

Priit Ligi

NATIONAL ROMANTICISM IN ARCHAEOLOGY: THE PARADIGM OF SLAVONIC COLONIZATION IN NORTH-WEST RUSSIA

Abstract

Ethnogenetic studies have had a long tradition in the archaeology of the former Soviet Union, but related theoretical debate was constricted by the bounds of official ideology, which laid a basis for the ethnic misuse of archaeology. This article discusses the present situation in the theory of Slavonic colonization, which has often served the purposes of ideological and political speculation. The author claims that after the numerous *ad hoc* modifications concerning the origin of the long barrows and the *sopka* mounds the whole national-romantic theory of Slavonic immigration should be rejected. The descent of the Russians of North-West Russia can be explained by the substitution of the local Balto-Finnic languages by the Slavonic languages. The distribution of the 'Old Russian' culture over a large area may be interpreted as an example of the use of material culture in social strategies.

Priit Ligi, Department of Archaeology, Institute of History, Estonian Academy of Sciences, Rütüli 6, EE-0101, Tallinn, Estonia

The interrelationship of archaeology and politics and its consequences for our view of prehistory have been a topic of discussion for several decades. However, keen interest in these questions has not become especially apparent until today (e.g. Kristiansen 1993a). In Eastern Europe, the collapse of communism and the emergence of new states have created a new situation for the discipline of archaeology (e.g. Neustupny 1993; Gringmuth-Dallmer 1993). Rapid political and ideological change has also had a strong effect on archaeology, and its future development promises to be quite contradictory. Ian Hodder (1991a; 1991b) has recently expressed concern about the possible nationalistic and ethnic uses of archaeology under conditions of ethnic unrest to justify regional claims in Eastern Europe. He has called for a continuous critique of reconstructions of the past as ideological. Hodder feels that an uncritical link between archaeological theory and nationalist claims has inhibited theoretical discussion in many parts of Europe. He sees the main reason for this in the shadow cast by the misuse of the past for nationalistic purposes in the Third Reich.

I would claim that Hodder is only partly correct. It is highly typical for a Western archaeologist to

speaking about the damages brought on by the Third Reich while completely forgetting the former Soviet empire. In the West, Soviet archaeology was often seen in much too positive a vein (e.g. Trigger 1989; Lamberg-Karlovsky 1989). This was partly due to language barriers and partly a product of naive 'Marxist solidarity'. There is no question that Soviet archaeology had its positive sides and its many gifted scholars who produced serious achievements, but I feel that many Western archaeologists have not fully understood the constrictions placed by official Soviet Marxist ideology on theoretical discussion and debate (cf. Tilley 1991; Klejn 1991). In speaking about the nationalistic misuses of archaeology it is important to bear in mind the long tradition of ethnogenetic studies in the former Soviet Union, and the consequences of its limitations on theoretical discussion there. Soviet archaeology is also a good example of the necessity of Hodder's warning. On the other hand, the Soviet experience also shows that in the near future the ideological reconstruction of the past might very well become a problem for archaeology within the European Community as well. There are already signs of creating some kind of 'EC archaeology' (e.g. Randsborg 1991), and in a

struggle against the EC a reaction might well be the resurrection of ethnic archaeology in Europe (cf. Rowlands 1984, 111, 112).

In the former Soviet republics archaeology is already being misused in the press in connection with political disputes. The only ones to halt such a development are the archaeologists themselves, but I am afraid that they are often not ready to do so. Archaeological speculation figures, for instance, in territorial debates between Estonia and Russia. In Estonia, the assertion 'Finno-Ugrians were here long before the Slavs' is very popular, whereas in Russia the superiority of the Slavs over the autochthonous 'Finns' was openly emphasized, a view that was slightly hidden during the Soviet period. It is also a paradox that both 'sides' use the concept of the Slavonic colonization theory. This article presents a critical survey of the present situation in the theory of Slavonic colonization in North-West Russia. My aim here is to discuss whether there is any real basis for any of the ideological approaches mentioned above.

Despite serious Soviet contributions to archaeological theory on the interrelationships of archaeological cultures and ethnic groups (Leo Klejn and others), there were areas of archaeology which, in my view, were hardly influenced by them, particularly the archaeology of the Baltic countries and the 'Slavonic-Russian archaeology' of North-West Russia. Also isolated from Western archaeological thought, these fields pursued their own quiet life under the strong, though indirect, influence of Gustaf Kossinna's methodology of identifying prehistoric ethnic groups. A typical feature of this situation is that Kossinna was always strongly criticized in the Soviet archaeological literature. This criticism, however, was not methodological, but purely political. The only exception was L. Klejn, whose 1974 study on Kossinna was not published in the Soviet Union. Both in the Baltics and in North-West Russia much energy was channelled into searching for early ethnic borders by using 'ethnic indicators'. The data of physical anthropology were also widely used for these purposes. The national-romantic 'paradigm' of Slavonic colonization was created to explain the origin of the Russian nation. Some details of this theory, concerning certain grave types, met with resistance among individual Russian scholars and particularly in Estonian archaeology.

