pca

european journal of
postclassicalarchaeologies

volume 6/2016

SAP Società Archeologica s.r.l.

Mantova 2016

pca

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"Post-Classical Archaeologies" was approved on 2015-05-13 according to ERIH PLUS criteria for inclusion. Classified A by ANVUR (Agenzia Nazionale di Valutazione del sistema Universitario e della Ricerca).

DESIGN

Paolo Vedovetto

PUBLISHER

SAP Società Archeologica s.r.l.
Strada Fienili 39/a, 46020 Quingentole, Mantova
www.archeologica.it

PRINTED BY

Tecnografica Rossi, Via I maggio, Sandrigo (VI)

Authorised by Mantua court no. 4/2011 of April 8, 2011

For subscription and all other information visit the web site www.postclassical.it

ISSN 2039-7895

pca
european journal of
postclassicalarchaeologies

volume 6/2016

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EDITORIAL

The sixth issue of PCA presents the material from two conferences held in different European countries last year.

The volume opens with some of the papers presented at The British School at Rome (April 2014) at a conference on The Recycling and Reuse of Materials during the Early Middle Ages. The meeting – organised by Alessandro Sebastiani (who has collaborated as guest editor for this section), Elena Chirico and Matteo Colombini – dealt mainly with productive structures related to the transformation of glass and metal in Italy (papers by Alessandro Sebastiani, Stefano Bertoldi, François-Dominique Deltenre and Lucia Orlandi). Other international experts have agreed to add their contributions to the subject: Robin Fleming on the reuse of construction material in early medieval graves, Sarah Paynter and Caroline Jackson offering a synthesis on the reuse of glass, and the team of Carmen Fernández-Ochoa in Spain presenting the early medieval productive structures at the villa of Veranes (Gijon). Two papers by Florin Curta and Michele Asolati, dealing with exchange in the Byzantine Mediterranean, have been published in the Variae *section.*

After the catastrophe of World War II, many international institutions were founded: the United Nations, UNESCO, the European Community. All these organizations are today immersed in a transitional phase in the systemic crisis which affects the entire Western world, a crisis to which the nihilist and relativist positions have contributed and which has (rightly) delegitimated the imperialism on which the West had built its dominant position. In this crisis, the recovery of shared historical memories is increasingly revealed as a central element in the defence of a rational world, which, although it may have abandoned the utopias of the 1900s, at least safeguards the principles of freedom and the pluralism of values. Today, there is wide debate, even among archaeologists, over how to present cultural heritage in a globalized society while nevertheless pre-

serving its multiple identities and cultures. The discussion of these matters was the purpose of the papers dedicated to the World Heritage List. This collection, guest edited by Margarita Díaz-Andreu, results from a workshop of the EU-project JPI—JHEP Heritage Values Network (H@V) held at the University of Barcelona in February 2015. The main question, summarized in the title of the paper by Díaz-Andreu, is whether the inclusion of social values and local communities in the management of cultural heritage is an impossible dream. Is it a utopian vision, typical of the historical processes which gave birth to the international organizations and their initiatives to hold back the spectre of a World War III? In many of these contributions, the watchwords still conform to this direction: the participation and involvement of stakeholders in the hope that local communities will be led to a positive valuation of assets and their public use.

The different directions of the debate move between the two poles of economic management and cultural enrichment of local communities. Too often, it is difficult to find a balance between touristic exploitation and a useful cultural proposal for local communities, as happened in the telling example of the Daming Palace in China, developed by Qian Gao, winner of the 2016 PCA young researcher award.

Direct involvement is often difficult in a globalized and multicultural society that has lost its historical roots. Most of the contributions consider that a proper balance can be found between global strategies promoted by UNESCO, based on the decalogue of general principles under which to file an application for protected sites, and the feeling and evaluation expressed by the local community (the focus of Torgrim Sneve Guttorsen, Joel Taylor, Grete Swensen on Heritage Routes and Matthias Maluck and Gian Pietro Brogiolo on organizational proposals in the interventions).

Also related to the subject of cultural heritage and the public is the project section of this issue, a homage the Poggibonsi Archeodromo. A project developed in recent years by the team of Marco Valenti (University of Siena), this is a unique living archaeological park recreated from archaeological evidence, presenting the life of an early medieval village, an initiative that clearly demonstrates the social and economic benefits of good practices in public archaeology in Italy.

Finally, the retrospect section, which addresses the history of early medieval archaeology in different European countries, is this year devoted to the fascinating recent history of early medieval Archaeology in Russia, with an extensive study by Nadezhda Platonova (St Peterburg).

PCA 6 (2016) ISSN: 2039-7895 (pp. 333-416)
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Problems of early medieval Slavonic Archaeology in Russia (a view from St. Petersburg)

NADEZHDA I. PLATONOVA
Institute for the History of Material Culture RAS, St. Petersburg, Department of Slavic and Finnish archaeology, Dvortsovaya Embankment, Saint Petersburg,
niplaton@gmail.com

1. Introduction

Beginning this paper with a view of acquainting the Western reader (in the broad sense) with the history of early medieval archaeology in Russia, I intended to give a historical sketch of the respective studies in Russia and the USSR from the 1880s to the present day. Reality, however, urged me to revise my plan. The theme turned out much too broad for a journal article. Even a more or less detailed outline of developments from the mid-1900s onward would force me to exceed the allowed volume.

Alternatively, the article might be a purely formal referential sketch. Because such a prospect did not suit me, I decided to focus on theoretical problems and on several scholarly trends in the development of Soviet/Russian early medieval archaeology in the late 20th and early 21st century. I found it interesting to describe this series of trends (mainly concentrated in St. Petersburg and Moscow), not only as a specialist, but partly as a memoirist and eyewitness. Also, instead of providing a complete bibliography, I refer the readers to reviews where all the references can be found.

Naturally, it is simply impossible in the frame of a single article, albeit a voluminous one, to discuss all the issues of Slavonic and Old Rusian studies throughout the Russian realm. Many subjects unavoidably remain behind the scenes. Possibly, someone other would have treated the

Received: 17-01-2016 - Accepted: 15-02-2016 - Revised: 01-03-2016

problem differently. Thus my work does not contain an exhaustive exposition of the problems. My concept is really "a view from St. Petersburg", but I did my best to make this view interesting to the readers.

At the present time, a major stage in the development of Russian early medieval Archaeology is essentially coming to an end. It began in the Brezhnev era – in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Such a lengthy period, of course, might be subdivided into several smaller stages, but the continuity in the evolution of basic concepts and of major projects is evident. This is the period on which I would like to concentrate in order to reveal its socio-historical context, principal tendencies, contradictions, and results.

As a first step, however, I will look at the key features of Soviet science in the second quarter and middle of the 20th century. Without this, modern developments would be hard to understand.

2. Just one period?

What, it might be asked, is the rationale behind pooling the early medieval Slavonic and Old Rusian studies of the entire period between the 1970s and the present? Political developments during this span fall into at least two sharply divergent periods. The first coincides with the end of the political "stagnation period" ending with Gorbachev's Perestroika (until mid-1991). The second begins with the "August Revolution", resulting in dramatic changes of Russia's entire sociopolitical system.

The answer is that no exact match can be expected between the stages in the development of science and those in political history with their sharply defined limits (often within a day, let alone month or year). What happens in reality is "lagging behind", often by years and even decades. Neither the 1991 political coup nor subsequent social cataclysms entailed immediate changes in the system or structure of archaeology in this country. One might add for the sake of comparison: nor did much graver, in fact disastrous cataclysms of 1917-1920 cause *immediate* changes. Radical "reforms", which included the restructuring of the Academy of Sciences and the dismantling of the entire structure of the humanities, did not begin in 1917 but twelve years later[1].

Before 1930, archaeology was headed exclusively by members of the old school, who had acquired their titles and reputation before the Revo-

[1] Similar changes, be it noted, began in 2013, when Russian science got under an avalanche of arbitrary innovations and drastic structural reforms introduced in a violent way by uninvited officials rather than by the scientists themselves.

lution. In the 1920s, leaders of pre-Soviet archeology who had not emigrated – A.A. Spitsyn, A.A. Miller, B.S. Zhukov, V.A. Gorodtsov, D.V. Ainalov, etc. – were surrounded by numerous pupils and followers. And when, in the 1930s, repressions began and reputed specialists were ousted from their leading positions, the generation of their pupils, educated between 1917 and 1930, suddenly turned into an elder generation and gave rise to an entire constellation of leaders, both formal and informal.

Among the specialists in early medieval archaeology who belonged to this generation were M.I. Artamonov, V.I. Ravdonikas, A.V. Artsikhovskii, M.A. Tikhanova, M.K. Karger, P.N. Tretiakov, G.F. Korzukhina, E.I. Goriunova, G.P. Grozdilov, N.N. Cherniagin, who was killed during the war, etc.

This was the generation of quadragenarians. Compared to them, Efimenko, who turned forty-five in 1929, looked as a patriarch. They managed to restructure Soviet archaeology in a systemic way themselves, preventing a collapse which this discipline would have suffered following the ill-conceived and politically motivated "top down" reforms.

Science was preserved because it was subdivided into two levels, communicating but still separate. One was the official "ideological façade", directly mirroring all the zigzags of totalitarian policy. This level manifested itself in editorials, in forewords to specific publications, in textbooks, and in certain summaries. However, judging Soviet archaeology by its façade would be a grave mistake – one that is being committed by Western colleagues over and over again. Behind the façade, the second level can always be found – specific archaeological studies, standard analysis of sources, a discipline that had survived and assumed legal status by the late 1930s (Platonova 1999, 2010, pp. 235-241; Platonova, Kirpichnikov 2013, pp. 195-200). It managed to preserve, in fact to augment the original array of methods.

New challenges, focused on socioeconomic issues, were answered by large area excavations of settlements, closer attention to their horizontal structure, dwelling types, tools, ancient technologies studied by use-wear analysis, etc.

Those who had assumed leadership at that critical period remained pacemakers until the late 1960s, when many of them began passing away, marking the end of an entire epoch in Russian archaeology.

3. Scholarly ideology of the 1960s: historical roots

The 1960s were the time to sum up the results of the entire period of early medieval studies in Eastern Europe. Notably, theoretical gener-

alizations built mostly on findings relating to the western part of the region, from southeastern Baltic and North-Western Russia in the north to the North Pontic steppes in the south[2]. This geographic area was traditionally associated with the origins of Slavs and Balts, their contacts with Finns and Iranians (Sarmats), etc. The central theme of discussions was cultural continuity and ethnicity of Roman and early medieval cultures of the forest and forest-steppe zones of the Russian Plain and related issues such as (a) archaeological roots of the early Slavic culture, and (b) the emergence of the culture of Old Rus'.

The theoretical foundations were laid down by large-scale field studies of the 1950s and 1960s. As a result, numerous lacunae on the archaeological map were filled up. After the war, areas such as northwestern Russia, the Dnepr, Dniester, Volga basins, etc., were subjected to a detailed archaeological examination by Y.V. Stankevich, I.I. Liapushkin, P.N. Tretiakov, Y.V. Kukharenko, E. A. Shmidt, E. A. Symonovich, etc[3]. Hundreds of new sites dating to the first millennium AD were discovered, and their systematic excavations were launched (Platonova, Kirpichnikov 2013, pp. 202-217). M.A. Tikhanova, E.A. Symonovich, G.B. Fedorov, and Y.V. Kukharenko, among others, excavated Zarubintsy and Chernyakhov sites in Ukraine, Belarus', Moldavia, and southern Russia. In parallel to that, archaeologists were interpreting and revising in a broader context many facts that were known but had remained poorly understood since the pre-Revolutionary period.

For instance, Y.V. Kukharenko attributed numerous mounds with cremation burials on the left bank of the Pripiat' and the Teterev, excavated by S.S. Gamchenko and I.F. Levitsky in the early 1900s, to the *Prague culture* (Kukharenko 1955, 1961). At that time, early medieval burials

[2] The second part spanned northeastern and eastern areas of Eastern Europe (northwestern Ural, the Kama basin, and the left bank of the Volga. Until the mid-20th century only scattered early medieval sites were known there, but later large-scale excavations began, resulting in the emergence of regional archaeological schools with their own traditions and theoretical framework, led by V.F. Gening, A.K. Khalikov, and others. This eastern region will be touched upon later.

[3] Parallel studies were conducted by archaeologists of Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, such as V.N. Danilenko, L.D. Pobol', A.G. Mitrofanov, D.T. Berezovets, A.A. Aulikh, V.D. Baran, B.A. Timoshchuk, I.S. Vinokur, M.Iu. Smishko, E.V. Makhno, E. A. Rikman, etc. But the research process was highly correlated all over Soviet republics in the Eastern Europe. There were many Russian natives among archaeologists in the republics (and vice versa). Many Ukranians, Belarusians, Moldavians were graduates or post-graduates of Russian universities. They worked on probation in Moscow or Leningrad expeditions (as well as many Russian archaeologists took part in the expeditions organized by the universities or Academies of sciences of these republics). The main trends of the development of archaeology in the USSR were not much different in different regions. Alternative concepts presented in Moscow and Leningrad, had their representatives in Ukraine, Belarus, Moldavia. But certainly nationalistic sentiments created the common views of some groups of researchers ("Thracian autochthonizm" in Moldavia, or "Ukranian autochthonizm", that became frondeurs both to Russian "autochthonizm" and "hyper-skepticism"). However, analysis of the specific activities of Ukranian, Belarusian, Moldavian researchers is beyond the scope of this article devoted to Russian archaeology.

of this type, first described as a separate category by I. Borkovský in Czechoslovakia (Borkovský 1940), were a single reliably Slavic culture dating to AD 500-750. Shortly after that, similar burials were discovered in Volyn', on the Western Bug, and on the Upper Dniester (see bibliography in Rusanova 1973, pp. 49-51).

The process of interpretation and revision concerned many different cultures. Instead of isolated sites and small clusters of sites, an entire suite of cultures appeared on the archaeological map of the forest and forest-steppe zones. Stable combinations of types and of their constituent elements were established, and the ranges of cultures and their variants were specified. Following the views that became predominant in Soviet archaeology in the early 1950s, cultures were believed to be *directly associated with ancient ethnic (respectively linguistic) groups*.

An ethnic group, as seen by most Soviet scholars in the 1960s, was "a rigid structure with a stable array of attributes", which usually included female ornament set, handmade pottery, funerary rite, and architecture (Mikhailova 2014, p. 15). Disagreement between a culture and the expected stereotype in at least one of these indicators immediately called the tentative ethnic attribution into doubt. Viewed that way, culture was necessarily static without being allowed to live and evolve like a living culture should (all reservations aside, an archaeological culture does mirror a living culture – a distorted and reduced mirror image though it be, but still an image!). Mechanical borrowing from one ethnic culture to another was deemed to be the only source of innovations.

Perhaps the biggest problem with this approach concerned affinities between cultures. There was no theoretical reason to claim that such and such sites represent a single culture in one case, differences notwithstanding, and different cultures despite certain similarities in other cases (cf. Anikovich 2014, p. 18). Therefore a retrospective standpoint, requiring complete continuity and similarity in all the key indicators, was usually considered the only scientific approach to establishing cultural affinities in archaeological studies.

These ideas ran counter to the long-established view that relatively stable periods in cultural evolution necessarily alternate with critical points, whereas the emergence of new cultural entities is hard to detect because *for an archaeologist, culture is always ready-made* (Klejn 1975, 1991). But such a claim would sound as a heresy in Soviet archaeology of the 1960s.

The situation was rooted in the history of science. In the USSR, the idea of *cultural transformation*, rapid change in culture without population replacement was discredited in a large measure by preceding

decades, when Marrist ideas of abrupt stages were predominant. At that time, transformations were proclaimed, not demonstrated (only at the level of the ideological façade, of course). Now that the pendulum had swung the other way, the idea of transformations was abandoned altogether. Only those who, like E.A. Symonovich and B.A. Rybakov (1981, p. 214-284), stubbornly clung to the idea that many southeastern European cultures from the 3d millennium BC were "pre-Slavonic".

What such sweeping generalizations lacked was evidential base; much of the reasoning proceeded from intuition, vague parallels, and preconceptions. That is why in the 1970s and 1980s archaeologists of the new generation viewed this theory as "ideological façade" and made little of it. Even justified caveats against the retrospective method, and reminders to the effect that the entire set of ethnic indicators (the "ethnic veneer") is chronologically restricted (Rybakov 1981, p. 219) were sneered at because they were mouthed by a person who was less that stringent in his approaches.

However, in the late 1920s, the remaining "founders" still remembered an opposite tendency in the development of the Russian archaeological theory. Documents preserved at the archives of the Institute for the History of Material Culture in Saint-Petersburg suggest that the task of a *multidisciplinary study of Eastern Europe as a geographic and historical whole* was first formulated at GAHMC (The Academy for the Study of Material Culture History) in 1925. The central idea of this approach was that the geographic nature of Eastern Europe as a plain sufficed to prevent the inhabitant tribes from evolving in isolation: "[This structure] necessarily intertwined various languages, cultures, and customs." (IHMC Archives, Fund 2, 1925, File 1, page 38). Accordingly, regional studies of this vast territory had to be linked and to proceed on an interdisciplinary basis, with a participation of specialists in related disciplines such as archaeology, ethnology, linguistics, Fenno-Ugric, Caucasian, and Oriental studies, etc.

The institution that became the principal venue of discussions relating to this task was the Ethnological Department of GAHMC. Debates were convened by A.A. Miller and enjoyed the benevolent attention of N.I. Marr. They immediately revealed a keen scholarly interest in cultural theory and the origins and transformations of separate cultures. The newly-founded Section for the Evolution of Culture (literally called *Genetics of Culture*), chaired by P.P. Efimenko, was aimed at an in-depth analysis of those issues. Future challenges included not only the reconstruction of cultural contacts during the European Iron Age and the early Middle Ages, but also the understanding of the general mechanisms of cultural change.

Note that within the theoretical framework of the 1920s, the social factor did not substitute the geographic and ethnic factors, in contrast to the situation in the 1930s and 1940s. The notion of "cultural circle" was in use, and the possibility of transferring a tradition via migration and of its "hybridization" with local traditions was discussed[4]. The dominant thrust, however, was to abandon the migration theory and the idea of direct borrowing, *while trying to detect the inherent sources of innovation within culture, not outside it*, and to substantiate this view with archaeological facts. This was one of the principal aspects of Russian archaeological theory in the 1920s. "Not migrations but entirely different factors played a central part in cultural origins, and the older population did not disappear without trace from places where it had lived" (Miller 1927, p. 16).

This, of course, was an all-too-familiar "running ahead of tine". In the 1920s, the knowledge of Eastern European cultures was simply insufficient to give a plausible answer to such questions. And yet raising them was important per se (Platonova 2015, pp. 70-74). Now that the problem of cultural traditions versus innovations is as topical as ever, specialists in cultural evolution admit that "those associated with the GAHMK Section for the Genetics of Culture "transcended the possibilities of science of their day whereas their theories ran ahead of actual historical reconstructions of cultural processes" (Bondarev 2009, p. 14).

What followed, however, was the "Great Breakthrough" and two decades marked by the dominance of Marrism – not Marr's own brand of it, however, but that of Soviet ideologists. Beginning from 1930, the Marrist view of cultural transformations turned into an *ex cathedra* postulate of Soviet archaeology out of bounds to critical assessment. In essence, Marrism parasitized this prospective idea, having rendered it vulgar to the extreme[5]. And still, those who had been associated with GAHMK Ethnological Section under Miller and had taken part in the debates (Petr N. Tretiakov, Mikhail I. Artamonov, Nikolai N. Cherniagin, Grigorii P. Grozdilov, etc.) were still able to perceive ideas such as "new traditions stemming from the contact of old ones" or "cultural mutations" not as details of the ideological façade, but as elements of a scholarly worldview, unfinished but promising.

[4] These notions stemmed from a previous respectable tradition, currently known as "combinationism" (Klejn 2007, pp. 128-136). It stems from N.P. Kondakov's popular ideas to the effect that cultural evolution is a *continuous historical succession of events*, not necessarily leading to "progress" in the conventional sense. According to Kondakov, the source of innovations is *contact, mutual awareness, and eventual admixture of various tribes* (Kondakov 1896, pp. 6-7).

[5] For Marrists, cultural transformation necessarily co-occurred with linguistic transformation. This issue, however, is beyond the scope of this study.

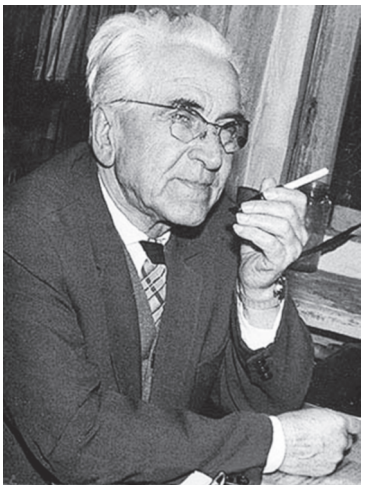

Fig. 1. Mikhail I. Artamonov in the late 1960s.

