indicating the day of the week or the associated feast day. Kuzmin also examined the use of the 15-year cycle known as the *indictio*, while Sergei Tsyb has dedicated a monograph to the dating conventions employed in the *PVL*.¹¹

1. Old East Slavic chronicles

The richest sources of information for the purposes of the present investigation are the Old East Slavic chronicles.¹² This is due at least in part to the fact that medieval forms of historiography remained popular into the 17th century, leading to the production of a new generation of codices which duplicated earlier versions of these texts and augmented them with new variants. The *terminus post quem* for the inception of Old East Slavic historiography is 988/989, the traditional date of the conversion of Kievan Rus' to Christianity. The actual process of becoming a Christian land, however, took some time. Using the establishment of dioceses as a metric makes clear that Christianity spread fairly slowly there, as the bulk of these bishoprics came into being only in the 12th century.¹³ The slow pace of conversion is also reflected in the historiographical traditions which took root in the monasteries in the vicinity of Kiev, though the rhythm of this process varied by region.

The largest volume of data on the relationships between Hungary and (the constituent principalities of) Kievan Rus' in the period between the 10th and 13th centuries comes from the family of chronicles known as the *Hypatian Codex* (*HypCod*). The first section of this codex is the *PVL*, which narrates the history of the Rus' from its origins to the year 1117. Its second part is the *Kievan Chronicle* (*KC*), which includes events from years 1118 to 1198/1199, followed by the *Galician–*

9 Stepanov, "Kalendarno-istoricheskie", pp. 1–71.

10 Berezhkov, *Khronologia*.

11 Kuzmin, "Indikty", pp. 305–313; Kuzmin, *Nachalnye etapy*; Tsyb, *Vremiaischislenie*, pp. 271–273, 290–293.

12 Given the enormous volume of secondary literature on this subject, I must limit myself to mentioning the following surveys: Shakhmatov, *Razyskaniia*; Shakhmatov, *Pověst'*; Priselkov, *Istoria russkogo*; Likhachev, *Russkie letopisi*; Nasonov, *Istoria russkogo*; Cherepnin, "K voprosu", pp. 228–253; Lurie, "Moskovsky svod", 94–113; Kuzmin, *Nachalnye etapy*; Kloss, *Nikonovskiy svod*; Font, "Die Chronistik der Ostslawen", pp. 807–808.

13 Shchapov, *Gosudarstvo*, pp. 23–75.

Volhynian Chronicle (GVC), which recounts the affairs of southwestern Rus' from 1205 to 1289. The *HypCod* family of texts includes the following codices: the *HypCod* of the early 15th century; the Khlebnikov (Khleb) version from the early 16th century; Podogin's copy (Pog) and Ermolaev's redaction (Erm) from the late 16th century; and the later, 18th-century Latin version known as the Kraków codex (Crac).

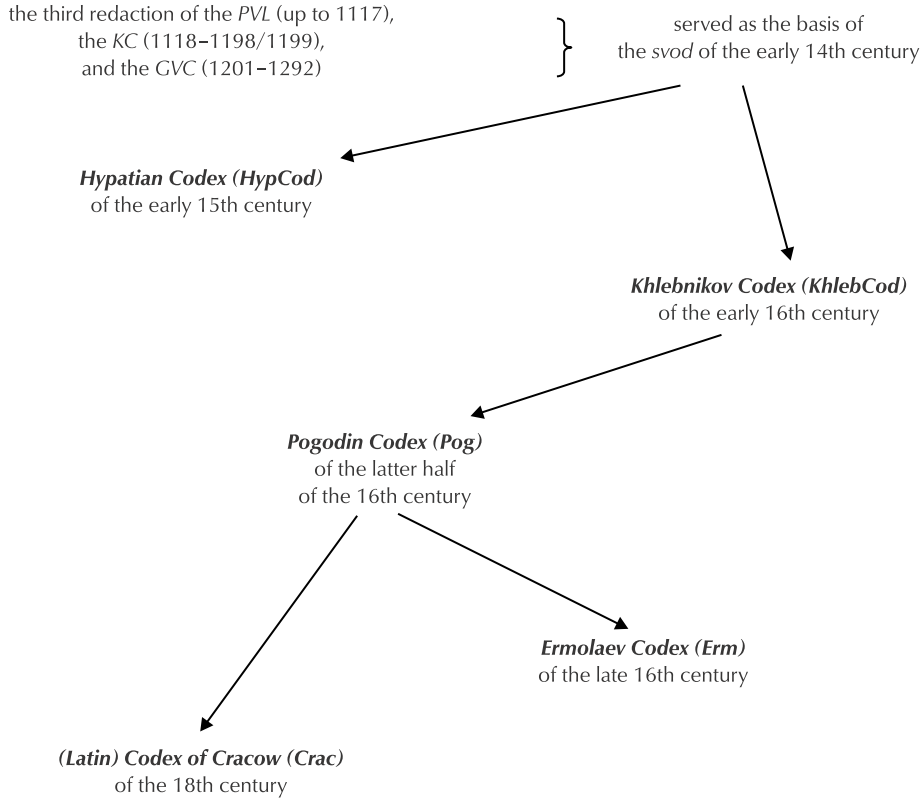


Figure 1. The family of codices connected with the *Hypatian Codex*
 (Source: Likhachev, *Russkie letopisi*, pp. 431–433)

The two earliest codices can be traced back to a common protograph which was likely compiled in the early 14th century. The 13th-century portions of these codices vary significantly; only the text of the *HypCod* itself is subdivided by year, and its dates are marred by innumerable inaccuracies. This chronological framework was probably produced considerably later, given that the year immediately following the *KC* is recorded as 1201, but actually describes events from 1205; its closing date is supposedly 1292, but the history transcribed there is actually that of the year 1289.

