CULTURAL PROCESSES CONNECTED WITH EXPANSION OF THE RUS OF KIEV TOWARDS LITHUANIA IN THE 9TH–11TH CENTURIES

1. The history of the present Byelorussian territories in the early Middle Ages is composed of complicated settlement, social, political, cultural and ethnical processes. Written sources being extremely rare, it is difficult to explain some problems. A reconstructed past can be built only after considering all available types of historical sources that are the basis of research. Written records, among which the Russian chronicles (letopisy) are most important, have been occurring more frequently since the 11th century.* Post-war editions of sources and historiographic works in the Soviet Union inform well about this unfavourable situation.¹ In the principal publication concerning the history of Lithuania — documents from the first half of the 15th century say little about the period during which the state of Lithuania was being formed.² A review of written sources prepared by V. T. Pašuto ³ shows clearly that all available historical evidence (excavations, toponymical, ethnographical, anthropological) should be regarded as an essential supplement. They should be treated only as a general indication, and cross-checked.

In the case of cultural and, especially, ethnic research results not based on written sources should be rigourously revised and be free from the influence of hypotheses. In prehistoric researches, the ethnic interpretation of archaeological findings is an extremely controversial problem. Discussions since the 1890s have helped to bring together the widely divergent methodological viewpoints. O. Montelius and G. Kossinna tried to interpret archaeological cultures as the remains of the lives of certain peoples. The latter founded the renowned settlement-archaeological method (1895) which proved to be only more controversial than any other and, with the growth of the imperialist German state, it assumed a hostile ideological significance ⁴ and this cast doubt on the problems. No archaeological culture can be a basis for the identification of ethnic groups (social consciousness, language, culture) though there is a link between the elements of archaeological culture and ethnic attachment. These elements
can be taken into consideration when determining the ethnic character of a population, living in a given area and at a particular time.\textsuperscript{5}

In 1936, A. M. Tallgren assumed a critical attitude in regard to G. Kos-sinnna's method. He pointed out that in order to reconstruct prehistoric ethnic relations, the retrogressive method should be used, based on all available sources. K. Moszyński expressed himself many times against the settlement-archaeological method, as well as against medial proof showing settlement and cultural continuity. W. Hensel has stressed several times the necessity to revise these problems. A basic difficulty in prehistory is the impossibility of establishing ethnic criteria, unchangeable and independent of time or place. As criteria differing the ethnic groups, W. Hensel proposed: (1) consciousness of the ethnic community, (2) a definite territory for this community, (3) common language, (4) common cultural features, (5) marriage within the community, (6) common faith, (7) a definite racial population group. Without doubt all these criteria are historically changeable. The first criterion, and the most important, is, without written sources, difficult to determine. Therefore the interpretation of ethnic data in prehistory should only be regarded on a broad basis. The principal method to be taken into consideration is historical materialism. "Detailed methods of lesser importance" — states W. Hensel — "should simplify the analysis of the sources of the particular branches of science that may throw light on ethnic problems i.e. written, linguistic, archaeological, ethnographic and anthropological. Research should be conducted as follows: thesis — antithesis — synthesis. Results obtained on the basis of archaeological evidence should be considered as a thesis; as an antithesis — successive results obtained by analyzing a variety of other sources. As a last step, a summary of archaeological sources."\textsuperscript{6}

Discussions concerning the ethnic expressions of excavations and other evidence, are particularly important with regard to the thousands of years before our present era. These methodological problems also concern the early medieval times and the settling of the upper Nemen river basin by the Slavs. Applying the retrogressive method and starting with the settlement and the character of the culture of the particular ethnic group, leads to highly probable reconstructions. In Polish literature, such a trial was made regarding the prehistoric location and identification of the West Baltic peoples, living west of the river Nemen.\textsuperscript{7}

Methods are of key importance in studying the ancient Slavonic-Baltic borderlands. Since the Neolithic Age the territories of the Priepet river basin had been an area of varied ethnic and cultural influences. Researching the borderlands of the Slavs and western Balts in the 9th–11th centuries, the situation in the 12th–13th centuries would be a starting point for reconstruction by the retrogressive method. It should be aimed to re-
construct the successive historical changes continuously following the discarding of too static data. Only the strictly historical method, carefully verifying suggestions and hypotheses, encompassing long chronological periods, can give valuable results.

Recently Z. Hilczer-Kurnatowska and Z. Podwińska have suggested that archaeological sources should be taken into consideration in studying the social and the settlement patterns of the Slavs, from the 6th to the 10th centuries. In their research they distinguish groups and settlements of different social structure (tribes and settlement communities of a lower grade). Here both the progressive method as well as the retrogressive can be helpful. That the first method may be of greater value, is maintained by P. N. Tretjakov, Z. Hilczer and W. Hensel. As a basis for defining particular tribe and settlement groups, research should help to investigate the differing features (burial rites, types of settlementes, types of regional earthenware, customs, ethnographic differences, language, etc.) as well as the territorial spread of ethnonyms (B. Dostal, W. Hensel, W. Łęga, K. Musianowicz, J. Poulík, B. A. Rybakov, W. W. Sedov, G. E. Solovieva, E. T. Timofiejew, A. Točik, R. Turek, H. Zoll-Adamikowa).