Western scholars would consider such archaeology 'nationalistic', and they would be right. However, before voicing such comments and drawing parallels with the Third Reich, one should always try to understand the concrete political background and to find out the interests actually served

by archaeology. In the present case, one has to bear in mind a certain positive role played by nationalism under the Soviet empire. Firstly, the Russian nation, though being the 'leading' one, still faced a certain threat to its cultural identity in the concept of the 'Soviet nation'. Consequently, interest in the origin of the Russians offered a kind of escape from that situation. This was even more the case with the Estonians (and Latvians, Lithuanians, Ukrainians etc.) who had forfeited their independence and whose future was directly threatened through mass deportation and official assimilation policies. On these grounds, I would prefer the term 'national romanticism' in this context. Furthermore, in the former Soviet Union the term 'nationalism' still bears associations with the Stalinist repressions of intellectuals.

Estonian archaeology is a good example of how ethnic archaeology is perhaps best made attractive by changing political borders. Before the Second World War, ethnic interpretations of archaeological materials were only a kind of by-product of Estonian archaeology, which was to a large extent influenced by the functionalist views of A. M. Tallgren. While Professor of Archaeology at Tartu University from 1920 to 1923, Tallgren was the founder of Estonian national archaeology, and he was very critical about the ethnic uses of the discipline (see Tallgren 1937). After Estonia was incorporated into the Soviet empire, ethnogenetic research, which was becoming more and more popular in the Soviet Union, was 'borrowed' from the East to become the main direction of Estonian archaeology. Research (see Moora 1956) was carried out in a solid interdisciplinary way, complementing archaeological data with that of ethnography, linguistics, physical anthropology and folklore studies. The same process occurred somewhat later in Latvia and Lithuania. The political grounds for such change were obvious. The ideological importance of the archaeologists' claims to the Estonian people at that time - 'our ancestors have lived here for thousands of years' - cannot be underestimated. This statement was one of the few ways available to resist the ideology of the Soviet Communist Party, which maintained that smaller nations were to disappear sooner or later. There is also a great deal of irony in the fact that as the main complex ethnogenetic study produced in Estonia (Moora 1956) was also published in a parallel version in Russian, it became a veritable lesson in methodology for corresponding research throughout the Soviet Union.

National romantic interpretations of the past were a logical consequence of the totalitarian regime. Russian national romanticism, however,

was not only used to oppose the regime - the regime itself utilized it in its own policies of assimilation. The theory of Slavonic colonization was very useful in that it presumed that cultural superiority of the Slavs, and it found use primarily in the sphere of education (the official glorification of Russian history, Russia as the Big Brother of other nations) as the historical justification for the dominance of the Russian language in the Soviet Union and the Russification of smaller nations. These policies were naturally reflected in the structure of archaeological institutions as well. It is no accident that the Leningrad branch of the Institute of Archaeology of the Soviet Academy of Sciences - the leading institution in the study of North-West Russia - had no Bronze or Iron Age section dealing with this area. The section of Slavonic archaeology renamed, 'Slavonic-Finnic' in the 1970s (in order to develop foreign contacts?), studied only the 'Slavonic period'. As a result, no one dealt systematically with these 'non-Slavonic' periods of prehistory in this area. From this alone it is difficult to understand how large-scale immigration could be demonstrated. The prehistory of the local Balto-Finnic groups was studied in the context of their relations with the Slavs and the Old Russian state.

But let us take a closer look at the paradigm of Slavonic colonization. Both Estonian and Russian researchers share the opinion that at least until the middle of the first millennium AD North-West Russia was inhabited by various Finno-Ugrian groups. It would lead us too far to discuss whether such a claim is fully justified. I only note here that the whole theory is based, first of all, on the identification of archaeological cultures and physical types with ethnic groups. In fact, we do not know, of course, what the linguistic situation was during the Stone and Bronze Ages. But it should be certain that the local population did not speak any proto-Slavonic dialects during the Early Iron Age. Estonian and Russian scholars also agree that the autochthonous population was mostly assimilated after Slavonic colonization took place. Differences in opinion emerge in identifying the earliest Slavonic antiquities. Most Russian scholars maintain that the long barrows and the *sopka* mounds of the second half of the first millennium AD were built by the Kriviches and the Novgorodian Slovenes respectively, and can be interpreted as the earliest Slavonic graves. Estonian archaeologists have usually rejected these claims, and have attributed these antiquities to the 'Finns' (Laul 1971; Aun 1980; Jaanits et al. 1982; Selirand 1983). The Estonian literature of the past decades, however, never attempted to answer the question of the

origin of the present Russian population of North-West Russia. It should be clear that an answer to this question would be essential if one is to interpret all the known burial remains as non-Slavonic. At the same time it would be incorrect not to mention that, for political reasons, it was impossible for Estonian archaeology in the 1950s and '60s to openly debate the ethnic identification of antiquities which Russian scholars had declared to be Slavonic. Debate did not become possible until some of the Russian scholars had raised their own doubts.