As a result of an analysis conducted by the Ukrainian historian Mykhailo Hrushevsky around the turn of the 20th century, we know that the dates in these chronologies differ from the actual historical calendar by one to four years, though there is no discernible pattern in the magnitudes of these discrepancies.¹⁴

In the context of Old Slavic manuscript culture, it is difficult to differentiate historiography from chronicle literature.¹⁵ In the regions where Latin was the language of written communication, various genres were distinguished from one another: annals (*annales*), chronicles (*cronica*), and *gesta*; in addition to these genres, there were also codices which preserved and combined all of these genres alongside texts with other types of content. In the period in question, however, East Slavic historians used the complex designation *letopis* (летопись) to indicate any or all of the aforementioned genres. *Letopis* is the literal equivalent of *annals*, but was also used to denote types of content associated with chronicles and *gesta*. Furthermore, *letopis* was also used to refer to individual codices which preserved a particular set of historical records. This word could even signify certain portions of the larger text which were not preserved independently, but could be deduced from the text of the chronicle. The surviving codices serve as evidence of the existence of hypothetical, presumably lost texts called *svods*. In the course of comparative textual analysis, chronicle-researchers refer to individual textual variants as “redactions”; the term *izvod* is used to denote texts which are distinguished by minor linguistic differences. Given that these designations are not consistent with the terms used to describe phenomena characteristic of Latin-language chronicles, I consider it appropriate to maintain the Slavic usage *letopis* or to employ the more general term *chronicle*.

1.1. THE PRIMARY CHRONICLE (*PVL*)

The *Tale of Bygone Years* or *Pověst' vremennykh let* (*PVL*) was one of the first chronicles written in Old East Slavic. The East Slavic literary compositions known to have been produced before it include the *Ostromir Gospels*, a few fragmentary inscriptions, and the legal code of Yaroslav the Wise. Even so, none of the works listed here featured any contemporaneous – that is, medieval – reflections on the past, and thus the *PVL* is still the preeminent work of Old East Slavic chronicle literature.

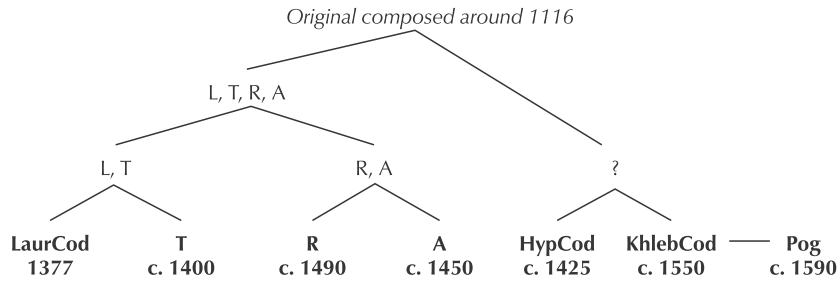
The text of the *PVL* – which today is generally regarded as a separate document – is essentially a reconstruction derived from several textual variants. Its earliest editors did not differentiate the text now known as the *PVL* from the rest of the codex in which it was preserved, nor did they investigate the relationships between the various versions of its text.¹⁶

¹⁴ Hrushevsky, “Khronologia”, pp. 1–72.

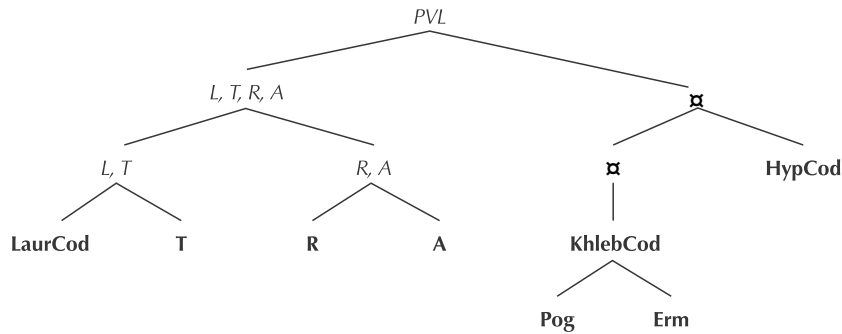
¹⁵ Font, *Geschichtsschreibung*, pp. 8–9; Font, “Die Chronistik der Ostslawen”, pp. 807–808.

¹⁶ For more on this subject, see Font, “A Poveszty vremennih let, mint történeti”, pp. 249–278.

Müller



Prisielkov



Bugoslavsky

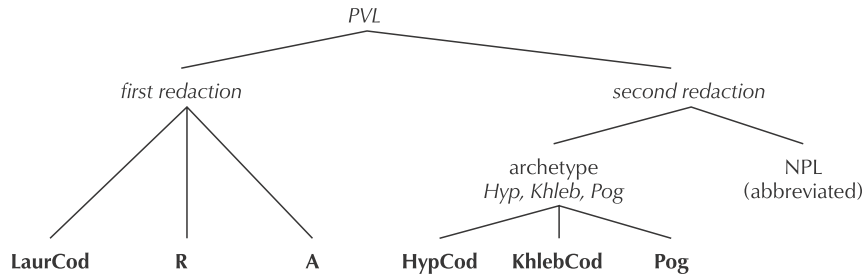


Figure 2. Codices which preserved the text of the PVL

Key: *italics* = hypothetical redaction of the chronicle (*svod*); **bold** = actually surviving codex; ⌘ = hypothetical protograph; LaurCod = Laurentian Chronicle; T = Troicky (Trinity) codex, lost in the early 19th century; R = Radziwiłł Chronicle; A = Academic Chronicle (a compilation of all the chronicles and codex-copies which survived in the environs of Moscow); HypCod = Hypatian Chronicle; KhlebCod = Khlebnikov Chronicle; Pog = Pogodin Chronicle; Erm = Ermolaev Chronicle. The latter four belong to the so-called Southern family of codices, which preserved a slightly longer version of the text of the PVL, known as the third redaction.