More detailed studies of the concept of "tribe," always lead to showing its historical variability. For proto-state tribes (the years 570–800–950) the connecting links were: common culture, law, customs and territory. These features still appear in the characteristics of tribes made by Nestor. In more recent literature, the social reconstruction of the Slavs is strongly emphasized on newly settled areas, away from the Motherland of the Roman era, and to a smaller degree inside this area as well. One must agree with H. Łowniański and Z. Hilczer that the so-called names of tribes, which are now known from written sources, should be arranged chronologically, distinguishing: the archaic and the newer type of tribe. The latter type, more close to a proto-state, would have arisen as a result of reconstructing and combining different original elements, at the end of the migration of peoples and during the stabilization of settlements (7th–8th cent.). It is then that the differentiated territorial aspect of the Slavic culture was formed. A characteristic feature of the "small Slavic tribes" was, above all, that they closely settled an area, often giving it the tribe's name.

The above remarks and methodology cannot be mechanically applied in research studies of the Baltic tribes of the same era. Even though the development of the Balts was similar, it was not strictly simultaneous in its stages. The settling of the Balts had other forms and only few names of the Baltic tribes have been found. Other linguistic material — hydronymia and toponymia — between the Baltic and the Black Seas also require more accurate and deeper studies than have yet been carried out. Lan-
guage problems have been dealt with statically in historical literature, not enough attention having been given to the specific historical character of smaller regions. Verification of existing concepts, and, consequently, discarding old historiographic constructions, is necessary in historical research.  

2. Cultural processes that took place in the Nemen basin should be discussed along the lines that the ancient population should be regarded as Proto-Balts. The proto-Slavonic ethnos should be linked with the peoples of the archaeological culture of Zarubiniec. On the other hand, the found-

--- Map: Borderline of the Lithuania in the 9th–11th centuries near the upper Nemen  
1: The territory of Sudovia on the Nemen in the 10th century  
2: The eastern border of Mazovia up till the first half of the 11th century  
3: The eastern border of ethnical territory of Lithuania by the end of early Middle Ages  
4: The eastern border of the region with mixed Lithuanian-Russian settlements in the east in the 9th–11th centuries  
5: The tribal territory occupied by the Dregovichians tribe in the 6th–9th centuries according to V. V. Sedov (1970)  
6: The castra (grody) of Ruthenia by the end of the 11th century: B — Brest; Ch — Chernihov; D — Drohichin; DK — Drutsk; G — Grodno; I — Izyaslavl (Zaslaw); KI — Kletsk; L — Lukoml; LH — Lohoy; M — Minsk; N — Novogrodek; O — Orsha; P — Pinsk; PK — Polotsk; S — Slonim; Sk — Slutsk; Sm — Smolensk; T — Turov; W — Vladimir; Wk — Volkovsk; WT — Vitebsk.
ers of the archaeological Brushed Pottery Culture were the ancestors of the West Balts. The borderlands of the Balts and Slavs in the period of the Roman influence were the upper basins of the Dnieper and Priepet and the valley of the Priepet. The period of the Great Migration brought insignificant changes here.\(^{14}\)

The region between the two rivers Nemen and Priepet was the key area in the process of Slavization of the West Balts’ territories. That area, lying approximately parallel with a line of latitude, was surrounded in the south by a well defined anthropogeographical boundary, consisting of vast marshlands and the Priepet flood waters. Two devious routes led to the left bank of the Nemen: from the east (along the Berezyna and across the Minsk Upland) and from the west (across the Białystok Upland and the watershed of the Narev and the Priepet). The tribes of the proto-Sudovians settled in the area between the Great Mazury Lake District, the upper Bober and the Nemen. In a later period of Roman influence, the Baltic population of various origins (different material culture and different burial rites) migrated to East Mazuria, probably under pressure from the expansion of the East-Slavonic tribes,\(^{15}\) though the natural geographical boundaries were not crossed. The Białystok Upland and the upper basin of the Narev were still inhabited by a Slavonic population of the Przeworsk Culture.\(^{16}\)

The area of Lithuania had already become culturally differentiated at the turn of this era. Research by Lithuanian scientists allows us to establish approximate tribal regions in the period of Roman influence:

1. West Lithuanian (coastal);
2. North Lithuanian,
3. Central Lithuanian (on the rivers Shventa, Vilia and Merkis). West of the Nemen, in the basin of the Shesupupa, was a separate proto-Sudovian region. At the time of the Great Migration and at the beginning of the early Middle Ages (5th–8th cent.), the North Lithuanian region merged with the central Lithuanian region. At the same time (5th–7th cent.) the proto-Sudovian territory was under various cultural influences, but there were no changes in the south. It was the same with the Lithuanian settlements on the river Merkis and in the Oshmiana Upland in the 5th–8th centuries.\(^{17}\) The left bank of the middle Nemen was quiet and scantily populated till the 10th century. Russian settlements in the Novogrodek Upland appeared in the 10th century.\(^{18}\)

Researches in the north of Byelorussia confirmed the assumption that, in the 4th–5th centuries, ancient Slavonic tribes (late Zarubiniec Culture) had slowly moved along this area to the north occupying the Homel region and imposing their culture upon the ancient Baltic population. Settlement and cultural contacts with the Lithuanian Balts took place in the valleys
of the rivers: Shchara (left tributary of the Nemen), Lan (left tributary of the Pripet) and Ptych. Studies were undertaken to determine the area primarily occupied by the Balts, on the basis of hydronymia. As a result the river names with the suffix — are connected with the settlements of the ancient Baltic tribes of the Roman period, the migration of people and the early Middle Ages. These territories do not necessarily correspond to definite tribes, for instance the proto-Sudovians, but to a group of tribes as well, that later on differentiated in regard to culture, language and territory.