I would see the problem of the origin of the Russian population in the former Novgorod Land in quite a different light. I have previously written about the impossibility of demonstrating any kind of pattern of Slavonic colonization in the area of the long-barrow culture in the middle of the first millennium (Ligi 1989), or in North-East Estonia, Ingria or the Votic Land (Ingermanland) in the 11th - 13th centuries (Ligi 1986; 1988). Here, I will try to argue for the position that the origin of the Russians of North-West Russia should first and foremost be explained by language replacement and that no large-scale Slavonic colonization can be proved. On that point I share the opinion of Viktor Paranin, whose study (1990) has so far been almost totally ignored by scholars, perhaps partly because of his neglect of archaeological data. The idea itself is of course much older and, in principle, can be traced as far back as the 18th century (see Tatischev 1979, 96). My own explanation of the process of language replacement is not far removed from certain ideas already expressed by some Russian scholars 15 years ago, who claimed that towns played a decisive role in this area (Bulkin et al. 1978). Their study can be characterized, however, as a 'softer' version of the theory of Slavonic colonization.

Although the theory of Slavonic colonization has undergone several essential *ad hoc* modifications, its basic ideas have remained very much the same (for a general review see Kirpitschnikov & Ryabinin 1987). The paradigm that has formed over the past four decades argues that after the first waves of Slavonic immigrants had arrived into the almost uninhabited lands in the second half of the first millennium AD, the Slavs continued to colonize more and more areas during the so-called Old Russian period. The mounds and *zhalnik* interments of the 11th - 14th centuries are interpreted as signs of a growing Slavonic population, which assimilated the local 'tribes'. To show what seems to be wrong about the whole theory I will discuss its most obvious *ad hoc* modifications.

Until the beginning of the 1950s, it was gen-

erally maintained that already in the Pre-Roman and Roman Iron Age early Slavonic tribes inhabited the headwaters of the Dniepr and the Dvina rivers, from where they later moved towards the north (Tretyakov 1953). One reason why the long barrows and *sopka* mounds were attributed to the Slavonic immigrants was the statement that these graves had no local 'roots' (Early Iron Age antiquities were almost completely unknown in North-West Russia, and this situation has not appreciably changed even by now). The first serious problem for the immigration theory emerged when it became obvious that oldest southernmost long barrows (the Smolensk group) were at least four hundred years younger than the early northern long barrows (the Pskov group). Now the first *ad hoc* modification was introduced. According to the new version (Sedov 1960), the Krivich tribes had originated from eastern Poland, from where they first moved to the Pskov region, and only then to the south.

By the 1970s the need for the next *ad hoc* modification became obvious, as no suitable candidates could be found for the earlier 'roots' of the long barrows in the assumed initial territory of the Kriviches. According to the new theory (Sedov 1974; 1982), the Krivich immigrants invented the new grave type (the long barrow) only after they had arrived in North-West Russia. The fact that the main argument for denying the 'Finnish' origin of the long barrows (the lack of local 'roots') should no longer have been used was never discussed. To prove the Slavonic origin of the long barrows Valentin Sedov used a Kossinna-style retrospective method proceeding from the later antiquities – the semispherical mounds with cremation burials. For some reason, he took their Slavonic origin for granted. New discoveries of pit cremations with the same type of pottery as is characteristic of the long barrows also seemed to be in accordance with the latest version. It was now discussed (Nosov 1982) whether the early Slavs of the Novgorod Land could still have originated from the south, as similar pit cremations with somewhat similar pottery were to be found there (the Tuschemlya-Bancerovo culture, 5th-7th centuries AD). But as these antiquities were spread over a comparatively limited area, and were of the same age as the early long barrows, they could not be used to locate the 'homeland'.

Moreover, the geographical distribution of the long barrows proved to be much broader than previously assumed (Nosov 1981), which in itself eroded the plausibility of the immigration theory. Paleodemographic estimates showed that the population to whom the long barrows belonged

was very sparse (Lesman 1985; Ligi 1989), which again was not in accordance with the immigration theory. Admittedly, these calculations only gave a picture of the burials in the barrows, and there is no certainty that the whole community was buried in them. Despite this, the supporters of the Slavonic theory have always referred to the barrows as proof of a sudden increase of population resulting from immigration. Finally, a number of Roman Iron Age pit cremations with typical 'Finnish' textile-impressed pottery were discovered in the eastern part of the area of distribution of the sites and antiquities concerned (Baschenkin 1990). It had been claimed previously that the 'Finns' never practised urn-pit cremations. At present, an increasing number of scholars have rejected the idea of the Slavonic origin of the long barrows. Instead, the main emphasis is now on the *sopka* mounds. The different locations of these grave types are underlined, the *sopka* mounds being normally on heavier soils than the long barrows (Dolukhanov 1986). Accordingly, the economy of the Slavonic immigrants is considered to have been much more advanced than that of the autochthonous population. And yet, this 'stake' seems very much a bluff.

