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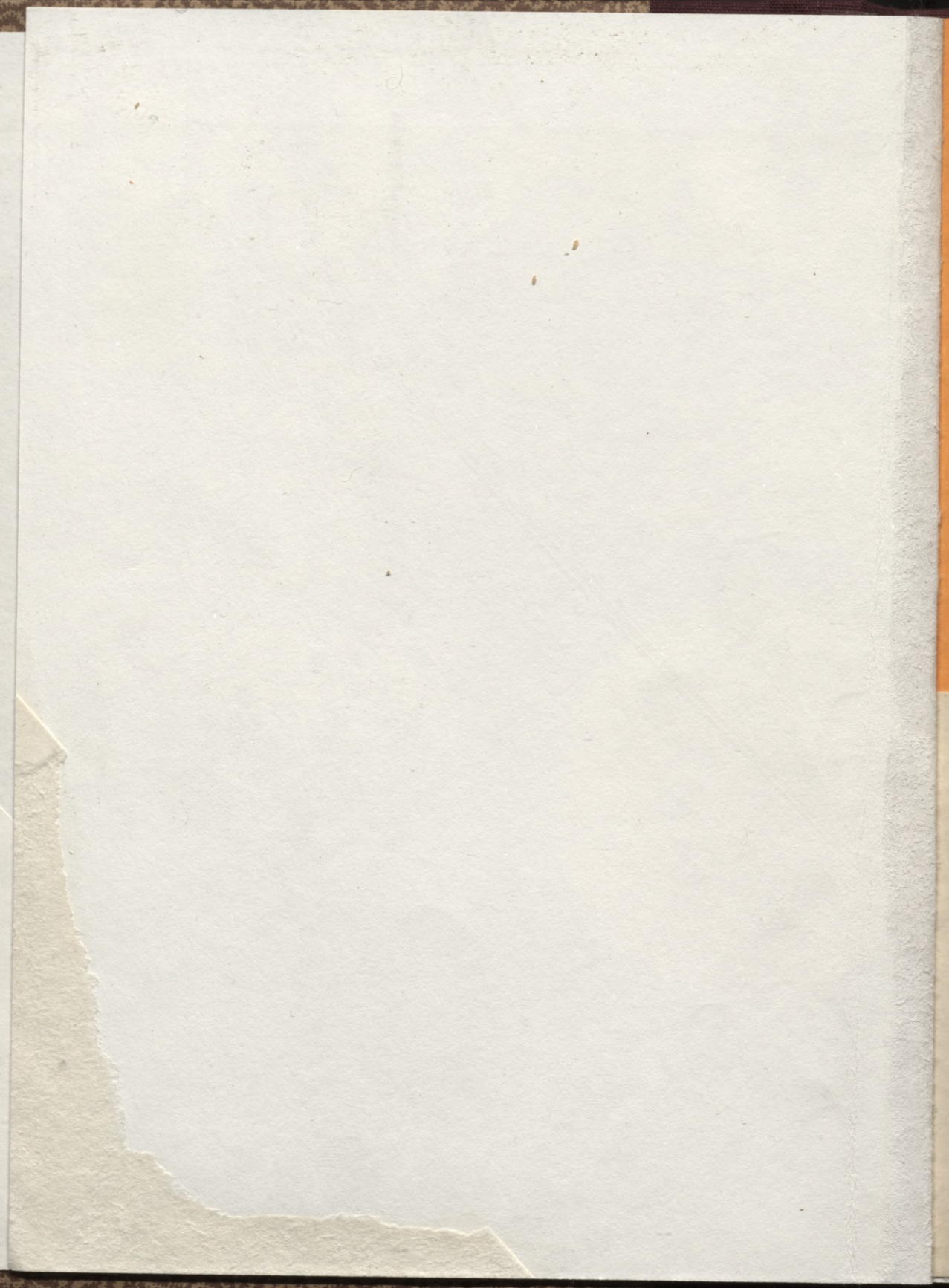
Arnolds Spekke

BALTS and SLAVS

Their early relations

1968

Published by
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Ar patiesas cieņas apliecinājumu

*Latvijas sūtniecība
Vašingtonā*

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Toronto 2-8, Ontario, Canada

LATVIAN LITERATURE

Edited by
1964

ALEKSIS RUBULLIS

Associate Professor of Modern Languages

Niagara University

Consulting Editor

MARVIN J. LAHOOD

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Niagara University

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This volume of stories is a revelation of the rich literary tradition of Latvia; in vignettes of beauty and power there is presented the vibrant, often tragic, life of a people too little known to North Americans.

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Professor of English

St. Michael's College

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TORONTO

Excerpts from LATVIAN LITERATURE:

The whole household came together, as during the flax harvest, and, raking the sand with their fingers, the people drew out the potatoes that the earth had matured. When the pickers were at one end of the furrow, they looked like a crown of worshippers, kneeling down and slowly moving forward with heads bent low, and the potatoes that they caught and tossed into the baskets, like rosary beads. And as worshippers know that when they have completed a set distance on their knees and said a set number of prayers, while fingering their beads, a brighter morning of forgiveness of sin awaits them, so the pickers knew that by unearthing the potatoes in the furrows they would free themselves from earth that had kept them attached to itself all summer.

By **Edwards Virza**

"There is a real man!" she called out to me, as to an old friend, "Not like you and all the rest! What temperament! What freedom and constraint! Even now I have no idea who he is . . . He pressed me against him so passionately . . . I don't think that I have ever belonged to anyone like him."

"You see, life isn't narrow after all."

"Yes, I'm beginning to believe it again. And his eyes," the baroness Slipenbach continued taking my hand into hers, as if to seek protection, "such eyes I have never seen. They sparkle through that wonderfully subtle mask which is so perfect, that if I were to meet him in a forest I would be frightened."

At this moment her beau again appeared in the ball-room, and the Mistress took one breath and left.

"Dearest . . ." She repeated this word five times. Then, suddenly she threw her arms around her escort's neck, her lips clung to the horrible mask. What followed was a nightmarish, inexplicable but angry growl, and, at the same time, like an echo, from the woman's withdrawing head came an even more terrible cry of fear . . . She tried to disengage herself, but couldn't. He rushed towards them and saw his maliciously gaping mouth in which there were many sharp teeth. This was a real ape!

By **Janis Ezerins**

Sun in the sky, the clear air, the mirror-like waters, and the wide wide face of the earth — what a song of praise shall I sing to you?

You are and you will remain my property forever — I am a part of you, you are a part of me.

I can wander over the greatest of distances, climb the highest of mountains, or descend into the deepest of depths — you are always with me, and I am with you.

The salmon fisherman from the river Amur is a kinsman to the angler of Newfoundland, just as the man at the herring net off Bergen is a brother to me, a man from the river Daugava.

We all are united by the glory and the beauty of Nature, the sun, the air, the earth, and the water — things forever new which renew one forever.

By **Janis Jaunsudrabin**

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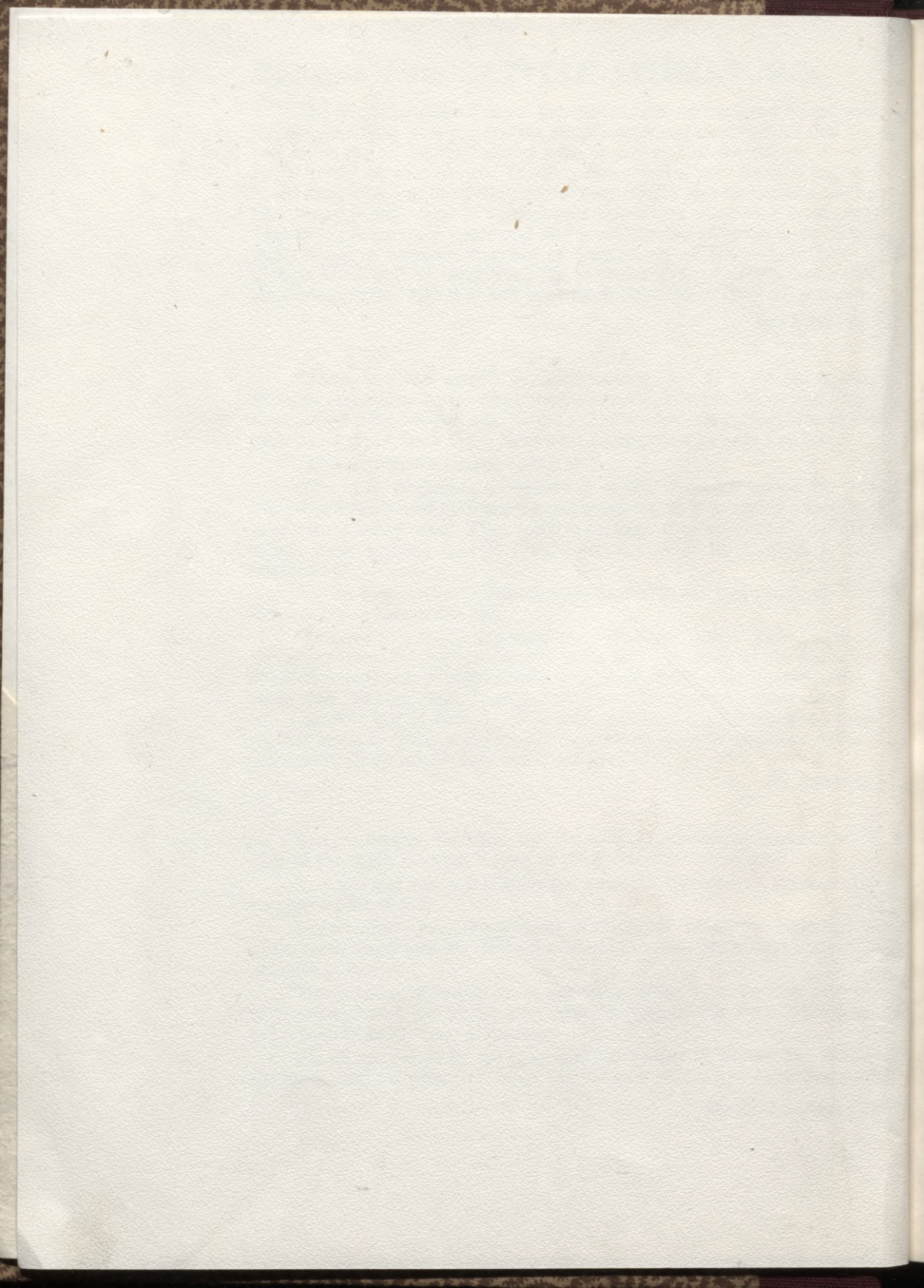
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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