The text of the *PVL* was reconstructed by Aleksey Shakhmatov.¹⁷ His descriptions of the relevant codices and his conclusions about the *PVL* are indispensable, even though some scholars, such as Mikhail Prisielkov, have disagreed with his findings and criticized his work. In the 1940s, Dmitri Likhachev combined Shakhmatov's conclusions with the results of his own research in producing a bilingual (Old East Slavic and modern Russian) edition of a text based on the *Laurentian Codex* (*LaurCod*), which included a commentary spanning several volumes.¹⁸ Several subsequent Russian editions of the *PVL* have been based on Likhachev's work.¹⁹ In addition to stand-alone versions of the text of the *PVL*, scholars have also published new critical editions of the codices in which it was preserved; these volumes include more recent scholarly studies and textual criticism.²⁰ Andrei Nikitin has recently produced a new analysis of the text.²¹ The *PVL* has been translated into numerous languages, which has inspired a range of new research. In addition to a well-received translation and the commentary accompanying it, German Slavists have also produced a thorough linguistic analysis of this text.²² Researchers at Harvard have published a three-volume comparative edition which collates every known redaction of the *PVL*.²³ In addition to translations and analyses of the content of the *PVL*, scholars have also produced numerous studies of the linguistic and lexicological features of its text.²⁴

Scholars have long since accepted that the chief written sources of the *PVL* include the Byzantine historical compilations known as *chronographs*, in particular the chronicle of George Hamartolos.²⁵ Historians generally agree that the collection of regulations on Rus' merchants featured in the *PVL* were based on a set of

17 Shakhmatov, *Obshcherusskie svody*; Shakhmatov, *Razyskaniia*; Shakhmatov, *Povest*. For more on Shakhmatov's work in the field of textual criticism, see Font, "Osnovatel' kriticheskogo", pp. 158–169.

18 *PVL*, vols. I–II.

19 See, for example, *PLDR*, vol. I, pp. 23–278, 417–450; *PVL* 1999; *PVL* 2007. For a modern Russian translation with a new commentary and critical apparatus, see *PVL* 2012.

20 Though these recent editions feature new indexes and scholarly analyses, the text that appears in them is simply a reprint of the old edition and its chronology. The new introduction to the *Laurentian Codex* (*PSRL*, vol. I, 1997 and *PSRL*, vol. I, 2001) was written by Boris M. Kloss, while the lexicological work was done by Oleg V. Tvorogov; see *PSRL*, vol. I, pp. 270–271, 273, 280. Boris M. Kloss wrote the new introduction to the *Hypatian Codex* (*PSRL*, vol. II, 1998 and *PSRL*, vol. II, 2001), while Ludmilla L. Muravieva prepared its index.

21 Nikitin, *Osnovaniia russkoi istorii*; Nikitin, *Inok Ilarion*; Nikitin, *Tekstologia, PVL*; Nikitin, *Tekstologia, Yuzbnaia Rus'*; Nikitin, *Tekstologia, Novgorod*.

22 The German edition is not a reconstruction of the *Laurentian Codex*, but rather follows the version of its text which is considered to be the oldest; the accompanying volumes include novel linguistic and stylistic analyses of these materials. See Müller's position: *Handbuch*.

23 *The Povest' vremennykh let. An Interlinear Collation*. This edition was produced by Ostrowski in cooperation with David J. Birnbaum and Horace G. Lunt.

24 Among others, see Nikolsky, *Povest' vremennykh let*; Larin, *Lektsii po istorii*; Tvorogov, *Leksichesky sostav*; Tschekova, "Genese und kommunikative", pp. 250–267; Franklin, *Writing, Society, Culture*; Sitzmann, *Nordgermanisch-ostslavische*.

25 Tvorogov, "Povest' i Khronograf", pp. 99–113; Tvorogov, *Drevnerusskie khronografy*; Vodolazkin, "Khronika Hamartolos", pp. 322–332; Vilkul, *Litopis i khronograf*.

commercial agreements between the Rus' and Byzantium and can be traced back to Byzantine sources; Jana Malingoudi has demonstrated that the relevant texts associated with the years 907, 912, and 944 were inserted during the early 12th century redaction of the *PVL*. However, the expression “according to Russian law” which appears in these agreements is a reference to Viking (Varangian) legal customs.²⁶ It is possible that some of this composition originated at the Church of the Tithes (the first church built after the conversion of Kievan Rus' to Christianity) or at the Saint Sophia Cathedral (built in Kiev by Yaroslav the Wise at some point after 1036), though there is no proof that this was the case. In the latter half of the 11th century, the monks at the Cave Monastery of Kiev prepared a subset of these historical records, as evidenced by the preservation in the *PVL* of a variety of information about the monastery, including a description of the circumstances of its establishment and reverent allusions to the activities of its abbot (or *hegumen*), Theodosius. The identity of the author of the legend of Boris and Gleb, who were canonized in 1072, is unknown; the early 12th-century redaction of the *PVL* seems to connect the text of the legend to the year of the brothers' martyrdom, 1015, though it was almost certainly composed after 1072.²⁷

Sections for which there were no written sources in the early 12th century may have been adopted into the *PVL* from contemporaneous oral tradition. The elements of oral history here include the legends of the migration of the Slavic tribes and the Varangians' “invitation” to the region; the Slavic epic poems known as *byliny*; and “family chronicles” – mythical accounts of the ancestors of the ruling family, which had been preserved up to that time by oral tradition and may have resembled the *Pouchenie* (*Поучение Владимира*, or *Instructions of Vladimir Monomakh*).²⁸

A Hungarian translation of the *PVL* is available in electronic form, which has made it possible to use a simple character-count to determine the volume of text associated with each of the years in its chronology.²⁹

26 See Cross' English translation of the *PVL: The Russian Primary Chronicle*, p. 76; for an analysis, see Malingoudi, *Die russisch-byzantinische*, pp. 107–109; Stein-Wilkeshuis, “Legal Prescription”, pp. 1–16.