Until the 1980s the *sopka* culture was dated to precisely the same period as the long-barrow culture (6th – 10th centuries). However, by now it seems certain that the earliest *sopka* mounds date from the 8th century, and the majority are of the 9th – 10th centuries. It would be methodologically interesting to discuss how the theory of Slavonic immigration could be constructed with the help of an erroneous chronology. But even this is not the main point here. It is more essential that the Slovenes are always assumed to have initially settled around Lake Ilmen, where the Russian chronicles of the 11th and 12th centuries place them and where the largest concentration of *sopka* mounds can be observed. From there, they were assumed to have moved at a later date to the north. Now, however, it is clear that the earliest *sopka* mounds are those in the north (in the Lake Ladoga area), and the ones in the Ilmen region are only from the 9th – 10th (11th) centuries. In fact, the situation became very much the same as in the case of the long barrows twenty years previously, and an *ad hoc* modification of the theory was again required to solve the puzzle. The invention of the rite of building *sopka* mounds now began to be explained through Scandinavian-Slavonic contacts in the Lake Ladoga area. The *sopkas* were now interpreted as the burial monuments of the elite and not as the graves of the whole community (Konetski 1989). Such an explanation seems very likely, but as we are dealing here with a theory of migration

we should perhaps ask why the Slovenes had to travel so far before honouring their leaders with such displays of mortuary architecture. In view of the whole paradigm, I would like to refer to one more interesting moment: in the minds of scholars, the Slovenes proved to be as lucky as the Kriviches in not having to face the embarrassing question of the 'roots' of their burial monuments. As noted above, this question was fatal for the autochthonous population for whom such 'roots' were obligatory.

Despite the lack of early *sopka* mounds in the Ilmen region, scholars have not abandoned the idea that this was the area where the Slovenic immigrants first arrived in the 8th century. According to the latest version of the theory, this colonization had the character of a rapid, large-scale process of immigration (Konetski 1992). The *sopka* mounds are no longer necessary to prove it, since the first pit cremations have been found adjacent to them. Following the logic of the modification strategy of the paradigm, these cremations were attributed at once to the Slovenes (Konetski 1989), although there is nothing that would indicate their ethnicity. These are not the only facts which I see as 'counterinstances' and not as 'puzzles' for the paradigm, to use Thomas S. Kuhn's (1970) terms. Let us also take a look at the other essential points.

Firstly, I would like to refer to the method of 'ethnic indicators' which was widely used in Soviet archaeology. It is interesting to note that for the early Slavonic immigrants, unlike the other ethnic groups, the existence of such indicators was not considered necessary. Instead, the statement of Niderle (1956) was often referred to, claiming that the Slavs always used non-Slavonic ornaments in the areas of contact with other ethnic groups. Though such a phenomenon of displaying 'solidarity' is actually possible (see Hodder 1982, Odner 1983), it cannot be regarded as a specifically Slavonic ethnic feature, nor can it be used to prove immigration. The display of such solidarity would rather presume that in the contact areas the Slavs would have been the ones that were assimilated.

Another essential point concerns the interpretation of the most numerous category of finds – the pottery of the so-called Ladoga type. This ware is characteristic of the town of Old Ladoga and also of the *sopka* mounds. As the *sopkas* are attributed to the Slovenes, the pottery often follows suit. For example, rural settlements containing this type of pottery are usually attributed to the Slovenes. Here, we are in fact dealing with an obviously tautological explanation. Furthermore, Ladoga-type pottery is interpreted as an innovation in North-West Russia. However, similar ware was

typical of neighbouring Estonia already from the Bronze Age, and also of the Dyakovo culture (Lang 1991).

The next problem is the question of the 'homeland' of the assumed Slavonic immigrants. Defining its exact location appears to have been a puzzle postponed for the future. However, it is clear that most scholars have started to believe in a West Slavonic origin for the immigrants (see Sedov 1982; 1986; Nosov 1990; Yanin 1992; Konetski 1992), although the evidence does not appear to be at all sufficient. Anything seems to merit as proof of the new version: certain common features of West Slavonic and Ladoga pottery (despite the fact that the former was wheel-turned and the latter was made by hand!); a number of arrowheads found at the hillfort of Novgorod; even dwellings with horizontal beams and an oven in the corner (!); certain similarities of physiognomy between the assumed Slovenes and the Western Slavs; and some western features of the Novgorod dialect in the 12th – 14th centuries. There was no discussion whatsoever of alternative explanations (for instance, the role of the Viking Period international trade routes) or the actual evidence for the migration route (was it really a large-scale maritime campaign undertaken by farmers?).