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These sketches attempt to present a general survey of the already existing historical evidence, especially of the chronicles of the neighbors of the ancient Balts; archaeological and linguistic investigations and their results, as much as the author has been able to obtain and utilize them, are quoted as supplementary illustrations and proofs. The author does not pretend however to anything but an incomplete treatment of the problem dealt with, but it is hoped that his efforts may be helpful to some future historian who, perhaps in better times and under better research conditions, will succeed in making more conclusive and scientific clearances in the dense woods of Eastern European prehistory. Some new investigations, books and articles of the late 50's and early 60's are mentioned in the Appendix.

The manuscript was to appear in book form, including some maps, in the early sixties. However a delay was caused by circumstances beyond the author's control, and the demand of time compelled him to prepare these offset technique sheets which, due to the readers' wide interest in this subject, are now presented in their second edition.

Washington, Fall 1965

A. S.

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Those Who No Longer Exist : Yatvingians and Old Prussians	59
Withdrawal, Political Build-up, Counterblows : Lithuanians and Latvians	83
Appendix	114

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83	Withdrawal, Political Build-up, Concessions : Lithuanians and Latvians
111	Appendix

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Given the all-importance of this Ilmen-Lovat-Dniepr region which crossed also the Daugava, there remained little left to neighboring elements, mainly our Daugava. It was quite common during my student years, to hear statements to the effect that the Daugava had played no part in the expansion of the Varangians. In a similar vein were the statements that the ancient amber trade could very well have existed without the ancient Baltic tribes.

Let us begin, in all modesty, with geographical facts. If we take, for instance, the book of a well known linguist, R. Trautmann, Die slavischen Völker und Sprachen, 1947, these facts appear very clearly. The great route reaches simply from the river Lovat to the Daugava, whence following the well known Kasplja volok it joins the river Dniepr following which it runs into the Black Sea, or even further, as far as the coveted and glittering Cargrade (Constantinopolis). Prof. R. J. Kerner, once of California University, a specialist in voloks, and author of the books The Urge of the Sea, The Course of Russian History, and The Role of Rivers, Portages, Ostrogs, Monasteries and Furs, Berkeley, 1945, does not seem in the least to encounter

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But very little attention seems to be called upon the fact that this region, which might almost be called a geographically negative region because of the endless rivers, streams, lakes of various dimensions, countless marshes and virgin forests, did resemble anything rather than a widely used commercial route.

And if these arguments were not sufficient to persuade the reader, then I should like to refer him to those ancient Russian chronicles which describe the fate of those unfortunate travellers who, wandering from the narrow path of the voloks, lose their way in some virgin forest (see also my *Latvians and Livonia in the 16th Cent.*, pp. 123-124), or to the tale of the courageous diplomat Baron Herberstein, describing his journey to Muscovy, truly heroic for those times, as he did not follow the usual route through Livonia, or the one from Smolensk but made his way cross-country, in-between both known routes, along the river Lovat (Drisa-Polock-Novgorod). His description reminds one of some scenes of the period immediately following the ice age.

In order not to give too many examples, I will only say that already the old, careful Z. Khodokhovski is very puzzled as to the whereabouts of the famous "highway" so much talked of at a later date (*Puti soobshchenija v drevnej Rossii*; *Russkij istoricheskij sbornik*, I, Moskva 1837), and another recent investigation of this problem, by S.V. Bernstein-Kogan (*Puti iz varjag v greki, Voprosi geografii, Sbornik 20, 1950*) marks nothing less than nine of them from the

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When the Polyanians lived by themselves among the hills, a trade-route connected the Varangians with the Greeks. Starting from Greece, this route proceeds along the Dnieper, above which a portage leads to the Lovat'. By following the Lovat', the great lake Il'men is reached. The river Volkhov flows out of this lake and enters the great lake Nevo. The mouth of this lake opens into the Varangian Sea. Over this sea goes the route to Rome, and on from Rome overseas to Tsar¹grad. The Pontus, into which flows the river Dnieper, may be reached from that point. The Dnieper itself rises in the upland forest, and flows southward. The Dvina has its source in the same forest but flows to the east, and discharges through seventy mouths into the Caspian Sea. It is possible by this route to the eastward to reach the Bulgars and the Caspians, and thus attain the region of Shem. Along the Dvina runs the route to the Varangians, whence one may reach Rome, and go from there to the race of Ham. But the Dnieper flows through various mouths into the Pontus.

Before we proceed, let us analyse the text:

First, it is striking that in this text there is no mention of Slavs or Russians, as if they did not exist along the highway. And this chronicle should be, according to the unanimous judgment of Russian historians, a conclusive picture, a sort of resume of

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Second, the Daugava is not mentioned in the system of voloks. Either it has been forgotten, or the writer's geographical knowledge was insufficient. If Nestor himself could have done without it, what need was there for later historians to bother about it?

Third, this continental monk (Kiev) has great difficulty with the world's, or rather the European seas. Sailing the Varangian Sea (even Peter the Great still used to call the Baltic by this name), which in his eyes must have represented the world's encircling ocean, he is able quite happily to reach Cargrade, the object of his dreams. If we take a look at world maps of the 10th and 11th centuries, we will clearly see the reason for this.

Fourth, on the other hand he seems to be fairly precise in placing the estuaries of great Eastern European rivers, excepting a few mistakes like the straight southern direction of the Dniepr, etc. On this point he might have had authentic Russian sources of information.

Fifth, regarding Daugava, his information is erroneous: it should be flowing northwards. Possibly because these regions were foreign to him. He is faithfully followed in his geographical errors by such well-known

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historian as Dlugosz, who wrote three hundred years later. He too is remarkably precise in his description of the Niemen, but in what regards the Daugava, he has to have recourse to Ptolemy (see the conclusion of this article).

Sixth, of great value are Nestor's assertions concerning the Volga and its great commercial importance, such as we can deduce it from the laconic text. This passage is, in my opinion, one of the most important in our quotation; it throws light on the geographically horizontal ways of communication and shows their importance and influence both commercially and culturally, extending as far as our shores.

Much has been written about this subject, and archaeologists will still have a great deal to say, but its chronological aspect has always been very misty. As far as my own knowledge reaches I have been able to find only one fairly precise chronological reference to it in the famous Russian orientalist's V. V. Bartold's article: *Arabskije izvestija o Rusakh (Sovietskoje Vostokovedenje, I, 1940, pp. 18-19)*:

We don't know for certain at what epoch the already existing commercial route of Central Asia, directed westwards and toward the Black Sea was joined by a new commercial route towards the North-West following Central Volga, the Kam and hence to the Baltic Sea; obviously this fact is connected with the caravans of the great Persian Sassanide Empire and the vast expansion of maritime commerce during the last centuries of its existence (3rd to 7th centuries)."

This passage is followed by detailed evidence, including the Chinese chronicle *Bej-ši*, in Russian "Severnije dvory" (7th cent.) which should mention the merchandise to be brought from the Chozerm to China, among which was amber, undoubtedly of Baltic origin.

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Seventh, Nestor tells us in one breath that "by way of the Daugava one can reach the Varangians, but from the Varangians - Rome." One fails to understand why this sentence should not be a clear proof of the fact that the Daugava was the commercial route of the Varangians. Why does not anybody point it out. The chronological frame must naturally be provided by us.

Eighth, all the details given at the beginning of the quotation about the Lovat, the Ilmen, the Volkhova, lake Ladoga, are seemingly an enumeration of factors belonging already to a purely Russian, i.e. later epoch. This particular part of the quotation should so turn out chronologically to be the most recent. Of this opinion is also Shakhmatov, op. cit., p. 45, who traces the origins of the "highway" back to a "historical" (i.e., not a prehistoric) period. Data of more recent periods are interestingly brought to light by V. A. Brim: Putj iz varjag v greki (Izv. Akad. Nauk SSSR, N. 2, Otdjel obshchestvennykh nauk, 1931), although some parts of this article are now outdated.

Interesting remarks concerning the practice of ancient commercial routes can also be found in some Russian chronicles some centuries later, for instance, Pamjatniki istorii Velikogo Novgoroda i Pskova, Sbornik podgotovlennij G. E. Kochinim, 1935. There are to be found several passages stating that the rivers of the commercial routes can be sailed "bez pakosti" (without molestation), that is, when the "putj chist" (the way is clear), etc.