27 Lenhoff, *The Martyred Princes*, pp. 102–112.

28 Ferincz, “Pouchenie”, pp. 53–94; Font, *Geschichtsschreibung*, pp. 58–61; Font, “A Kijevi Rusz és a Magyar Királyság”, pp. 271–272; Font, “A Kárpátokon innen és túl”, pp. 13–32.

29 Font, “A Poveszty vremennih let”, pp. 260–271.

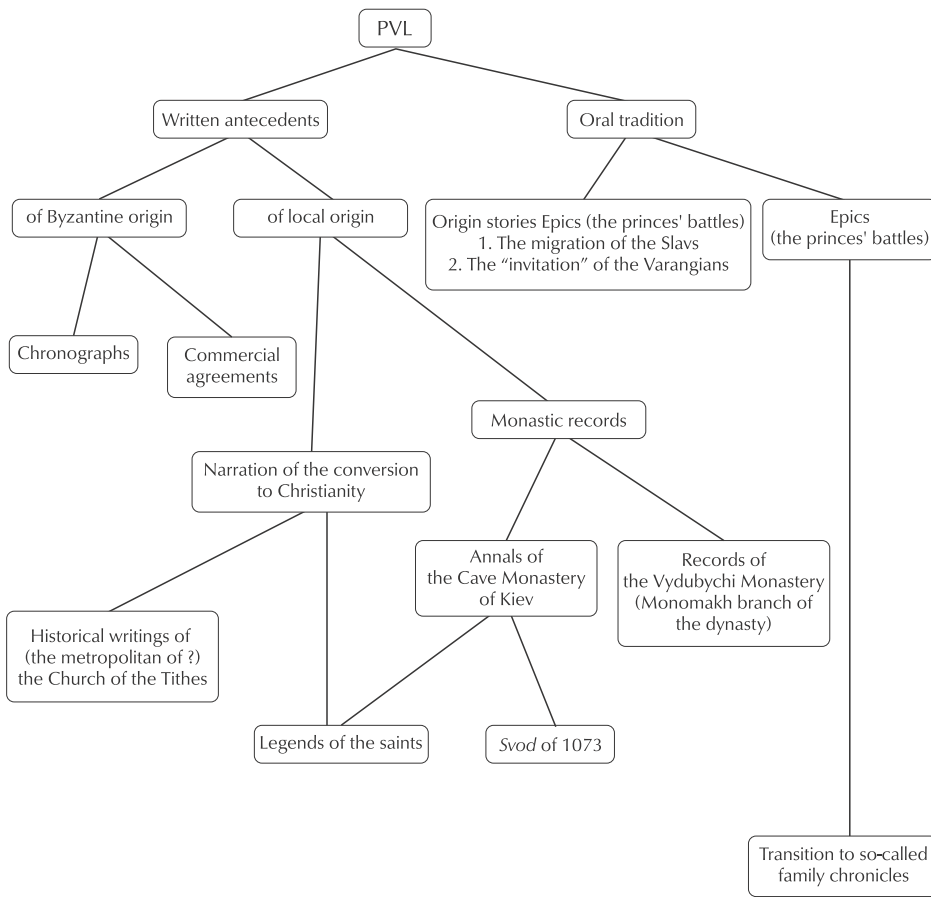
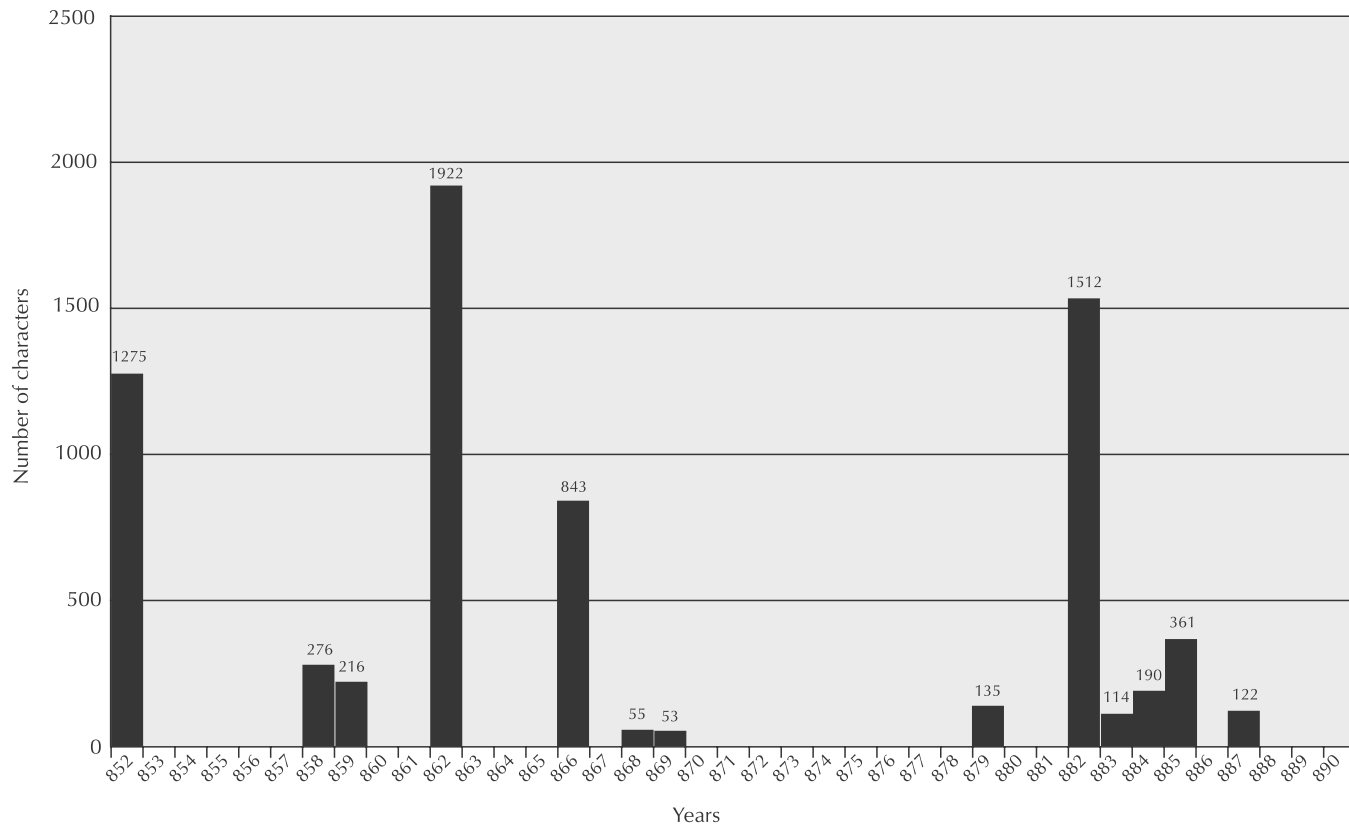
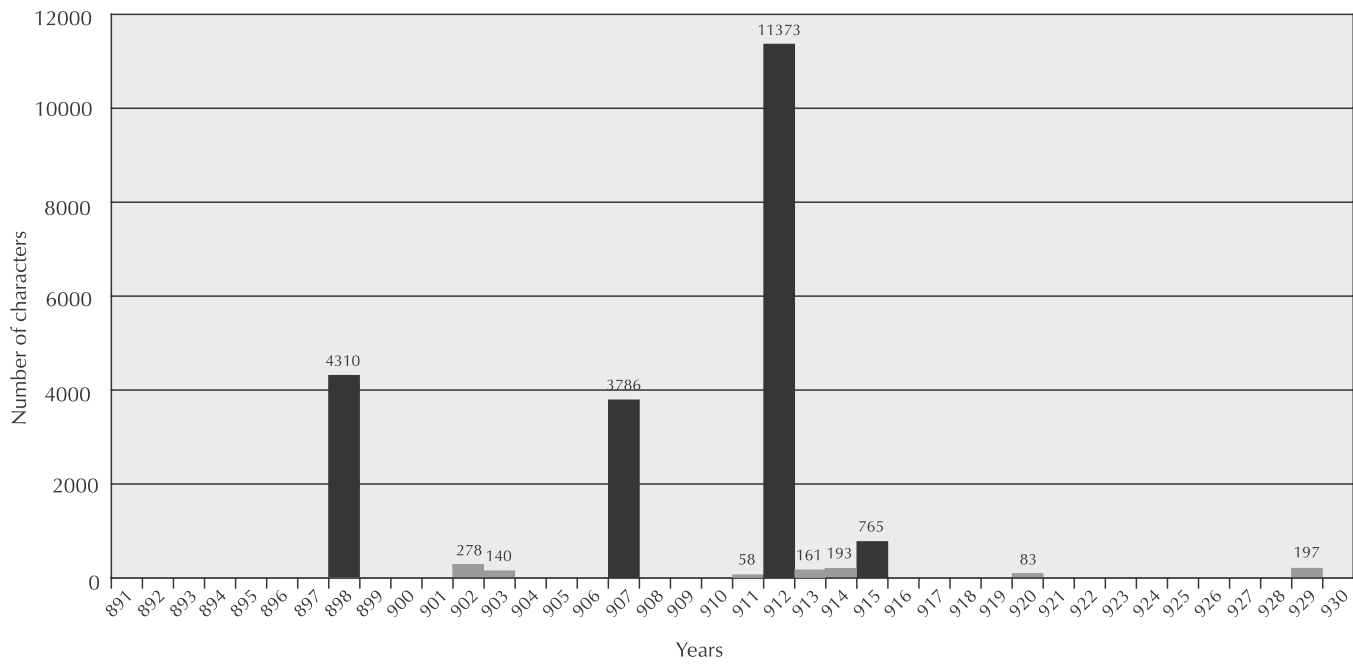