Another essential problem is the lack of any explanation of the social, economic and demographic preconditions for large-scale Slavonic migration (this is of course too much to ask, since even the location of the homeland is unknown). Nor is there any discussion of the curious phenomenon of the enormous backwardness of the society and economy of the autochthonous population of North-West Russia in comparison with their neighbours. According to Vassily Konetski (1992), the economy of the local 'tribes', which was based on slash-and-burn cultivation, had come to an impasse, and therefore they had to disappear from the historical scene. This claim differs from the earlier modifications of the paradigm by its more explicit ideological superstructure: the autochthonous population is assumed to have been primitive and to have played only a passive role in the early history of Russia. But how can one then explain that the settlement pattern of the Bronze and Early Iron Age has come to be discovered on the same soils on which the *sopkas* are situated (see Nosov & Plokhov 1989; Nosov 1991)? We may also ask what the Pre-Roman and Roman Iron Age settlement pattern of neighbouring Estonia would have looked like if the rite of burying in stone settings had not been practised there. To date, only a few dwelling sites and settlements of these periods are known in Estonia. Furthermore, the archaeological

data is insufficient for conclusions concerning the economy of a prehistoric society, and there is no palynological evidence for the primitive state of the local economy.

Finally, we must also keep in mind the fact that Marxist archaeology has always emphasized the importance of internal factors in the development of society. It has also emphasized the priority of the establishment of private property in land in the formation of classes and the state. In the present case, however, Soviet Marxist archaeologists tried to combine migrationist concepts with those of orthodox Marxism. The 'real' internal development of a society towards the formation of a state is thought to have begun at a fixed point in time. But how can one combine the extensive development of agriculture under conditions of enormous reserves of available land, which were always available to the surplus population, with rapid social development? According to the theory, it took only one century after the assumed migration for the process of state formation to be completed. It is of no importance here whether we look at these developments from a Marxist position or not – an historical process of this kind is simply not likely. There is no doubt that the existence of free land would have slowed societal development (cf. Hedeager 1992).

In my opinion, the above problems are enough to show that the national-romantic paradigm of Slavonic colonization has reached a point of crisis and should be rejected. To continue research within this paradigm would mean that the early history of North-West Russia will remain *das Ding für uns*, and we would come no closer to *das Ding an sich*. All the difficulties could be avoided if the changes in the settlement pattern and culture were explained as a result of internal development and not by migration. Intending to strengthen the paradigm, Evgeny Nosov put the question in these terms over ten years ago (Nosov 1982): if we reject the Slavonic attribution of the long barrows and the *sopka* mounds, are there any other antiquities or remains that would trace the course of Slavonic immigration? His answer was negative. Now we may ask if any such immigration ever occurred. My answer is also in the negative. But before going on to the problem of language replacement we must briefly review the archaeological and anthropological data of the 'Old Russian colonization period' from the 11th to the 13th centuries.

How can we explain that in several peripheral areas of North-West Russia we can observe the replacement of the local 'Finnish' cultures by the 'Old Russian' culture in the 11th – 12th centuries? In some of these areas, burials of the 10th – 11th

centuries displaying a 'pure Finnish' culture have been excavated (e.g. in the South Ladoga area). In other places, the earliest known graves share both 'Finnish' and 'Russian' features, as in Ingria, and on the east coast of Lake Peipsi. The interpretation of culture change as a result of migration is, of course, typical of the culture-historical school of archaeology. The 'Slavonic-Russian archaeology' of the former Soviet Union always equated the distribution of 'Old Russian' material culture (primarily women's ornaments) with colonization, linguistic and assimilation processes (the concept of an ethnically mixed population). However, alternative explanations can also be found. In my opinion, the idea of material culture being used in social strategies (Hodder 1982; 1986) is appropriate here, and we may well rely on the concept of 'solidarity display'. The distribution of the 'Old Russian' culture over a large area can be understood as the cultural consolidation of groups sharing common economic and political interests, whose cultural differences were levelled as a result of the concentration of political power in Novgorod (cf. Hodder 1982, 105-124). At the same time, it is certain that, as in Finland (see Taavitsainen 1987; 1990), new wilderness regions were colonized in the northern parts of the Novgorod Land by a surplus population between the 11th and 13th centuries. This process may have been caused, at least partly, by the intensification of the fur economy. The colonization, however, cannot be identified with the spread of the Slavonic language.

There is no doubt that the data of physical anthropology is of great value in trying to solve the problem of the origin of the Russian population in the Novgorod Land, especially when DNA analysis is applied. But at present it can be noted that Soviet scholars always tried to interpret their data of diversity in the physical composition of the 11th-14th-century population of North-West Russia within the bounds of the theory of Slavonic colonization. There was also a tendency to place migration processes in periods from which skeletal material is available, which was not only typical of research in North-West Russia. In the Novgorod Land the oldest available skulls are from the 11th century, but the history of human settlement there is over 10,000 years old. Leaving aside the cemetery of Olennyi Ostrov in the periphery of the region, we know almost nothing about the physical anthropological types which were present in the Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age and most of the Iron Age. But we do know, for example, that the European physical type, characterized by a narrow face and a gracile odontological complex, was already present in the East-European forest zone

during the Bronze Age (Denisova et al. 1985). How can one then be sure that the similar type, attributed to the Slovenes, did not appear in the Novgorod Land until the 8th century AD? Furthermore, the odontological complexes of the typical 'Slovenic' craniological series, which have been referred to repeatedly (Kositskoye, Khreple) have proved to represent typical 'Finnish' types (northern gracile and North-European relic). Also the present population of North-West Russia belongs primarily to these odontological types (Gravere 1987; 1990).