Chronologically the most recent picture of the coming of Varangians to the "cennym istochnikam obogashchenija (meaning good sources of livelihood), as Shakhmatov says (op. cit., p.43) is

Seventh, Nestor tells us in one breath that "by way of the Danube one can reach the Varangians, but from the Varangians - Rome." One fails to understand why this sentence should not be a clear proof of the fact that the Danube was the commercial route of the Varangians. Why does not anybody point it out. The chronological frame must naturally be provided by us.

Eighth, all the details given at the beginning of the quotation about the Lovat, the Ilimen, the Volkhov, Lake Ladoga, are seemingly an enumeration of factors belonging already to a purely Russian, i.e. later epoch. This particular part of the quotation should so turn out chronologically to be the most recent. Of this opinion is also Shakhmatov, op. cit., p. 45, who traces the origin of the "highway" back to a "historical" (i.e., not a prehistorical) period. Data of more recent periods are interestingly brought to light by V. A. Brin: put' iz var'og v gruki (Izv. Akad. Nauk SSSR, N. 2, Otdel obshchestvennykh nauk, 1931), although some parts of this article are now outdated.

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penetrated into the zone of Slavic colonization. It appears that the Slavic communities around the sources of the western to be found in G. Vernadsky's book, *The Origins of Russia*, Oxford 1959, p. 176-177. This book which is rich in new historiographically revolutionary ideas (especially linking up the ancient fates of the Russian plain with oriental influences), repeats the same author's quotation referring to the Daugava: *Ancient Russia*, 4th ed. 1952, pp. 266-268 (see also map on p. 267). Clearly in the space of a few years the author has not come across any new studies on the subject concerning us. The long quotation runs as follows :

p. 266: In the fifth and the sixth centuries the Norsemen were exploring extensively both the southern and the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea, and in the sixth century a group of them settled at the mouth of the western Dvina. In the seventh century the kings of southern Sweden had overseas possessions in Kurland. By the beginning of the eighth century Livonia and Estonia were parts of the realm of Ivar, King of southern Sweden and Denmark... Having consolidated their control over the Livonian littoral, the Varangians began to penetrate deeper into the country. Originally, one may suppose, only small bands of trappers and fur traders ventured into the woods. The course of the western Dvina river offered the natural route inland, and it became the first path to facilitate the Varangian advance in Russia. The native population

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penetrated into the zone of Slavic colonization. It appears that the Slavic communities around the sources of the western Dvina and the vicinity were, except for Novgorod, small and weak. It is characteristic that in their further drive inland the Varangians by-passed Novgorod and occupied it much later. Due to the mutual proximity of the sources of the western Dvina, Dnieper and Volga, once the Varangians reached the upper parts of the western Dvina, they were likely to explore the upper parts of both the Dnieper and the Volga as well. We may imagine that they reached the sources of these two rivers as early as the 7th century. With regard to the Dnieper, the Varangians could hardly go down it very far since the Lithuanian and the Slavic tribes in the upper Dnieper region must have been strong and well organized. Their most important city in that area was at the site of Gnezdovo, near Smolensk.

p. 334: The upper Dvina and lake Ilmen region played the role of an important commercial station on the road between Scandinavia and the Orient, and vice versa. Finds of weapons and fibulas of the Norse type (see further).

This quotation will be sufficient to give us a general picture, but we must add right away that there is no need for us to swear by Prof. Vernadsky's conclusions, however famous his name may be at the moment, especially on this continent. Analytical studies regarding the object of our interest, i.e. the Slavic expansion westwards, also along the shores of Daugava, begin to get more precise and incisive at least with N. Barsov's clever book, so rich in material... (Ocherki russkoj istoricheskoj geografii. Geografija nachalnoj - Nestorovoj letopisi, 2nd ed., Warsaw 1885). Chronologically it was followed by Shakhmatov, Pogodin,

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Also regarding our theme of the Daugava as a commercial route the reader's attention may be called to the already mentioned book by A. Stender-Petersen, in several chapters of which he goes out to prove, with the help of a precise and witty linguistic analysis that the "Hellespont" of the Saxo Grammaticus is nothing else than a part of the Daugava, wrapped up in original Varangian legends and denominations. Worthy of notice is also the part of his book dealing with Sembiya-Samland and its relations with the Swedish Vikings. All this must be stressed and pointed out, since it has been steadily denied by our Baltic German historiographies (see, for instance, relevant passages of Baltische Lande, I, 1939, Ostbaltische Frühzeit). Worthy of mention is also R.J. Kerner's book, so interesting in its method and paying tribute to the great Russian historian S. Solovjov and his deep insight into the nature and ways of Slavic expansion.

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Since this is the picture which presents itself in the light of the latest studies, what then becomes of the once famous "highway" ? We have at our disposal a relatively recent study by the Soviet historian S. V. Bernstein-Kogan, op. cit. It is written with great care and foresight, and omits any derogatory remarks about the "bourgeois" angle on history and the like of which the books of his colleagues abound and which so miserably degrade the works of these writers.

It begins with the statement that the "commercial route" has played a much greater part in the writings of historians than in the actual course of history. There is nothing to prove, writes the author, the commercial and transit role of this route, and it is very doubtful "whether it has had any relevant part in the international commercial

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Having carefully examined the northern sagas as well as the Byzantine chronicles, tales of the Arab world and the legends about St. Andrew, used by some of the old Russian chronicles, the author comes to the conclusion that there are signs of an evident southward movement of the Varangian tribes (Novgorod, Kiev, and the Black Sea), but that there are however no existing proofs of any role played by Scandinavian merchants in Byzance. On the other hand, there is the luminous example and proof of a flourishing commerce between the East and the Baltic shores, especially the isle of Gotland, its enormous deposits of ancient coins dating from the 8th to the 10th centuries, about 67.000 in all: 23.000 Arab, 14.000 Anglo-Saxon, 27.000 German-Dutch and Polish. and only 180 Byzantine (the latest book on this subject gives a little different figures; see J. Brøndsted, The Vikings Pelican ed., 1960, pp. 128-129).

Another such centre of commerce is represented by Gnezdovo (Smolensk) where large quantities of Arab coins and eastern merchandise have been found. (And what does the Soviet finally recognized official version of their Encyclopaedia have to say about the same Gnezdovo?! A. Sp.). According to Bernstein-Kogan's observations, evidence about Novgorod as an important commercial station for Greek merchandise destined westwards, should be almost completely lacking. On the other hand, "the courses of Lovat and Dnieper were most intensively exploited as a road between Kiev and Novgorod in the 11th and 12th centuries."

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mainly along Volga and its affluents and across water courses to the Daugava and Neva. Without going into more detailed descriptions of this "track of coins", I shall only say that it has an undoubtedly horizontal and not vertical direction, with which statement I think to have touched the heart of the matter. The author's conclusion sounds as follows: "the topography of these deposits of ancient coins makes us draw the conclusion that the main route from the Dniepr to the Baltic Sea was the river Daugava which has been so often considered a secondary addition to the road from the Varangians to the Greeks."

Chronologically this should refer to the 8th to the 10th centuries. Beginning with the 13th century, from which we have in our possession the texts of several treaties (Smolensk-Riga-Novgorod), we have a new era and new conditions with the appearance of the Hanseatic League.

In sad contrast to this article stands out the book of the Soviet ancient historian P. N. Tretjakov: Vostochnoslavjanskije plemena, in two versions, the first "before Marxism," and the second, a corrected one, after the author had realized, as the preface says, the mistakes made in the first edition.

I say I know these books, yet I cannot state to have ever quite understood how many "sins" are attributed in them to the "bourgeois angle on history" for ever recurring in them. One thing is however clear: the great movements of the Slavic tribes in the first thousand years A.D. are completely taboo to the author who maintains that these tribes existed in the positions they actually occupy from times immemorial (see p.12 and further). This seems to be one of the main lines of the bolshevik ancient historians. The Varangians, too, are to be found with great difficulty in the

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writings of Tr., and so our Daugava has to begin its own Baltic tale approximately from the same point as at the time of the free Republic of Latvia (see map on p.107 and explanations in the 1953 ed.).

Such then are my short bibliographical notes concerning Nestor's famous route vertically across the western part of the Russian plain. But we should indeed ill-use our old Daugava if we did not say a few words about its ancient past as a river, that is as the only means of communication of those times, of which archaeologists have proved that the geographical horizons of ancient peoples were not at all as limited as has often seemed to the not so well-informed.

Already in my book "The Baltic Sea in Ancient Maps" (p.5-7) is to be read a tale connecting our Daugava with one of the oldest and best beloved Greek legends, that of the voyage of the Argonauts to Colchis (in the south-eastern corner of the Black Sea). The translator of the legend's last edition in English, E.V. Rieu (Apollonius of Rhodes, The Voyage of Argo, the Penguin classics, 1959) says in his introduction: "In taking Argo across central Europe regions unfamiliar to the Greeks" it is his duty and pleasure to 'give his readers fairy-tale geography';" and in another passage: "We can conclude that the tale was never standardized." In other words, the drawing nearer or farther of geographical horizons (Apollonius lifetime, 222-181 B.C.) gave way to ever new geographical suppositions and speculations, and so it is that in our days the problem of the legends partial linking up with the ancient amber routes crossing the Russian plain in a south-easterly direction from the Daugava to the Don, is never absent from the historian's mind.