However, for those whose archaeological career started in the late 1930s (Ivan I. Liapushkin) or after the war (Valentin V. Sedov, Yurii V. Kukharenko, Irina P. Rusanova, etc.), the idea of cultural transformation and autochthonous evolution was inseparably coupled with Marrism and its unscientific view of "saltations". Attacks on Marr's theory, which began in 1950s, urged certain "founders", primarily M.I. Artamonov, to radically revise their attitude to it.

The scholarly path of P.N. Tretiakov, a prominent specialist in Slavic, Baltic, and Finnish archaeology of the Dnepr and Upper Volga areas, was different. In his practical work, he considered various modes of relationship between culture and ethnicity. He accepted the possibility that intrinsic factors might contribute to an autochthonous origin of a new culture, and he adhered to this position until the end. This resulted in a prolonged and fierce clash between the two broadly-minded scholars, Artamonov and Tretiakov. The argument did not abate until the end. It drew a line, beyond which an entirely new stage in Russian medieval studies began.

4. Debates of the late 1960s: summing up[6]

The 1950s and 1960s were marked by a large number of important monographs publishing and interpreting the findings of early medieval studies. Some (by far not all) are cited below: Liapushkin 1958; 1961; Stankevich 1960; Kukharenko 1961; Karger 1958-1961; Korzukhina 1954, 1955; Goriunova 1961; Tretiakov, Schmidt 1963; Symonovich 1963; Tikhanova 1957; etc. Apart from these, however, a series of summarizing works by elder scholars appeared in the late 1960s. Two opposite viewpoints, two contrasting interpretations of European ethnocultural history in the first millennium AD can be traced in those archae-

[6] See Rusanova, Symonovich 1993, pp. 5-12 for a detailed review of Soviet publications on early Slavonic archaeology that had appeared in the 1960s-1980s. A more important task of the present review is to reveal the keynotes of the discussions and to relate them to the socio-political context of Soviet science in the second half of the 20th century and the early 2000s.

ological works (Liapushkin 1968; Artamonov 1967, 1970; Tretiakov 1966, 1970)[7].

The first position, taken by I.I. Liapushkin and M.I. Artamonov, was often seen as a "pragmatic approach", an utterly honest view of archaeological sources and of the information they provide. It is not incidental that this view was later deemed "pessimistic" and "hyper-critical" (Lebedev 1998, p. 146).

Hyper-criticism relating to the problem of Slavonization of Eastern Europe was an understandable reaction to prolonged groundless attempts at attributing all more or less significant cultures of the early 1st millennium AD on the Russian Plain to Slavs. The "ideological façade" of Soviet science prompted scholars to find "noble ancestors" for the Russian people, however tenuous the claims might be. In this context, Liapushkin's and Artamonov's hyper-critical stance, formulated in the 1960s, when the ideological pressure was relaxed to some extent, was intended to adopt a purely scholarly view and revise the available sources from a stringent standpoint. But, as it often happens in a heated argument, the pendulum swung in the opposite direction too far. This time, all disputable cases were resolved in favor of the *non-Slavic* attribution of early medieval cultures.

In the view of Liapushkin and Artamonov, one might speak of Slavic affinities only if continuity was traceable retrospectively. But in the Slavic world of the Russian Plain, the maximal depth of cultural continuity does not reach below the 5th or even 6th century, and only in a comparatively restricted area south of the Pripyat'. Any connections between this world and the Late Roman Age cultures such as Zarubintsy and Chernyakhov were discarded a limine.

Both scholars unanimously believed that the Slavs appeared in northwestern Rus' around AD 1000, simultaneously with the appearance of the Norsemen in Eastern Europe. M.I. Artamonov, in fact, wrote that both peoples, having migrated from various places, had eventually met and, apparently, contracted an alliance, resulting in the emergence of Rus' as a new ethno-social unity. He related the subdivision of Eastern Slavs into tribes listed in the *Tale of Bygone Years* with various autochthonous groups, Baltic and Finnic, assimilated by the Slavic immigrants (Artamonov 1990, pp. 283-285).

Notably, the idea that early medieval cultures of the forest zone were predominantly Baltic was borrowed by the archaeologists from the linguists. The huge stratum of Baltic hydronymy on the Upper Dnepr was

[7] To this list one might add posthumous publications prepared in the early 1970s but unfinished (Tretyakov 1982; Artamonov 1990). Certain themes are rendered in more detail and sincerity there, but the most important things were said in 1966-70.

unreservedly ascribed to the actual presence of Balts in the area during the early Middle Ages (Toporov, Trubachev 1962, p. 236). The tentative nature of linguistic chronology was something that even the most cautious scholars preferred to ignore for the time being.

The second viewpoint was taken by P.N. Tretiakov. It can, with some reservations, be described as autochthonist since the Slavs were believed to have originated locally from the Zarubintsy culture. In the mind of many later scholars, the idea was so intrinsically associated with the "ideological façade" of Soviet archaeology that even L.S. Klejn, whose account of Tretiakov's work is generally quite objective, has nonetheless made in passing a rash claim that "Tretiakov contrived to *elaborate an official theory* without having lost the respect of his colleagues" (italics mine – N.P.) (Klejn 2014, p. 238).

The idea of being "official", then, becomes an indelible mark stigmatizing a reputed scholar forty years after his death. Actually, however, Tretiakov's search for the Slavic homeland was a bone fide attempt to solve a puzzle by scholarly methods and without transcending the scientific domain. His studies marked the beginning of a new stage of studies, which radically changed our notions of early Slavic archaeology.

In this regard, following P.V. Shuvalov, I would like to note that "both the hyper-critical and the credulous positions in the evaluation of sources indicate a sound and positive development of its criticism. In the same way as a fair trial, … requires both a prosecutor and a defendant, the examination of a source needs adepts representing both extreme positions" (Shuvalov 2009, p. 77). Formulated with regard to the study of early medieval epic and script, this dictum equally applies to the assessment of sources for the early medieval archaeology of Eastern Europe.

While the "critical standpoint" intentionally accentuated the contradictions, revealing the lacunae in the available evidence, its principal opponent, Tretiakov, in response, looked for new sources. In the 1960s his Upper Dnepr Expedition launched large-scale excavations in the Desna basin, first around Bryansk and then around Chernigov. Over fifty previously unknown sites dating to various periods and associated with different cultures were detected and excavated. Later it turned out that they represent a large cultural community subdivided into several cultural and chronological horizons spanning a period between AD 100-700 (Goriunov 1983, p. 22).

Tretiakov himself had no doubts that he had discovered the missing links in what he believed to be an evolution from Zarubintsy to the early Slavic culture. In his view, this process was contemporaneous with the Chernyakhov cuture while being unrelated to it. People displaced from their former places of residence continued to practice their traditions in

Fig. 2. Petr N. Tretiakov in the mid-1970s (© The Archive of IHMC RAS).

the forest zone of the Dnepr basin; later some of them returned to more southern areas… He did understand, of course, that a detailed study and publication of sites he had discovered was something he himself could never accomplish.

Despite that he did not abandon his attempts to solve the puzzle by revealing the successions and stable affinities in the mosaic of divergent Late Roman and early medieval groups of sites hidden under the Post-Zarubintsy umbrella. He conceived the ethno-cultural situation on the Upper Dnepr as a motley pattern of "Slavic areas" interspersed with "Baltic islands". He ascribed the Kolochin sites, which show a marked influence of the Zarubintsy tradition, to the Slavs, and cultures such as Tushemlya-Bantserovshchina to the Balts, although some of them display a "mixed tradition" (Tretiakov 1966, pp. 220-230, 254-280).

In his last study, published posthumously, Tretiakov viewed the Kiev type sites as a link between Zarubintsy and those dating to AD 500-750 (Tretiakov 1982, pp. 60-65). The Kiev type settlements were first described by V.N. Danilenko as early as the 1950s based on a cluster of sites in the Middle Dnepr. He himself refrained from publishing anything beyond an abstract (Danilenko 1955). Tretiakov was the first to regard his findings in a broader context and demonstrate their key role in the ethno-cultural history of the Dnepr basin between AD 200-500.

Fig. 3. Ivan I. Liapushkin in the field (1950s) (© The Archive of IHMC RAS).

Many reviews of scholarship add one more name to those of top-ranking archaeologists such as Tretiakov, Liapushkin, and Artamonov – V.V. Sedov, the author of yet another major study published in 1970 (Sedov 1970a). Its main thrust is the juxtaposition of archaeological sources and written evidence about late 1st millennium AD Slavic tribal unities such as Dregovichi, Krivichi, Severyane, Radimichi, etc. I should mention that Sedov's views of Slavs in Eastern Europe are generally, though not fully, consistent with the "critical theory", claiming that not only in the Early Iron Age but also in the Early Middle Ages the Upper Dnepr and Western Dvina basins had been inhabited by Baltic tribes, which were later assimilated by the Slavs. By the same token, Sedov does not consider Zarubintsy Slavic. He also subscribes to Artamonov's view regarding the importance of assimilation in the origins of the Old Russian culture of various regions. Both scholars deemed it one of the key factors.

Nevertheless Sedov's monograph really contains the first fruits of the theory that might be considered the "third one", i.e., a full-fledged alternative to the former two. He thought the Slavs' division had occurred much earlier the mid of the 1st millennium AD, and was looking for several lines of their history in this period. Consequently Sedov ascribed to Slavs, apart from the Prague-Korchak culture, sites like Pen'kovka and kurgan cultures of northwestern Rus' (long barrows and *sopki*). He considered them different options of Slavic culture. Finally, he sought early Slavs among the cultures formed under strong La Tene and especially Roman veil (Pshevor, part of the Chernyakhov). Neither Lyapushkin and Artamonov, nor Tretyakov could agree with this. The contradictions seemed to be critical.

Today, looking back, we can state that the "hypercritical theory" accumulated the ideas put forward by quite a number of prominent specialists in Eastern European Middle Ages before the mid-1960s. These include Gali F. Korzukhina, Mariia A. Tikhanova, Irina P. Rusanova, Iurii V. Kukharenko, Kseniia V. Kasparova, Evgenii A. Schmidt, Ol'ga I. Davidan, and many others. Minor disagreements between them notwithstanding, it can be stated that reputed Soviet archaeologists of the 1960s (those

having gained what Pierre Bourdieu termed "scientific capital" not by administrative interference but by actual scholarly merits) advocated a stringent critical approach to archaeological evidence regarding the ethnic and cultural history of early medieval Eastern Europe.

Shortly afterward this stringent approach was demonstrated by I.P. Rusanova. Her seminal study on Slavic archaeology (Rusanova 1976) was a milestone in Soviet early medieval archaeology. Integrating the findings of the "summing up" period, it essentially belonged to the next stage, when broad but lacunary generalizations gave way to a closer look at specific regions.

In Rusanova's study, for the first time in Soviet and Western scholarship alike, a comprehensive view of the Prague culture as an archaeological source was provided. No such view can be found in the works of her predecessors including I. Borkovsky himself. Importantly, apart from regrouping the material on the basis of her own, more or less astute observations, she improved the analytic methodology to a large measure by elaborating the classification of vessels based on the proportions of intact specimens and formulated distinct criteria of similarity versus dissimilarity of types peculiar to various cultures. The detailed typology allowed to create a periodization and to consider (for the first time!) the dynamics of the early Slavic culture. It is now a generally recognized basic research component of the Early Slavonic studies in the post-Soviet space (as well as in Poland, Bulgaria, Serbia, Slovakia, Czech Republic, partly Romania) (see Profantova 2015; Elinkova 2015; Fusek 2015; Stanchu 2015; Pleterskii 2015; Radichevich 2015; Iankovich 2015).

One of the chapters in Rusanova's monograph focuses on the Upper Dnepr sites such as Tushemlya, Bantserovshchina, and Kolochin, which she separated from the Prague culture. After a detailed analysis of pottery, architecture, and funerary rite she concluded that these sites fall within a single culture. On this issue she disagreed with Tretiakov, who considered the Upper Dnepr sites culturally heterogeneous (Slavic and Baltic). Rusanova (as well as Yu.V. Kukharenko and his disciple K.V. Kasparova) questioned his ideas regarding the impact of Zarubintsy on these sites. In their view, Zarubintsy traditions had gone extinct by the mid-first millennium AD, having been replaced by more ancient ones, originating from the Early Iron Age of the forest zone (Rusanova 1976, pp. 56-84). Accordingly, she regarded the early medieval groups associated with Zarubintsy as Balts.

Quite a few conclusions made by Rusanova have remained valid until the present time. This primarily concerns her thorough analysis and description of the Prague culture. Some of her views, on the other hand,

were rooted in the poor chronological classification of sites excavated by Tretiakov, his pupils and followers (see below). Rusanova, for instance, pooled sites on the Desna, dating to AD 250-500, with Kolochin sites (5th-7th centuries). But most importantly, using only intact vessels for establishing the typology of ceramics results in considerable loss of information. Eventually the idea that the entire Upper Dnepr population from the Desna to the Berezina was associated with a single culture was challenged again (Gorunov 1981; Gavritukhin, Oblomskii 1994, p. 100).

Fig. 4. Irina P. Rusanova (1970s). Courtesy of I.O. Gavritukhin.

5. The new generation of the 1960s and 1970s: new methodological seminars

In the 1960s, several very important educational and organizational projects were launched in Leningrad and Moscow. In their course, a new generation of Russian early medieval archaeologists emerged, and the discipline itself experienced an upsurge, which might appear unexpected to an outside observer. Actually it was quite predictable. During the political stagnation period, crowds of high school graduates stormed the university admission boards. According to Sergey V. Beletskii, currently a professor, who was an enrollee at that time, the number of applicants per place at the Department of Archaeology in 1970 was 68, the respective figure for the entire Faculty of History being only 15.

No doubt this mirrored the public attitudes of the Brezhnev era. All the political pressure notwithstanding, being a scholar was prestigious even despite small salaries. Scholarly endeavor and its results were perceived as a means of self-actualization, essentially an end in itself. Under Soviet egalitarianism, money was not a universal criterion of success. What mattered was inner autonomy, public esteem, and the status of an intellectual. And this was what membership of the least politicized scholarly disciplines guaranteed. One of these was archaeology.

The first of these projects was the famous Slavonic-Varangian Seminar at the Department of Archeology, launched in 1964 by L.S. Klejn under an active support of the then Department Chair M.I. Artamonov

(Klejn 2009). It is not by accident that the Norse problem was chosen – the spontaneous public interest in it was mounting.

"I arrived at an understanding that young people were mostly attracted and mobilized by true problems, not by educational exercises", the founder of the seminar recalled, "True problems and acute issues, prompting one to struggle, exercise courage and responsibility. Then I came up with an idea of launching not just an educational seminar focused on a specific issue, but one that would raise topical questions of archaeology; one where undergraduates would not merely solve problems for the sake of education, but would become motivated to contribute to science from the very beginning" (Klejn 2009, p. 274). Clearly, having started collecting data on the "Varangian problem", the teacher and his pupils realized that the task would take many years. After enriching their knowledge of issues they had been entitled to explore, many undergraduates began perceiving them as a lifework.

The late Iurii M. Lesman, who enrolled in the seminar in 1968 as a fourteen-year-old boy attending the Department of Archaeology school circle, shared valuable reminiscences of the seminar's early stage:

"The overall impression was stunning: I saw an entire team of friends who jointly participated in a scholarly endeavor… Klejn corrected them and summed up the results, but the principal issues and talks were up to the undergraduates. Their arguments with one another and with Klejn occasionally became heated… My naïve questions were answered; I was regarded as a junior colleague, not as an importune child."

"Themes taken up by the seminar members eventually changed. At first they concentrated on unambiguously Norse sites both in Sweden (Birka) and in the east (Grobini, Ladoga, the area around Lake Ladoga, Gnezdovo). Later, the Yaroslavl kurgans and Shestovitsy were added to the list. Eventually it became apparent that an even broader array of sites had to be revised. Topics chosen by the undergraduates, who were supervised by graduates – G.S. Lebedev, then V.A. Bulkin and, somewhat later, I.V. Dubov, mostly transcended the limits of the Varangian problem in the narrow sense while still conforming to it in a broader sense. To understand the origins of the Old Russian culture and state, it was not enough to collect and analyze the Norse component itself – its local context, too, had to be understood. The bounds of the Varangian problem were becoming to narrow (Lesman 2009, pp. 281-282).

The Slavonic-Varangian Seminar functioned from the mid-1960s until the early 1990s, having given rise to several subgenerations of Petersburg specialists in early medieval archaeology. When I joined it in 1974, some elder graduates had already turned into young university lecturers whereas others, such as Vladimir A. Nazarenko, Valerii P. Petrenko,

Evgenii A. Riabinin, Evgenii N. Nosov, Natalia V. Khvoschinskaia, Anna A. Peskova, etc., became postgraduates or Institute of Archaeology (LOIA) staff members, actively exploring the Slavo-Finno-Balto-Scandinavian problems. This was the generation that came to replace the founders.

Unfortunately, Artamonov's death in 1972 deprived the Slavonic-Varangian seminar of any administrative support. The Faculty of History Dean Office immediately struck it out of the curricula[8]. This evoked protest on the part of second sub-generation members, who had joined the seminar in its heyday and refused to stoop to fate. Three of them — Iurii M. Lesman, Mikhail M. Kazanskii, and Sergey V. Beletskii — took up chairing the sittings themselves, once a week as before. Eventually the department leadership came up with a Solomon's decision. The seminar was reopened under a new neutral name (something like *Problems in Old Russian Archaeology*). But for two decades it remained what it had been for its members — the old legendary Slavonic-Varangian seminar.

Rather soon, in 1968, what seemed to be a project unique to Leningrad reappeared in Moscow — the D.A. Avdusin's Smolensk Archaeological Seminar at the Moscow University Department of Archaeology. It was indirectly but markedly influenced by the Slavonic-Varangian Seminar, then at its peak. Somewhat earlier, in 1965, a discussion on the Varangian problem was held at the Leningrad University Faculty of History. It had been officially designed as a public crackdown on "Normanists". Unexpectedly, however, the faculty leadership failed to bring the freethinkers to shame. For one thing, professors of history, entitled to accuse the younger generation of digressing from Marxism were reluctant to assume the role of censors — those times had passed. For another thing, Klejn's advocacy was very clever. What was intended as a demonstrative crackdown turned out a triumph.

It was the seminar members who, in the late 1960s, became the principal staff of Tretiakov's field projects in the Desna area. Discoveries relating to the time span between AD 250-750 were made before their eyes and under their direct participation. Yet another breakthrough came in 1967: undergraduates engaged in Liapushkin's Gnezdovo Project took part in another important discovery: they demonstrated that a large area near the Gnezdovo kurgan group, previously thought to be another such group disturbed by plowing, turned out to be a large early medieval settlement. Liapushkin 's excavations at that place revealed what is now seen as a major proto-urban centers on the trans-European "Road from the Varangians to the Greeks".

[8] In the early 1970s, Klejn entrusted two of his graduates, Gleb S. Lebedev and Vasilii A. Bulkin, with the leadership of the seminar. For various reasons they were unable to counter the administrative pressure.

Fig. 5. The eldest members of Slavonic-Varangian Seminar (late 1960s). Staraia Ladoga. From left to right, stand: Gleb S. Lebedev, Konstantin M. Plotkin, Evgenii A. Riabinin; sit: Vasilii A. Bulkin, Vladimir A. Nazarenko (author's archive)

During a joint field work at Gnezdovo, young archaeologists from Moscow and Leningrad got in with one another. The Moscow team got infatuated with the idea of a problem-oriented seminar like the one in Leningrad and were eager to follow suit. Indeed, already in 1968, a similar seminar was launched at the Moscow University Department of Archaeology. Its main paradox was that Daniil A. Avdusin – the only conceivable convener – was an anti-Normanist. "Normanism", as he understood it, was tantamount to the racist idea of German racial superiority[9]. At the beginning of his field work at Smolensk and Gnezdovo project he sweepingly rejected any Norse participation in the culture of Old Rus' during AD 800-1000.

Later, however, Avdusin showed himself a tolerant and thoughtful leader; in fact, he encouraged his pupils to pursue the exploration of "heretic" topics. He did his best to acquaint them with the evidence of the Norse presence in Old Rus'. In 1970, he assumed leadership of the

[9] It should be noted that Klejn, too, defined classical "Normanism" as a "variety of biological determinism in history", an "assertion of the inborn superiority of Scandinavians (northern Germanic speakers) over other peoples and a claim that this superiority accounted for their achievements" (KLEJN 1999, p. 99). If so, the issue was unrelated to science. Klejn's dictum however, did not in the least apply to the analysis of archaeological sources by members of the Slavonic-Varangian Seminar even though its members recognized a key role of the Norse in Old Rus'. This was in no way a variety of racism – this was a purely scientific discussion.

Moscow Department of Archaeology Gnezdovo project, and excavations at the complex became regular. As a result, new unique findings became available to the Smolensk Seminar members. For the undergraduates and graduates, as in Leningrad, the work was not merely part of the archaeological education but a first step in their future professional career.