On the whole, the present linguistic situation remains the only argument to support the theory of Slavonic colonization. Therefore we must answer the question whether the local languages could have been replaced by the Slavonic one without large-scale immigration and assimilation processes. Colin Renfrew (1987) has suggested several models for the replacement of language, of which the elite-dominance one is worth considering here, although the situation in North-West Russia was somewhat specific. In the present case, the main factor could have been the concentration of power in towns which formed as a result of rapid socio-economic progress. The latter was caused by international trade routes passing through North-West Russia. The trade and craft centres attracted representatives of different ethnic groups, and it was in the polyethnic towns where the Slavonic dialects first gained dominance. This was not determined by the specific ethnic features or the higher level of development of the Slavs but by the fact that the Novgorod Land was made part of the economic, religious and political system of the Russian state, in which the Slavonic ethnic element dominated. Under the conditions of a symbiosis of the towns and its agricultural hinterland with its 'Finnish' population, the local dialects were gradually replaced by the Slavonic language. The local elite must have been the first to change its language, and I would regard this process as a variant of the elite-dominance model (see also Hodder 1982, 109). The non-Slavonic elite changed its language in order to maintain its social position in the old Russian state and the rest of society followed suit. Christianization must have had a very important role as well. It is clear that the speed of this process of language replacement was not the same in all parts of the Novgorod Land. However, I do not believe that analyses of the composition of grave-goods or material culture change as a whole can define the precise time of language replacement.

It could be argued that my scheme does not explain why some of the Balto-Finnic groups kept

their own language and material culture (Karelians, Ingrians, northern Votes). I think, however, that the reason lies in the specific political and economic relations of these groups with Novgorod. They all had political autonomy for a long time and were not orientated exclusively towards Novgorod but also to the West and the North. In case of Karelia, for example, we can observe a long-term Swedish-Russian competition while in northern Ingria there were even more competitors.

Finally, some general observations are required. One methodological conclusion from the present discussion could be that though the Marxism which was practised in Soviet archaeology is often called dogmatic, there were clearly cases where the dogmatic Marxist scheme of development of prehistoric society came into conflict with Russian national romantic ideas and, consequently, 'revisionism' was immediately possible, and Marxist views had to take second place. It might be claimed that in this case such archaeology cannot even be called Marxist. I remain convinced that if we are to speak of Marxist archaeology at all (see Klejn 1991), the use of the term is justified only in the case of the former Soviet Union and its satellites, and not in the West where it is clearly misused (cf. Kristiansen 1984, 96; 1993b, 192). What I mostly react against is the use of Karl Marx's name in archaeology. We do not speak of 'Darwinist' archaeology when speaking of the impact of evolutionary thought, do we? Western 'neo-Marxist' archaeology could very well be called 'dialectical archaeology' instead, keeping in mind the importance of dialectical epistemology for this tradition (cf. Saitta 1989). In the case of the Soviet Union the term 'Marxist archaeology' would be correct, perhaps, because consciously or unconsciously, the great majority of Soviet archaeologists (including those of the Baltic republics and even those opposed to communism) accepted the classical Marxist scheme of development of society, and used it in their studies. As an official policy, Marxism made it possible for national romanticism and Marxist ideology not to exclude but to complement each other.

I am quite aware that my own interpretation of the origin of the Russians may also be considered ideological. In Russia, some would perhaps describe it as nationalistic, whereas in Estonia appraisals might be quite the opposite (e.g. too 'cosmopolitan'). Michael Shanks and Christopher Tilley claim that 'archaeology, as the product of social conditions and forms of social existence, is always produced in terms of specific interests and values' and that 'archaeology is always dependent on the political and social position of the investi-

gator and his or her awareness of the social conditions in which archaeological production takes place' (1987, 200). I myself would agree if my position were considered a phenomenon of the politics of compromise. I must also confess here that my viewpoint is partly shaped, perhaps, by my own social experience. This experience reminds me what happened with the non-Russian elite of the 'national' republics of the previous Soviet Union. It was impossible for this elite to keep their social position without the knowledge of the Russian language. It was absolutely necessary to belong to the 'Orden', i.e. to the communist party, too. And very often the local leaders married a Russian wife and put their children in a Russian school which was a good way to prove one's loyalty.