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Some of these historians not only admit in principle the possibility of such a solution, but believe themselves to be qualified to indicate the various stages of this route. I shall quote here two lady historians who apparently did not know of each other's existence. The Russian archeologist E.N. Kletnova held a conference in Prague on the 21st March, 1927, entitled "The oldest commercial route from the Varangians to the Hazars." All that remains of this conference as far as I know, is a short résumé published in "Zapiski Russkago Istoricheskago Obschestva v Prage, 1927. In its author's opinion the route had great importance long before Nestor's mention of it; it took two directions: 1) a roundabout way to the Volga; 2) a shorter way to the Daugava.

On the Russian side, beginning with the famous Gnezdovo, the route should have crossed the Desna and Seima, i.e. along the Oskol-Donec - Don. The author is not lacking in proofs to sustain her theory: they are of an archeological nature (the vast burial grounds near Gnezdovo and north of Donec, the so-called Verkhneje Saltovo, also oriental merchandise and coins etc.). The topographical nomenclature also gives several place names connected with the name of the once powerful Alan tribe, and finally we have some ancient texts to be studied and interpreted with care. Since Ptolemy was able to write that the Volga is called Rha (in the language of the Finnic tribes) and that the river Ural is called (by its Turkish name) Jaïk (Bartold, op.cit., p.17), Kletnova in turn has found out that Ptolemy's alleged denomination of the Daugava, "Rudon", should be of Persian origin.

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In contribution to the significance of Miss Bacon's book, it is to be said that the reader gets a clear picture not only of the legend growing out of "a narrative of a real voyage in the Euxine" (p. 168) undertaken by the Thessalians in the 14th - 13th centuries B.C., but also that "during the Homeric Age vague reminiscences of the amber routes from the Baltic connected themselves with the Argonautica" (p. 169)."

And however vague and chronologically late these literary references may be (with the exception of Pindar's short witness) one doubtlessly gets the impression that the "all-famous" legend-myth (in Homer's wording) has touched the ancient amber trade of Eastern Europe in the times when amber was to those people a vessel for important mystical and sacred rites, a sort of talisman, as it is pointed out in my book about the Ancient Amber Routes.

The map of amber routes of the English author is not very realistic, as she herself admits, but our shores, our Daugava, and the possibility of their connection with her theme, the so-called fourth homeward journey of the Argonauts, are considered by her definitely historically possible (see especially pp. 113-114).

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WATERWAYS, PORTAGES, AND ETHNIC FRONTIERS.

In ancient times, when land roads had as yet no place in landscapes of impenetrable forests and bogs, the principal and, very often, only means of transportation between prehistoric tribes were the various waterways: rivers, lakes, and such. We can imagine the importance of waterways in those times, since the only means of transportation in central Eastern Europe up to the Vth century A.D. had been either the sledge or the human back. Carts (wheel barrows) only appeared in the Vth century, introduced by Roman or Germanic merchants, according to the book, Slaves et Germaines, 1945, p. 13, by J. Ancel. The Swedish historian, J. Salgren, in his article, Wikingarfahrten im Osten, /Ztschr, f.slav.Phil.Bd.VII, 1931/ stresses not only the widespread application of the volok technique in Sweden in early times, but also tells us that the Swedes, apart from their powerful navy, "had a highly developed technique of navigation whereby they were able to drag their embarcations on land." Even in the first great Russian-Marxist encyclopedia we find the opinion, now presumably condemned as heresy, that the Varangians had probably taught the volok technique to the Slavs, especially at the time of the colonization of Novgorod /Under the heading Volok/. We must also remember the fact that the most recent archeologists often point to the possibility of much livelier commerce in the Bronze Age than had ever previously been imagined. See, for instance, G. Bibby, "The Testimony of the Spade," /Life in Northern Europe, from 1500 B.C. to the time of the Vikings, 1956./ I think that my previous chapter might also stimulate curiosity in this direction.

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founders of Russian history. From their tales we shall, I hope, get a better idea of this region of our interest, so difficult to humanize, since it is, and remains, for the greatest part, geographically negative. These quotations will be followed by an extract from the works of a known Russian geographer in which we shall see the gradual "overgrowing" of the volok regions, under the comprehensive colonization efforts of the populations. One of the founders of anthropogeography, Fr. Ratzel, says that the course of the history of ancient peoples can be deduced ("herauslesen") especially from the middle course of rivers. Maybe I shall succeed, within my limits, with the quotations in this chapter, to shed some light on the unfolding of the ancient history of our people. Even if we have no historical texts in our possession, the most modern methods of research have learnt to interpret certain natural phenomena historically.

A History of Russia by V.O. Kliuchevski, New York, 1960.:

Vol. V
p. 237

"In fact, we find nowhere in Western Europe such a complex river system as in Russia, or meet with such fluminal ramification, and with such juxtaposition of fluminal basins. Here and there fluminal basins, the main streams of which flow in contrary directions, approach one another so closely with their branches as practically to lead to a mutual process of interplaiting. And all over the plain there has become formed a fluminal network extremely configurate of character. It is a peculiarity which, with existence of narrow and gently sloping voloki /portages/, facilitated colonisation from the first, since it rendered our bygone voyagers' task of transferring their river barques from basin to basin a matter of ease.

p. 247

His river he /i.e. the Russian/ altogether loved; of no other element of his land has he spoken in terms so kindly. There were reasons for this. During his migrations his river pointed out to him the way: during his periods of settlement his river remained with him as his never-changing neighbour - he could pour out to it his complaints, and set his dwelling, church, and village above flood mark upon its bank. Again, his river fed him during the not inconsiderable portion of the year

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A History of Russia by V.O. Kizuchevskii, New York, 1900.

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p. 247

Лавинская Библиотека

people follows that direction.

set aside for fasting. And for trade purposes it provided, in summer time, a ready made road, and, in winter time, a highway of ice. Nor did it ever offer him menace of storm and sunken rock: one needed but at intervals to shift the helm as constantly, capriciously the river wound along, and to remember where the shallows and the rough waters lay. The river nourished in the Russian of the day both a sense of system and the social sense, for a river itself loves system and order, whilst its regular, strictly seasonal floodings, a phenomenon with which the hydrography of Western Europe has nothing to compare, at once indicated where settlement would not be advisable, and, by temporarily converting even most modest streams into navigable waterways, advantaged incalculably river travel, trade, pasturage, and arable culture.

- p. 248 ...those /Russian rivers/ with their moderate degree of fall/ trained the dwellers on their banks to social life and the sociable habit is due to the fact that, as diffusion of settlement followed the river system, such settlement always thickened along the brisker and more navigable waterways, and passed over the forest-clad and marshy watersheds between. Could we now look down upon fifteenth-century Russia from a sufficient height, we should see, as it were, a sheet of canvas fantastically patterned with thin strips of waterline amid large dark blotches. Thus Russia's rivers fostered enterprise by accustoming men to work together and in common, and by compelling them to consider means, and to devise resources, and to remember that they were a community, and to engage in intercourse with strangers, and to take due note of manners and interests, and to effect exchange of merchandise and life experience, and, in short, to learn what was what.
- p. 242 The Chronicle /i.e. the so called Nestor/, for its part, locates the Russo-Slav tribes exclusively according to rivers."
- Solovjov: "Nature in the great Eastern plain is monotonous. It will not create lively impressions in the traveller. The old meticulous observer, Herodotus, was only struck by one thing: In Scythia, he says, there is nothing noteworthy, if we are not to count the rivers flowing in it - they are wide and rich in water. Truly, the ancient, wide expanse of Scythia was the theatre of an extensive system of waterways, almost intermingling with one another and thus creating a network of river roads, from which the local inhabitants found it almost impossible to disentangle themselves for their individual life. As elsewhere, so also here, the first groups of inhabitants followed the rivers. New tribes settled along the rivers, new towns arose on their shores. Since the greatest rivers flow eastward or south-eastward, so also the development of the Russian

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Solevov:

people follows that direction.

In this way, following the four main river systems, Russia was divided in four principal parts: the first, the region of Lake Novgorod, the second, the Daugava region, i.e. of the Krivichi and Polochans, the third, the Dniepr region, the fourth, the upper region of the Volga."

Paszkiewicz "One feature is particularly striking when we examine p. 28 the way in which the tribes have been located. 'Nestor' describes the area inhabited by them solely in connection with the rivers." etc.

Barsov p.87-88 "The forming and uniting of the regions in the land of the different Kniazhestva took place along the various waterways. The wooded marshy areas of the voloks between the rivers, the so called watersheds, were the natural border lines between villages and regions connected among them, and later between the lands arisen from them, which were usually situated along the rivers. These were the only natural frontiers in the Eastern European plain where the navigable, calmly flowing rivers did not divide, but rather brought together the peoples living on their shores."/The exception was the wide, prosperous Dniepr, which in its middle course divides the tribes, but in its upper course unites the Krivichi tribes./

"With time, and with the increase of populations, the sites of the Voloks were peopled by permanent inhabitants, roads appeared in the wooded areas, clearings were made, and villages, maybe also the individual farms (dvorishcha) which we find in White-Ruthenian forests later, around the XVith century, were built. But the peoples who went to live in the forests did not lose touch with their neighbours and fellow tribesmen. In this way, from the two opposite sides of the voloks, the inhabitants coming from different lands and regions drew nearer, and so also the first frontiers dividing them (Granji, Mezhi, Rubezhi), were created. Such drawing nearer was beginning to lead to quarrels and clashes among the neighbouring tribes." /Such examples are not lacking in the so called 'Nestor's chronicle.'/"So it was that in these border areas the first fortified defense posts appeared, even whole fortified villages, which do not figure in the old chronicles, because of their lack of importance in later Russian history, but whose traces we can still detect in the place names of voloks and regions."