After the invasions of the Goths, the ancient Slavonic groups from the upper Vistula, and the Huns, a large part of Polesye was almost uninhabited (5th cent.). South of the Pripet and the Jasiolda no archaeological remains have been found that could be confidently assigned to the 5th century, or to the first half of the 6th century. Only the area between the Nemen and the Prypeth was occupied by a scattered population of Balts. As evidence of this is a crematory mound with an urn, discovered in Wirtki in the Lenino region on the river Lan (5th–8th cent.). It is ranked with the so-called east Lithuanian mounds. The swampy left bank of the Prypeth constituted, as before, an uninhabited intertribal zone. Only from the middle of the 6th century, south of the river Pripet, appear finds of the Slavonic type. They are flat burial grounds with crematory graves (Khorsk region of Davidgrodek 6th–8th centuries, Khotomel region Davidgrodek, 8th cent.). It is difficult to state their exact date. A third burial ground dating back from the early Middle Ages was examined in Zubkoviche near the middle Ubor. Here crematory graves were found with hand-moulded urns covered with earth mounds.

Evidence of scattered Slavonic castra (grody) of the 6th–7th cent. was found only on the borderlands with the Balts, i.e. on the Pripet. These grody with settlements were situated in: Khotomel (7th–9th cent.), Khilchice, region of Turov (6th–7th cent.) and Babka, region Vladymyric, between the river Styr and Horyn. Among the open settlements only one, Petrikov, was situated on the Pripet. Most of the Slavonic settlements dating from the early Middle Ages, evidence of which has been found in the form of earthenware, Korchak type, of the 6th–7th century, occupied the area south of the line: Kovel-Sarny-Rovne-Ovruch, according to the studies by L. P. Rusanova, J. W. Kuharenko and P. N. Tretjakov. The Pripet basin remained till the 8th century, a rather scantily inhabited borderland, dividing the Baltic peoples from the Slavonic.

3. Cultural influences and the demographic wave of the Slavs spread since the first half of the first millennium A. D. over the basin of the lower Berezyna and the Desna. The infiltration of Slavonic elements brought about the formation of an archaeological culture called the Smolensk cul-
ture (6th–7th cent.) in which the Balts prevailed. In the years 500–750 the Balts still occupied the territory near the upper Sosh and Desna. The complete Slavization of the Smolensk region came about as a result of processes to be found in archaeological materials called the Prolonged Mounds Culture. Slavonic Smolensk arose in the first half the 9th century. At the end of the 10th century on the upper Desna there were only purely Slavonic settlements.

Slavonic influences appeared early near the Dnieper’s Berezyna. The sitting of an early medieval castle in Kolochin on the Dnieper (at the mouth of the Berezyna) and a big settlement on Zamkova Gora near Dzyedzilovich in the Borisov region, are proof that Slavonic family clans existed here, or the deeper influence of Slavonic culture in the 6th–7th centuries. Examining the earthenware of the inhabitants from the Middle and Upper Dnieper, we can assume the existence, at that time, of a mosaic of people of Baltic-Slavonic origin, in the area of the present north-eastern Byelorussia. In the 6th and 9th centuries the eastern Slavonic tribes only slightly expanded their settlements to the north, advancing up the rivers Drut, Berezyna nad Ptych.

Various tribes of Balts remained during the 8th–9th centuries on the vast territories between the sources of the Oka, the Nemen and the western Dvina. At the mouth of the Svisloch where it flows into the Dnieper’s Berezyna, not far from the later to be established Minsk, until the second half of the 8th century there had been a stronghold (grod) defending the east Lithuanian population (Bancerovskoye Gorodishche). The castrum was used in the 6th–8th centuries in connection with the nearby Slavs. A cartographical work of archaeological finds, prepared by I. I. Ljapuškin (1968), showing Slavonic relics of the 8th–9th centuries, illustrates the territorial spread of the expanding Slavization. The Slavonic settlement centre extending furthest to the west was situated then near Polotsk, on the lower Dzisna (the left tributary of the Middle West Dvina). H. Łowmiański called attention to the different ethnical constitution of the Polotschان state in the 8th–10th centuries and the conversion of a great tribe the Kryviche-Polotskians into the feudal Polotsk Territory. A large part of the Dvina basin was under Russia in the 10th–12th centuries, but these were mostly political influences and not to any great extent, cultural.