It very soon became clear that in Moscow as well, "stereotypes of official historiography were not believed to be worth serious consideration by students, especially by those familiar with archaeological scholarship" (Petrukhin, Pushkina 2009, p. 302). Even Avdusin's views were evolving, and his professionalism eventually outbalanced ideological clichés (Avdusin 1988). His former reputation of a Soviet orthodox proved an advantage as it prevented authorities from suspecting his pupils of dissent. As a result, the Moscow seminar, unlike that in Leningrad, functioned smoothly and without outward interference. It had soon outgrown the level of an educational project for undergraduates, having become fully scholarly. In the 1970s, its elder members such as Tamara A. Pushkina, Andrey E. Leontyev, Vladimir Y. Petrukhin, Elena A. Mel'nikova, Elena V. Kamenetskaia, etc., were prominent specialists in early medieval archaeology and history[10].

In other words, the seeds Klejn had sown in Leningrad came up remarkably well in Moscow, too. Of the "true issue" that had cemented the two student communities, the basic approach, one must admit, was the same: analyzing Scandinavian elements in the Eastern European context without regard to the official ideological façade. This stance was shared by seminar members in Leningrad and Moscow alike. "The presence of the Norse and their active role were beyond doubt (we adopted this idea from the very beginning). What it all boiled down to was the necessity to work honestly and thoroughly, in a professional manner" (Lesman 2009, p. 282).

Another important project developed in Moscow at that period was the Novgorodian Seminar, convened by Valentin L. Ianin at the Moscow Department of Archaeology. This was the main venue for comprehensive discussions around various sources (archaeological, written, paleographic, numismatic, sphragistic, etc.) for the study of Old Russian history. Ianin himself was a key authority in such an analysis (see Ianin 1977). Excavations of the ancient habitation layers of Novgorod, extremely rich in finds, secured a stable influx of new information. At Ianin's seminar, understandably, early medieval topics were subordinate to those relating to the period between AD 1100-1500. However, this seminar influenced quite a number of future specialists in medieval studies in Moscow and elsewhere.

[10] Later, thanks to a good organization, the Smolensk Seminar outlived its Slavonic-Varangian counterpart by many years. In fact, it continues even now under the guidance of T.A. Pushkina.

Broadly shared views, of course, did not preclude disagreement. I remember well that at the sittings of the Slavonic-Varangian seminar in the mid-1970s, a sharp distinction was drawn between notions such as (1) 'Slavic' versus 'Old Russian', and (2) 'ethnic' versus 'ethnographic'. This, perhaps, was the major distinction between ourselves and our Moscow colleagues, who adhered to the tradition of equating archaeological cultures with 'tribes', whereby stable elements of the cultural (ethnographic) complex were still viewed as 'ethnic indicators' with all the ensuing conclusions. In Leningrad the idea was frowned upon more and more often. In the words of Y.M. Lesman, he "was amazed by individual ethnic attributions of burials and calculations based on them – a practice frequent at that time and later". The reason was that his teachers at the seminar had convinced him that a deceased person does not bury him/herself, and that the funerary rite is indicative of its subjects, not of its object" (Lesman 2009, p. 282). This approach was revised in the late 1980-90s, in the works by most Moscow scholars.

Little by little an idea crystallized in the minds of Leningrad young archaeologists – an idea of Old Russian culture as a complex multiethnic unity, the "state culture" of Old Rus', one that had absorbed numerous non-Slavic elements. By far the most enigmatic component, however, was Slavic proper. How did it originate? How did it eventually come to predominate? Most of us undergraduates of the 1970s accepted Liapushkin's and Artamonov's idea that Slavs had begun colonizing northern (upper) Rus' no earlier than the 9th century. No one of us had ever questioned the Scandinavian veil spread over the culture of Eastern Europe in AD 800-1000 – this was a firmly established fact. There were more questions than answers, however.

Culture of the late 1st millennium AD on the Upper Dnepr and in northwestern Russia appeared to be an uninterrupted Baltic or Balto-Finnic continuum. But birchbark documents unambiguously demonstrate that in the 11th century the written (and oral?) language of the wider population in Novgorod Land was Old Russian.

Mass migration? Rapid assimilation? Well, maybe. But what could account for this rapid dispersal? Where are its archaeological traces? How did Slavs come to be assimilators given that Balts and Finns outnumbered them whereas the social elite was largely Scandinavian?

Ultimately it became clear that our teachers were right in admitting the inadequacy of the database. Their theories were hypothetical, and so was Tretiakov's autochthonist theory, which we used to censure for what we believed was lack of stringency. The line it drew marked the start, not the finish of discoveries and methodological elaborations.

6. New discoveries and the methodological crisis: the last decades of 20th century

6.1. Theoretical approaches

The peculiar upsurge of "hyper-criticism" in the late 1960s signaled a methodological crisis in the interpretation of sources. Any translation from the language of archaeology to that of history and ethnology is inaccurate and ambiguous. When this fact was acknowledged, an upsurge of interest in theoretical approaches to archaeological sources ensued. In Russian archaeology, the 1990s were marked by a number of important theoretical discussions. Among the issues raised were the status of archaeology among other disciplines, the specificity of archaeological sources, strategies of classification and typology is historical and archaeological studies, prospects of systemic and structural approaches, etc. (Masson, Boryaz 1975; Klejn 1979; Kolchin 1979, a/o).

The rise of methodological issues culminated in Leo Klejn's first monograph *Archaeological Sources* (1979), which laid the foundation for his system of basic archaeological concepts. The book, for the first time, integrated 20th century Western approaches to archaeological classification and interpretation of sources. Also, it outlined Klejn's own original theory explaining the specificity of archaeological analysis and a archaeology's special status in the system of disciplines.

The principal distinctness of archaeological sources, according to Klejn, lay in the fact that scholars had to overcome the "double breach": that between the traditions (that of the remote past and the present one) and the "objectivation breach". The former is caused by the loss of ancient meanings underlying the artifacts of the extinct culture and their contexts. The latter breach is between the realm of objects and that of ideas with which scientists operate (Klejn 1978, p. 61).

"Taken separately, each of the two breaches, while obstructive to cognition, is not so dangerous" (Klejn 1978, p. 62). In ethnography, the cultural context, unintelligible to the researcher, can be understood through communication with those involved. In ancient history, information is translated via written tradition, which by itself is a verbal explanation of the long extinct culture. "But taken together, both breaches result in the scholar's radical isolation from past reality, and sometimes to complete inability to understand the meaning of the information" (Klejn 1978, p. 62). Respectively, to overcome the isolation, a "double translation" is required.

First and foremost, archaeological sources need to be described. They must be *translated from the language of artifacts into that of com-*

Fig. 6. Leo S. Klejn (2000s). Photo by Iulia Lisniak (L.S. Klejn's archive).

mon verbal science. Then the "second translation" follows – the *decoding of latent information and its inclusion into the system of other disciplines* such as history, sociology, ethnology, etc.

To be sure, the information extracted from archaeological sources does mirror the realities of the distant past. The question, however, is, how does it mirror those realities? The information we glean from archaeological sources is reduced, patchy, hard to understand, like a distorted text in which over 30 % of words are missing, or like a silhouette successively reflected by a series of distorting mirrors. The "translation" of information into the language of historical and social disciplines, then, is not a translation but a decoding, something like an investigation a criminal case. Such an investigation involves intricate analysis of traces and fragments, the use of additional data from various sources.

According to Klejn, it is the "double breach" that prompts us to view archaeological sources (i.e., ancient material remains) as a separate category different from other categories of sources examined by historical disciplines. The analysis of archaeological sources must constitute a distinct discipline – archaeology, which belongs neither to history nor to anthropology. It has its own objects and methods (Klejn 1978). The key element in Klejn's system is the analysis of sources; only later, however, did he describe archaeology as a discipline focusing on sources.

This theory influenced early medieval studies, which were undergoing a critical stage of paradigm shift, in large measure. Of course by far not all experts in medieval archaeology even in Leningrad considered them-

selves Klejn's followers (in the same way as Molière's character did not suspect he was speaking prose). But everyone was adopting his experience. The understanding of what the archaeological study must be like, how the notions of "type", "classification", and "archaeological culture" should be defined, was gained from Klejn's works. Nevertheless, all sorts of views of various issues were expounded at his classes, and we were supposed to assess them critically.

Not only *Archaeological Sources*, but also *Archaeological Typology* (Klejn 1991) and his books published much later and containing a detailed analysis of Malmer's "rationalistic archaeology" (Klejn 2010) and the British-American "New Archaeology" (Klejn 2009b) were, for the most part, written in the 1970s. Those who were undergraduates at that time had a chance to get acquainted with their content during his classes, long before publication[11]. Klejn himself described this time as follows:

"Leningrad provided an excellent venue for the elaboration and revision of archaeological theories. Here, I was engaged in permanent and fruitful discussions with major advocates of all principal directions of archaeological typology – incidentally, members of various generations. An ardent opponent of morphological typology was Sergey Semenov, who introduced the use-and-wear (traceological) method. Despite my peccant (in his view) belief in type and archaeological culture, he invariably supported my theoretical studies. The inductive-analytical approach to typology, similar to that elaborated by Spaulding, was being advocated by my peer and friend Iakov Sher. Our debates used to be heated. Conventionality of types and cultures was ardently proclaimed by Gennady Grigoryev, a major expert in Paleolithic studies" (Klejn 1991, pp. 13-14).

Looking back from my present standpoint, I think that in the 1970s Klejn's theories meant "running ahead of time", and precisely for that reason they are so topical today. His standards of archaeological analysis were often too high to match the available evidential base. This marked yet another breach, a yawning gap, in fact – between elegant theory and dispirited practice. To bridge it, one had to look for new sources, descending from the radiant peaks of theory to the lowly routine of empiricism – gleaning archival data, conducting field surveys and excavations.

Nonetheless, the surge of interest in methodology we had witnessed in the 1970s was an invaluable experience. It contributed to the understanding of discrepancies between the boundaries of ethnic groups and those of archaeological cultures. Also, it prompted archaeologists to

[11] I recall well Klejn's free elective on the New Archaeology, which I took in 1978-79. His fundamental monograph on this subject was published only thirty years later, with some additions (Klejn 2009b). Interestingly, even at the turn of the century it does not in the least appear outdated.

apply semiotic and informational approaches to the study of cultures and cultural transformations, and to explore the ways these might be mirrored in archaeological sources. New approaches proved helpful already in the 1980s (see section 7.1). Finally, greater awareness of theoretical issues raised new questions to the raw data.

As a rule, the generation of founders worked with huge aggregations of sites. They strove to reveal the general tendencies in their distribution and change, perceived as the "ethno-cultural history" of the regions. V.V. Sedov continued working in this vein, by "broad strokes", even in the 1980-1990s. A closer look at relatively compact areas (a challenge put forward in the 1970s) disclosed the heterogeneity of these aggregations of sites. Distribution areas of various cultures showed partial overlap. The archaeological map revealed numerous blank spots and a generally patchy cultural pattern.

Another obstacle was the paucity of in-depth chronological studies relating to Eastern Europe during the period between AD 250-1000. Whatever had been done required a radical revision (Ambroz 1971a, 1971b; Abramova 1975; Goldina, 1979; Zasetskaya 1979; Zasetskaya *et al.* 1979; Aibabin 1982, 1984). Too few artifacts could be used as chronological indicators of the 3rd to 5th centuries; even those available (enameled ornaments of non-Roman origin, etc.) were often erroneously attributed to later periods. The chronology of the AD 700-1100 span, too, was but a series of lacunae. Even the final stage of the Early Middle Ages (AD 900-1100) could be viewed largely if not exclusively through the prism of towns such as Ladoga. Novgorod, Pskov, Beloozero and a few small forts. Cemeteries such as long and round kurgans with cremations, *sopki*, kurgans with inhumations) normally contained few burial goods and their chronology, both relative and absolute, was hard to evaluate.

New evidence was urgently needed — new findings, without which the discussion of problems posed by the founders was like running around in circles. Therefore in the 1970s, a new wave of field studies and discoveries co-occurred with an intense search for new paradigms that could make the decoding of archaeological information more accurate. The first to be raised were issues such as (a) compiling detailed archaeological maps of micro-regions, and (b) finding clusters of interrelated sites and their analysis.

This was the start of the "great archaeological discoveries", which dramatically changed the views of early medieval Eastern Europe. This was the time of intense field surveys, compiling summaries and maps, establishing local variants of known cultures, and search for those yet unknown. Everyone was engaged — autochthonists and skeptics alike. The archaeological situation was changing before our eyes.

6.2. The quest for early Slavs

The focus on the Varangian problem and the initial stages of Old Rus' diverted many young archaeologists of the 1960s from the problem of early Slavs. This issue appeared to have been essentially resolved, at least with regard to eastern Europe. Under Liapushkin's influence, the Prague culture was perceived as a monolith associated with undivided proto-Slavs, who originated somewhere on the Danube. This was the region from whence certain Slavic tribes were thought to have migrated to the right bank of the Middle Dnepr in the 6th or 7th century. All the local variation had allegedly originated later. This was a consistent theory, placing the Slavic homeland in Central Europe. Young archaeologists sneered at Tretiakov's attempts to locate it in the Dnepr area. He had no followers in Leningrad.

Tretiakov, worried by the absence of a successor who might continue his work, literally demanded from the administration of the LOIA that it find and enroll the candidate. The search was successful, and Evgenii A. Goriunov, a graduate of Department of Archaeology, whose thesis was about the Neolithic, agreed to shift to the Early Middle Ages for the sake of a permanent job, which, at that time, was prestigious and which only very few graduates were offered.

The choice was amazingly fortunate. It took just two years for the enrollee to acquire professional knowledge in a new domain. Goriunov viewed his supervisor's theory as a working hypothesis liable to testing. In his later work he combined Tretiakov's breadth of scope with a thorough analysis of data. The latter feature was a legacy of skeptics such as Liapushkin, Korzukhina, and Tikhanova, who, fortunately, were Goriunov's colleagues at LOIA (Leningrad branch of the Institute of Archaeology) for some time.

In 1971 he began his own surveys in the left-bank forest-steppe area of the Dnepr, adjacent to the Desna basin. He noted that early medieval settlements in that region are located in the floodplain, on the dunes, and on the first riverine terraces. As it turned out, his predecessors looked for them in wrong places – on high terraces and on the edges of ravines, where Chernyakhov sites were located. Goriunov, on the other hand, used his expertise in Neolithic archaeology. His surveys on the left bank of the Dnepr revealed numerous previously unknown sites. Also, he was the first to note that in certain areas, Chernyakhov and Kiev type sites coexisted and their distribution areas overlapped.

In the course of his excavations, now deemed exemplary, Goriunov carried out an in-depth study of a series of stratified settlements, which included late Zarubintsy (Kiev type), Pen'kovka, Sakhnovka, Kolochin, and

Volyntsevo horizons. This allowed him to elaborate his own criteria of ceramic analysis, suggest a new classification, generalize previous findings, and eventually to revise traditional views regarding the cultural stratigraphy and ethnic history of the region.

Goriunov refrained from describing the Dnepr sites dating to the AD 100-500 interval as 'late Zarubintsy'. Despite certain similarities, he drew a line between this culture and the classical Zarubintsy culture of 300 BC-AD 100 and proposed to attribute them to the Kiev type (Goriunov 1981, p. 36). His conclusions regarding the affinities between the Kiev type, Kolochin, and more southerly Pen'kovka sites, on the one hand, and those of the Tushemlia-Bantserovschina type, on the other (I.P. Rusanova and V.V. Sedov pooled them into a single early medieval culture of the Dnepr Balts).

In 1975 I took part in Goriunov's excavations at Khitsy and Vovki – unfortified settlements that are now regarded as key sites in the area. Evenings at the camp fire contributed to the peculiar air of this expedition. Everyone joined, from the chief to the unsuccessful university enrollee, for whom the field trip was a means to quell his or her frustration. Equality reigned supreme; as a rule, tea was preferred to liquors. Songs, Russian and Ukrainian, alternated with lengthy debates around archaeology and the cultures we were studying. These conversations were initiated by M.M. Kazanski – now Michael Kazanski, Docteur habilité at CNRS, France, and then a young Department of Archaeology graduate, Slavonic-Varangian Seminar member and Goriunov's pupil. He alone matched our chief in erudition. Having fallen under the spell of their unending thoughtful dialog, we juniors listened open-mouthed, day in, day out, barely getting a word in edgeways.

It won't be an overstatement to say that we were admitted to the adytum of a true scholar. We felt the pulsation of his thinking, his longing for the solution to the problem, his doubts, the occasional indecision, and eventual assuredness when the facts supporting his view had been collected. Goriunov's project was a school of rigid thinking; attending such a debating society, even passively, was not in vain.

Unlike Tretiakov, an old school member, who sought to reconstruct the entire picture using isolated details, his pupil focused on the examination of sources: typology, classification, and per area analysis with simultaneous quest for general solutions (Goriunov 1981, pp. 3-4). Such a stringency guaranteed the result: although facts have been rapidly accumulating over the last three decades, Goriunov's monograph – the only one he was able to prepare – is as timely as it was. More and more facts in support his hypotheses emerge (Terpilovskii 2001, p. 33).

In the early 1980s, Goriunov designed a study addressing the compar-

ative analysis of the three key early medieval cultures of the forest (Prague, the most part of Kolochin) and forest-steppe zone (Pen'kovka). While he attributed them to the Slavs, his conclusions were not hasty. In his view, during the period between AD 500-750 the Slavic world was much more variable than Liapushkin, Artamonov, and Rusanova, among others, believed. His plans did not come true, however – Goriunov passed away in 1981.

His demise, which coincided with Kazanski's emigration to France, changed the situation with early medieval archaeology in Leningrad dramatically. To be sure, large-scale excavations initiated by Goriunov were continued by LOIA staff members until the early 1990s. The most important among those were large-area excavation at Khutor (Velikie Budki) – the key site of the Kolochin culture, dating to AD 400-700. The most important find from that settlement was a hoard associated with the Antae – the first one found in the settlement context during systematic excavations. Also noteworthy were excavations of stratified settlements at Gochevo, Kursk Province, with layer dating to AD 100-400 and 800-900 (Goriunova, Rodinkova 1992; Goriunova 2004). The theoretical tradition derived from Tretiakov, however, worked itself out.

Apart from the death of a top-level scholar, capable of enriching this tradition by new approaches (without these, a tradition is bound to grow obsolete), the reason was that Goriunov's potential pupils in Leningrad were absorbed by 'Mark B. Shchukin's seminar', also known as Chronograph. This new informal project, co-chaired by Dmitrii A. Machinskii (like Shchukin, he was Tikhanova's pupil), shifted the course of early medieval studies in Leningrad, which Tretiakov and by Goriunov had marked out. As a result, in the mid-1980s, this course was more consistently followed not in Leningrad but in Moscow, by Andrey M. Oblomskii and his associates at IA RAS (as well as in Kiev, by Rostislav V. Terpilovskii, who consolidated the traditions of Danilenko's and Tretyakov's scholarly trends).

At present, the Department for the study of the Great Barbarian Migrations era, founded in the Institute of Archaeology RAS Department of Medieval Archaeology, is the largest and logistically unified Russian experts team in that area[12]. In practice, its scope ranges from the early Roman period to the early Middle Ages.

Moscow scholars have always coordinated their efforts with those of Ukrainian colleagues, primarily with R.V. Terpilovskii. The Russian-Ukrain-

[12] Initially, the group of the Great Barbarian Migrations era was founded within the Department of Medieval Archaeology (IA RAS) in 2002 (Oblomskii 2004, pp. 130-133). Its core consisted of specialist who had started working on those issues in the 1980s – A.M. Oblomskii, V.I. Kulakov, I.V. Islanova, I.O. Gavritukhin, and a number of young employees. Now the group became a serarate department. See http://archaeolog.ru/ for bibliography.

ian cooperation in early Slavonic studies was maintained at various levels, formal and informal alike, at the field, conceptual, and publication levels. Several directions such as the post-Zarubintsy cultural horizon, Kiev culture, etc. were essentially explored jointly, within a single research community. This situation continued even after 1991. In most summaries of the 1990s-early 2010s, published on both sides of the border, the teams were invariably international and included the same key authors (see Oblomskii 2010, pp. 142-150 for bibliography).

The evidential base of those publications was mostly created in the 1970s and 1980s. The huge influx of new information about the AD 250-750 sites in the Desna basin and in the forest-steppe on the left bank of the Dnepr provided a possibility to shift to a new level of comparisons and generalizations.

6.3. Kurgan cultures of northwestern Russia

In the early 1970s, intense field surveys began in northwestern Russia — on the Volkhov, Ilmen', and Luga, around Lakes Chudskoe and Ladoga, and elsewhere. In their course, new approaches were developed and traditional views of seemingly well known cultures were revised. In the mid-1970s, E.N. Nosov, for the first time, drew attention to the topographic and geographic contexts of the two most common types of early medieval burial mounds in northwestern Russia — the long kurgans and *sopki*. These contexts turned out to be strikingly different, highlighting a new facet of studies — geographic and ecological.

Simultaneously a new problem arose: open settlements adjacent to the kurgan groups were disturbed by plowing. The problem was first posed by V.V. Sedov as early as 1960, based on unfortified settlements in the Smolensk area (Sedov 1960). In 1967, Liapushkin used the case of Gnezdovo to demonstrate that excavations at such sites were promising. Eventually, quite a number of unfortified settlements, topographically and culturally associated with *sopki* or with *long kurgans*, were found near Lake Il'men, on the Volkhov and on Msta. Also for the first time, remains of complex burial structures were discovered, including flat burials without kurgans. Topographically, those structures were associated with long kurgans (Nosov 1981a).