"The boats which travel from the remoter Russia to Constantinople, come from Novgorod, the dwelling place of Svjatoslav son of Prince Igor of Russia. They come from

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Having established the general outlook of our horizons, let us ask ourselves what the real aspect of the system of voloks, which united the Lovat with the Daugava, and the Daugava with the Dniepr, was. A Russian historian of the former period writes:

Brim p. 232 "The Varangians and, later, the Russians pulled or carried their boats a relatively short way, exploiting every stream, every lake so that the boats could float on water and, if not, could at least be dragged on wet and not on dry ground...Therefore, the best way to understand any volok system will be a careful study of maps."

This sounds just like a copy from this essay in the understanding of our regions. Thus they were in fact: composed of woods, marshes, rivers, and streams of all dimensions, small and big lakes. Here the imagination and power of orientation of the early tribes were given full scope in their trying to get from one large river to another with the least possible toil. Some modern historians, for motives better known to themselves, greatly "simplify" the ways of this system, for instance, R. Trautman in his book, Die Slavischen Volker und Sprachen, 1947, p. 129, in a passage quoted before.

Here we must again mention Kerner's book /see chapter about the Daugava/ which endeavours to solve the problem systematically as far as possible, and in this book the schemes of voloks and their computation occupy many pages.

Regarding the functioning of voloks in the region of our interest, there are no detailed news of the epoch. There is only the description of the navigation on the Dniepr by the Emperor Constantine, which I give here almost in full:

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the fortresses of Milinisk, Telionca, Chernigov, and Vishegrad. They all float downwards on the waters of the river Dniepr until they reach the fortress of Kiev whose name is Samatas. The Slavs, dependents of the inhabitants of Kiev by the name of Krivichi and Liuchani, as well as other Slavs, carve out some trees for their boats, during the winter in the mountains, and when they have properly shaped them, they leave them in some neighboring marsh until the coming of the spring and the melting of the ices. Then, after having put their boats in the river Dniepr, they come downstream and gather in Kiev. There they pull their boats out of water, stand them upright and sell them to the Ros. /in Greek: eis tus ros./ The Ros, on their part, buy them only as shapes of boats and, demolishing their old ones, they carve out of them oars, oar-holders, and all other implements of navigation and provide them with all that is necessary. Then, in the month of June, following the river Dniepr, they come to Vitechebe, a fortress belonging to them. There they gather, and, in the space of two or three days, until all the boats have arrived, they proceed further along the river Dniepr...

/by the Neaset rapids/ they /the Ros/ pay great attention to their sentinel duties because of the Pechenegs. The remaining /i.e. those free from any sentinel duty/ having taken their things out of their boats, lead the chained slaves along the shore about 6000 feet /six Roman miles, one Roman mile equalling 1481 m., A.Sp./ until they get to the other side of the difficult rocky passage; then pushing their boats back in the water, they load them with all their belongings, finally get in themselves, and continue their navigation...providing their boats anew with all that is necessary, in case something should have got lost, like sails, masts, and cudgels which they keep near themselves...And so they conclude this part of their difficult journey fraught with worry, danger /halepos plus/. /When they reach the island of St. Gregorius/ they perform religious rites and offer live birds in sacrifice, under a huge oak. Sticking their arrows all around, they place bread and meat and other things, according to what behooves each man, and to their custom. And they draw lots concerning the birds, whether to eat them, or kill them, or let them free."

There is a whole linguistic literature about the Swedish and Russian names of the Dniepr falls. It is not our task to look more closely into this, but it might be useful to note that the enigmatic place names of Constantine's description have been partly deciphered (T.D. Kendrick,

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A History of the Vikings, London, 1930, p. 151): "towns like Novgorod, Smolensk (Miliniska), Lyubetch, Tchernigov, and Vishegorod."

Chronologically the most recent descriptions of the voloks in the regions of our interest are to be found in the Smolensk Trade Codes of 1229 and 1274 /Kerner, p. 153-154/:

"If the Bailiff /of the Portage/ should hear of the arrival of a Latin merchant, he is to send men with wagons /kola/ to transport the goods /across the Portage/, and not detain the merchant, /for/ in this, damage might be caused.

... If Latin and Smolensk merchants should arrive at the Portage /at the same time/, lots should be drawn to determine who should be transported first /across the Portage/ to Smolensk.

If men should arrive from other lands, they are to be transported /across the Portage/ later.

...If any Portager should undertake to transport Latin goods across the Portage and should any part of these goods perish, then all the Portagers must pay /the damage/.

...If, God forbid, anybody in these lands /along the Dvina/ should lose a boat /uchan/ or skiff/cheln/, whether /he be/ Russian or Latin, his goods should not be seized either in the water or on the shore."

The text from 1274 is roughly of the same nature only in the first paragraph. There is an adjoining note which undoubtedly points to the increasing and menacing strength of the Lithuanian state:

"If the Bailiff of the Portage /Voloch'skyi Tiun/ should hear that a German merchant and men of Smolensk have arrived at the Portage, he is to send his men without delay to the Portage /Volochane/ so that they may transport the German merchant and the men of Smolensk with /their/ goods / across the Portage. No one should cause them any hindrance, because...it may lead to a great deal of damage to the men of Smolensk and to the Germans at the hands of the pagans."

The journeys of the merchants were not without danger. This is proved by such expressions in the Russian chronicles as "Pukj chist"

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or that it is possible to travel "bez pakoski," and others, or the following sentence in a 1294-1303 text: "if the river roads will not be clear, the Knjaz will order his men to accompany the merchants." The quotations refer to the commercial roads of Novgorod /see Kochin p.114-115/.

The already quoted Brim describes as closely as possible the ways of the merchants in the 13th century, beginning from Scandinavia down to Novgorod. A few short extracts will give us some picturesque examples:

Brim, p.212 "The Varangians began their austrvågr twice in a year, in the springtime and in the autumn. Those who remained in Novgorod during the winter were called winterfarars, but the former, who spent the summer abroad, were called somerfarars. There are no direct descriptions from the Viking period, but the text of the Novgorod Commercial Treaty with the Hanseatic League in the year 1269-70 has survived, and gives, presumably, a fairly exact retrospective picture of the conditions of life such as they must have been several centuries before. The Hanseatic text begins the journey from the island of Björkö, on the northern shore of the Finnish Gulf. In an 18th century Russian text this island is given the name of 'ostrov Beriozovyi'. The next stage of the merchants' journey is the isle of Kotlin, the Kronstadt of the Later Great Russia ('Retusari' in Finnish, meaning insula inculta). There, 13th century Novgorod should have kept a special maritime guard either against the Swedes or against the pirates which menaced this commercial track. Further, the road proceeds along the river Nieva, which must then have been richer in waters, since Nestor calls it a lake. On the shores of Lake Ladoga, also on the northern part, have been found several Varangian fortified spots - fortresses for those times. The most important of these is on the southern shore. On the shore of the Volchova, not far from the lake, old Ladoga was founded (Aldagen, Aldeigjubork,) which Nestor's chronicle mentions already in 862: 'and they erected the town Ladoga, and in Ladoga lives the eldest brother Rjurik.'"

The well known Marxist archeologist, W.J. Raudonikas: Die Normannen der Wikingerzeit und das Ladogagebiet, p. 17-27, writes profusely about the excavated implements and comes to the conclusion that:

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"excavations and historical data have pointed out that, from the 9th to the 11th centuries, old Ladoga was in the hands of the Scandinavians, i.e. the Swedes who had settled there and found a port and a base for their commercial and warlike activities eastward and southward. From this centre, the influence of Scandinavian culture must have extended to the neighbouring regions."

Navigating the Volchova, before the tenth kilometer, all merchandise had to be loaded into lighter boats called Lodyini. Along the 19 km. long Volchova falls the boats were guided by men who the text of our quotation calls vorschkerle (vorsch - meaning falls in the Hansas text). Further down the river there were some customs stations; we would call them taverns. These taverns had some very picturesque names. (Arne, 14): "...and when the travellers had got past Dhrellenborch (holopij gorodok), on the third day they reached Novgorod." The whole voyage was long and dangerous and lasted, according to Adam of Bremen, four weeks.

History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen by Adam of Bremen, translated with an Introduction and Notes by Francis J. Tchan. New York, 1959.

p.194-195 "What Einhard /Vita Karoli XII/ said about the unexplored length of this gulf (the Baltic Sea) has lately been proved by the enterprise of the highly spirited men, Ganuz Wolf, a Danish leader, and Harold, the king of the Norwegians. After exploring the compass of this sea with much toilsome travel and many dangers to their associates, they finally came back, broken and overcome by the redoubled blows of the winds and pirates. But the Danes affirm that many have oftentimes explored the length of this sea. With a favorable wind some have reached Ostrogard in Russia ^{x)} from Denmark in the course of a month. As to its breadth..."

x) p. 67, note 74: Identified either as Novgorod on the Volkhov River, or as Ostrov.

A XIVth century Russian chronicle relating to the year 1316 relates what happened to those who got lost from the trodden path and gives a very vivid picture of what the world in those parts must have

"excavations and historical data have pointed out that, from the 9th to the 13th centuries, old Ladoga was in the hands of the Scandinavians, i.e. the Swedes who had settled there and found a port and a base for their commercial and warlike activities eastward and southward. From this centre, the influence of Scand- navian culture must have extended to the neighbouring regions."