The development of the settlement and cultural situation in the area of the watershed of the Nemen and the Dvina we can observe primarily on the basis of archaeology. The east Lithuanian mounds, the burial grounds of the Lithuanian tribes till the 10th century, were found on the territories up to Lake Swir and Lake Naroch. The territory of the Smolensk-Polotsk-Kryviche included, in the 9th–10th centuries, to the south, the Orsha Upland and the sources of the Dnieper Berezyna. Not until the 11th–13th

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centuries were the sources of the Vilia settled by the Kryviche. The Kryviche tribe's boundary extended in the 9th and 10th centuries, according to L. V. Aleksejev, to the middle Dzisa and in the south-west to the Minsk Upland turning, near Borysowa, to the east and approximately following the river Bobr, to Orsha. The Kryviche did not go further west as a united ethnic group, because they were preceded by the expansion of the Dregovichians.

In *Povest veremennych let* we read: “They settled between the Pripet and Dvina and called themselves: Polotskians.” So at the beginning of the 12th century the Dregovichians did not reach the Dvina where the Polotskians lived. According to the maps by V. V. Sedov (1970), who took into account the appearance of characteristic ornaments of the tribes, the whole Ushachka basin (the left tributary of the middle Dvina) was in the possession of the Kryviche. Therefore the burial ground in Pucilkoviche (9th–13th cent.), contrary to the opinion of L. Sedlaczek, was used by the Kryviche. Though the Russian tribes had a stronger political organization — the settlement boundary (and ethnic as well) fixed in the 10th century on the Dzisa did not change much in the later centuries. In the early Middle Ages the watershed of the Nemen and the Dvina remained borderland. On the other and the upper basin of the Vilia (up to Lake Naroch and the Naroch River) and the upper basin of the Nemen up to Nemen-Berezyna in the west, became territories of mixed Lithuanian-Russian settlements, in the 10th–13th centuries.

The Slavonic burial grounds in the Minsk region are of the 10th century (Tochilishche, obl. Minsk). The nearest burial ground found farthest south: Knyazha Mogila, Nizharovskiy Khotora (near Sluck) may be dated back to the 10th century. Arabian coins found in the area, where Minsk is now situated and on the territories of the Minsk province determine the period of the struggles between the tribes and the retreat of the Balts to the north. They are two coins found separately (the year 795–796 and 797–798) and a treasure concealed after the year 816. According to J. V. Kuharenko, V. V. Sedov, I. V. Aleksejev, archaeological finds prove that the Dregovichians began settling the upper Sluck, Ptych and Lan from the second half of the 8th century. The watershed of the Pripet and the Nemen was settled by an East-Slavonic people as late as the 10th century. The ancient settlements of the Dregovichians, whose territories in the 11th century were between the Pripet and the basin of the Dvina, were probably situated earlier (7th–9th century) in the basin of the lower Pripet, judging by the name of the tribe (the root: “dregov” — means “swamp”).

H. Łomiański (1967–1968) states that the route of the first Slavonic groups leading north (towards the territory of the later Pskov) was up the Berezyna (6th–7th century). However this is only a hypothesis and it is
difficult to consider the Minsk region as the oldest territory belonging to the Kryviche tribe, on the basis of a hypothesis. The boundary of the Kryviche tribe's territory in the 9th–10th centuries, according to L. V. Alekseyev, stretched from the middle Dzisna to the Minsk Upland, then it turned to the east reaching up to the regions of Borysov and Orsha. In the 10th–11th century the ethnographic boundary of the Kryviche and Dregovichians stretches to the Minsk Upland and along the rivers Usyazha, Gayna nad Bobr. 89 Izyaslav (lying 25 kilometres east of Minsk) was, in the 11th century, a borderland settlement with a mixed Dregovichian-Kryviche population. In the area of the Minsk Upland the traditional cultures of the separate Russian tribes and the autochtonic Baltic population appeared simultaneously. It was a preliminary period before the unification of the north-western Russian culture.

The contribution of the Dregovichian tribe to the conquest and colonization of the territories of the Prypeth and Nemen watershed was greater than that of the Kryviche people. The first expansion of Slavonic settlements in the areas lying to the west of the river Ptych (up to the source of the Shchara in the south) was started in the 10th century by the Dregovichians. It is most probable that the expansion was at first led by the tribe princes, but after the end of the 10th century, by the Duke of Kiev. The ethnic names of places of the type "Kryviche" — to be found in areas of the Pripyat and Nemen basins — do not at all mark the western tribe boundary of the Kryviche. On the contrary, newcomers from afar, settled by the ruler, were called by the ethnic name by the earlier population of those territories (the Dregovichians and the mixed Lithuanian-Slavonic people). It was similar with settlements called Yatvyezh, near Volkovysk and Zdiecioł. They may have arisen in the end of the 13th century. 40 These territories never belonged to Sudovia, hence the assumptions of J. Ochmanski and V. V. Sedov should be rejected. 41 The Lithuanian-Kryviche borderlands were confined within the basins of the Dzisna and upper Vilia, during the epoch of tribes (7th–10th cent.). The watershed of the Nemen and the Prypeth, lying to the south, was exclusively an area of Lithuanian-Dregovichian neighbourly contacts.