At the present time, all these findings have become an integral part of early medieval archaeology of northwestern Russia. But forty odd years ago those were true discoveries. Speculative ideas of "long" and "elongate" mounds alongside "round" ones were replaced by a new notion of two cultures, namely *culture of sopki* (CS) and *culture of long kurgans* (CLK), both being represented by cemeteries and settlements and differ-

ing in ceramics and other artifacts. Each of them occupied its own ecological niche. Also, they were markedly different in terms of chronology and distribution ranges (Nosov 1981b).

CS occupied central regions of the Novgorod Land, mostly near Lake Il'men and on the Volkhov, dating mostly to AD 900-1000 or, less often, to AD 700-900. In the eastern part of the area – near Lake Ladoga and on the Mologa – certain large kurgans, similar to *sopki* in appearance, sharply differ from them in terms of chronology and accompanying goods. They date to AD 500-750 (Bashen'kin, Vasenina 1989).

Long kurgans, in turn, fell into two groups, termed 'Smolensk–Polotsk' (AD 700-1000) and 'Pskov', or 'northern Russian' (AD 500-750). They encircle Lake Il'men from the west, south, and east in a horseshoe fashion. Such cemeteries were excavated in southwestern Estonia, east of Lake Chudskoe, on the lower Velikaia, Luga, Pliussa, Lovat', and Western Dvina. In the early 1980s, virtually identical kurgans were discovered in the remote northeast of the region – southwest of Lake Beloe and on the Msta and Mologa (Bashen'kin 1987; Islanova 2006, 2012).

E.N. Nosov, for the first time, outlined the distribution areas of those cultures and described their distinctive features. As he believed in the 1970s, CLK and CS were left by two waves of migrants (supposedly Krivichi and Novgorod Slovene of the chronicles). Also, he disagreed with Liapushkin who regarded hemispheric kurgans with cremation burials as the only reliable evidence of Slavic presence in the period between AD 800-1000. However, cemeteries cited in Liapushkin 's summary turned out to represent the same CLK, which, apart from hemispheric mounds, included those of the long, rectangular, and combined types. Groups consisting only of hemispheric ones, while being quite rare, are culturally identical with those of CLK (Nosov 1981b, pp. 43-45).

I remember well: we, the Leningrad Department of Archaeology undergraduates of the

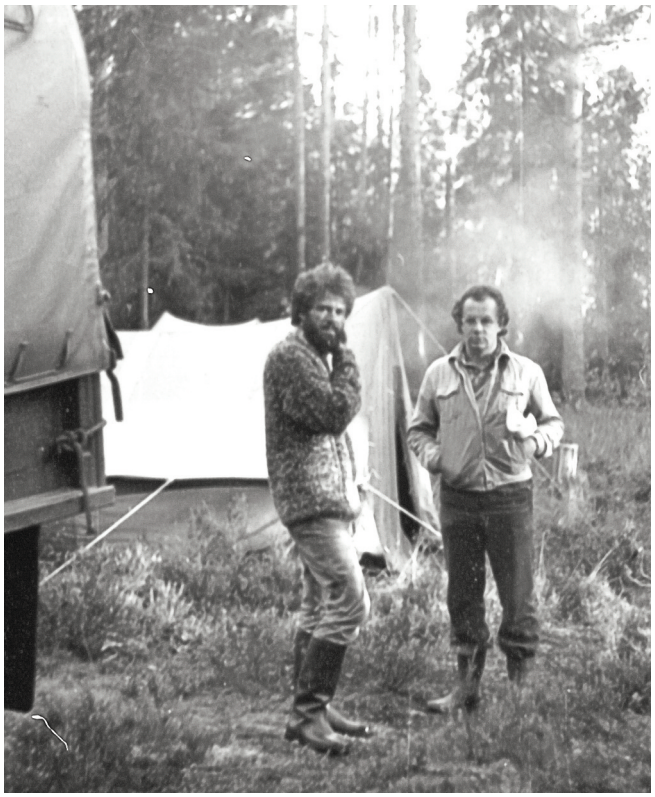

Fig. 7. During the field works in Novgorod region (mid-1980s). From right to left: Evgenii N. Nosov, Sergei G. Popov (E.N. Nosov's archive)).

1970s, did not regard the developments as extraordinary. Soviet early medieval archaeology was undergoing an information explosion. Our lives proceeded from one discovery to another, and this, we believed, was the way it should be.

The need for new field practices such as excavating spaces between the mounds, large-area excavations of kurgans, etc., was discussed at the Slavonic-Varangian seminar in the 1970s. One of the first to apply these principles in the North-West was Natal'ya V. Khvoshchinskaia. She introduced the methodology of large-area excavations covering inter-kurgan spaces during her work at the Zalakhtov'e cemetery (east of Lake Chudskoe). As a result, she revealed previously unknown types of burial structures and assessed their chronology and evolution. The analysis of this interesting cemetery led her to conclude that it was Finnic. Not long ago she integrated her findings in a monograph (Khvoshcinskaia 2004).

Any mature and state of the art idea must be in the air before being finally formulated. New methodology became adopted by everyone very soon. As a result, several new chamber-graves were discovered in Gnezdovo under the barrows already excavated in the 19th century (Avdusin, Pushkina 1989; Zharnov 1991). I practiced such an approach in the late 1970s and 1980s. This allowed me to register new types of funerary rite at Udrai, where an entire group of flat, collective, and chamber burials dating to the final early Middle Ages (11th-early 12th centuries) was discovered (Platonova 1992 and 1998). In later years this approach became standard. In fact, it is even hard now to imagine an alternative excavation technique.

One of the key features of this period was that settlements and cemeteries must be excavated together, and that settlement patterns must be viewed as a system. These ideas were consistently applied by Vladimir Y. Konetskii, Aleksandr N. Bashen'kin, Inna V. Islanova, and others including myself, during the excavations on the Luga, Msta, and Mologa. Certain differences in methodology can be explained by local specificity. In recent times, said technique has found a brilliant embodiment in interdisciplinary research of "northern Russian village", carried out by Nikolai A. Makarov and his staff for the district on Lake Kubenskoe (Makarov *et al.* 2007-2009).

A milestone in the reconstruction of the early medieval period in northern Rus' was the elaboration of the Novgorodian chronology on the basis of numerous habitation layers and using the dendroscale developed by Natal'ya B. Chernykh. Mariia V. Sedova was the first who made a classification of Novgorod jewelry and tried to correlate it with dendroscale (Sedova 1981). The impressive task of detailed elaboration of the chronology (including various categories of finds) was partly accom-

plished by Lebedev's pupil Yuriy M. Lesman of the State Hermitage.

Initially Lesman's objective was to elaborate the chronology of kurgans. Therefore, first and foremost, artifacts from burials were analyzed. Even this proved a challenge beyond the capacities of a single scholar. Lesman's accomplishment — the correlation of various finds from burials in northwestern Rus' with the dendroscale of Novgorod — was a milestone in the archaeology of northwestern Rus'.

Later, critical comments followed to the effect that it was impossible to define the chronological ranges of artifacts within a year, based on the dendroscale of Novgorod. This was but a pinprick; obviously, as every specialist understands, such an accuracy is but a convention. What really mattered was Lesman's statistics of occurrence of various artifact types (and details of their construction, decorative motifs, etc.) in each habitation layer of ancient Novgorod. As a next step, he tested his results using closed funerary associations to see if any discrepancies in his scale were present. The totality of Lesman's findings was a huge accomplishment, providing a firm basis for typological and chronological studies in final early medieval archaeology of northern Rus' (Lesman 1984, 1988).

Until the end, he continued to sophisticate and extend his work. His professional training as a specialist in computer science and applied mathematics made his judgments on the prospects of formal 'seriation chronology' and 'types of types' — cluster, chronologically meaningful, datable, etc., especially weighty (Lesman 2004). My hope is to see his fundamental monograph *The Chronology of Novgorod Jewelry (10th to 14th Centuries)* finally published.

Just at that time Vladimir F. Lapshin had elaborated a chronological scale for Early Medieval kurgans and open settlements at *Suzdal' Opolye* (Upper Volga basin). The chronology was based on the Scandinavian findings in the kurgans. At last he was able to justify the inicial period of the Old Russian colonization of the region — 925-950 AD (Lapshin 1981). Just at that time Kirill A. Mikhailov collected an extensive database for comparative analysis of the burial rites of elite graves of Inicial Rus' (especially chamber-graves and pseudo-chamber-graves) (Mikhailov, 1996; 2003; 2005; etc.).

A separate problem was the study of the Lake Ladoga area — the region where the processes of Finnish-Scandinavian contacts and fusion took place even earlier than Slavic-Finnish ones. The archaeologist who studied the burial rite of the kurgan culture southeast of Lake Ladoga in the 1970s and 1980s was Vladimir A. Nazarenko (Nazarenko 1983). He elaborated and published, regrettably in the form of brief articles only, the principles of the modern understanding of the southeastern Ladoga Kur-

gan culture and its relationship with the town of Ladoga. Based on his detailed analysis, he concluded that the Ladoga kurgan tradition had originated from several local Finnish funerary traditions, to which the kurgan rite was added. The underlying cultural elements, in his view, included "houses of the dead" in some instances, and flat cemeteries in others (Nazarenko 1982, p. 144). His conjectures were later convincingly supported by field studies thanks to the new approach to the excavation of cemeteries.

Later, the process of elaborating and clarifying the chronology of Inicial Old Rus' was continued by Oleg I. Boguslavskii (V. Nazarenko's pupil). Using various science-based methods and the results of dendrochronological research he worked out a detailed chronology and new periodization of Kurgan culture of South-East Ladoga lakeside (Boguslavskii 1992a, 1992b). Later O.I. Boguslavskii together with Ol'ga A. Shcheglova continued researching this area, but in the aspect of the problem "burial-settlement" (Boguslavskii, Shcheglova 2000). They excavated so called "Gorodok na Siasi", a fortified settlement which was an important local center of the Viking time (hypothetically identified with *Alaborg* of the ancient Scandinavian sagas (see Machinskii, Pankratova 2002, pp. 39-40).

6.4. Archaeology of proto-urban settlements

As mentioned above, a radical revision of views regarding the open settlements disturbed by plowing was prompted by Liapushkin's work at Gnezdovo. In the mid-1970s, his excavations were vividly remembered, and he seemed to be alive likewise, at least in his pupils' memories. It was his lectures and the field training that urged them to address issues which had been considered hopeless.

Discoveries were sure to follow one after another, notably at sites that had long been known and excavated. In 1973 the Department of Archaeology graduate I.V. Dubov discovered a large late 9th and 10th century cemetery, some 10 ha in surface area, near Yaroslavl in the Volga basin, in a field adjoining the well-known cemetery of the princely guard at Timerevo, where excavations had been underway for well-nigh a century. Dubov immediately discovered a large hoard of Arab silver including coins with Runic signs (Dubov 1982).

Two year later, for the first time, an early medieval layer with organic inclusions was discovered at the Novgorod (Ruric's) Gorodishche. This site had been well known for nearly a century. A.V. Artsikhovskii, M.K. Karger, and a number of others had conducted excavations there. Each time, however, the archeologists' verdict was pessimistic: the site was believed to have been disturbed, its habitation layer was allegedly rede-

Fig. 8. At the excavations of Gnezdovo. I.I. Liapushkin's expedition, 1967. G.S. Lebedev (right) and E.A. Goriunov (left) are drawing the section (The Archive of IHMC RAS).

posited and represented Old Russian culture of the time span no earlier than 12th or 13th centuries.

The discovery was made by Nosov, who, at that time, was yet another post-graduate taking part in the Slavonic-Varangian seminar. In 1975, for the first time, he cleared the transects at the Ruric's Gorodishche. In the bank of Sievers's canal, under a thick spoil heap, areas of "wet" layer with remains of wooden structures emerged. Were they early medieval? This had yet to be proven.

The proof came in 1977, when this horizon was dated by dendrochronological method to the early 10th century. This led to a radical revision of the existing ideas of the origin of Novgorod. According to a popular hypothesis by V.L. Ianin and M.H. Aleshkovskii, the town originated from a fusion of three villages supposedly differing in ethnic attribution and situated 3 km north of the fortress. But this disagreed with chronology: the habitation horizon around the fortress was by no means earlier than the 930s. After the discovery of early medieval layers inside the fortress, the location of the earliest Novgorod of the Russian chronicles became evident. The subsequent comprehensive excavations at that site, which are ongoing, have shed light on the origins and the early period of Novgorod — a 9th and 10th century administrative, military, and trade center in the Il'men area (Nosov 1990; Nosov *et al.* 2005).

Also in the 1970-1980s, ideas concerning the earliest northern Russian towns — Ladoga[13], Pskov[14], Izborsk[15] etc. — were revised. The principal

[13] The most substantial collections of articles devoted to old Ladoga are Sedov 1985; Kirpichnikov 2002; Nosov, Smirnova 2002. We must mention also serial editions: "Materials of Scientific Readings in Anna Machinskaia's memory" (SPb., published since 1995, edited by D.A. Machinskiy) and "Ladoga and its area in the Early Middle Ages" (SPb., published since 2008, edited by A.N. Kirpichnikov). See also: www.ladogamuseum.ru

[14] See bibliography of old Pskov studies in Beletskii 2011, pp 293-295.

[15] See bibliography of old Izborsk studies in Sedov 2007 and Beletskii, Lesman 2008.

challenge was to construct chronological scales. Excavations at Zemlianoe Gorodishche in Old Ladoga, carried out by the LOIA staff member E.A. Riabinin, were especially important in this respect. Having begun working there nearly twenty years after V.I. Ravdonikas and G.P. Grozdilov, Riabinin was able to subdivide the lower habitation layer $E3_3$ into three separate microlayers, thereby supporting the conclusion made by O.I. Davidan, who had revised Ravdonikas's findings (Davidan 1976). Samples of excellently preserved wood taken during his expedition provided a basis for the dendrochronological scale, which N.B. Chernykh of the Moscow Institute of Archaeology elaborated for northwestern Russia. Thanks to these new studies, the stratigraphy of Ladoga was supported by accurate estimates. The earliest date, AD 753, assumed to be Ladoga's foundation year, too, was based on Riabinin's findings (Riabinin, Chernykh 1988).

These excavations provided new evidence concerning professional manufacture in early medieval Rus'. One of the most important discoveries, which had drawn general attention, was made in the bottom layer of Ladoga – a jeweler's workshop with a toolkit dating to the mid-8th century – the earliest not only in Eastern Europe but in Northern Europe as well. Among the tools was a bronze finial representing Odin and testifying to the artisan's Norse origin (Riabinin 1980). In the overlying layers, dating to the early 800s, a glass workshop was unearthed, which, as the analysis demonstrated, used imported sand (Riabinin 1997). Although this workshop was not described in detail by Riabinin, it can be regarded as the earliest evidence of glassworking in Northern and Eastern Europe.

Riabinin was a brilliant excavator and the level of his techniques was quite high. Those who observed him at Old Ladoga witnessed his professional skills growing from one field season to another. He was perfectly endowed with the ability to "see the layer". I was fortunate to work with him at the excavations of Zemlianoe Gorodishche in 1982, and I will never forget the scrupulousness with which he cleared the deposits. Should unexpected problems arise, work might be stopped for a day or two – for as long as was needed to untangle the intricacies of Ladoga's unbelievably complex stratigraphy. He used to repeat, "Everything must be understood in the field, otherwise you will never understand it".

New findings made a big contribution to the knowledge of Ladoga's architecture. Based on this data, Riabinin interpreted "large houses" as storage buildings of manufacturing teams such as those which, according to the Arab traveler Ibn-Fadlan, were built by the *Rus* traders in the land of Bulgars. Just at the same time Evgenii N. Nosov radically revised Ravdonikas's evolutionary scheme. It turned out that square houses with stoves in the corners were built there from the very beginning (Nosov 1977).

The generalization of all those findings in the context of the urban archaeology of Northern Europe and Russia was accomplished by G.S. Lebedev and V.A. Bulkin, who, in the late 1970s, put forward a hypothesis about the origin of cities on the trans-European trade routes. They introduced the notion of 'open trade settlement', or 'proto-town'. International trade was actually recognized as a major factor in the process (Bulkin, Lebedev 1974; Bulkin *et al*. 1978, pp. 85-100; Lebedev 1985). In essence, this meant partly returning to V.O. Klyuchevsky's "trade theory" of urban origins, but on a new stage of knowledge, when the time has come to support conjectures with archaeological evidence.

It had initiated a new substantive discussion of urban origins in Eastern Europe, which involved many archaeologists and historians (Alekseyev 1977; Petrukhin, Pushkina 1979; Avdusin 1980, Dubov 1983 (here the bibliography); Mel'nikova, Petrukhin 1986; Froianov 1992). E.N. Nosov summarized the results of this discussion in the mid-2000s and proved again "… the early trade-and-craft, military and administrative centers arose as a result of the active influence of foreign trade on the local community …" (Nosov *et al*. 2005, p. 27). However, the gradual accumulation of the data and recent research in the area of settlement structures dated back to 5th-7th and 8th centuries in the Ilmen and Western Dvina basin allowed to return to the problem again. Its solution may be not so unequivocal. As for the Il'men area we can assume two scenarios of the process, where the first one was interrupted in the Viking time (Eremeev, Dziuba 2010, p. 417). But it was implemented in a number of areas of the Belarusian Dvina, which remained aloof from the main military-and-trade routes of Eastern Europe (Eremeev 2015, pp. 21-59). Perhaps the same can be said about the huge number of Slavic hillforts located in the vast area from East Germany to the Dnieper-Don watershed.

6.5. The northeastern part of Eastern Europe: 1970s to 2000s

Clearly, the accumulation of new finds per se or even the most striking discoveries made on their basis did not suffice to break the methodological stalemate in Eastern European early medieval studies of the mid-20th century. Were the early Slavic sites structurally different, maybe, the crisis wouldn't have combusted so early and so intensely. But one had to deal with what they were – inexpressive and scarce in finds traditionally viewed as ethnic indicators: female ornaments made of base metals, belt sets, weapons, etc. The burial rite did not in the least contribute to the preservation of either its details or the artifacts. Corpses were cremated elsewhere, and those few artifacts that were buried with the calcified bones had been usually heavily damaged by fire. By the

1970s, the necessity to develop new approaches to the study of early Slavic culture became urgent.

The situation in the easternmost part of Europe was entirely different. Here we'll consider the investigations of the Kama region as good example. Large-scale field studies, launched by V.F. Gening and continued by his former pupils until the present time, rather soon led to a dramatic revision of the entire archaeological map of the region. One after another, new cultures and stages were being described. Lacunae were filled by sites, which were subjected to detailed excavations. Gening, the leader of the regional school, had no doubts that all archaeological cultures represented *ethnic units*, i.e., tribes.

This, in essence, was the approach which Liapushkin and Artamonov practiced already in the 1960s. With regard to early Slavic finds, however, their conclusions were pessimistic, contributing to the methodological crisis. In the eastern part of the distribution range, by contrast, no one challenged the validity of "ethnic focus" in archaeological studies. Direct connection between culture and ethnicity was either proclaimed or implied. Alternative views were overshadowed by the ever-growing body of findings which had to be processed. This situation continues to the present time.

One of the reasons is the richness of the database, bearing, among other things, on the ethnic history of the region. This is because the burial rite practiced in that region during the early Middle Ages favored preservation. In various 1st millennium AD cultures of the Ural, Kama and Middle Volga areas, the principal type of burials across large cemeteries was inhumation. The comparative database, therefore, sufficed for chronological assessments and archaeological reconstructions relating to ethnographic costume, ritual, etc. Ethnic history, presence versus absence of continuity with extant cultures and peoples, as usual, aroused keen interest among the local public. The scholarly conclusions, it would seem, should remain objective.

In practice, however, it turns out that many key issues in ethnic and cultural history of the Volga–Ural region are still quite far from solution. Specialists in the Kama region in the second half of the first millennium AD have split into two large fractions. One of these regards the early medieval people of the region, specifically those of the Lomovatovka, Polom, and Nevolino cultures (and their ancestors), as Ugrians (Belavin *et al.* 2000; Belavin, Ivanov 2011; Krylasova 2012), others, as Permian Finns – ancestors of Komi and Udmurts (Goldina 2004; Mel'nichuk, Chagin 2015). The controversy is all the more acute, in fact hopelessly inextricable, because advocates of these two theories turn a deaf ear to their opponents' arguments, deeming them unworthy of attention.

As we see, extensive database and striking ethnographic elements in archaeological assemblages do not in the least preclude controversy in interpretations, especially when ethnic groups are thought to be rigidly defined by features allegedly peculiar to certain traditional societies at a certain stage of their history. To be sure, the variation of ethnographic traits, especially in their "archaeological" (*read* reduced and deficient) variant, is not large enough to preclude random coincidences altogether. In addition, "…culture does not coincide with language in principle; nor, a fortiori, should it coincide with ethnic group, because ethnic group is a category of social psychology" (Klejn 2014, p. 456).