Navigating the Volchova, before the tenth kilometer, all merchandises had to be loaded into lighter boats called *lobyalni*. Along the 19 km. long Volchova falls the boats were guided by men who the text of our quotation calls *vorschkevi* (*vorsch* - meaning falls in the Hansa text). Further down the river there were some customs stations; we would call them taverns. These taverns had some very picturesque names. (Aina, 14): "...and when the travellers had got past *Dreihsendorch* (*holojj gorodok*) on the third day they reached *Novgorod*". The whole voyage was long and dangerous and lasted, according to Adam of Bremen, four weeks.

History of the Archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen by Adam of Bremen, translated with an Introduction and Notes by Francis J. Tchou, New York, 1959.

p. 194-195 "What Einhard /Vita Karoli XII/ said about the un- explored length of this gulf (the Baltic Sea) has lately been proved by the enterprise of the high- ly spirited men, Gannu Wolf, a Danish leader, and Harold, the king of the Norwegians. After exploring the compass of this sea with much toilsome travel and many dangers to their associates, they finally came back, broken and overcome by the redoubled blows of the winds and pirates. But the Danes affirm that many have oftentimes explored the length of this sea. With a favorable wind some have reached Ostrogard in Russia (x) from Denmark in the course of a month. As to its breadth..."

(x) p. 67, note 74: Identified either as Novgorod on the Volkhov River, or as Ostrov.

A XIVth century Russian chronicle relating to the year 1316 re- lates what happened to those who got lost from the trodden path and gives a very vivid picture of what the world in those parts must have

looked like:

"And Michael Jaroslavich, Knjaz of Tver, arose against Novgorod, and set off along unknown roads and through unknown regions and he got lost in those savage forests /v zlich lesach/ and marshes and lakes, and when he finally reached the river Lovat, he stopped there in great sorrow and anxiety. And his people were so famished that they even ate skins and chewed their boots and strappings and many died of hunger and the remaining suffered great ills and the rest struggled homewards on foot; and so they return from the river Lovat, having achieved nothing and having given themselves great trouble to no purpose."

This sounds like a passage from some old epos. A passage like this makes us understand why the merchants erected small chapels in some of the volok sites, in thankfulness for a successful journey, and why, in the tale of the Emperor Constantine, the pagans, slave traders, performed their rites at the end of their journey, after their "heavy navigation."

And, finally, a few words about the beliefs of these primitive peoples connected with the voloks. After all that we have read, it will not be surprising to learn that the dangers and adventures through which they had passed led the imagination of these shaken and exhausted people to weave legends of evil spirits connected with the voloks. The surrounding nature greatly encouraged this tendency. Slavic folklore abounds in beliefs and customs of this kind: /The old Russian Encyclopedia, XIII, 82/:

"The people's superstitions would have that the voloks were evil and accursed places, the burial sites of evil heroes /lichogeniji/. Every passerby and wayfarer is bound to throw down branches of trees, stones, hay, and anything that comes to hand on these spots, the more the better, so that the voloks may become higher and drier. It was deemed a sin to remove or take away what had been thrown down."

We feel a mystical breath in this passage and we Latvians may be reminded of our poet's inspired words: "a people that seeks refuge on

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its hillsides." Folklorists can more ably tell the rest. I would only like to add that I have seen with my own eyes our gypsies in a Latvian forest performing similar "mysteries."

And, finally, two quotations describing the Livonian-Russian frontier in the XVith century: (Latv. & Liv. /State Archives, Venice/ see p. 146, 123-124:)

"The road had to be made through a 200 mile wide forest, thick with huge trees, since it was 180 years ago that the last army had passed through it. So they (i.e. King Stephen's army) proceeded forward, 8000 men being assigned the road making task, and they so filled the forest with their cries and with the noise of tree felling, that it seemed the whole sky would fall upon them. In this forest they came upon several marshes, some of them 10 miles long - these the army crossed on bridges, but the roads were so bad that it happened that sometimes 2000 men had to toil pulling a cannon. Finally, after many difficulties and great endeavours, the army came out of the forest and found itself in the fields of Muscovy which were well kept and sown with various crops. On the 28th day of August, the army stopped in front of Viecaluco, this name meaning large town.."/i.e. Velikiye Luki. A.Sp./

From the Ancient Tales /Dunsdorfs/, p. 75, "Inventory of the Castle of Ludza," (1599):

"This castle is situated four miles from the frontier of Muscovy, and its lands are often mistaken for the lands of Muscovy. However, both are framed in by thick forests and impenetrable marshes so that not only an army, but the single wayfarer has to follow certain trodden paths, watched by sentinels from their hiding-places. These guards thus catch and chastise the peasants and other wayfarers who, escaping from the province of Vidzeme, often become (Russian) bondsmen (serfs)."

Relatively abundant and complete descriptions of all matters concerning the voloks have been handed down from the XVIIth century. Two of these, describing this practice in remote regions of Siberia, are particularly interesting. The Russian geographer, D.M. Lebedev, in

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And, finally, two quotations describing the Livonian-Russian frontier in the XVIIth century: (Lestv. & Liv. \State Archives, Venice\ see p. 166, 177-178.)

"The road had to be made through a 300 mile wide forest, thick with huge trees, since it was 180 years ago that the last army had passed through it. So they (i.e. King Stephen's army) proceeded forward, 8000 men being assigned the road making task, and they so filled the forest with their cries and with the noise of tree falling, that it seemed the whole sky would fall upon them. In this forest they came upon several marshes, some of them 10 miles long - these the army crossed on bridges, but the roads were so bad that it happened that sometimes 2000 men had to roll quiting a cannon. Finally, after many difficulties and great endeavours, the army came out of the forest and found itself in the fields of Moscow which were well kept and sown with various crops. On the 28th day of August, the army stopped in front of Vladimir, this name meaning large town. \i.e. Velikiye Luki. A. Sp. \

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his book, Ocherki po istoriyi geografii Rossii v 15.i 16 vekov /Moscow, 1956/, describes, for instance, a volok system in the year 1601 (p. 106-108). But Kerner, whom we have often quoted, furnishes descriptions referring to 1640 and 1668. The latter also gives some very descriptive drawings, comparable, if we like, to the maps drawn by Olavus Magnus, representing Russian merchants dragging their boats, and, a little further on, in the act of making them.

X

After reading in the numerous early Russian chronicles the passages particularly referring to the voloks, the careful observer may be inclined to draw some general conclusions. He gets the definite impression that the line drawn by the volok and its surrounding area represents a border-line; this is also often quite clearly expressed. The volok region is like a no-man's land, the nec plus ultra of neighbouring and conflicting spheres of influence, a limit to administrative ambition and rivalry to be tacitly respected. The voloks have been the theatres of fierce battles, but it is there also that peace treaties have been signed and ambassadors received. Here I want, once more, to draw the reader's attention to Kochin's book, in which the problem of voloks, also as a regional administrative problem, is often treated.

For a long time now, Latvian and Lithuanian historians have sensed that the establishing of the Eastern ethnical frontier of the Baltic peoples is an unsolved problem full of intuitions and unknown quantities. It has never given them peace and lately there have been renewed attempts at reaching some clarity. The former interpretations of the Baltic Germans cannot satisfy them, for instance, those of F. Stern, because they mainly go out to prove that the eastern frontier of Old Livonia as well

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as of modern Latvia is established and fixed by German expansion, i.e. that without the help of the Germans, the Russians would have spread out much further westward. What I have to say in this respect, I would like to be considered as a working hypothesis, for, in order to formulate questions of this nature precisely, one should be able to study them on the spot, not thousands of miles away, from books and articles. On the basis of Kerner's enthusiastic appreciation of old Solovjov's political-geographic visions concerning the ethnical and political influence of Russian rivers and their basins on the local populations, I have looked up these judgements of the Russian historian, and I must say, not in vain. I can join Kerner in his appreciation of Solovjov: "one of the best accounts of the influence of rivers, portages, and ostrogs on early Russian history",/p. 14, n. 6/.

I have long been puzzled by the question why the great Slav expansion, in a greater or lesser measure, connected with the 6th and 7th centuries A.D. (However much the modern neo-Russian, hypernationalist historians may struggle against this theory) did by-pass the Baltic in historical times, (about prehistoric times we have the theories and chronology of K. Buga) following an easterly direction from the Lovat waterway, and reaching ever further out in the wooded and watery plains, especially the basin of the Volga and its affluents. Why was this same expansion able to create a whole line of noteworthy political entities - Russian principalities, in an easterly direction, but unable to create any political formation west of the Lovat, that is, of the region of the voloks? This is approximately speaking, naturally, for geography is not geometry. Why were the Krivichi, these same Krivichi, who were able to circumvent and conquer the all-important centre of Smolensk-Gnezdovo, so unsuccessful on their way westward from the rivers Lovat and Velikaja?

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Independent of the relations between tribes and nations and their individual attitudes, nature itself seems to have favoured an expansion and colonization of the Krivichi and their southern neighbours, eastward. We have quite a categorical formula in this respect from Trautman: "The central basin of the river Dniepr together with the basins of the Pripet and Desna, must be considered the point of departure of the history of the eastern Slav colonization." In order to make this assertion geographically understandable, let us reread a descriptive passage of a Russian historian of the old school (P.V. Golubovski: Istoriija Smolenskoj zemli do nachala XV stol., Kijev, 1895, p. 8), observing the respective map. He says:

"It is clear that some tribe is unrestrainably striving eastward and north-eastward of the Dniepr's great water system towards the equally great Volga water system. This direction is established by nature itself: the course of the rivers and the definite lines of the hills, as well as the first colonizer's impulse to get out of the impenetrable marshes of the south-west and reach the higher and drier regions of the central Russian altitudes."