According to H. Łowmiański a complicated cultural and ethnical situation arose north of the middle Nemen, near the Nemen's Berezyna, the upper Vilia and the Dvina lake district. Since the 10th century, a mixed Lithuanian and Slavonic population lived here. A close Lithuanian settlement began beyond the line: Merech-Traby-Svir Lake — and the vicinity of Braclav. Areas of mixed settlements arose, most probably beyond the boundaries of the political organizations of the Dregovichians and Polotsk Kryviche. This is confirmed by incidents in the 13th century, when Voysielk Mendogovich founded a convent on the Nemen "between Lithua-
nia and Novogrodek” (Ipatijevskij letopis), i.e. between Lithuania and Russia as political units. The river-bed of the upper Nemen was an easily defended political boundary in the middle of the 13th century. It had been so, most probably, since the 11th century. According to Povest vremennyh let, Lithuania paid Russia a tribute. Up to the 12th century, a particular subjection of Lithuania to the Duchy Polotsk is apparent. One is apt to agree with H. Łowmiański that it was not a subjection of the whole of Lithuania up to Samogitia, since Sudovia too was compelled to pay tributes only from time to time. A tribute to Russia was paid principally (probably exclusively), by the territories inhabited by a mixed Russian-Lithuanian population, defined in Russian sources by the word “Lithuania.” Those would be the areas with a majority of Baltic people, between the upper Vilia and upper Nemen (i.e. Povilia’s Lithuania).

4. The middle Nemen divided the settlements of the Lithuanians and the Sudovians. It was only in the years 800–950 that the Sudovian tribes began their expansion up the river Nemen, mainly along its western bank. The Deynove tribe later occupied the Grodno region and the valley of the river Svisloch. Evidence of this are the remains of a medieval castle in Sopočkinie and a big crematory burial ground with family barrows in Jasudowo (10th–11th cent.). The settlement and political relations (the area of the territories) between Sudovia and Lithuania (in the 10th cent.) on the eastern bank of the Nemen are still not quite clear. It has been determined that the east Lithuanian tribal group increased in numbers in the 9th–12th centuries, populating the basins of the rivers: Shventoi, Vilia and Merkys, and the territories on the right of the Nemen river basin. There is a lack of evidence from the Nemen territories of the Byelorussian Republic. It is possible that the demographic concentration of Lithuanians on the Merkys and Vilia was the result of the increasing Slavonic expansion, since the 11th century, towards the north-west.

Scattered West Slavonic settlements occupied the basin of upper Narev. The settlements concentrated on the Bielsk Upland and on the Bug (Haći, district Bielsk Podlaski 6th–7th century, Sova Kozarovka near Drohichin 6th–8th centuries). Barrows with a layer of crematory ashes, found in the area of Podlasie, date back to the years 600–1000. Burial grounds of this kind were found in the district of Dąbrowa, Bielsk, Sokółow, Siemiatyche (all in the Białystok Voivodship). This type of grave, different from the Sudovian, was characteristic of the Polish tribes at the beginning of the early Middle Ages. The West-Slavonic settlements “Old-Podlasie” included in the east the basin of the Lesna and Mukhaviec. Natural boundaries of this region were the marshes of the Prypeth and the wilderness along the rivers: Chodara, Yasiolda and Nemen.

The Balts hydronymyms appear exclusively in the northern part of the
Białystok Voivodship (Sidra, Gierwin, Sokolda) and are evidence of the Sudovian influence (7th–10th cent.). Other names of rivers (Metelyna, Sloia) and a few place names, that are defined as of Baltic origin, were given by the Lithuanian population brought there by the Great Duke of Lithuania in the 14th–15th century.⁴⁶ In the territories of the Białystok Upland and the Bielsk Upland there is no evidence that the Balts lived there before the 13th century. The information from the Chronicles by Jan Długosz, about the Sudovians in Drohichin was politically based and therefore not accurate.⁴⁷

The vast territories between the Nemen and the Narev were a scantily populated borderland in the 6th–9th centuries, exploited chiefly by hunters. The Mazovian tribes occupied the area up to the Volkovysk Upland and the sources of the Supraśl. In the second half of the 10th century the state of the first Piasts reached up to these territories (Mieszko I or even his father Siemomysł). Graves of the Sudovian type appear near the river Zelva in the 10th century (according to the chronology of V. V. Sedov, 1969).⁴⁸ In the 9th–10th centuries the Sudovians spread to the south. The struggles between Russia and the Sudovians (since the middle of the 10th cent.) probably caused the Sudovians to settle in the basin of the Nemen river. After defeating Mieszlag in Mazovia with the help of Yaroslav the Wise (in 1047) the Polish ruler Casimir the Restorer gave Yaroslav the Wise, ruler of Kiev, the territories lying in the basins of the Bug and upper Narev. It permitted the Russian expansion towards Sudovia and Lithuania. It was then that they built Drohichin on the Bug, and Grodno on the Nemen (second half of the 11th cent.). Later, the development of the Lithuanian state led to the conquest of Russian Grodno (end of 12th cent.) and to the occupation of the Brest and Drohichin territories (beginning of 14th cent.).⁴⁹