This said, the progress in interpreting archaeological cultures of easternmost Eastern Europe has been considerable. Despite the ethnic focus, which I believe to be unwarranted, the validity of regional studies in that area is beyond doubt. This especially concerns typological and chronological research done by Rimma D. Goldina and her pupils – a research which provide a basis for modern views of the early medieval period in the Kama area (Goldina 1979, 1985, 1995, 2004; Goldina, Kananin 1989; Goldina, Vodolago 1990). Goldina's work relating to the evolution and correlation of the Kama cultures as well as the debate on these issues are highly relevant to the chronology of Eastern Europe in general, including its western parts.

7. Searching for new approaches: late 1970s to early 1990s

7.1. Historical and cultural zones, archaeological geography, and beyond

Both in Leningrad and in Moscow, new methods have been traditionally sought on the path of cooperation between linguists, philologists, ethnographers, historians, and people engaged in natural scientists. For instance, the Joint Seminar on Ethnic Origins and Ethnic History was started at Leningrad University in 1982. Its conveners were G.S. Lebedev (then Associate Professor at the Department of Archaeology) and Professor A.S. Gerd, Head of the Faculty of Philology Department of Mathematical Linguistics.

"This was a seminar of a truly universitarian scope, one where undergraduates, graduates, associate and full professors, archaeologists, historians, ethnographers, physical anthropologists, philologists, and musicologists sat alongside one another, arguing on equal terms. The principal focus was on the theory and methodology of ethnic studies, particularly those concerning the origins of Slavs, Finns, and Balts. Each of us was both a

pupil and a teacher. Places in the Faculty of History auditorium 75 had to be occupied in advance, people used to stand in doorways. Gleb Sergeyevich was the anchorman and soul of each sitting" (Gerd 2004, p. 17).

The seminar worked until the early 1990s. The principal findings of that period were integrated in a collection co-edited by Gerd and Lebedev and titled *Slavs: Origins and Ethnic History (Multidisciplinary Studies)* (Gerd, Lebedev 1989). One of the most important contributions was Y.M. Lesman's study of ethnicity, reconstructed from archaeological evidence using the *information model*[16].

Having stressed that the essential of ethnicity is ethnic identity, Lesman claimed that the sine qua non of an ethnic group is its *informational permeability* – stable and ever relevant opposition of ingroup versus outgroup. The disappearance of this opposition is for some time compensated for with "ethnic memory – an asynchronic permeability" (Lesman 1989, pp. 13-14).

In the continental forest zone or under insular dispersal, providing for an independent existence of small groups, such a permeability, according to Lesman, is questionable. It emerges only after rapid migration or increased mobility during the transition to early stratified society. In patchy landscapes, in the steppe or on the coast, informational permeability is much higher. However, frequent migrations interrupt the process of ethnic origins before it has terminated.

All this "accounts for an earlier emergence of ethnic groups in geographically patchy Western Europe, contrasting with the frequently abortive processes of ethnic origins in the steppes" (Lesman 1989, p. 15). The beginning of such a process may be signaled by a series of imports and by borrowings from other cultures, indicating permeability of the ethnic boundaries and openness of ethnic territory for influences from without. The emergence of an ethnic group results in cultural consolidation and unification. In this framework Lesman proposed to analyze the origin of the Slavs, which he related to the consolidation stage of the Prague culture in the 5th century, and the emergence of the Old Russian ethnicity between AD 700-1000 (Lesman 1989, pp. 16-18).

Although Lesman's publication, proposing a new approach to ethnic origins, was quite concise, its significance can hardly be overestimated. First, it drew a sharp line between an ethnic group proper, defined by shared identity, and an amorphous linguistic group without shared identity (such a group is described as "dialectal continuum", "ethno-linguistic continuum", "ethnic community based on contacts", etc.) Second, Les-

[16] In the U.S.S.R., the general outline of the model was developed in the 1970s (Arutiunov, Cheboksarov 1972).

man emphatically separated ethnic and linguistic origins. Ancestors of people associated with certain traditions and involved in an intense phase of ethnic consolidation could have previously spoken similar dialects while shared identities extended only to clans. Also, Lesman reinterpreted widely known situations where a territory occupied by a certain ethno-cultural group becomes a target of imports; or where a period of rapid, virtually explosive cultural unification is paralleled by the culture's expansion into new areas. This situation often puzzled the researchers, because culturally identical and, moreover, contemporaneous sites emerged in widely separated regions. No doubt, Lesman's theory could not have appeared without a close cooperation of ethnographers and linguists participating in the Joint Seminar.

A number of prospective ideas was advanced by linguists involved in Balto-Slavic studies and taking part in the same seminar (Otkupshchikov 1989; Laučiūtė 1989; Martynov 1989, etc.). These studies provided a basis for Mark B. Shchukin's theories of Slavic origins (see below). At the same time, G. S Lebedev had come to think that the term "Baltic", borrowed from linguistics, cannot be used as an ethnic definition of the forest zone population in the 1st millennium AD. So he proposed in unison with M.B. Shchukin and D.A. Machinskii, the idea of proto-Slavonic-Balt continuum in the upper Dnepr basin and Poles'ye in the Late Iron Age[17].

Another important outcome of the seminar was that Gerd, Lebedev, and their co-authors formulated a number of postulates coupling regional and ethno-linguistic studies with archaeological reconstructions via the notion of *'historical and cultural zone'* (hereafter HCZ) (Gerd, Lebedev 1999, 2001). HCZ was considered a *spatial unity* defined by a combination of factors such as geographic, climatic, historical, economical, linguistic, ethnographic proper, etc.

Boundaries between different HCZs, which the authors discussed in detail (examples include Dnepr-Dvina, Ingria, southeastern Ladoga, parts of Karelia adjacent to Lake Ladoga, area adjoining to Lake Onega, etc.) had remained rather stable over time. Periods passed one after another, but borders between new cultures and their groups were the same as before — a fact long familiar to the researchers but largely neglected.

According to Gerd and Lebedev, "the critical factor in the history of such zones is slow evolution, admixture, transformation, bilingualism, and biculturalism. Autochthonous and immigrant groups live side by side for centuries; together and through a long chain of transformations they pass to a new linguistic and cultural state while remaining within the

[17] Lebedev 1989. These new idea was not developed in G.S Lebedev's later works. In particular, it haven't been reflected in his chapter of the collective monograph Gerd, Lebedev 2001, pp. 31-58.

same boundaries. Occasional immigration triggers new changes" (Gerd, Lebedev 2001, p. 8).

Interestingly, this brings us back to the ideas expressed by the Leningrad / Saint Petersburg archaeologists nearly eighty years before. The theory of Gerd and Lebedev, for example, closely resembles that formulated in the late 1920s at GAHMC Ethnological Department (see above). Direct borrowing is out of the question in this case because none of those theories were published, whereas archival documents came to light only in the 2000s.

The database on which the new theory rested, specifically early medieval archaeology facts collected by Lebedev, Bulkin, Nazarenko, etc., was generally adequate at that time. Those facts seemed to support Liapushkin 's and Artamonov's idea that Slavs had migrated to northern (Upper) Rus' quite late. Notably, archaeologists of the 1980s and 1990s did their best to discard the idea of a one-to-one correspondence between cultural and ethnic units. In practice, however, they were often wrong because the non-Slavic attribution of late 1st millennium AD sites was a deeply ingrained preconception:

"The Late Iron Age (the middle and the end of the 1st millennium AD) was marked by turbulent ethnic processes triggered by migrations during the Roman Era (AD 0-400) and by the Barbarian Invasions (AD 400-600). By AD 500-750 the ethno-cultural situation, mirroring those events, had stabilized…"

"The earlier HCZ around the Gulf of Finland, from the lower Daugava to southwestern Finland, remained stable: stone barrows across this territory are similar and represent Finno-Esto-Livonian tribes. At the same time, the earlier 'ethnic border' between Balts and Baltic Finns, passing along the Dvina, had shifted. The area between Daugava, Lakes Pskov and Chudskoe, and the Velikaya was occupied by Latgalian flat cemeteries…"

"Similar tribal cultures associated with the Balts… emerged throughout the distribution area of Letto-Lithuanian peoples of the Baltic area from the Daugava to the Vistula. East of it, on the upper Dnepr and Dvina, the culture of Smolensk-Polotsk long kurgans existed (AD 700-900), originating from the blend of the earlier Gorodishche–Tushemlya culture, that of eastern Lithuania, and possibly under the impact of the Slavic Romny–Borshevo culture…"

"In AD 400-900, the Upper Rus' was the distribution area of stable and distinct funerary traditions of primarily northern long kurgans of the Pskov-Vologda (or rather Borovichi) type, where features of the local 'Chud' ethnic culture with its archaic slash-and-burn agriculture were becoming more and more prominent… Certain scholars relate those northern long kurgans with the 'Chud' of the Russian chronicles or, at any

rate, with Finnic-speaking groups…"

"The distribution range of *sopki* includes the central part of Upper Rus'… In ethno-cultural terms, these sites are thought to relate to the Novgorod Slovene, but in terms of origin, they likely result from early contacts between Scandinavian and Slavic funerary and other cultural traditions. … In the periphery of their distribution range and elsewhere, the *sopki* reveal distinctly Finnic features" (Gerd, Lebedev 2001, p. 34-41).

My lengthy quotes from Lebedev are not accidental. This text may in some sense be regarded as a summary: the author generalizes the conclusions made by the leading Petersburg specialists in Russian archaeology – members of his generation – at the end of the 20th century. As we see, the idea that until AD 700-900 inclusive, all the territory of the future northern Rus' was occupied exclusively by the continuum of Balto-Finnic tribes is quite persistent. Others broadly agreed:

"The first Slavs hardly appeared near Lake Il'men and on the Volkhov before the 8th century… The dispersal of Slavs, the foundation of Ladoga, the origin of the trade route, and the first appearance of the Scandinavians fall into one and the same historical period, which was rather short…" (Nosov 1997, p. 283). "Our search for habitation layers of the middle and the third quarter of the first millennium in the area around Lake Ilmen has so far been unsuccessful" (Nosov 1997, p. 277).

Interestingly, in modern Western literature, Slavic colonization of northern Russia is still viewed through the lens of Liapushkin 's and Artamonov's "critical theory" of the 1960s, supplemented but not radically revised by their pupils and 1970s-1990s. Over the last twenty years, however, the situation with sites in northwestern Russia and on the upper Dnepr and Desna has markedly changed.

To be sure, Western colleagues cannot be expected to know all the newly-acquired facts. Among the reasons for such a neglect are linguistic barrier, the lesser intensity of book exchange, understandable difficulties in gaining first-hand information about new collections, etc. Even so, I am at a loss to understand what made a well-known scholar, whom I respect, claim that the idea of an early Slavo-Scandinavian symbiosis during AD 700-900, elaborated by Artamonov and Klejn, and later by Lebedev, was an outcome of "Stalinist Great Russian chauvinism and post-communistic nationalism" (Duczko 2004, p. 4). "Nor," he goes on, "should we omit in this context the problem of Finnish (sic) and Balt (sic) populations of Northern Russia, the demographic environment in which most of the early activities of the arriving Scandinavians took place. This ethnic environment was often left aside and the Slavic one highlighted" (Duczko 2004, p. 11).

My description of the state of affairs in Soviet archaeology of the 1960s-1980s (see above) should leave no doubt that a grosser distor-

tion can hardly be imagined — everything was exactly the other way round! The only thing for which Liapushkin and Artamonov could be reproached today is understating the role Slavs had played in the northwest — not overstating it! While there are many reasons for disagreeing with their pupils from a state of the art level, no informed scholar would ever castigate them for Great Russian chauvinism.

It is beyond doubt that Soviet archaeology existed in a context where the ideological façade was an inevitable — but also a lesser — evil. But it wasn't the façade that determined the principal trends in the discipline; nor did it make the atmosphere in research institutions of the 1960s-1980s intolerable. Let me reiterate the words of my colleague Ivan I. Eremeev: "Only a blinkered preconception regarding the allegedly circumambient Russian chauvinism can prevent a historian from mentioning a single study in the impressive body of scholarship relating to the Finno-Ugric archaeology of northern Russia, accumulated by Russian specialists over half a century… It is ironic that Duczko's entire system of views about Slavic colonization of the northwest is based exclusively on findings made by Soviet archaeologists" (Eremeev, Dziuba 2010, p. 398).

7.2. Environmental and technological studies: Aleksandr M. Mikliaev's school of Archaeological Geography

The panorama of interdisciplinary research in archaeology of the 1970-1990s would be incomplete without mentioning the works by A.M. Mikliaev and the 'archaeological and geographic school' he had founded. Actually, as it was believed in the 1960s, such an approach was a way to overcome the limitations of the retrospective method in the exploration of cultural phenomena. His methods were markedly different from those described above. Initially, Mikliaev, not without the influence of G.P. Grozdilov[18], set up the task of multidisciplinary studies of cultural evolution in a particular region from the Stone Age to the Middle Ages. The Dnieper and Dvina interfluve became for him a region of such studies for his entire life.

Mikliaev, while still a student, started his field studies in the Usvyatsky lakeland, where he made an important discovery. He found three horizons of pile dwellings dating to the Middle and Late Neolithic[19]. Later, after he had become staff member of the State Hermitage Department of Primi-

[18] Grigorii Pavlovich Grozdilov is one of the last representatives of the generation of 'founders' who worked still under Aleksandr A. Miller in the Ethnological Department of the State Academy of the History of Material Culture (GAIMK) in the 1920s (see sections 2-3). In the early 1960s, he directed the Pskov expedition of the State Hermitage.

tive Culture, he launched the North-Western Archaeological Project. This longterm project, branched in separate detachments, became a school for many young researchers. Excavations of peatbog areas began. In their course, time changes of palaeolandscapes were analysed, an interdisciplinary method of dating the sites was developed and cultural and chronological scales for different microregions were developed.

By the end of the 1970s, Mikliaev had clearly formulated his theoretical positions, demonstrating a marked continuity with the Russian palaeoethnological school of the 1920s (quite consciously perceived by himself) (Platonova 2010, pp. 148-195). He defined material culture as an instrument whereby humans interact with environment. This instrument enables people to use any ecological niche, but eventually blows up the niche itself. This causes either search for a new habitat, similar to the previous one (migration) or reshaping of the material culture in the old niche. That is why Mikliaev's Archaeological Geography' put forward the goal of 'analysing the material culture of past epochs on the background of meticulously collected, tested and dated geographic evidence', enabling us to 'clear up the mechanism of interaction between man and environment in antiquity' (Mikliaev 1984, pp. 127-128; Mikliaev 1995).

Accordingly, a focus was made on the development and application of various science-based methods including geomorphological and palynological analyses, radiocarbon dating, remote sensing, palaeolimnology, etc., to the analysis of data. In the 1960s-1980s, this challenge presupposed the existence of a database and infrastructure of science-based studies. Parts of such a basis had indeed been created in the U.S.S.R in the preceding period, though the proportion was markedly shifted to technological studies to the detriment of ecological research.

In the 1960s, a major center of science-based studies mostly focusing on the Middle Ages was the Restoration Laboratory at the Moscow University Department of Archaeology. Here, spectral analysis is successfully applied to the study of artifacts made of glass and base metals (Konovalov *et al.* 2008; Eniosova 2012).

In 1967, a new Laboratory of Science-Based Methods was founded at the Moscow Institute of Archaeology, merging the research groups focusing on dendrochronology, spectral analysis, metallography, archeomagnetic method, palynology, faunal analysis, etc. The founder of the laboratory was B.A. Kolchin, one of the leading specialists in the archaeology of medieval Novgorod. No wonder the research under his guidance focused on early medieval issues from the very beginning.

[19] Mazurkevich 2014, p. 9. For the list of works by A. M. Mikliaev cf. Mazurkevich *et al.* 2014, pp. 15-17. http://www.archeo.ru/izdaniya-1/vagnejshije-izdanija/pdf/archaeoloy_of_lake_settlements_2014.pdf

As the laboratory developed, two major directions came to the fore: history of ancient manufacture and dendrochronology. Beginning from the 1960s, dendrochronological studies in Eastern European medieval cities, fortresses, and churches resulted in a vast database comparable to those used in similar Western laboratories (Kolchin, Chernykh 1977; Karpukhin 2009). Without science-based data, the elaboration of the chronology of the final early medieval sites in Eastern Europe would have been impossible. The same applies to the database relating to Eastern European iron metallurgy and foundry, collected at the laboratory during the last decade (Zavialov *et al.* 2012; see bibliography in that publication).

The situation in Leningrad was markedly different from that in Moscow. On the one hand, studies of ancient technologies and materials had a longstanding tradition here, reaching back to the 1920s. Then, the Institute of Archaeological Technology functioned within GAIMK (1919-1939)[20] (Platonova 2015, pp. 267-270). Later, in 1951, the Laboratory for Archaeological Technology (LAT) was founded at LOIA. Since the mid-1950s, it has been conducting environmental, spectral, geophysical, and radiocarbon research (Platonova 2015, pp. 264-268; Zaitseva 2013, pp. 261-268; Egor'kov 2013).

On the other hand, those in charge of science-based research in Leningrad were invariably experts in areas remote from medieval studies. Therefore, unlike the situation in Moscow laboratories, medieval artifacts were rarely examined with the use of science-based methods, and when that happened, the initiators were separate excavators, and the studies were unrelated to major projects. This situation continued until the 1980s.

The work of the State Hermitage Northwestern Archaeological Expediton headed by A.M. Mikliaev, however, was a gratifying exception. Mikliaev's expedition excavated sites spanning a wide period. Nevertheless, the early Middle Ages featured prominently in his own studies. His closest associate was P.M. Dolukhanov, who, as a LAT member, was in charge of environmental and geochronological studies[21]. Together, in the 1960s-1980s they carried out studies of lacustral and boggy deposits in northwestern Russia to reconstruct the paleoclimate in various periods. The early Middle Ages featured prominently in those studies. At one stage of his project or another Mikliaev cooperated with geographers, geophysicists, specialists in radiocarbon analysis, zoologists, and linguists (see Mikliaev 1994).

[20] In 1930 it was renamed Institute of Historical Technology, and in 1938, Laboratory of Archaeological Technology. As early as the 1930s, the institute conducted pioneer research in the photographic analysis of ancient fabrics, ceramic technology, and the identification of wood varieties using charcoal samples according to Kler's method, etc.

[21] Dolukhanov emigrated to Britain and became Professor of Archaeology at Newcastle University. In 1990s and 2000s, without interrupting contacts with IIMK, headed several international projects.

As a result, by early 1990s, extremely valuable findings had been made relating to archaeology and historical geography of the Dnepr and Dvina watershed. In Mikliaev's opinion, this database should constitute a basis of a large collective monograph. These plans were thwarted by an accident which broke off his life in 1993. Presently, the school of the 'archaeological landscape studies' in Saint Petersburg is represented by Mikliaev's disciples Ivan I. Eremeev, Andrei N. Mazurkevich, Boris S. Korotkevich, Aleksei G. Furas'ev, et. al. Some of them have their own pupils. This area is successfully developing, and most of those concerned maintain intense contacts with Western colleagues under international projects.

7.3. Multidisciplinary studies in Moscow: archaeologists, historians, linguists

Important and prospective as they were, science-based studies in early medieval archaeology of the 1970s and 1980s were at the initial accumulation stage. The principal focus of archaeologists in Moscow, as in Leningrad, was on establishing long-lasting collaboration with philologists, historians, and linguists. The Moscow archaeologists did this with due solidity, involving underlying logistics. They launched two important projects — (a) preparing for publication the overarching series *Earliest Sources on the History of Peoples of the U.S.S.R.*[22]; and (b) analysis of birchbark documents in the context of Novgorodian archeology.

7.3.1.'Earliest sources…'

In 1970, a sector named *Earliest States in the Territory of the U.S.S.R.* was founded at the RAS Institute of History of the U.S.S.R. Its head, the historian V.T. Pashuto, was a forty-year-old professor at that time. The challenge was to assemble, analyze, and publish foreign documents relating to Eastern Europe. The time span to be covered was from the classical era, when the region was first mentioned in the written texts, to the late 1200s. The publication of a source or a group of sources was preceded by their analysis in terms of cultural context, historical information, and relevance to Eastern Europe.

The project was multidisciplinary from the very beginning. In the 1970s, historians involved in it (Elena A. Mel'nikova, Tatiana N. Jackson, Galina V. Glazyrina, and Aleksandr V. Podosinov, among others), established close contacts with archaeologists in Moscow in Leningrad and began regularly participating in archaeological conferences. The first volume of the series,

[22] Retitled *Earliest Sources on the History of Eastern Europe* in 1993.

published in 1977, focused on contacts between Norse and Russians in AD 900-1200 based on Scandivavian Runic inscriptions[23]. By the present time, 27 volumes have appeared. Six of them contain analysis and publication of classical sources on Eastern Europe; eight address Scandinavian texts; three, Byzantine documents; six, European (including Western Slavic) texts in Latin; and three focus on Arab sources. Both originals and translations were published. In parallel, collections discussing key issues in early medieval history and archaeology of Eastern Europe and proceedings of regularly held conferences appeared[24].