This would not have been possible along the Desna river-bed because of its marshes, so it follows that the central spot of Smolensk, on the crossing point of two waterways, is the natural point of departure for any colonization northward and eastward. Let us also remember E. Reclus:

"From the geographical point of view, (Lithuania) is a well defended entity, because the Niemuna basin, similar to the Daugava basin, is like a frontier against the Dniepr regions: almost impenetrable forests, marshes, large as whole provinces, but eastward (of this entity) there are groups of hills dividing the waters which flow towards the Niemuna, the Dniepr, and the Daugava."

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Here are some illustrations from old Russian chronicles, in the guise of an argumentum ex silentio, if nothing else. In the chronicle

of Laurentius, I 52, we find the following passage: /sub anno 6496,
resp. 988/

"And Vladimir did say: it is not a good thing that there should be so few towns around Kiev. And he began to build towns on the shores of the river Desna, on the Ostera (an affluent of the Desna, A.Sp.), on Trubezha (an eastern affluent of the Desna, A.Sp.), on the Sula (an eastern affluent of the Desna), on the Stugna (a western affluent of the Desna, A.Sp.), and the best men from the tribes of the Slavs, Krivichi, Chudi, and Vjatichi were chosen to build these towns, and he let them abide in these, for there was a war on against the Pechenegs, and, fighting them, he overcame them."

And the best men of the Baltic tribes, why were they not chosen as well? For the simple reason, probably, that they were out of reach, or that the relations between them and the lord of Kiev were none too good. In other words: either they were fighting the Russians on their own, as these same chronicles will tell us a little later, or they had withdrawn from the Russians, into other regions, guided by a different trend in history.

The Balts do not appear in other passages of the same chronicles either, for instance in those referring to the year 848 or to the years 880-890 /Hipat., II, 235, and Laurentius, I, 10/, the first dealing with the insurrection of the Krivichi, Slavi, Chudi, Meryia, against the Varangians, the second narrating Oleg's march against Smolensk with an army composed of Varangians, Chudi, Slavs, Meryia, Ves, Krivichi; afterwards, this army is directed against Lubech.

In Solovjov's simply worded tale we can perhaps find some key to the understanding of our ancient history. Without exaggeration, his definitions, when pondered in their ultimate historical meaning, have inspiring force:

"The Slav tribes in their movement from South to North, did not settle anywhere on any sea shore: coming towards and meeting these slow-moving Slavs, we see the brisk movements of the Varangians. The Slavs

"And Vladimir did say: It is not a good thing that there should be so few towns around Kiev. And he began to build towns on the shores of the river Dniepr, on the Ostera (an affluent of the Dniepr, A.S.P.), on the Trubecha (an eastern affluent of the Dniepr, A.S.P.), on the Sula (an eastern affluent of the Dniepr, A.S.P.), on the Stugna (a western affluent of the Dniepr, A.S.P.), and the best men from the tribes of the Slavs, Krivichi, Chud, and Viatichi were chosen to build these towns, and he set them aside in these, for there was a war on against the Pechenegs, and, lighting them, he overcame them."

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succeeded in fortifying themselves on the site where the Volchova flows out of Lake Ilmen, the actual spot of Novgorod. But they did not succeed in fortifying the other important point where the Volchova flows into Lake Ilmen.

...The principality of Novgorod is a region of lakes, whose centre can be considered Lake Ilmen. It follows that the natural frontiers of the principality must coincide with the river systems of Lake Ilmen, Lake Ladoga, and other neighbouring lakes. In fact, we see the frontiers of the principality of Novgorod are formed by the voloks dividing the river systems of the principality from those of the Volga, the Dniepr, and the Daugava. These frontiers are naturally approximate.

...The frontiers mainly follow the line of voloks, which, we must straightaway add, have nowhere else the importance they have in Russia, for here they even take the place of mountains. The southern border of the principality of Novgorod dividing it from the regions of Smolensk and Polock, was a volok, dividing the water systems of the Ilmen and the Daugava.

...The regions of Daugava and Polock had the same fate as the principality of Novgorod. The Slav tribes occupied the upper and central basins of the Daugava. Their slow movements were unable to reach its estuary and the shores of the Baltic Sea inhabited by the local inhabitants who did submit to the Russian Prince, but did not submit to the Russian people.

...The Dniepr divided its history with other rivers: although its shores were full of Russian boats from time immemorial, it became a possession of the Russian State only beginning with the reign of Catherine II."

So we have that the volok regions are the meeting ground of the principalities of Novgorod, Smolensk-Polock, and of the unnamed, i.e. Baltic tribes in their already existing or forming political entities which have not been mentioned by these foreign texts, but whose existence is documented by the defence systems of their ancient castle-mounds with sufficient evidence.

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A few decades after Solovjov, Barsov, after carefully and scrupulously studying the place names of relevant maps, comes to some conclusions regarding the ethnical frontier between the Slavs and the Balts, which we would do well to take into account even three quarters of a century after the publication of the last edition, /Ocherki Russkoi Istorieskoi Geografii. Geografiya Nachalnoi-Nestorovoi-Letopisi. 2 ed. Warsaw, 1885./ Barsov's analysis, as he says in his title, concentrates on Nestor's chronicle, that is, the oldest Russian chronicle. This chronicle represents, as we know, a sort of resume, an account of the expansion of the Eastern Slavs at a time when the fluid "waves" of moving peoples are beginning to harden into political formations. The withdrawal of the Balts under Slav pressure is an already established fact and the dimensions and, sometimes, the forms of this withdrawal are witnessed by many a place name - as a previous student so cleverly writes: "In the geographical denominations," he writes, "we hear the old language. This is the first proof of the existence of a nation."

On being acquainted with the dwelling-places of the Krivichi, (and they inhabit the upper course of the Volga, the upper course of the Daugava, and the upper course of the Dniepr) we at once get a feeling of the future great importance of this tribe in the formation of Russian history: their keeping to the "north-western and hillier part of the water system" /p. 178/, this decides their role in the future Russian State, also following Ratzel's formula /Politische Geographie/ according to which the political formation of great states begins from the periphery, and, I shall add, from the outskirts where, because of a continuous struggle with the neighbours, the idea of nationality is sooner and more intensely crystallized.

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The theoreticians of anthropogeography unfailingly attribute this fact to their thesis that the beginnings of many a great state are to be found in their geographical and ethnical periphery and the beginnings of this process of formation in some border-zone centre of resistance. We can give many examples of this: in the case of Germany (Prussia), Italy (Piedmont), Spain (Asturia and Old Castille), etc. We Balts get great "geopolitical satisfaction" in this way; the two great Central and Eastern European Empires, the German and the Russian, more or less originated in our periphery, have been trying to "grind" us for centuries, but have not quite yet succeeded.

The significance of the Krivichi is demonstrated, says Barsov:

"by the Russian-Slav work of colonization of formerly non-Russian lands. The Russian-Slavs were given the possibility of submitting wide regions of north-eastern Finland to the Slavic world. Their colonization movement went mainly in this direction, meeting powerful opposition in the western Chudi tribes, who showed greater strength and independence than their fellow tribesmen, as well as in the warlike Lithuanians."

By the Lithuanians, the author here obviously designates the Balts generally, as was often done in his time. As for the lack of warlike qualities in the eastern Finns, a student of our day, Pashkewicz has quite a different opinion on the matter, also based on the study of ancient texts, which corrects radically the "imperialistic viewpoint" on the Russianisation of the Russian plain.

In pp. 76-77, Barsov, defining the ethnical frontier between the Yatvingian abodes and the Esthonian provinces, writes:

"North of the Daugava the ethnical frontier coincides with the basin of the river Velikaja on one side and on the other the basins of the small affluents of the right bank of the Daugava, which flow into the Gulf of Riga and the lake of Peipus."

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The author refers to the times of the so called Nestor's chronicle.

On pp. 178 to 183, the author elaborates his thesis in detail. The affluents of the Velikaja should have non-Russian names (Alula, Kudna, Ujuta, Issa, Utroja, Kukva, etc. I do not possess the latest map of Estonia and transcribe the names such as they are given by the author. A.Sp.) Even the name of Velikaja should sound like a translation; all this should demonstrate that a different people once inhabited the basin of this river.

"Here the Krivic colonization might have reached the watershed between the basin of the Velikaja and the basins of those rivers which throw themselves into the lower part of the Daugava and into the Gulf of Riga."

Here the author gives a list of place names. There are no names, he adds, in which we can find the root kriv-

"this region is rich in places bearing names that remind us of border-lands, and frontier fortifications: follow examples..."

"The lake-basin connecting one limit of the Velikaja basin with the basin of the Daugava was inhabited since ancient times by the branch of the Lithuanian tribes, the Letgallians, and maybe the Livs; this region attracted Russian colonization very early on. It is quite possible that this region should have extended from the upper part of the Velikaja, from the Oepochka and Velikoluki zones to the Daugava, in a south westerly direction, touching the lakes Sebez and Osveja and the Drisa region, as far as the sharp turning of the Daugava to the North /near Daugavpils/ where the villages of Kreslava or Kreslavka, on the Daugava, and Great-Krivin north of Daugavpils, are actually situated..."

"South of the Daugava and of the turning mentioned above, we find Russian dwelling places side by side with purely Lithuanian ones, alternating in the regions of the Viliya and Niemunas, as far as the watershed which divides the two above mentioned rivers from the Pripet basin."