There is so far no unity of opinion as to how the basin of the Nemen became Slavonic in the 10th–13th centuries. One thing is certain that, at the turn of the 10th and 11th centuries, there was a dense Russian population of various origin there. R. Jakimowicz (1939) found evidences of mutual influence regarding the particular types of burial rites and the existence of burial grounds with mixed burial traditions in the area of the region east of Vilno and in the region of Minsk. This evidence confirms the fusing of the different settlement elements (and tribal cultures) already in the middle of the 10th century. Since the 11th century, groups of Drogovichians settled in four centres: Vysokeye (near Molodechno), Platovo (near Novogrodek), Orlovichi (near Slonim) and between Kamieniec and Brest.⁵⁰ In the territories of the upper Nemen (Ponemne), the Lithuanian population had lived together with the Russian newcomers since the 10th century. On the basis of archaeological evidence it has been ascertained
that groups of Dregovichians, Kryviche and Sudovians (names of settlements: Kryviche, Yatvyeyz) were displaced here by the Russian rulers. There was also an influx of Russian people from Volhynia. Halt earthen dwellings were found by J. Zverugo in Volkovysk (Muravielnik, the end of the 10th cent.) and by F. Gurevič in Novogrodek and the nearby Gorodilovka (second half of 10th cent. and beginning of the 11th cent.). Their appearance in a northern wilderness and specific topology may give evidence of the displacement of groups of Russian people from the south to areas on the Nemen.51

In the middle of the 11th century a Duke of Kiev strengthened his power over the Nemen territories by annexing East Podlasie, erecting new strongholds (grody) in Slonim, Drohichin and Zdjitov, and reconstructing old ones (Brest, Volkovysk, Novogrodek, Izyaslavl). The Russian border strongholds south of the Nemen were built at the end of the 10th and 11th centuries.52 The oldest archaeological finds in Novogrodek are from the second half of the 10th century. The Christian burial grounds of the 11th century in the Novogrodek stronghold give evidence of a direct and strict control of this centre by a state organization. Nearby there are settlements with the remains of Old-Russian burial grounds of the barrow type, dating back to the 10th and 11th centuries. The burial ground in Gorodilovka shows evidence of various kinds of burial rites and grave (dowry) equipment. The results of later archaeological research shows that population was, in part, pagan, but ethnically Russian (the Dregoviche) and Lithuanian.53

The eastern Mazovians (Old Podlachians) lived in the basin of the upper Narev and in Brest (Mukhaviec basin). Until the death of Mieszko II (1034) the Piast State occupied the basin of the middle Bug, up to the Prypeth and Nemen watershed. Brest belonged to Poland probably up to about the year 1031.54 The castrum Muravielnik-Volkovysk was used in the fourth quarter of the 10th century and deserted c. 1050. At that time these territories ceased to belong to Poland. The barrows in Ratajczyce near Brest (10th–12th cent.) are of the west Slavonic type. In the 12th century a new expansion of Mazovians took place from the west. The graves of these Mazovians are surrounded with an oblong of stones.55

5. The cultural development of communities should be analysed by examining the changes taking place in the social structure, technical production, customs, art and ideology. Detailed studies of political history are necessary to achieve this. On the other hand, to reach conclusions, it is sufficient to state the incidents determining the development of cultural processes. The state of the political organization and its changes, the settlement processes investigated from the territorial and ethnic point of view, the roads and trade routes, cultural contacts — analyzed against the
economic and military background are sets of problems necessary for a preliminary study. It is on the basis of these studies that a deeper analysis of general cultural changes can be achieved. This article is an attempt to summarize the achievements in various branches of study. The purpose being to give an idea of the cultural relations in the Narev basin in the period when the early feudal states of the Balts and Slavs (9th–11th centuries) were being formed. This problem requires further research, though it has been greatly advanced since the results given in the monographs by V. V. Mavrodin (1945), and A. N. Nasonov (1951).

Much has been said about the location of the Slavs' original homeland and about their decline since the 6th century. It is an unquestionable fact that the ancestors of the Balts and Slavs had been neighbours since the Bronze Age. In the 7th century, the boundary between them stretched along the watershed of the Mazurian Lake District and the river Narew, along the watershed of the Nemen and the Pripet and included the basin of the upper Dnieper. The cultural processes, taking place on the border of the Slavs and Lithuanian — Balts, were caused directly by the increasing settlement expansion and Slavization of these territories.

The differentiation of the East Slavonic territories began already in the period of Roman influence. The Russian tribes, and indirectly the Baltic as well, were (since the 5th cent.) in permanent cultural contact with the Byzantine Empire. After the Great Migration, important routes of far reaching exchanges were formed, connecting the Black Sea with the Baltic and the Near East with Russia and the Baltic. The Russian culture was formed from coalescing elements: Byzantine, Eastern, Slavonic, Baltic and Ugro-Finnish. The general cultural changes and the forming of the specific culture of north-western Russia was accompanied by linguistic changes. Phonetic and vocabulary changes appear in the 8th–9th centuries (adoptions of words from non-Slavonic peoples). The development of a whole group of East-Slavonic dialects takes place at this time.

The spread of the Slavonic territories, precisely in the basin of the upper Dnieper (and the Pripet) were conditioned by demographic and political problems and, to a large extent, by the characteristic model of the Slavonic economy. The geographical zone of north-European forests was the natural boundary of the traditional proto-Slavonic culture. The adaptability of the settlements of the East Slavs to life in the steppes near the Black Sea was considerably delayed by the strong political organizations of the steppe tribes (Khazars, Magyars, Pechengs) who controlled the territories near the Black Sea up to the rivers Ros and Sula (tributaries of the Dnieper) during the whole 8th, 9th and 10th centuries, where the rulers of Ki.-v erected fortifications.