But what would be the political and ideological consequences if the language replacement hypothesis proves to be mostly correct and the paradigm of Slavonic colonization were abandoned? Firstly, it would help Estonians to rid themselves of certain 'masochistic' 'national-romantic' features of their view of the history of the Finno-Ugrian people, who are thought to have suffered for centuries from the pressure of the Slavs driving them out of their ancient territories. Secondly, it would help the Russians realize that their ancestors were not relatively late immigrants but that their roots in present-day NorthWest Russia are much older, as their language is not the decisive factor in this connection. Therefore there should not be any need for archaeologists to try to prove that the Slavonic immigrants settled in an almost empty territory, sparsely populated by 'Tchuds' whose society – for some strange reason – was far behind those of all other peoples in Northern Europe, and whose fate it was to be assimilated by the much more advanced Slavs. And thirdly, archaeology could in a way even serve as a balancing ideological factor between the two countries.

REFERENCES

- Aup, M. 1980. Ауп М. *Курганные могильники Восточной Эстонии во второй половине I тысячелетия н. э.* Таллинн.
- Vaschenkin, A. 1990. Башенькин А. Н. К вопросу о сложении погребального обряда культуры длинных курганов. *Новгород и Новгородская земля. История и археология*. Новгород, pp. 48–50.
- Bulkin, V., Dubov, I., Lebedev, G. 1978. Булкин В. А., Дубов И. В., Лебедев Г. С. *Археологические памятники Древней Руси IX–XI веков*. Ленинград.
- Denisova, R., Graudonis, J., Graverre, R. 1985. Денисова Р. Я., Граудонис Я. Я., Гравере Р. У. *Кибуткальский могильник эпохи бронзы*. Рига.
- Dolukhanov, P. 1986. Natural environment and the Holocene settlement pattern in the North-Western part of the USSR. *Fennoscandia archaeologica* III, pp. 3–16.
- Graverre, R. 1987. Гравере Р. У. *Этническая одонтология латышей*. Рига.
- Graverre, R. 1990. Гравере Р. У. Формирование одонтологических комплексов северо-западных русских. *Балты, славяне, прибалтийские финны*. Рига, pp. 145–182.
- Gringmuth-Dallmer, E. 1993. Archaeology in the former German Democratic Republic since 1989. *Antiquity* 67, pp. 135–142.
- Hedeager, L. 1992. *Iron-Age Societies. From Tribe to State in Northern Europe, 500 BC to AD 700*. Oxford.
- Hodder, I. 1982. *Symbols in action. Ethnoarchaeological studies of material culture*. Cambridge.
- Hodder, I. 1986. *Reading the past. Current approaches to interpretations in archaeology*. Cambridge.
- Hodder, I. 1991a. Preface. *Archaeological theory in Europe. The last three decades*. Ed. I. Hodder. London & New York.
- Hodder, I. 1991b. Archaeological theory in contemporary European societies: the emergence of competing traditions. *Archaeological theory in Europe. The last three decades*. Ed. I. Hodder. London & New York, pp. 1–24.
- Jaamits, L., Laul, S., Lõugas, V., Tõnisson, E. 1982. *Eesti esiajalugu*. Tallinn.
- Kirpitschnikov, A., Ryabinin, E. 1987. Finnougrische Volkstämme und Nordrussland. *Fennoscandia archaeologica* IV, pp. 49–72.
- Klejn, L. 1974. Kossinna im Abstand von vierzig Jahren. *Jahresschrift für mitteldeutsche Vorgeschichte* 58, pp. 7–55.
- Klejn, L. 1991. A Russian lesson for theoretical archaeology: a reply. *Fennoscandia archaeologica* VIII, pp. 67–71.
- Konetski, V. 1989. Конецкий В. Я. Новгородские сопки и проблема социального развития Приильменя в VIII–X вв. *Славяне. Этногенез и этническая история*. Ленинград, pp. 140–150.
- Konetski, V. 1992. Конецкий В. Я. К изучению социальных структур славянского населения Приильменя в конце I тыс. н. э. *Новгород и Новгородская земля. История и археология*. Новгород, pp. 124–133.
- Kristiansen, K. 1984. Ideology and material culture: an archaeological perspective. *Marxist perspectives in archaeology*. Ed. M. Spriggs. Cambridge, pp. 72–100.
- Kristiansen, K. 1993a. 'The strength of the past and its great might'; an essay on the use of the past. *JEA* 1, pp. 3–32.
- Kristiansen, K. 1993b. Exploring the limits. An interview with Leo Klejn. *JEA* 1, pp. 184–194.
- Kuhn, T. S. 1970. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Second Edition. Chicago.
- Lamberg-Karlovsky C. C. 1989. Introduction. *Archaeological thought in America*. Ed. C. C. Lamberg-Karlovsky. Cambridge, pp. 1–16.
- Lang, V. 1991. Ühe savinõutiübi ajaloost Loode-Eestis. *Muinasaja teadus I. Arheoloogiline kogumik*. Eds. L. Jaamits & V. Lang, pp. 45–65.
- Laul, S. 1971. Лаул С. Об этнической принадлежности курганов юго-восточной Эстонии. *ТА Тоит* 3, pp. 319–331.
- Lesman, Y. 1985. Лесман Ю. М. Памятники культуры длинных курганов в Лужско-Оредежском междуречье. *Новое в археологии Северо-Запада СССР*. Ленинград, pp. 33–37.