Such a database extended the scope of research in a great measure, providing a basis for future early medieval studies in Russia. In 1993, Pashuto's sector turned into a RAS Institute of World History *Center for the Study of Eastern Europe in the Classical and Medieval World.* The reform was accompanied by dramatic collisions. The Institute of History Department of the Earliest States of Eastern Europe, which E.A. Mel'nikova had chaired, was simply closed, the immediate reason being that the former Institute Director was replaced by A.N. Sakharov. This was a devoted anti-Normanist of a new type — a neo-anti-Normanist, one might say. The entire staff of the former Department was sheltered by the RAS Institute of General History.

These events demonstrate that in turbid times, fruits of freedom are not always enjoyed by those who had fought for them. True, the ideological façade of Soviet science shared the fate of the entire Soviet system, but its constructors survived. They have traditionally been the most politically active part of the scholarly community — others engaged in science and refrained from public activities. The trimmers rapidly changed their skins and began struggling for key positions as before. Fortunately, not all of them succeeded.

The neo-anti-Normanists' activities over the last two decades have been vigorously reacted upon more than once (see Klejn 2009, pp. 205-220; Gubarev 2015). Their writings, however, are largely non-scientific and I will not discuss them. The Center for the Study of Eastern Europe in the Classical and Medieval World, on the other hand, continues working. The series *Earliest States in Eastern Europe* and *Eastern Europe in Classical Antiquity and in the Middle Ages*, too, continue to be published, and the share of archaeological publications on their pages is not decreasing. Up to date, this is one of the best venues for scholarly exchange for specialists from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus' and other European countries.

[23] Mel'nikova 2001. Reference is given to the second, expanded edition.

[24] At present, publications relating to the project, including a voluminous archive, are available at http://dgve.csu.ru/

Thirty years ago yet another such venue emerged thanks to the joint activity of the Moscow University and the Novgorod Museum Reserve Novgorodian Expedition, sponsoring the annual conference *Novgorod and the Novgorod Land*, and publishing regular series titled *Novgorodian Historical Collection* and *Novgorod and Novgorod Land: History and Archaeology*[25].

7.3.2. Birchbark documents: discoveries and challenges

Special attention must be paid to a multidisciplinary archaeological and linguistic study of birchbark documents which circulated in the Novgorod Land. In the words of V.L. Ianin, who has headed the Novgorodian Expedition for many years, these finds "have united historians, archaeologists, and linguists… Cooperation between historians and philologists had been interrupted for many years. Now they can't get along without one another. One of the greatest acquisitions of the Novgorodian expedition is our famous linguist Academician A.A. Zalizniak, who has actively taken part in excavations for over two decades" (Ianin 2003, p. 22).

It is not enough, indeed, to discover a new source of information — one must make it speak. For some thirty years after the first birchbark letter had been found in Novgorod (1951), the principal progress was in the accumulation of the database. To be sure, birchbark letters were being restored, read, interpreted, and published soon after discovery. Before the early 1980s, A.V. Artsikhovskii and V.I. Borkovskii published seven volumes of the series Novgorodian *Birchbark Documents*[26].

A qualitatively new stage in interpretation began later, when a sufficient comparative database had accumulated. It 1982 Zalizniak began a linguistic analysis of birchbark documents. He demonstrated that regular "deviations from the Old Russian norm" reflected the peculiarities of the old Novgorodian dialect rather than mistakes made by semiliterate scribes.

The relevance of Zalizniak's conclusions to our topics cannot be overestimated. In 1980s-2000s, the number of final early medieval birchbark documents dating to mid-9th-early 12th centuries markedly increased due to extensive excavations at the Troitsky (Trinity) excavation near the Novgorod fortress. By the early 2000s there were more than one thousand birchbark documents, half of them dating to the early Old Russian

[25] Over the last thirty years, similar venues, with a focus on presenting archaeological findings, were set up in Novgorod and Pskov. Both originated from the joint activities of regional museum reserves and expeditions from Moscow (see annual conferences *Novgorod and the Novgorod Land*, Archaeology and History of Pskov and the Pskov Land; serial publication under the same titles, etc.). The principal bibliography and texts of these series, titled *Novgorod Historical Collection* and *Novgorod and the Novgorod Land: History and Archaeology* can be found at http://annales.info/.

[26] See bibliography at http://gramoty.tu.

period (900-1200). These documents are invaluable sources on the "everyday history" of that period as well as on Novgorodian mentality, social structure, literacy level, etc. Suffice it to recall an elegant billet-doux written by an indignant girl to her careless friend. A separate area of study is the analysis of names mentioned in birchbark letters, their distribution areas in the 11th and 12th centuries, etc.

Zalizniak's main contribution, however, was the discovery of distinctive phonetic and morphological features of the Old Novgorodian, or Pskov-Novgorodian dialect, which cannot be derived from proto-Eastern Slavonic. Hence his important conclusion that Eastern Slavonic was initially heterogeneous. It has long been known that Southern and Western Slavonic branches were heterogeneous from the beginning. The Eastern Slavonic branch, traditionally considered exceptional in this respect, was shown to result from variously directed processes, which included convergence of related but non-identical dialects (Zalizniak 2004, p. 57).

The first generalization of these findings, published in 1988, evoked a heated response on the side of linguists and a controversy among archaeologists. Summing up the new round of debates, Zalizniak gave his opponents' arguments due consideration and gave up his initial attempt to link the dialectal findings he had revealed with specific Slavic tribes such as Krivichi and Il'men Slovene. In his words, it would be wiser in the future to use purely geographical rather that tribal terms because linguistic classifications are incomparably more accurate than those relating to ethnic variation (Zalizniak 2004, p. 6).

A sound idea indeed! The acuteness of debates around the Slavic colonization of northwestern Rus' introduced a risk of misinterpreting the findings by trying to adopt new linguistic facts to old ideas about ethnic history. These traditionally held ideas were (a) that the Novgorod Land was colonized by Western Slavs (Waris/Waigri, sometimes linked with the Russian Variagi/Varangians) from the Baltic coast of Poland; (b) that people associated with the northern Russian culture of *long barrows* (Slavs or Balto-Slavs) had migrated directly from Poland. Numerous archaeologists who did not subscribe to such ideas were forced either to object or to pretend that the issue of the Old Novgorodian dialect did not concern them. Both positions are pointless. Rather, one must reckon with indisputable facts disclosed by Zalizniak.

In essence, the hard facts are these. The discussion around the Old Novgododian dialect has revealed a cluster of traits that can be related "not merely to the preliterate period but to its very early stage" (Zalizniak 2004, p. 149). They could have originated only "on the basis of proto-Slavonic, specifically early proto-Slavonic" (Zalizniak 2004, p. 154). At the present time none of the viable hypotheses can derive these features

from supra-dialectal Old Russian, reconstructed from sources relating to southern, central, and northeastern Rus'. These are two courses taken by the early proto-Slavonic linguistic system.

This does not mean that the Old Novgorodian dialect is not Eastern Slavonic (Zalizniak 2004, p. 57). What this means is that until a certain moment its speakers had evolved independently from those of other Eastern Slavonic dialects. Hence the conclusions relevant for archaeologists:

(1) A considerable segment of the 11th century population of northwestern Rus' was initially isolated from, or at least not fully consolidated with, the remaining mass of Eastern Slavs, whose language became the koine at the early stage of the Kievan Rus';

(2) By the 11th century (possibly earlier), speakers of that dialect merged with those of other Eastern Slavonic dialects, having preserved certain dialectal peculiarities;

(3) The dialect spoken by Novgorodians proper, including the elite, demonstrates all the basic features of the Old Novgorodian dialect, distinguishing it from "supra-dialectal Old Russian".

Accommodating these facts by reconciling them with the archaeological pattern of northern Rus' is quite difficult. The accommodation process, in fact, has not yet started. Facts filling the 600-800 gap in Lake Il'men area began to accumulate only during the last decade (Eremeev, Dziuba 2010, pp. 373-379). Quite recently a state of the art description of the culture of northern Russian long barrows was published (Mikhailova 2014). Regrettably, we do not have the same generalizing studies devoted to *sopki*; but only the outdated summaries (Sedov 1970; Konetskii 1989, 1993) and publications relating to various sites and areas (Petrenko 1994; Kuz'min 1989, 1992, 1999; Platonova 2002; Islanova 2006; etc.). From the 1990s on, however, data concerning separate isolated groups of sites dating to AD 500-750 have been gradually accumulating. It is to be hoped that discoveries relating to the Old Novgorodian dialect will be analyzed in the context of the revised database relating to the origins of northwestern Russian and Belorussian cultures.

8. Mark B. Shchukin's 'School of historical and archaeological reconstructions'

Mark B. Shchukin was one of the most prominent Russian specialists in archaeology, history and chronology of the early La-Tene and late Roman periods in Europe. He came to his work on the Early Middle Ages 'from below', i.e. from the studies of the Sarmatian and Chernyakhov culture. His special course 'European Sarmatia' was delivered at the His-

torical Faculty of Leningrad State University in 1974-1976. At the same time, a circle of interested like-minded persons and disciples began grouping themselves around him. In the late 1970s this circle transformed into a permanent 'Shchukin's seminar' 'which formally was not tied to any official body but largely determined the direction and peculiarities of the archaeological activities in Leningrad-St. Petersburg… for over 30 years' (Sharov, Shcheglova 2009, p. 188).

From his teacher, Mariia A. Tikhanova (and from the other teacher - Leo S. Klejn, as well), M. Shchukin borrowed concerning the archaeological evidence the strict approach which he himself not once demonstrated in his typological and chronological studies. At the same time, he also clearly perceived those contradictions which were engendered by the 'hypercritics' who did not leave any place altogether to the ancestors of the historical Slavs in Eastern Europe. He was captivated by the problem of "Slavic origins". However, he distinctly distanced himself from the 'autochtonists' who attempted to build a cultural continuity by means of a simple expansion of chronological borders of the Chernyakhov culture (Boris A. Rybakov, Mikhail I. Braichevskii; Erast A. Symonovich). Neither the 'Late Zarubintsy model' by Piotr N. Tretiakov seemed completely doubtless to him. Attempts of Valentin V. Sedov and Irina P. Rusanova to search for the roots of the Slavs in the west, i.e. in the Przeworsk culture, were at first contemplated sympathetically by Shchukin. However, after a deeper examination of the Mid-European materials on which these researchers were basing, this hypothesis was also rejected by him (Shchukin 1997).

M.B. Shchukin well discerned the weak links and particular contradictions in all these constructions. Nevertheless, he was not tempted by 'too simple conclusions' to disregard the problem itself. In this connection, such his statements as "…the Veneti against whom Ermanaric was at war and Antae against whom fought Vinitharius, must be finally interrelated archaeologically in the late 4th century. Possibly, these interrelations should be searched for within the Chernyakhov culture itself. By now, the attempts of division of the Chernyakhov culture have been rather unsuccessful so that the possibility of identification of a specialvariant… must be seriously considered…" (Shchukin 1975, p. 63); "…until we have not cleared out the events and processes taking place in the first half of the 1st millennium AD in the forest zone, neither the problem of genesis of the Slavic culture of the 6th-7th centuries nor that of the origin of the Slavs in general will be completely solved" (Shchukin 1975, p. 69).

Cultures of the forest zone from the start attracted Shchukin's attention within the context of the problem of Slavic ethnogenesis. It is of interest that the rather sarcastic proposition of Joachim Werner directed at Russian archaeologists (Werner 1972) "to reject the charms of

the Baltidom" found then recognition exactly by M.B. Shchukin. He was the only researcher who had wholly estimated this attempt to demonstrate that a general opinion was not always true. Thus the unequivocal 'Baltidom' of expansive areas of Eastern Europe believed by the majority of scholars was not an axiom but rather a hypothesis arisen at a certain stage of the investigations.

Naturally, J. Werner had no information on sites of the Upper Dnieper region yielded by the preceding decade. His model of the dynamics of ethnocultural processes was built on erroneous notions about the chronology of the Kolochin sites and it was soon criticized severely by Evgenii A. Goriunov. Nevertheless, for Shchukin of more importance was the principal possibility to discern behind the materials from Poles'e, Upper Dnieper region and the Desna region ('reliably Slavic' and 'East-Baltic' ones taken in aggregate) some 'cultural continuity', a continuum formed by people similar in the very structure of the cultural complex although already decomposed into a number of separate cultural groups.

The development of a special direction of studies (called 'the search for a third way' by the author himself) was carried out in incessant discussions both at 'Shchukin's seminar' and at the seminar of Aleksandr S. Gerd and Gleb S. Lebedev. An important support was that of his close friend Kazimierz Godłowski, a very prominent expert in the Iron Age of Europe, who in 1970s came to the idea of the key significance of the sites of the forest zone (Godlowski 1979, 1986). Like J. Werner, Godłowski decidedly opposed the hypothesis of the ancestral home of Slavs in the Vistula region.

Having considered the publications on East-European sites which were fairly profuse by the late 1970s, K. Godłowski agreed to the Slavic belonging of the post-Zarubintsy, Korchak, Pen'kovka, Kolochin and Tushemlya sites, as well as of the culture of the North-Russian long kurgans. Similarly to J. Werner, he was an 'outsider' so that neither himself nor archaeologists of the 'Cracow school' founded by him were certainly unthreatened to be accused of the Great-Russian chauvinism of this position. Having mapped the artefacts of the 5th century found at Slavic sites he demonstrated that they all were linked with East-European regions and belong to the context of the abovementioned Early Mediaeval cultures of the third quarter of the 1st millennium BC. The Slavic sites of Central Europe are always found to be younger ones (Godlowski 1979).

The idea originally borrowed by M. Shchukin from K. Godłowski was that of the structural commonness of the area of Central-European cultures of the Roman period ('bowl' and 'fibula' cultures abundant in metal objects, polished and polished-rugged pottery) which extended as far as the Middle Dnieper region in the east. Contrary to them, the East-European cultures

of the forest zone ('pot-abundant' and poor in metal and 'devoid of fibulae') also demonstrated a structural commonness although of a quite different type. All these facts were induced by some peculiarities either in mentality or in the cultural complex proper (e.g. the tradition of wide use of wood and other unstable materials, the archaeologically unidentifiable burial rite, complete burning of all the funerary gifts in the funeral fire, etc.).

The attempts to explain the scarcity of early Slavic materials through the general process of degradation of the material culture of European peoples after the fall of the Roman empire, in the opinion of M.B. Shchukin, were inefficient: "…In Western Europe which had seen the same processes no such events took place. At synchronous sites of the Merovingian period we encounter both polished bowls and pitchers, and weapons and brooches. The forms had been modified but no change in the structure occurred… And only in Central Europe, where the Slavs appeared, a sharp difference of cultures of the Late Roman period and Early Middle Ages is observed. Moreover, there is mostly a certain hiatus between them. This phenomenon has been brilliantly studied by Kazimierz Godłowski who at the same time introduced a very important notion of 'the structure of archaeological cultures'…" (Shchukin 1997, p. 113).

Getting ahead, I should note that the idea about extreme scarcity of metal finds at Early Mediaeval sites of Eastern Europe wasn't confirmed by new data. We have now the representative collections of artifacts from the settlements layers (enamel decorations, brooches, spurs, etc.) (Gavritukhin, Oblomskii 1997; Oblomskii 2010, pp. 35-38, 113-141, 291-305; Radiush 2010, 2013). However the supposition about unstable materials was the right. The scarcity of metal finds often is due to the tradition of the use of ornaments from lead-tin alloys. These are fast decomposed in a cultural layer and are preserved mostly in hoards due to objects from silver and bronze found nearby (Shcheglova 1999, 2001, 2002, 2003; etc.). Thus the subsequent studies show that some differences in 'the structure of archaeological cultures' meant not the absence of certain items in the living culture, but the peculiar characteristics of their arhaeologization. The specificity of ideological representations of Early Medieval population led to the absence of the ceremonial sets of ornaments and weapons in the burials in this region.

Finally, M.B. Shchukin proposed his own theory, to some extent similar to that developed by Tretiakov's followers (and those of V.N. Danilenko in Ukraine) but differing from the latter in a number of very principal points. Shchukin rejected the hypothesis of the Slavic character of the Zarubintsy culture (just as Iu.V. Kukharenko and his disciples). He noted with fair grounds the latter's sharp structural differences from early Slavic cultures, as well as the links of its area with the Bastarnae

(according to written sources) (Shchukin 1999). However, according to Shchukin, the real contribution of the post-Zarubintsy people to the Slavic cultural genesis was quite manifest. In addition, he considered the inflow of this population to the forest zone as an extremely important factor stimulating the process of the ethnogenesis proper of the Slavs[27] (Shchukin 1990; Shchukin 1997, pp. 130-143).

Thus while recognizing the crucial character of the Zarubintsy impulse, Shchukin nevertheless transferred the brunt of the problem to that medium which had suffered this impulse and transformed it in compliance with the laws of its own 'cultural world'. The researcher had been persuaded in the reality of processes of this kind after his consultations with linguists: "By power of chance, the Baltic-Slavic continuum received from the neighbouring peoples the general name of Veneti. The origins of its own Slavic self-identity were most possibly born within that social unity which found its archaeological expression in the Kiev culture… The final formation… of the self-identity took place still later during the actions on the Danube…" (Shchukin 1997, p. 143).

The strong side of Shchukin's conception was predetermined by his proficient knowledge of written sources as well as his comprehensive mastering of the European chronology of the Roman period. To his chronology he himself had much contributed. It is no coincidence that his disciples called the direction founded by him now 'the chronological school' now 'the school of historico-archaeological reconstructions'[28].

Meanwhile, the archaeological constituent proper of this conception has not been studied to completion. However this is in fact the task of the present-day stage of Early Medieval studies.

The present-day knowledge of Early Slavonic origins is much greater than it was in the 1980s and 1990s. For one thing, the database relating to the Kiev culture of AD 200-500 has been extended in large measure (see section 9). For another, new studies have upheld the idea that the earliest proto-Prague sites of the mid-4th century (Gavritukhin's type Prague 0) existed in the Belarusian Poles'e, where their presence was predicted by M.B. Shchukin and D.A. Machinskii in 1976 (Shchukin 1976, p. 78; Machinskii 1976, pp. 98-99). So it is time to revisit this theory, which appears quite viable.

[27] It would be apposite to recall archaeological criteria of the early stage in the emergence of a new ethnic group, formulated by Lesman under his 'information model'. A weak but universally traceable 'Zarubintsy signal' in sites dating to AD 250-500 can suggest that the area had become permeable for foreign influences. The consolidation of the group and cultural unification mark the next stage of the process – a peculiar 'response to a challenge'.

[28] Mark Shchukin's disciples comprise Saint-Petersburg archaeologists as Oleg V. Sharov, Ol'ga A. Shcheglova, Aleksei G. Furas'ev (who is at the same time A.M. Mikliaev's disciple), S.I. Kargapol''tsev, S.V. Voroniatov, V.E. Eremenko (1963-2014), Petr V. Shuvalov (a historian), and others.

9. Briefly about the most important: Early Medieval Slavonic-Russian studies in present-day Russia

9.3. Socio-political context of the 1990-2010s and innovations in the Early Medieval studies

The sketch of the main directions and key problems of Slavonic studies in Russia here presented beginning since the turn of the 1960/1970s, as it seems, leaves no doubts that the period under consideration can be considered as internally integral. Its integrity is constituted by scientific-educational and scientific-organizational projects and structures, which have existed for decades and which have formed particular research guidelines among archaeologists. Also there has arisen the awareness of the belonging to certain 'schools' (seminars, regular conferences, permanent expeditions, some scientific institutions, etc.).

To be sure, the socio-political context of Russian science changed abruptly in 1991. Political transformations, predictably, were accompanied by an economic crisis. In 1992, the financial support offered to archaeology by the state was curtailed. Field works of the following decades were either supported by Western grants or were purely commercial. They concentrated mostly in cities and at the construction of communications (gas, oil, highways,etc.). The so-called crisis of the 1990s triggered a construction boom, which eventually helped both archaeology and archaeologists survive. Many became engaged in salvation projects, conducted often from early spring to late fall. Facts assembled previously, in the era of the "Great Discoveries", had to be analysed out of duty.

On the positive side, prospects for more detailed publications became much better than before. In the 1990s a large series of highly important studies focusing on Slavonic-Russian issues was published. Some had been prepared under the old Soviet publication projects such as *Archaeology of the U.S.S.R.*[29]. Alongside these, one after another, new periodicals emerged, supported by private sponsors, Russian and Western grants, etc. Much of what was published could not appear before; sometimes, the reason was censorship.

As a result, Russian archaeological scholarship was enriched by an entire series of publications of specific finds, broad generalizations, and methodological studies. Especially noteworthy among these are L.S. Klejn's books on archaeological theory and history – those written in the

[29] We must mention the volume *Ancient Slavs and Their Neighbors* (Rusanova, Symonovich 1993). It had integrated the results of Russian, Ukrainian, and Belorussian studies in Slavonic-Russian archaeology got in the 1960s-1980s.