The pressure of the Pechenges compelled them to build an economic
base in the north. As the Russian settlements spread — new trade routes connected the Baltic route, the route along the Dnieper and the far-east route i.e. leading from Kiev to Bulghar on the Volga and farther on to Khorezm and China. Trade along the Dnieper influenced only to a small extent the cultural relations on the Pripet. The formation of the route from Kiev to Pinsk (up the river Pripet) and Brest caused an inflow of Russian luxury goods to the territories on the Bug, Pripet and Nemen. Russian merchants mainly bought furs from the Balts and probably slaves. Articles of Russian production were also found in the area of Sudovia. From the end of the 11th century the water route of the river Bug became busier.

The spread of the Russian settlements and the development of their trade in the borderlands of Lithuania and Sudovia caused the Slavization of the population living in the upper basin of the Nemen and the political expansion of Russia, that was at its height in the 11th century the Balts (Sudovians, Lithuanians) and Old-Podlachians (regions: Bialystok, Podlasie) were under strong Russian cultural influences from the end of the 10th century. The same processes were continuing in the east, in the 9th–11th centuries, evidence of which are the burial grounds of the Prolonged Mounds Culture, in the regions of Polotsk and Smolensk. Anthropological material is also evidence, though indirect, of the existence of an ethnic conglomeration of stronger Russian influence (since the 10th century) in the area of the upper Nemen. Anthropological material illustrates the oldest relations between the population as well as the ethnic relations.

The culture of early Kiev Russia was a complex phenomenon. Two levels of culture should be considered from the social point of view (the traditional tribal culture and the more international culture of the ruling groups), as well as the ethnic. A. Giesezytor drew attention to this problem, and recently W. B. Wilinbachow devoted a special study to this subject. The culture of a small social group, that is the characteristic features of a tribal community, are always particularly stable. Therefore a change in the cultural characteristics of a tribe proceeded slowly. In early Russia, during the whole Early Middle Ages, the cultural variety was great and, in certain historical conditions, it became even greater. Economic phenomena that always were of the utmost importance in the process of cultural assimilation, in the period from the 9th to the 12th centuries, only to a certain extent unified the culture of the territories subject to the Rurykovitch. Unification proceeded mainly in the culture of the ruling classes.

Each of the tribal and geographical regions of early Russia lived independently. The rapid cultural changes on the borderlands of Lithuania
can be explained only by the intensive Slav settlements of various origin that developed spontaneously and were directed by a state organization between the Pripet, Nemen and Narev rivers. A strong settlement infiltration and political pressure on the part of Russia brought about, in the Nemen river region, permanent cultural transformation. The internal development of the cultural and social relations of the Balts favoured those processes. The religious ideology, that is the adoption of Christianity and the establishment of Episcopates in early Russia, was also a form of consolidation of these territories with the Kiev state (episcopates in Polotsk in about 1050–1060, in Turov about 1088, in Vladimir before the year 1087). Earlier attempts at Christianization on the borderlands between Russia and Lithuania, undertaken by Brun of Querfurth (in 1009) and supported by the Piast State, were unsuccessful.

The separate tribal traditions — cultural and political — of the Dregovichians and later of the Duchy of Turov were a brake on the direct expansion of early Kiev Russia towards Lithuania, at the end of the 10th century and the first half of the 11th century. An intensification of early Russian settlement of Podlasie occurred in the 12th and 13th centuries. That is why, at that time, the separate Black Russian elements of material culture (and others) began to form, related to the earlier traditions from southern Russia, Mazovia and other territories.

The cultural processes in connection with the settlement and political expansion of early Russia towards Lithuania before the year 1100 caused a strong Slavization of the territories in the southern basin of the Nemen river. Of course it was not a whole or complete Slavization. In the 12th and 13th centuries, after a period of varied (tribal) Slavization — with the influence of the Dregovichians, Mazovians, Kryviche, Volhynians and others — a stronger Ruthenization of the Balts began, embracing the masses of common people as well as groups of the powerful. Beyond the area with a mixed culture near the Nemen river were the centre of the territories of the independent Lithuanian tribes: Aukštota and Samogitia. The population of these territories preserved their culture and, benefiting from the Russian and West European models, created their own state model. In the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which united all the Lithuanian tribes, this was a synthesis of a Baltic-Slavonic type.

NOTES

* In this article Russian names of the authors cited in the literature are given according to the principle of transliteration, and Russian geographical and historical names in English phonetic transcription.


5 This view prevails among scientists in the USSR. Compare with a recent review of the problem: M. J. Artamonoŭ, Arheologičeskaja kultura i ėtnos, in: Problemy istorii feodal’noj Rossi, Leningrad 1971, pp. 16–32.


11 Some light has been thrown on many aspects of this question in the extensive work: H. Łomiancki, Plemiona [Tribes], in: Słownik starożytności słowiańskich, vol. IV, part 1, Wroclaw 1970, pp. 131–137.