Figure 3. The structure and sources of the PVL

Quantities of text in the yearly entries of the *PVL*, 852–890**Figure 4a. Graphic representations of the chronological structure of the *PVL* (852–890)**

Quantities of text in the yearly entries of the *PVL*, 891–930



29 **Figure 4b. Graphic representations of the chronological structure of the *PVL* (891–930)**

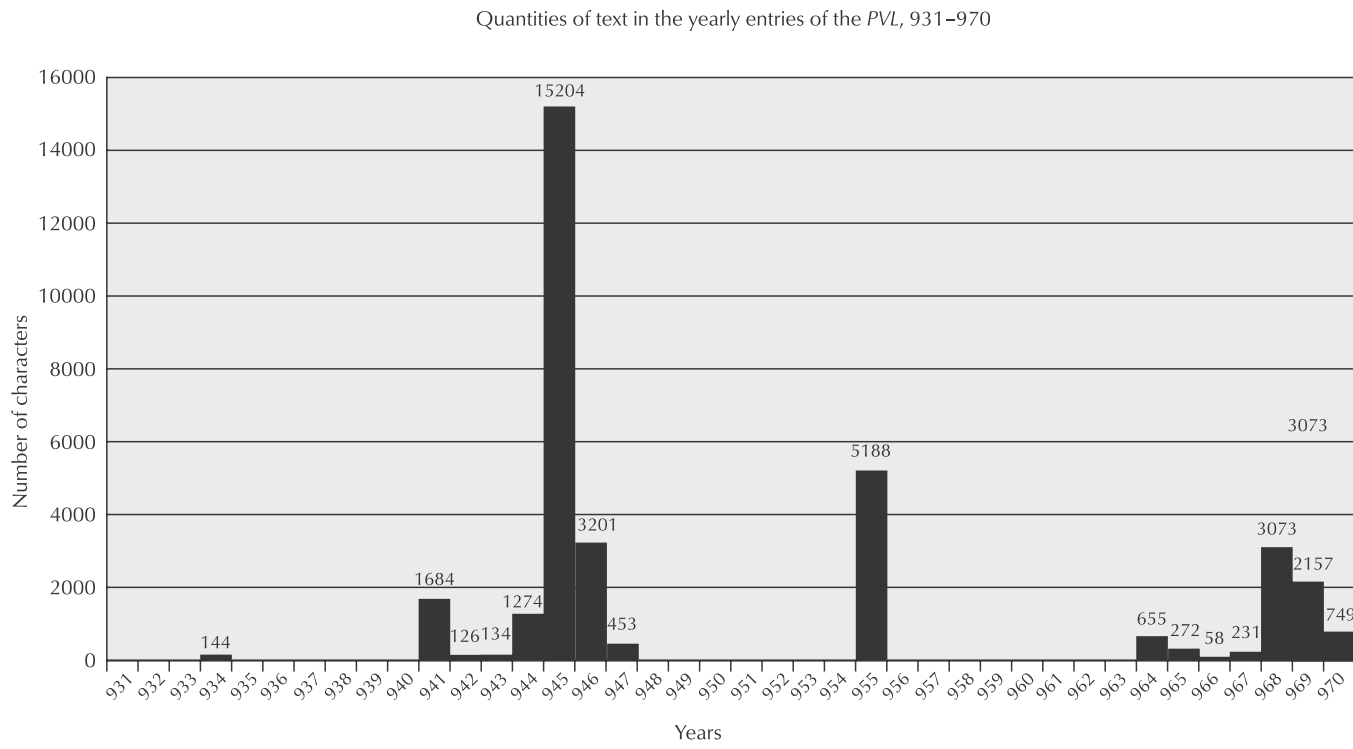
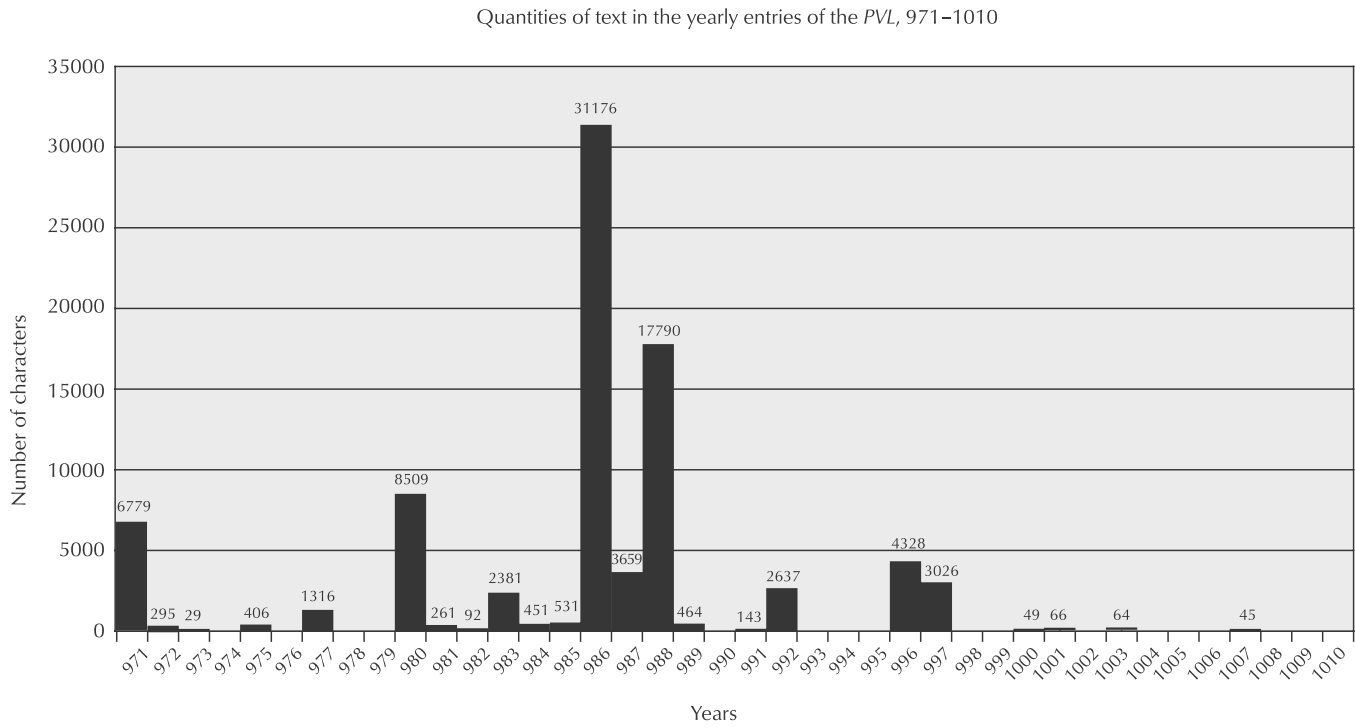


Figure 4c. Graphic representations of the chronological structure of the *PVL* (931–970)



31 **Figure 4d. Graphic representations of the chronological structure of the *PVL* (971–1010)**