1960s and 1970s and the newest ones. Amazingly, both have retained their topicality. Two important monographs by V.V. Sedov (1994, 1995) must be mentioned as well. Despite some gaps and inaccuracies "…they marked the first, after Lubor Niederle, attempt to reconstruct the entire pattern of Slavic archaeology, from Peloponessos to Ladoga" (Kazanski 2005-2007, p. 457).

The publication project of top importance in our field was the series *Early Slavonic World. Archaeology of the Slavs and Their Neighbors*, launched in 1990. In the early 1990s, an initiative group headed by O.V. Sharov formed within Shchukin's seminar. It began publishing a series *Petersburg Archaeological Bulletin* on a regular basis. Nine issues have appeared thus far, in which studies in classical and early medieval antiquity predominate. As a new stage in the project, the international journal *Stratum Plus* was founded in the late 1990s on the basis of the Kishinev Higher Anthropological School, Moldova. This appears to be the best archaeological journal on the entire post-Soviet space. This, however, was but the tip of the iceberg.

An entirely new area of research, which emerged after 1991, was the comprehensive study of Christian antiquities of Eastern Europe, which was constituted as a separate subdiscipline (Beliaev 1998; Musin 2002, 2013; Chukova 2005, a/o). This became possible only owing to the new socio-political context.

Another important initiative was the development of multidisciplinary studies of early medieval settlements under Western participation, which contributed to the progress in that area (Alsleben *et al.* 1994). To be sure, the tradition of applying various kinds of analyses (geological, pedological, radiocarbon, botanical, faunal, etc.), to the study of habitation layers was practiced in the U.S.S.R. before (see section 7.2). But early medieval expeditions often received limited financing. International cooperation, made possible after 1991, offered new possibilities.

This can be illustrated by findings at the Staraya (Old) Ladoga earthen fortress (Zemlianoie Gorodische). Excavations there have been carried out by A.N. Kirpichnikov's team for three decades in a row using science-based methods (pedological, geomorphological, botanic, faunal, spectral), resulting a reconstruction of Ladoga's early medieval economy (Kirpichnikov 2004, 2006, 2008; Alexandrovskii *et al.* 2010; Grigorieva, Lesman 2012; Kirpichnikov, Sarab'ianov 2013; Chukhina *et al.* 2014). The study of jewely unexpectedly revealed an entire series of ornaments made of plumbic-stannic alloy. Earlier specimens, dating to the 7th century, are well known after Pen'kovka, Kolochin, and Prague hoards associated with the Antes (see section 9.1). Ornaments from Old Ladoga were analyzed by O.A. Shcheglova (2002, 2003) and N.V. Grigorieva (2015).

Apparently our views of the agricultural development of the land around early medieval Ladoga need to be revised. It was much more intense than previously believed. This conclusion is in line with recent knowledge of the level of early medieval agriculture in northwestern Russia, gained through landscape analysis (Eremeev, Dziuba 2010, pp. 520-521).

Generally, however, continuity between various trends of archaeological thought over the time span from the 1970s to the 2000s is quite distinct. The reasons were both objective and subjective. As I said, most such structures, that have until recently determined the scientific process, are rooted in the 1960s-1970s. Now these 'clamps' start to break down, partly due to the natural change of generations and owing partly to the 'reformation races' in the Russian education system. Since 2013, this process has directly affected also the Academy of Sciences.

The subjective reason is that the principal burden of dramatic changes of the "dashing nineties" was on the shoulders of those who were 25-40 at that time. Those were people who had become archaeologists in the 1970s and 1980s and had adopted the principal ideas and discussions of that time before the crisis broke out. At the turn of the century, this generation managed to survive and preserve archaeology both in Russia and in post-Soviet countries such as Ukraine and Belarus'. Professionalism imposed moral obligations, preventing the abandonment of science, urging people to fight for it and to survive in critical situations[30].

A younger generation, who had graduated from the university in 1990s and 2000s either did not go into science or had quit academia to go into business, crime, management, politics with eventual emigration, etc. At the present time, this demographic gap is quite sharp. Now that the government has initiated a bureaucratic (top down) reshaping of the Academy of Sciences, what we need is a bottom up initiative by scholars aged 30-40 – by young professionals, not bureaucrats, but these are too few.

9.2. The Early Slavonic studies: new paradigm

It is time to ask: what has changed in Russian early medieval Slavonic archaeology in the recent years in purely scholarly terms? The answer is that a change of research paradigms has taken place. Owing to a number of causes described above, the last decades of the 20th century, primarily the 1970s-1980s, were characterized by the predomination of the 'hyper-critical' approach towards the evidence relating to the Slavic

[30] As a direct witness of the events, I can tell a joke which circulated in those years. Yeltsin asks Gaidar, "Do our Academy of Science members come to work?" "They do." "Why, reduce their salaries." "That's what I did." "Well?" "They come to work anyway." "Look, try to stop paying them at all." "I did that too. They come to work all the same." "Then charge them an admission fee!"

ethnic and cultural origins. Although from the very beginning of that period (or, more precisely, the sub-period), a struggle between different trends was observable, alternative variants of summarization were put forward, etc. However, the presence of differing views is an indispensable condition of the development of a 'normal' science. It does not abrogate the generally accepted basic conception.

On the other hand, during the recent twenty-five years, the expansion of our knowledge of the antiquities of the third quarter of the 1st millennium AD and especially active accumulation of information on sites of the Kiev culture have led to a *de facto* paradigm shift. A new basic theory has been definitively established. Through its lens we gain a new understanding of cultural transformations which, in the 1st millennium AD, culminated in the origin of Slavs.

Abandonment of the hyper-critical stance was not an overnight event – it spanned decades. In essence, new views began to gradually gain ground as early as the 1970s; old ones did not succumb at once. But considerable efforts and new discoveries were needed for a new paradigm to be accepted by the scholarly community.

9.2.1. Kiev culture and the Goths

It is currently believed that the Kiev tradition determined cultural evolution across vast areas of Eastern Europe in AD 200-500 (Furas'ev 2009, p. 27). According to present-day data, the territory of the Kiev culture "…comprised the forest-steppe zone of Eastern Europe from the Middle Dnieper area in the west to as far as the Oskol River in the east. Separate enclaves of the Kiev tribes recently have become known in the basin of the Khoper River (left tributary of the Don) and on the Middle Volga. Kiev monuments are widely distributed in the forest regions of the Dnieper and Desna. The westernmost among them are known in Podliachia (eastern Poland) while the northernmost are in the basin of the Dvina and Velikaya rivers" (Oblomskii 2007, p. 5).

Of course, even now there are many arguable questions related with this new cultural world sequentially opened to the eyes of researchers during almost half a century (since the 1970s). However it has become simply impossible to disregard its existence and close ties with the Slavic problems. The 'far splashes' of the Kiev traditions in the forest-steppe Don region[31] and Samara Luka (Middle Volga) (Stashenkov 2005) indicate an active cultural expansion. Nevertheless the presence of an en-

[31] The bibliography and history of the discovery of the Great Barbarian Migration period on the Don are presented in Akimov 2014, pp. 45-55) and Oblomskii 2015.

tire mosaic of cultural variants induces us to suppose that the process of integration was not intense here (by contrast to the later Prague culture where the unification reached its maximum).

Clearly, deepening the "early Slavonic perspective" down to the first centuries AD is tempting and dangerous at the same time. A thin but distinct line of continuity with the Zarubintsy culture as well as the well established fact that Kiev sites existed partly under the "Chernyakhov veil" sometimes prompt us to think that these early medieval cultures are Slavonic. Half a century ago this conclusion would have appeared warranted, especially given the facts we know today. This, in fact, was what our autochthonists were saying on numerous occasions (suffice it to read B.A. Rybakov's and E.A. Symonovich's comment to P.N. Tretiakov's posthumous book *Tracing the Early Slavonic Tribes* (Tretiakov 1982).

Nowadays such statements are mouthed mostly by pseudo-scientists. The Internet is swarming with amateurish interpretations of this kind. But this fact relates not to science but to social psychology and the constructing of national ideology. What concerns science, the situation is different.

The Kiev culture existed under the "Chernyakhov veil" north-east of the principal Chernyakhov distribution area but close to it; their areas showed partial overlap. While each of the two cultures occupied its own ecological niche, it can be suggested that the proximity of the Gothic Kingdom was a critical factor in the consolidation of the non-Chernyakhov people – those who were non-Gothic, non-Germanic, subordinate, unprotected from assault, etc.

Historical destinies of Chernyakhov and Kiev people turn out to have been intertwined, although the connection was built on the ingroup vs. outgroup principle, occasionally resulting in warfare. Ermanaric's and Vinitarius's wars against Venetae and Antes are but the best known episodes in this opposition, mentioned in the heroic epic of the Goths. At the present time, evidence of the late 3rd-1st half of the 4th century AD warfare such as the abandonment of some Kiev sites on the Middle Dnepr, Chernyakhov horizons overlying those of Prague culture, migration to the north, etc., are well attested archaeologically (Oblomskii 2002, p. 90; Terpilovskii 2003, p. 426; Furas'ev 2009).

A special issue relates to the "micro-migrations" of Kiev people. The Kiev population was generally mobile, which might be caused either by specific form of agriculture or by the political situation in the region. According to A.M. Oblomskii, frequent migrations of small groups contributed to greater cultural homogeneity (Oblomskii 1991, pp. 142-147; 1994, p. 53). A.G. Furas'ev, too, considers frequent migrations a consolidation factor, enhancing contacts and contributiong tp the emergence of a coherent informational space (Furas'ev 2009, p. 28).

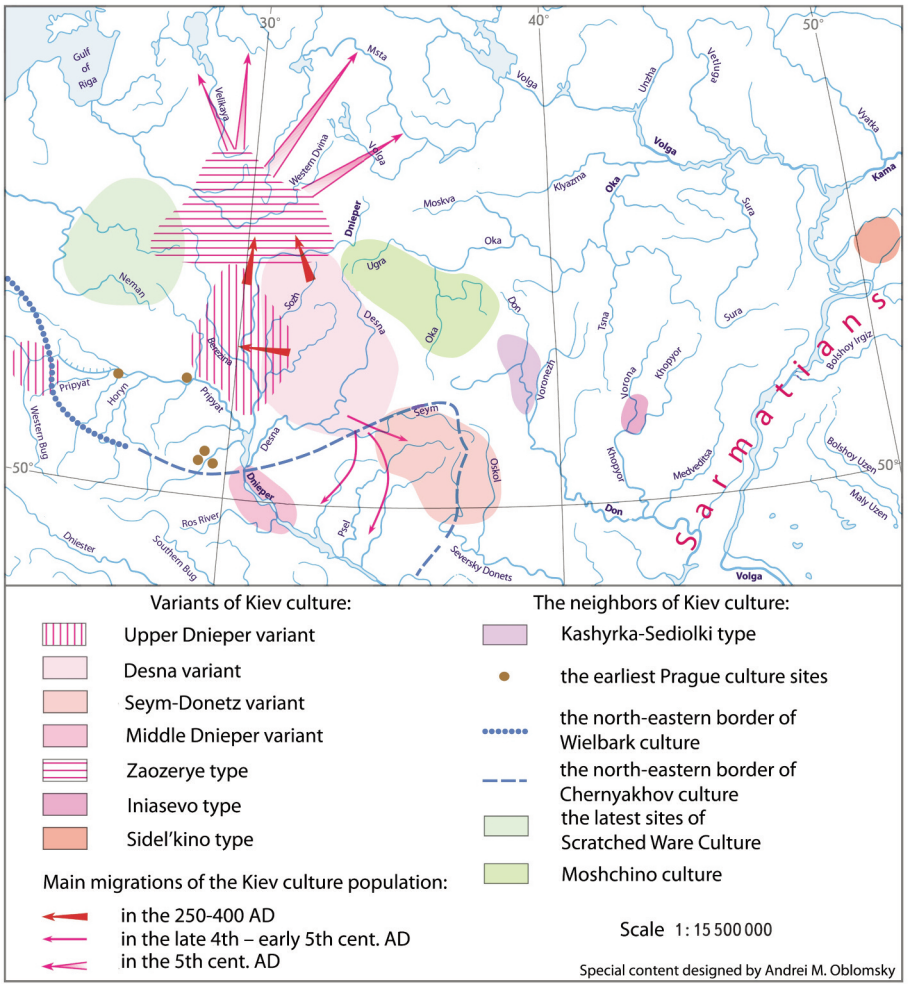

Fig. 9. The Kiev culture and its neighbors. After Andrei M. Oblomskii (Oblomskii 2009). English variant made by Nadezhda I. Platonova.

Apparently, existence at the periphery of the Gothic Kingdom, being opposed to it led to the consolidation of several, not necessarily related groups whose situation was similar, and to the emergence of common ethnic identity.

The most active group within the Kiev community concentrated on the Desna. In the first half of the 4th century, its cultural traditions began to spread across vast territories including the Upper Dnepr, Western Dvina, and the Dnepr-Don watershed (Oblomskii 1991, p. 123; Furas'ev 2009,

p. 30). The expansion was not always peaceful – at least the disappearance of the early Kiev sites like Abidiya in the Belarusian part of the Dnepr basin and their replacement by those displaying the Desna tradition may be attributed to hostilities (Gavritukhin *et al.* 2004, pp. 40-41).

Certain modern scholars believe that "precisely this community, which had emerged in mid-4th century under the domination of the Desna tradition, was the power with which Ermanaric clashed in his claims for hegemony in the forest zone of Eastern Europe" (Furas'ev 2009, p. 31). Therefore M.B. Shchukin and then R.V. Terpilovskii and A.G. Furas'ev argued that the Venetae, who fought with Ermanaric, lived on the Desna and adjoining areas on the left bank of the Dnepr (Shchukin 1994, pp. 284-285; Terpilovskii 2003, p. 429; Furas'ev 2009, pp. 27, 31).

Opponents of Vinitarius', who waged warfare half a century after Ermanaric, are referred to as *Antes* by Jordan. However, researchers have long been aware of an important contradiction: according to Jordan, who lived in mid-6th century, Vinitarius (literally *Vanquisher of Venetae*) was the *Vanquisher of Antes*. Apparently, Venetae as a socio-political union had been largely forgotten by that time, as mentioned by Jordan himself: *"Across vast territories lives a numerous tribe of Venetae. Although their names vary in terms of clans and locations, they are still widely known as Sclavinae and Antes*..." (Gindin, Litavrin 1991, p. 107).

It thus becomes clear that in the 6th century, Antes were perceived as successors of Venetae, and this accounts for the confusion. The term *Venetae* had already turned into an illusory Byzantine construct, which was still used owing to a longstanding literary tradition. It referred to the entire "numerous tribe", which had long fallen apart. In the 4th century, by contrast, the term was quite meaningful. The title *Vanquisher of Venetae*, used by Jordan, was evidently misinterpreted by the author himself, convincingly demonstrating that Vinitarius, like his predecessor, waged war with none other but Venetae. It was the land of Venetae where he committed genocide against the social elite, having crucified 70 elders including "King" Boz with his sons.

It is hard to say if this name was an endoethnonym of those associated with the Kiev culture of the Desna area. In any event, it was forgotten by their descendants in the early 6th century. In AD 537, informants of Procopius of Caesarea – Antes and Sclavinae – even failed to mention it when answering questions about their ancestors (see 9.2.2). But in the 6th (and perhaps 4th) century, the Ostgoths, who had been largely Romanized and whose educated representatives were familiar with the Roman literary tradition, used precisely that name to refer to their hostile neighbors.

9.2.2. Early Slavonic cultures in AD 500-800 and the origin of the Prague type

In the mid-1st millennium AD, a number of new different groups arose on the basis of the Kiev culture, synthesizing in one way or other the traditions of various East-European populations, not necessarily related ones. This was a very tumultuous time when different communities were torn away from their places and reshuffled. The historical and cultural context was defined by the collapse and disintegration of the Gothic union, followed by massive emigration of its former inhabitants southward into the Empire. But on the Russian Plain, the remnants of the former power survived, as evidenced by the Goths of Vinitarius and other "princes". The necessity of countering them turned the emerging early Slavic communities into natural allies of Huns.

Around AD 400, a radical population reshuffle in the Kiev community occurred, and new centers of attraction for socially active elements emerged. In the Desna area the *Kolochin culture* emerged, closely related to the Kiev culture. Further south, in the forest-steppe Dnepr basin, the Pen'kovka culture originated. Its continuity with the Kiev culture and ties with the contemporaneous Kolochin culture are now fairly manifest. Southward emigration implied the intrusion into the area of former Chernyakhov culture, from whence those associated with the Kiev culture had been partly displaced just a few decades before (some groups might be integrated into the Chernyakhov community). From that time on, the process was reversed. The distribution area of the Penkovka type matches that of the 6th century 'Antae' known from Byzantine sources. It spans the territory from the Seversky Donets in the east to the Prut-Dniester watershed in the west.

West of Poles'e and north of the Desna basin, in the upper Dnepr and Western Dvina area and adjacent territories of the northwest, an entire suite of cultures emerges, largely descending from sites of the Zaozerye–Uman' type (the *Western Dvina variant of the Kiev culture*) (Lopatin, Furas'ev 2007, p. 104). The best known of these is Tushemlya-Bantserovshchina and the culture of the Pskov long barrows (see § 9.2.3).

The most enigmatic culture is one which can be reliably associated with Slavs and is well documented – the Prague culture. It is quite distinct from the Kiev culture. Recently I.O. Gavritukhin (2003, 2005) has described the earliest stage of this culture, termed Prague 0 and dating to mid-4th-mid-5th century. It cannot be derived from known variants if the Kiev culture, but evidently is related to it by origin. The earliest proto-Prague sites have recently been found in the Belarusian Poles'e, and North Ukraine.

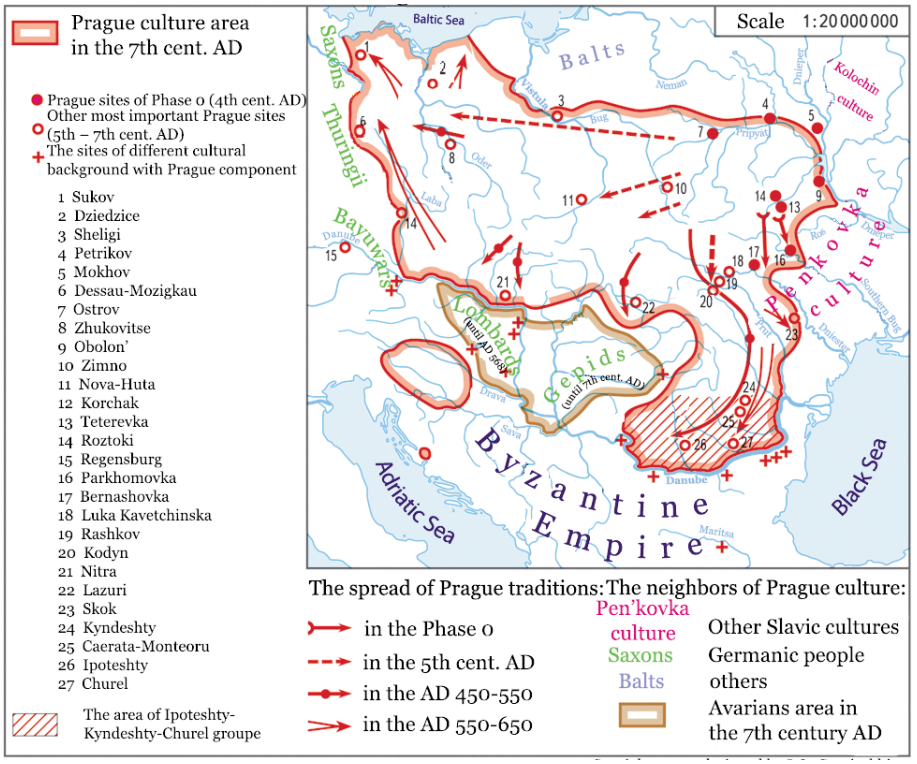

Fig. 10. The Prague culture and its neighbors. After Igor O. Gavritukhin (Gavritukhin 2014). English variant made by Nadezhda I. Platonova.

Mid-4th century is precisely the moment when the political situation sharply aggravated – intensive migratory processes and possibly struggle and partial admixture of various groups of Kiev community in the Pripyat' part of Poles'e. This critical situation may have contributed to the emergence of an entirely new cultural community, whose members called themselves Slovene – Sclaveni of the Byzantine sources. At first, this community was isolated from other related groups. The likely reasons for their ethnic specificity, contributing to survival and eventual expansion, were rooted in religion and ideology.

The strange and evidently non-Slavonic ethnonym *Antae* still puzzles many researchers. However, in Turkic and Xianpi languages this term meant "allies" (Kazanski 2005-2007, p. 461; see Kazanski 1998, for a detailed analysis with references to philological studies). This clearly suggests that after the military disaster and terror practiced by Vinitarius, descendants of the Desna variant of the Kiev culture (at least some of them) joined the Hunnic union. The foreign name *Antae*, meaning 'allies'

or 'confederates', eventually became the endoethnonym of that part of post-Kiev community that had joined the Hunnic union.