- Ligi, P. 1986. Лиги П. О воды на территории Эстонии. *TA Toim.* 2, pp. 156–167.
- Ligi, P. 1988. Kirde-Eesti vадja kalmete uurimise tulemusi. *TA Toim.* 3, pp. 267–282.
- Ligi, P. 1989. Лиги П. Культура длинных курганов в свете данных палеодемография. *TA Toim.* 4, pp. 316–322.
- Moora, H. (ed.) 1956. *Eesti rahva etnilisest ajaloost*. Tallinn.
- Neustupny, E. 1993. Czechoslovakia: the last three years. *Antiquity* 67, pp. 129–134.
- Niderle, L. 1956. Нидерле Л. *Славянские древности*. Москва.
- Nosov, E. 1981. Носов Е. Н. Некоторые общие вопросы изучения погребальных памятников второй половины I тысячелетия н. э. в Приильменье. *Советская археология*, 1/1981, pp. 42–56.
- Nosov, E. 1982. Носов Е. Н. Проблемы изучения погребальных памятников Новгородской земли (к вопросу о славянском расселении). *Новгородский исторический сборник* 1/11, pp. 43–78.
- Nosov, E. 1990. Носов Е. Н. *Новгородское (Рюриково) городище*. Ленинград.
- Nosov, E. 1991. Носов Е. Н. Археологические памятники верховьев Волхова и Ильменского Поозерья I тысячелетия н. э. (каталог памятников). *Материалы по археологии Новгородской земли* 1990 г. Москва, pp. 5–37.
- Nosov, E., Plokhov, A. 1989. Носов Е. Н., Плехов А. В. Поселение Холопий городок под Новгородом. *Краткие сообщения института археологии Академии Наук СССР* 195, pp. 34–42.
- Odner, K. 1983. Finner og Terfinner. Etniske prosesser i det nordlige Fenno-Scandia. *Oslo Occasional Papers in Social Anthropology* 9.
- Paranin, V. 1990. Паранин В. И. *Историческая география летописной Руси*. Петрозаводск.
- Randsborg, K. 1991. *The first millennium AD in Europe and the Mediterranean*. Cambridge.
- Renfrew, C. 1987. *Archaeology and language. The puzzle of Indo-European origin*. London.
- Rowlands, M. 1984. Objectivity and subjectivity in archaeology. *Marxist perspectives in archaeology*. Ed. M. Springs. Cambridge, pp. 108–113.
- Saitta, D. J. 1989. Dialectics, critical inquiry, and archaeology. *Critical Traditions in Contemporary Archaeology*. Eds. V. Pinsky & A. Wylie. Cambridge.
- Sedov, V. 1960. Седов В. В. Кривичи. *Советская археология* 1/1960, pp. 47–62.
- Sedov, V. 1974. Седов В. В. *Длинные курганы кривичей*. Москва.
- Sedov, V. 1982. Седов В. В. *Восточные славяне в VI–XIII вв.* Москва.
- Sedov, V. 1986. Седов В. В. Жилища словенско-кривичского региона VIII–X вв. *Краткие сообщения Института археологии Академии Наук СССР* 183, pp. 10–15.
- Selirand, J. 1983. *Urniväljadest ümarkääbasteni. Ääre-jooni slaavi arheoloogiale*. Tallinn.
- Shanks, M. & Tilley, C. 1987. *Social Theory and Archaeology*. Cambridge.
- Taavitsainen, J.-P. 1987. Wide-Range Hunting and Swidden Cultivation as Prerequisites of Iron Age Colonisation in Finland. *Suomen antropologi* 4, pp. 213–233.
- Taavitsainen, J.-P. 1990. Ancient Hillforts of Finland. *Suomen Muinaismuistoyhdistyksen aikakauskirja* 94.
- Tallgren, A. M. 1937. The Method of Prehistoric Archaeology. *Antiquity* XI, pp. 152–161.
- Tatischev, V. 1979. Татищев В. Н. *Избранные произведения*. Девинград.
- Tilley, C. 1991. Comments on Klejn: "Theoretical archaeology in the making". *Fennoscandia archaeologica* VIII, pp. 59–61.
- Tretyakov, P. N. 1953. Третьяков П. Н. *Восточно-славянские племена*. Москва.
- Trigger, B. 1989. *A history of archaeological thought*. Cambridge.
- Yanin, V. 1992. The archaeological study of Novgorod: an historical perspective. *The Archaeology of Novgorod, Russia. Recent Results from the Town and its Hinterland*. Lincoln, pp. 67–106.

ABBREVIATIONS

TA Toim. = Eesti NSV Teaduste Akadeemia Toimetised. Ühiskonnateadused. 1967–. Tallinn.

JEA = Journal of European Archaeology