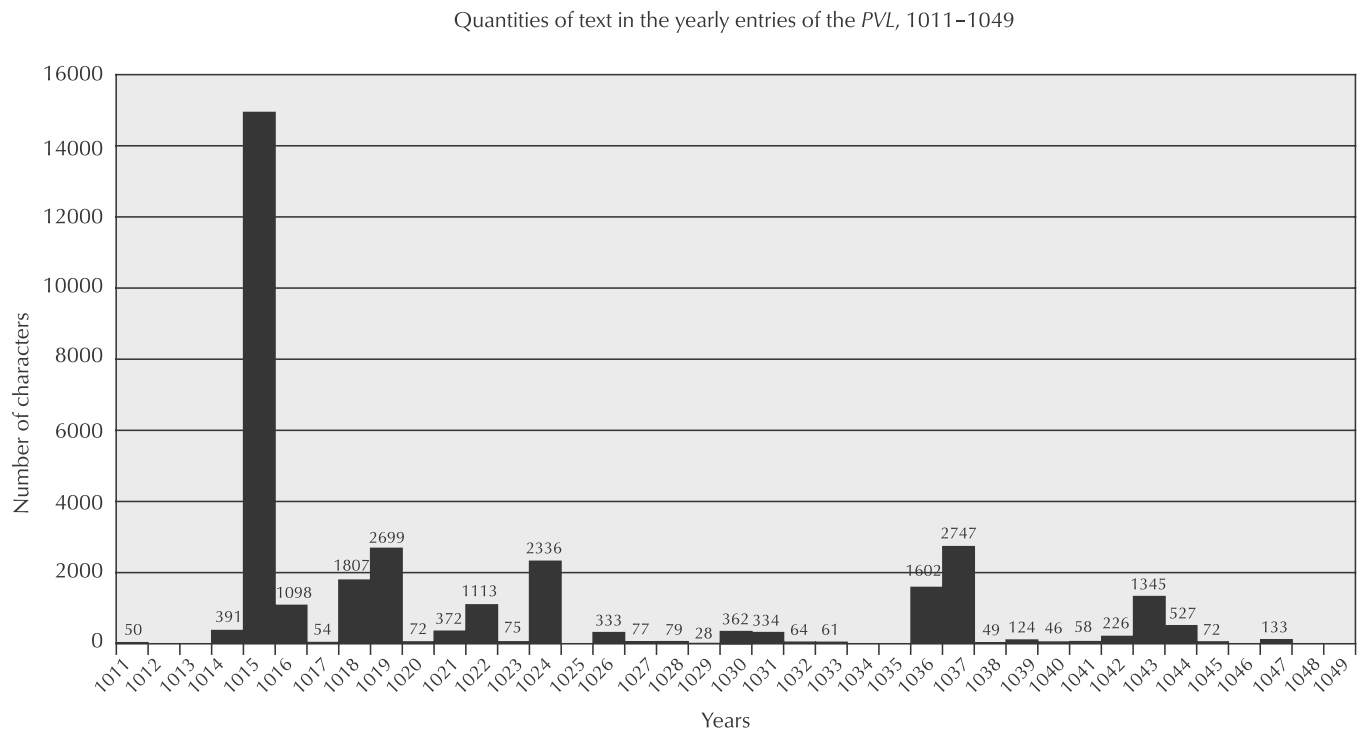
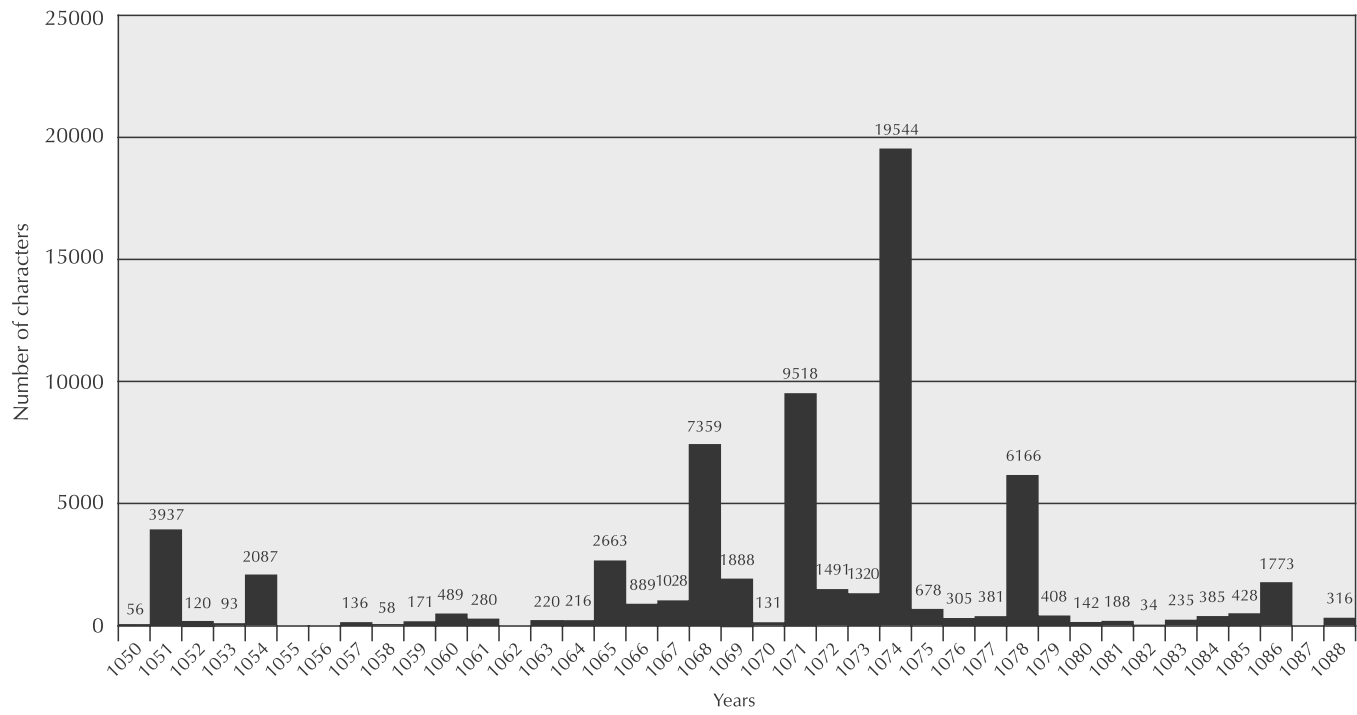
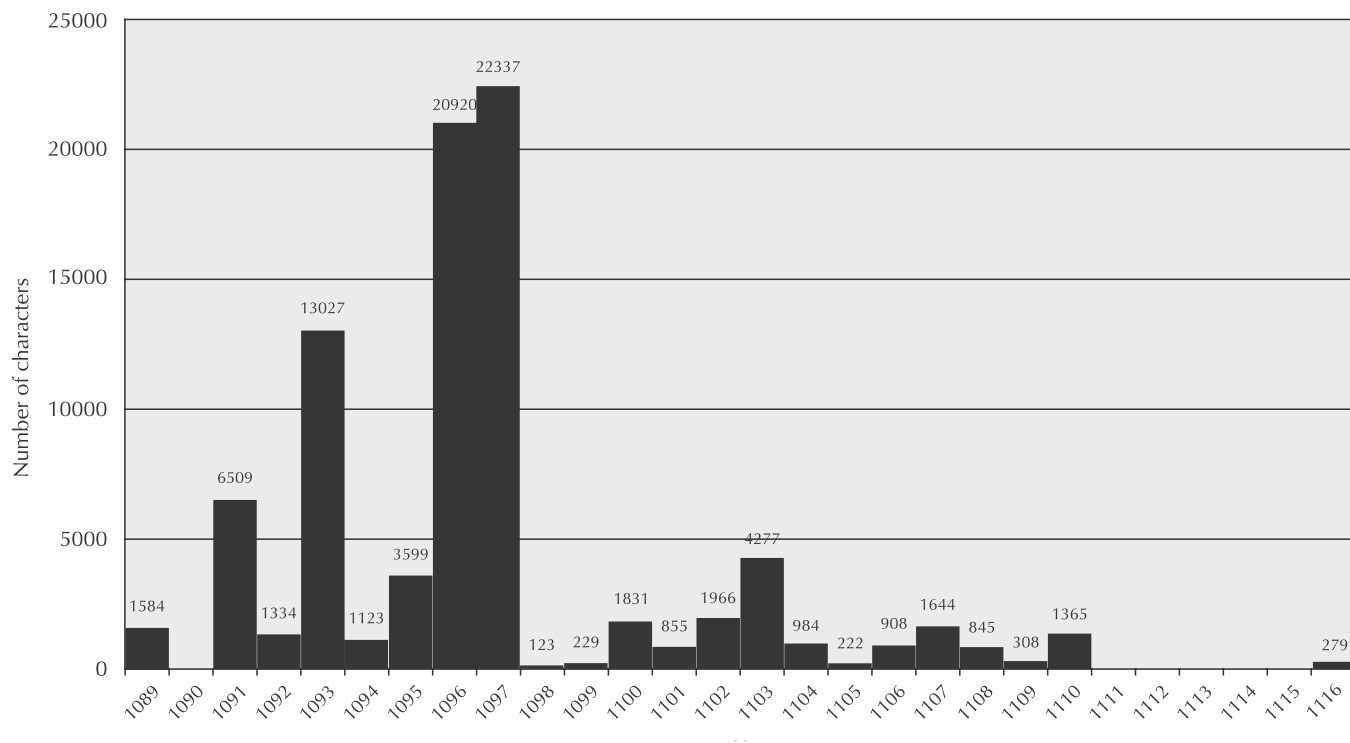