Note that the Pen'kovka culture contains numerous elements indicating systemic ties with the nomadic world. For that reason, M.I. Artamonov attributed this definitely agricultural community to Kutrigur Bulgars. The views of modern researchers with regard to this issue are discordant. The most founded view, as I believe, is that expressed by A.M. Oblomskii in his historical and cultural model relating to the 7th century. In his words, "connections between the nomadic people and the sedentary ones associated with Pen'kovka, were not confined to contacts between neighbors; rather, close links in the form of symbiosis should be inferred. The community included Antes as well as nomadic Turks. Each of those had their own elite. In Pen'kovka, this is evidenced by rich Martynovka-type hoards found at Martynovka, Kozievka, Novaya Odessa, Gaponovka, Sudzha, etc.; their counterparts in the nomadic world are sets of precious ornaments found at Maloye Pereshchepino, Novye Sanzhary, and Makukhovka. The nomadic elite, apparently, played the leading role in this community. Similar relationships between nomads and sedentary agriculturalists is observed, for example, in the Avar Kaganate" (Oblomskii 2012, pp. 25-26).

Regrettably, we have no evidence relating to the origin of this structure in southern Dnepr forest-steppe (Oblomskii 2012, p. 26). But only ties of at least some Slavic communities with nomads can account for the fact that by the early 6th century the Slavs had professional mounted warriors capable of shooting a bow while riding. These mercenaries made up a considerable part of Martins' and Valerian's party in Belisarius' troops which besieged Rome in AD 537. Contrary to a stereotype picturing Slavs as exclusively light infantrymen, Sclavinae and Antes serving in this party were mounted archers. As M.M. Kazanski aptly remarked, "No Romean officer could possibly arrive at an extravagant idea to recruit a bunch of undrilled Sclavinae and Antes and begin teaching them to ride. Marksmanship, especially mounted archery, takes long training, often from an early age. Martin and Valerian simply had no time for that" (Kazanski 2005-2007, p. 459).

Procopius of Caesarea unambiguously writes that Antes and Sclavinae, who served in this party, spoke one and the same language and considered themselves descendants of the same tribes. "For Procopius, 'Slavs' were not an abstract name of a remote people – he had held detailed talks with Slavic mercenaries in Italy, and we know when and where this took place: April 537 near Rome. The famous 'Slavic excursus' resulted from personal conversations, not from literary constructions… Precisely then did barbarians tell Procopius both their endoeth-

nonyms, 'Sclaveni' and 'Antes' and a name which they considered an initial endoethnonym of both tribes – Spori" (Ivanov 2008, p. 8). Based on such observations, Procopius described his informants as *people least of all insidious or evil-minded*, but *maintaining in their simplicity the customs of Huns* (Gindin, Litavrin 1991, p. 185).

In the first decades of the 6th century, then, the differentiation of Slavs was incipient, relating not so much to language as to social psychology (and perhaps in certain cultural features). The archaeological reflection of this process is presented by the opposition between the Prague culture (Sclaveni/Slovene) and all the other cultural unities stemming from the "Kiev tradition" (Antae, Veneti and possibly other tribes not mentioned by ancient authors).

Rather definite findings have been made in an area that had long remained highly controversial – so called 'antiquities of the Antae'. These are hoards or ritual burials of bronze and silver items of a ceremonial attire, clothing decorated with plaques made of lead and tin alloys, belts, weapons, etc. Thanks to the extension of the database and especially to the hoards found on settlements, these finds can now be viewed in a cultural context and are rather well dated. Specifically, it turned out that ornaments in hoards are identical to those worn by the Pen'kovka, Kolochin and Praga people in AD 625-650 (Oblomskii 2012, p. 16).

At present, based on the few inhumation burials discovered in the Pen'kovka distribution range, the female ethnographic costume has been reconstructed (Shcheglova 1999). It can be described as early Slavic with a rather high degree of probability, but representing the 'post Kievan' tradition with some Gothic elements. Previously, all the tentative reconstructions of the costume based on isolated artifacts from kurgans with cremations dating to 400-1000, were based exclusively on Latgalian and Baltic Finnic parallels. Therefore it was impossible to decide what accounted for those parallels – direct borrowing, common origin, or merely a wide circulation of respective artifacts (spirals, plaques, tassel beads, etc.), which belonged to widely different ethnographic ornament sets? The reconstructed 'Martynovka' costume (much similar to those studied *in situ* in South-West Crimea) can resolve this question with more certainty.

9.2.3. Northern variant of the Kiev culture and northwestern Russian sites of AD 500-1000

As the northern variant of the Kiev culture, the sites of the Zaozerye-Uzmen on the Upper Dvina may be considered. Their emergence was caused by two northward waves of migration of Kiev people – from the Upper Dnepr (Abidnya type) in AD 250-300, and from the Desna area

in early 4th century. The cultural parameters of this peripheral group fully agree with those of the Kiev "metropoly" (Furas'ev 2009, pp. 28-30). Presently, the beginning of Slavonization of the North-West is connected exactly with these antiquities (Lopatin, Furas'yev 2007, pp. 74, 105, bibliography ibid.).

As Ivan I. Eremeev supposes, the formation of the culture of Pskov long kurgans was possibly also induced by the same impulses. However 'we should not confuse the formation of material culture with the spread of mythological Weltanschauung which was found in the kurgan rite and accepted in no way by all the collectives within the area of the culture of the Pskov long barrows' (Eremeev, Dziuba 2010, p. 402).

Indeed, accumulation of information on discovery of sites of the third quarter of the 1st millennium AD unrelated to the culture of the Pskov long kurgans but situated within its distribution area has been taking place in various northwestern regions since the 1990s (basin of the upper Volga, Il'men area, Luga area, etc.). Now the ethnocultural situation here seems less definite than thirty years ago. The full systematization and interpretation of these sites is a task for the near future.

Now I wish only to note the exclusive importance of the most recent excavations in the region around Lake Il'men showing at a number of sites well-preserved and fairly reliably dated cultural layers of the 5th-7th and 8th centuries. These include the unfortified settlement of Prost, fortified sites of Seltso, Bronnitsa, Gorodok on Mayata, etc. (Plokhov 1997, pp. 106-107; Nosov, Plokhov 2005, p. 144; Eremeev, Dziuba 2010; Eremeev 2015, pp. 17-24). Certain sites of that type had long been known, but the few related artifacts were not considered a separate cultural or chronological group. Importantly the study of this cultural horizon proceeds in the framework of the landscape archaeology with the use of a wide range of geographic methods.

Fig. 11. The field research of the earliest wooden fortification (the walls dated back to 450-600 AD) of Gorodok na Mayate, near Il'men' lake. Excavations by Ivan I. Eremeev, 2006. (Photo by Ivan I. Eremeev)

"It turns out that the initial Slavic settlement around Lake Il'men was not condensed into a cultural and chronological whole marked by the Varangian expansion in the mid-700s to 900s. Rather, it preceded this expansion by some two centuries of independent development of the lacustrine tribal agglomeration" (Eremeev , Dziuba 2010, p. 417). Belarusian Upper Dvina area appears to be the source region of early Slavic (?) agricultural colonization of Il'men basin.

I.O. Gavritukhin – the leading Russian expert in Prague culture – has every right to note that *it is impossible in principle to derive the northwestern ceramics of the 750-1000 time span from the Prague culture*. In his words, as early as the 7th century, the distinctive features of Prague ceramics are sharply profiled vessels with S-shaped upper parts, well profiled rims, and, in certain groups, wheel-thrown pots (Gavritukhin 2009, p. 21). Contemporaneous pottery from northwestern Russia, including early wheel-thrown pots dating to the 10th and 11th centuries is indeed by far more archaic than the Prague pottery of the 7th centuries and had likely originated from that of the Zaozerye-Uzmen' type.

The last conclusion concerns not only AD 700-1000 horizons recently discovered by I.I. Eremeev at certain fortified sites around Lake Il'men, but also contemporaneous sites in northwestern Russia whose continuity with Old Russian culture of the region is beyond doubt.

In my view, we can link these conclusions with recent linguistic findings relating to birchbark documents, suggesting that the Old Novgorodian dialect diverged from other Eastern Slavonic dialects *at the early proto-Slavic stage* (see section 7.3.2) – hence its uniqueness. All the remaining Eastern Slavonic dialects jointly appear to be an undivided whole. Could the speakers of Old Novgorodian be a remnant of Proto-Slavs (specifically people associated with the Zaozerye-Uzmen variant), which had evolved in isolation from those associated with the Prague culture?

Turning to archaeological data, the development of the Kiev traditions on the middle Dnepr and in adjacent areas was terminated in the mid-7th-8th centuries. Those people were either destroyed or assimilated. The critical factor of this process was the expansion of the descendants of Prague culture (Sakhnov type etc.) (Gavritukhin, Oblomskii 1997, pp. 146-148; Oblomskii 2012, pp. 26-27). Only in the north was the situation different.

If so, there is no need to speculate about long-range migrations of Slavs from the west by land or by sea. The distinctness of the Novgorodian dialect would thereby be explained in a coherent way. Such problems, however, are not resolved by headlong dashes. The analysis of new northern Russian cultural types of the 500-1000 interval is still in its initial phase. Later findings will hopefully suggest a more plausible scenario.

10. Conclusions

The state of the art of Russian early medieval archaeology should be assessed in the context of experience accumulated by Russian and Soviet science in the 20th century. In general terms, I would define the tendency which was being gradually developed in the 1970s-2000s as a variety of *Neo-traditionalism*.

The Neo-traditionalist essence of Russian archaeology manifests itself in the structure of research, with a permanent focus on field studies and empiric approaches. At the same time, the socio-cultural approach maintained its positions along with others such as processual, behavioral, environmental, etc. This pluralism may in some sense be described as eclectic. However, none of my colleagues seek to develop a new "Great Paradigm" that would replace others. They prefer to use any methods developed within various systems provided these are informative.

The retrospect of the Russian 20th century archaeology teaches us many lessons. Over that time span, paradigms believed to be all-encompassing appeared more than once. They appeared and disappeared, each of them having left a certain "dry residue" which is still useful.

In the 1930s and 1940s, the prominent archaeologist S.A. Semenov developed his own *traceological* (use-and-wear) analysis with an unambiguous intention to destroy once and forever the "old archaeology" with its typological focus and the culture-centered approach. At present, however, both methods, traceological and typological, are viewed as three principal *mutually complementary* ways of approaching culture.

Back in the 1960s, another prominent archaeologist, L.H. Binford, did his best to turn archaeology into a natural science. In his view, cultural and historic evolution was reducible to a set of sociological regularities. In short, he made the same mistake as Soviet archaeologists had made in the twenties and thirties: they overemphasized the sociological factor and derived sociological regularities directly from archaeological data to the detriment of typological analysis. However, unlike Soviet archaeologists of that period such as V.I. Ravdonikas, P.P. Efimenko, P.N. Tretiakov, a/o, Binford ascribed cultural evolution to ecological and demographic changes rather than to technological and social evolution as his Soviet forerunners did.

The New Archaeology functioned as a single paradigm for hardly more than a decade. The lifetime of the Soviet sociological school in its orthodox version was about the same. That said, the "dry residue" of both schools was considerable. The New Archaeology introduced factor and systemic analysis and contributed to a better knowledge of paleoenviron-

ments. Thirty years before the New Archaeologists, in the 1930s, advocates of the sociological school in Soviet archaeology drew scholarly attention to the social aspect of archaeological studies. They began excavating settlements across large areas and analyzing mass material. They did not shun problems of wide scope such as hunting, farming, and nomadic pastoralism. Despite the yawning gaps in the resulting broad reconstructions, all the deficiencies of the database notwithstanding, certain generalizations they had made anticipated modern developments by six decades.

More examples can be drawn, but the conclusion is evident: rejecting a paradigm does not imply discarding its specific achievements and methods. By the way, pronounced reluctance to overturn traditions has been traceable in Soviet/Russian since the 1980s. This may be a reaction to prolonged ideological pressure and public renouncement of so-called "old archaeology". Return to traditions and quest for continuity were forms of latent protest, a psychological defense mechanism. One way or another, pluralism and mutual enrichment of paradigms in modern Russian archaeology is perceived as a norm. Each new interpretation, proclaimed to be radically new and opposed to all others, is valid with regard to one part of the problem while leaving room for other explanations.

Coupling archaeological findings with those of other disciplines should be discussed separately in the context of Slavic origins. In the period between the 1970s and 2000s, the theory most popular with Russian archaeologists was that formulated by H.-J. Eggers and R. Hachmann among others in the mid-20th century (Hachmann 1970). They believed that each discipline had to use exclusively its own methods avoiding influences from adjacent disciplines (Hachmann called this principle "regressive purification"). Only after the end of the study can conclusions be compared and an integration can be attempted.

That was precisely the way A.S. Gerd and G.S. Lebedev, the co-founders of the Inter-Departmental seminar, perceived their roles. In fact, they had agreed beforehand that archaeologists and linguists *would handle their own data and concepts so as to compare "pure" findings*. As M.B. Shchukin admitted, communication with linguists convinced him that archaeologists and linguists think somewhat differently, interpreting the notion "chronology" in radically different ways. Precisely the latter fact prompted representatives of both disciplines to cooperate. If you understand that your colleagues think in a different way, then you can at least hope to gain a better understanding of their findings.

No doubt such a purification itself may be challenged. When information from heterogeneous disciplines is integrated, conclusions may agree or disagree with previous ones. Both those situations are well known.

What this implies is that one has to start from the beginning, test the possibilities of each discipline, and try to find reasons why various specialists define the same notions differently. This appears to be the most acceptable strategy, especially now that major problems are being tackled by specialists in vastly remote disciplines such as paleogenetics. Each of those areas including archaeology itself has its own limitations, understandable only to professionals, not to specialists in other disciplines, whose only option is to accept their colleagues' conclusions at face value. The old stipulation that the historian who seeks to integrate various categories of data must be able to assess the reliability of each source is still valid.

Much more popular nowadays is an entirely different approach to interdisciplinary synthesis, one that is quite unlike Hachmann's "regressive purification". It can be described as a peculiar postmodernist reflection on the ways cultural anthropology can handle heterogeneous data. Its distinctive features are radicalism and audacity of style. The epitome of this way of thinking is a voluminous study by the American cultural anthropologist F. Curta (2001), *The Making of the Slavs: History and Archaeology of the Lower Danube Region*.

The central idea of the study is that there were *no Slavs* on the Danube simply because they are not supposed to have been there! They were, for some unknown reason, invented by the crafty Byzantines. Slavs did not migrate to the Danube from the north because no migrations are possible in principle. "Autochthonous" people of the Balkans such as Romanians, Albanians, speakers of Neo-Hellenic, etc., can with full right claim ownership of early medieval Slavic sites in that region.

I will not analyze Curta's ideas in detail because this has already been done by my colleagues (Ivanov 2008; Shuvalov 2008)[32]. A couple of words must be said, though, because the issues raised are too serious.

Problems of migration versus autochthony, ethnic and political origins, continuity of ethnic traditions, construction of social identity, etc., are being sharply debated. Reasons for their topicality should be sought in present-day political issues. Scientific approaches to problems of the remote past are being tested on modern ethnographic and sociological data. That is why sore points of our time project modern preconceptions onto the past, vehemently destroying past preconceptions. However, the scholarly potential today, as a century before, is largely contingent on the sobriety in assessing the difficulties and on the ability to avoid overt modernization.

[32] See also a series of reviews by the archaeologists from Central and South Europe, published in "Stratum plus", 5, 2015.

In the second half of the 20th century, the modern experience of manipulation with public conscience using sophisticated means such as mass media, the Internet, etc. gave rise to the *instrumentalist approach* to ethnicity. It is based on the rejection of nationalist and racist thinking and on the revision of the view of nations as key components of history. All these were replaced by the idea that a nation is a *social construct* that emerged during the modern era *in the course of a rational planned activity* of certain social forces (Smith 1998). Later, these views were extended to the Middle Ages and even to prehistory. The emergence of new identities came to be linked with a purposeful activity of "elites", allegedly generating entirely new communities (Geary 2003).

In Russia, this approach has won its way with great difficulty. Problems of nation and nationalism were less acute here (see Tishkov 2003). Neither during the pre-Revolutionary period nor during the Soviet era did Russian scholarly community tend toward racism. Russian historians and anthropologists, unlike their Western colleagues including those of the late 1900s, never coupled the notion of "race" with that of "nation" or "people". This does not imply that no national prejudices and hostilities existed in Russia before or after the Revolution. But within the scholarly community, any attempts to introduce nationalist or racist explanatory models, from F.K. Volkov to L.N. Gumilev, were invariably rebuked at once. I will not dwell upon this fact as its explanation is outside the scope of my study.

The instrumentalist idea per se, however, is promising. Socio-political processes might well co-occur with those relating to ethnic origins. Social groups developed their own ideas of the prestigious and non-prestigious. Their detailed study in cases where these groups can be reliably identified would be relevant to the understanding of processes whereby cultural innovations emerge.

It appears natural that medieval elites purposefully enhanced social cohesion and formed new communities such as military and/or political alliances, princely guards, etc. Under certain circumstances this might trigger the emergence of new identities. Specifically, this explanation may apply to processes occurring within the Kiev culture.

One should not, however, overstate the *rationality* of such actions; nor should one regard them as entirely *purposeful* or *preplanned*. Their initiators envisaged the future of their constructs even worse than do modern experts in political science and futurology, whose awareness is incomparable to that of early medieval leaders. The latter acted in an ad hoc manner, realizing their opportunistic ideas of advantage versus disadvantage, prestige versus lack thereof, and strength versus weakness.

The Empire, who had its own ideas of barbarians and barbarian policies, acted the same way.

In Curta's book, instrumentalist views of Slavic origins are reduced to absurdity. The Byzantine Empire during Justinian's reign is supposed to have used the levers of social construction comparable to those employed by modern superpowers. The main question, however, remains: what for? In a review, the prominent Russian advocate of ethnological instrumentalism notes:

"Consider for a moment that the Empire's propaganda machine worked so ideally as to indoctrinate everyone without exception from Syria to Portugal (which is highly unlikely given the absence of mass media). The principal question remains: how did barbarians themselves come to know that from that time on they should have been called Slavs? And there is no doubt they called themselves precisely that way… For some reason lots of barbarians across the vast Eastern Europe … began using this endoethnonym, otherwise we wouldn't have registered it in various sources spanning the area from the North Sea to the Black Sea… Justinian's fortresses were besieged by people who definitely considered themselves Slavs. Why did they cling to this name, why did it suddenly become so prestigious – those are questions to which we still have no answers" (Ivanov 2008, p. 11).

It is quite possible that the answer would be found when new findings, especially those relating to excavations of the last two decades in Russia, Belarus' and Ukraine are integrated[33]. For example in 1997, W. Pohl (1997, p. 71) had no doubts that there was no military aristocracy among the Slavs. Quite recently, quite a number of studies specially addressing Slavic weapons, mounted warfare, military control, etc., were published (Kazanski 2005-2007; 2011a; 2011b; 2015). So this issue, too, has to be revised.

The extension of the database relating to early medieval Slavonic-Russian archaeology has carried this discipline to a level where a new synthesis is required. In the words of P.V. Shuvalov (2008, p. 13): "It is time to construct a generalizing model, which would encompass archaeology, its inherent limitations notwithstanding, linguistics, and written sources".

This challenge requires huge efforts as the amount of new information is enormous. Various interpretations must be analyzed using modern

[33] A great work of translating, annotating, and publishing all known Greco-Latin written sources about the Slavs (6th-9th centuries) was finished by Russian scholars in the 1990s (Gindin, Litavrin 1991; Litavrin 1995).

ethnological methods. In this connection I would like to note that the information model of ethnicity, formulated at the Inter-Departmental seminar many years ago, is still viable and relevant to the origin of identities during the Great Barbarian Migration era and the early Middle Ages. Modern data concerning AD 200-800 sites in the forest and forest steppe zones of Eastern Europe help to make the model work.

Acknowledgments

I am deeply thankful to my teachers and to my elder and junior friends and colleagues, with whom I was lucky to walk down Russia's archaeological paths during the 'era of great discoveries' of the 1970s-1980s. My separate gratitude goes to Leo S. Klejn, Igor O. Gavritukhin, Ol'ga A. Shcheglova, Ivan I. Eremeev, Tamara A. Zheglova, Tat'yana B. Senichenkova, Evgenii N. Nosov, Natal'ya A. Khvoshchinskaya, as well as to Aleksandr G. Kozintsev, who translated most of this text.

My deep reverence is due to the late Gleb S. Lebedev, Yuriy M. Lesman, Evgenii A. Riabinin, Igor' V. Dubov, Evgenii A. Goriunov, Mark B. Shchukin, Aleksandr M. Mikliaev, and Ol'ga I. Davidan.

I'm thankful also to the Photo-Department of IHMC RAS Archive and especially to its employee Natalia A. Lazarevskaia who helped me to choose and copy some pictures for this paper.

The study was financially supported by a grant from the RAS Foundation Eurasian Legacy: New Meanings, under the project *Archaeological Cultures of Eurasia in the Context of Systemic Analysis: New Prospects of Historical Interpretation Using Archaeological Data* (project supervisor, Nadezhda I. Platonova).

I also offer my gratitude to Great Russian Encyclopedia for the permission to use the maps published in the articles of GRE.

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