20 It should be emphasized that the Baltic type hydronym "Jasiołda" appeared relatively late. The form "Jasolina" was still used to the 13th and 14th centuries.

21 S. Wysłouch, Rozwój granic i terytorium powiatu Kobryńskiego do połowy XVI wieku [The Development of the Borders and Territory of the Kobrynski District up to the Middle of the 16th Century], Wilno 1930, pp. 28–29. As in the first centuries of our era the Baltic settlement was not dense here.


31 F. D. Gurevič, Drewności Beloruskiego Ponemana, pp. 78, 200–201, 204.


35 V. V. Sedov, Slavjanie vverhneho Podnepr’ja, pp. 81, 83, 87, 120.


37 R. Jakimowicz, Okres wczesnohistoryczny [The Early Historical Period], in: Prehistoria ziemi polskich, Kraków 1939–1949, p. 422; H. Czech–Holubowicz, Słowińskie cmentarzysko kurhanowe koło wsi Płatowa w pow. i woj. Nowogrodzkim [Slavonic Mound Cemetery Near the Village Płatowa in the Novogrodsk

37 I. I. Lja p u ś k i n, Slawianie vostočnoj Evropy nakanune obrazowania drevnerusskogo gosudarstva, Leningrad 1968, pp. 102, 109, 111.

38 V. V. S e d o v, Slavianie verhnego Podneprov’ja, pp. 77–91.

39 H. L o w m i a ń s k i, Geneza ziemi połockiej [The Origins of the Polock Land], pp. 12–13, H. L o w m i a ń s k i, Początki Polski [The Beginnings of Poland], vol. III, Warszawa 1967, pp. 86–90; V. V. S e d o v, Slavianie verhnego Podneprov’ja, figs 20, 21, 30.

40 The Sudovians still lived near the Volkovysk in the 15th century: Lites ac res gestae inter Polonas Ordinumque Cruciferorum, vol. II, Poznań 1892, pp. 157–163; J. W i ś n i e w s k i, Dzieje osadnictwa w powiecie suwałskim od XV do polowy XVII wieku [History of Settlement in Suwałki District from the 15th to the Middle of the 17th Century], in: Studia i materiały do dziejów Suwalszczyzny, Białystok 1965, pp. 55–64.


42 M. G i m b u t a s, The Balts, London 1963, p. 151; H. L o w m i a ń s k i, Geneza ziemi połockiej [The Origin of the Polock Land], pp. 18–19; H. P a s z k i e w i c z, Jage- jelonowie a Moskwa [The Jagiellons and Moscow], vol. I, Warszawa 1933, pp. 108–117.

43 S. K r u k o w s k i, Cmentarzysko mogił ciałopalnych w Jasudowie pod Sopoć- kiniami (w pow. augustowskim) [The Cemetery of Crematory Graves at Jasudowo near Sopočkini (Augustów Dist.)], “Swiatołow,” Vol. IX 1911, pp. 1–21.

44 H. Z o l l - Ad a m i k o w a, Badania nad rytuałem ciałopalnym z pierwszych faz wczesnego średniowiecza w Małopolsce [Studies of Crematory Rites at the Beginning of Early Middle Ages in Little Poland], “Archeologia Polski,” Vol. XIII, 1968, No. 2, pp. 407–425; J. T y s z k i e w i c z, Proces slawizacji ziemi dorzecza Niemna w VI–XI w. [The Process of Slavization of the Territories in the Basin of the Nemen River during the 6th–11th Centuries], “Przegląd Historyczny”, Vol. LXIV, 1973, No. 1, pp. 12–14; J. T y s z k i e w i c z, Supraśl, Tocznia, in: Słownik starożytności słowiańskich, vols. V and VI (in print).


46 J. W i ś n i e w s k i, Przenoszenie nazw [Transfer of Names], in: Studia linguistica slavica baltica. C. O. Falk sezagenario a collegis, amicis, discipulis obiata, Lundae 1966, pp. 337–350; J. T y s z k i e w i c z, Proces slawizacji, p. 14.

47 S. Z a j ą c z k o w s k i, Problem Jańczeży w historiografii [The Problem of Sudovia in Historiography], “Zapiski Towarzystwa Naukowego w Toruniu,” Vol. XIX, 1953, No. 1–4, pp. 13–20.


49 N. N. W o r o n i n, Nad brzegami Klaźmy i Niemna [On the Banks of the Klažma and Nemen Rivers], in: Stadami dawnych kultur. Dawna Ruś, Warszawa 1957, pp. 383–383; J. T y s z k i e w i c z, Osadnictwo nad górnoj Narwią w I tysiącleciu naszej ery [Settlement on Upper Narev in the First Millenium of Our Era], “Przegląd Historyczny,” Vol. LIX, 1968, No. 4, pp. 596–603; J. T y s z k i e w i c z, Zarys dziejów okolicy Białogostoku od starożytności do początków XVI w. [An Outline of the History of the Neighbourhood of Białystok from Antiquity to the Beginning of the 16th Century],
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50 V. V. Sedov, Slavjane verhneho Podnepr’ja, pp. 77–91.


68 L. V. Alekseev, Polockaja zmejja, pp. 21–82.