Figure 4e. Graphic representations of the chronological structure of the *PVL* (1011–1049)

Quantities of text in the yearly entries of the *PVL*, 1050–1088



33 **Figure 4f. Graphic representations of the chronological structure of the *PVL* (1050–1088)**

Quantities of text in the yearly entries of the *PVL*, 1089–1116**Figure 4g. Graphic representations of the chronological structure of the *PVL* (1089–1116)**

It is my opinion that the volume of text dedicated to a given period was a function not only of the amount of information available to the chronicler(s), but also a reflection of the methods by which the *PVL* was compiled. In any case, there are several instances in which the entries for consecutive years feature no descriptions of events, only a brief sentence's worth of information, which suggests that these sections were inserted at a later date. The following is the distribution of text in the dated portions of the *PVL*:

Table 1. A quantitative analysis of the text of the *PVL* (on the basis of the *LaurCod*, with additional data from the *HypCod*)

	Years	Number of omitted years	Number of years without text	499 characters or fewer	500–999 characters	1,000–4,499 characters	4,500 characters or more
1	852–890	–	26	9	1	3	–
2	891–930	–	29	7	1	2	1
3	931–970	–	24	7	2	5	2
4	971–1010	2	15	12	1	6	4
5	1011–1049	1	7	21	1	8	1
6	1050–1088	1	3	21	2	8	4
7	1089–1116	6	–	5	4	9	4
Number of years in each category		10	104	82	11	41	16
As a percentage of the total number of years in the chronicle		4%	39%	31%	4%	16%	6%
8	1110–1117	–	–	–	–	7	1
Line 7 above, augmented with data from the <i>HypCod</i> :							
7	1089–1117	1	–	5	4	14	5
Number of years in each category		5	104	82	11	46	17
Augmented figures as a percentage of the total number of years in the chronicle		3%	39%	30%	4%	18%	6%

There are ten cases in which a particular year has been omitted from this chronology; if we disregard the five years at the end of the text (those which indicate the interval between the final described event and its transcription), then there are only five instances in which the chronicler(s) “skipped” a year, which could be attributable to simple scribal error. Even so, there are 104 entries (roughly 40% of the