We can add from our side to the analytic remarks of Barsov some new, very convincing data. The Livonian so called Reimchronik /the end of the 13th century/ gives us, in connection with Order's attack against

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Izborsk and Pskow, the ancient, local name of the Russian "Great River" /Velikaja/, namely Mode /Scriptores rerum livonicarum I 559/. It is the Latvian Mude, meaning "the quick one." The same name is repeated in Russow's chronicle /1584/: by der Beke tho Muddes /SS. rer. livon. II 93/. Cf. also Stalsans, p. 57.

This is what toponymy looked like in the year 1885. Our collection of local place names has made quite some progress since; I do not know whether it is the same on the Russian side. In time, let us hope, all these problems will be taken up again, with the help of more modern and precise methods of work.

Lately, a modern student, Col. R. Osis, has approached the problem from the same angle as described above, /The eastern frontiers of the Latvian tribes in the 13th century, Ceļa Zīmes N.2, 1949/ moreover doing this from his personal experience of military actions in World War II. I studied his article with the help of a map found in the Old Russian Encyclopedia, t. XII, p. 560-61. In order that the reader might see for himself what a host of ideas is evoked by the line of Latvian castle-mounds from Sebez to Polock and Vitebsk, I shall quote only one passage (p. 103):

"On the Northern shore of the Daugava, north of our frontier, as if on a line continuing from the river Disna in a northerly direction, there is a line of castle mounds with a clear tendency to dominate all the marsh crossings, river fords, lake straits, through which passes the road from East to West. This system avails itself to the utmost of all natural obstacles, and this seems to prove that it was not erected by compulsion, but was a carefully selected and connected unity serving the same end."

In other words, this is a continuation of the system of castle-mounds already established by our archeologists, see my H.o.L., p. 95. The

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castle-mound further mentioned by Col. Osis, on the Neshcherdo Lake peninsula, finds confirmation in this same Encyclopedia, t. XL, p. 959, where it is said that on this spot a castle burnt down in 1579 during the Great Livonian War used to stand.

K. Stalshans, in his book The fates of the eastern regions of Latvia and Lithuania, Chicago, 1958, so full of new historical evidence, strengthens the above mentioned tale with wider and more documented evidence:

p. 423

"The whole of the regions of the Drisa and the Sebez, and part of those of the OPOCHKA and OSTROV, belong to Latvian ethnographic territory. /see map on p. 434/. Their appurtenance to the Latvian inhabited territories is demonstrated, as has already been established before, by excavations, by the opinion of Russian historians, by the acknowledgement of Russian official Institutions up to the 19th century, by Church statistics of the middle of the 19th century, by Latvian place names, and by the news of the border zone inhabitants at the time of Latvian independence. As to the place names, they are those of the bigger inhabited centres and parishes only. Still unexplored remain the names of villages, rivers, streams, lakes, and hills, the study of which would bring still greater clarity. During the Latvian independence, we were not given the possibility to have a look beyond our frontiers, but at the epoch of the czars we lacked the necessary interest to do so."

I will add that at the time of the Latvian-USSR peace treaty on August 11, 1920, there were rumours of protest among the Latvian people that these zones had been left to the Russians. But evidently, those responsible for the signing of the treaty were not able to obtain more than the frontier across the Zilupe. So the zones up to the river Velikaja, which also bears an ancient Baltic name, Mude, remained in Russian hands. These regions very soon were cleared of their Latvian inhabitants who were deported to a central part of Russia.

And there is more: the same author, owing to carefully collected

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news, affirms that in early centuries the Latvian population extended as far as Polock, on the right bank of the Daugava. /p. 435 and further/.

And now let us mention the observations of a well known Slavic scholar which will also open certain chronological perspectives to us. /V. Kiparsky, Chronologie des relations slavobaltiques et slavofinnoises, Revue d'Etudes Slaves, 1948, t. 24, p. 29-30, and 46/:

"In studying this problem /i.e. the one mentioned in the title/ I was surprised by the obvious parallelism of Baltic-Slav, and Finnish-Slav relations. We can easily enumerate some scores of words in the Baltic-Finn, Latvian, and Lithuanian languages, having the same Slav origin. This fact is easily explained. Linguistic relations...reflect after all the same historic process: the Russian advance towards the south eastern shores of the Baltic, a movement begun probably around the 6th or 7th centuries and ended today with the complete Russification of the straits of Karelia and Eastern Prussia."

And further on:

"It is ascertained that the earliest relations are not those of Russians and Lithuanians, as might be expected, but those of Russians and Finns /follow linguistic proofs/. This fact can be understood if we admit that the protorussian tribes in their expansion northward followed first the rivers Lovat and Volchova as far as Lake Ladoga, and the river Velikaja as far as Lake Pskow and Lake Peipus... Only after having reached the Finns, or in any case the Esthonians and Vots, these protorussian tribes would have begun their march westward, along the Daugava, which took them to Latvia: in the XIIth century there is already a Russian colony in Koknese...These same tribes would have reached the Lithuanian territory several generations later. This explanation can be founded on the hypothesis that the Polock-Vitebsk-Smolensk region, which, according to all historians in unison, was populated by Balts before the coming of the Russians, was only scarcely populated; /une population clairsemee/ otherwise the Russians could not have reached the estuary of the river Lovat without having to cross the Baltic zones..."

This is not the only passage mentioning Baltic "islands" in the midst of alien populations. /see further/.

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So then we have: une population clairesemée. This is just what I want to talk about further. Naturally, all I can do is to formulate the problems and respective opinions, and not resolve matters. The coinciding of Kiparsky's hypothesis with Barsov's acute observation is also significant. See his 75.l.p.:

"The Slavs occupied the upper part of the Daugava, southern regions of the lake district, and the south-western part of the Volga-Oka. These places had previously been inhabited by non-Slav populations. In these districts Nestor's chronicle finds the Slavs already closely grouped and settled inhabitants. But, on the other side in the above mentioned territories, there are vestiges of an early colonization. Worthy of note is the fact that non-Slav names predominate in the most important water-courses, lakes, etc. and in the oldest abodes, of which there are very few. At the same time, secondary rivers /affluents, streams, lakes/ as well as the majority of hand-made abodes /rukozdannich mestnostej/ - bear purely Slav names. This is a clear sign that the earlier inhabitants occupied and civilised only the shores of important water courses, those best fitted for communications and livelihood, and that the said inhabitants were few in number. The Slav newcomers, on the other hand, overcoming them in number and in initiative /really also initiative? A.Sp./ not only pushed the old inhabitants out of their former positions, but, keeping the original names, settled also by secondary rivers and lakes, giving them Slav names."

The above quotation, I repeat, refers to the regions of Polock around the Daugava, the lake district of the Novgorod region...the upper parts of the Dniepr and the Oka.

The Balts, as far as we can make out, were never very productive demographically. In any case, they were numerically always a minority in front of the Slavs, already beginning with the times of Ptolemy. Many of their troubles can be explained historically by this empirical factor, including their centuries-long retreat before the Slavs, ceteris paribus. One of the most outstanding examples of this fact, which can be checked historically, is the fate of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

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Many of their troubles can be explained historically by this empirical factor, including their centuries-long retreat before the Slavs, certainly garden. One of the most outstanding examples of this fact, which can be checked historically, is the fate of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

Paskevic, p. 249, writes thus:

"The subject Slav territories were never colonized by the Lithuanians...This purely mechanical acquisition of land, however, suffered from the inherent weakness...The vastness of the Grand Duchy rendered impossible the settlement by Lithuanians of even a small part of these enormous areas. Towards the end of the 15th century, the Slavonic lands comprised about nine-tenth of the territory of the Lithuanian State, etc."

Lowmiański, on his side, operating with 14th century data, giving a certain statistic insight, reaches the following figures: Witold Wielki Ksiaze Litewski, 1930, p. 10:

"Ethnographic Lithuania, counting the local Polish population consisted of some 200,000 inhabitants at the most, the Slav population being 4 to 5 times superior."

So Ethnographic Lithuania, together with Black Russia and the Polesje districts, named Black because of their dark forests, and the Minsk districts, were like a populated island, encircled on all sides by a ring of virgin forests and impenetrable marshes. This same Professor has also tried to calculate approximately the number of ancient Prussians /The Ancient Prussians, 1936/ - he reaches the number of 170,000 in pre-Teutonic times /p.44/. For the sake of comparison, he gives some figures, equally approximate, for Latvia in the 13th century /145,000/, and for Lithuania /170,000/. Prussia should have 4 inhabitants to the sq. mile, Latvia 2.5, Lithuania, 3.

These data seem to coincide with Dunsdorf's data referring to the Duchy of Courland in the 16th century: 135,000 inhabitants. /Contrib. of the Baltic Univers. Pinneberg, 1947, nr. 49/. In the same strain of thought as described above, this passage of the late archeologist of ex-Konigsberg, C. Engel, can also be fitted: /Der Kampf um die Baltischen

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Lande in vor-und frühgeschichtlicher Zeit. In Jomsburg, "Volker und Staaten im Osten und Norden Europas" 1942, I-II, 95-96/:

In 187 "The Slav occupation /he writes/ which can best be described as a quiet infiltration /stille Unterwanderung/ finally changed the population of the Ukraine and the regions of Western and Northern Russia, but certainly in the 8th century the Slav expansion seems to have stopped at the actual eastern frontiers of the Baltic States. Only the new element of German leaders /Fuhrerschicht/, i.e. the Russian Varangians, started it again in the 11th and 12th centuries."

Let us not quibble about the geographic precision, let us forget the Fuhrerschicht of World War II, but let us take into account the inspiring "Quiet infiltration."

Let us also note that Russian "imperialism" is much older than was usually supposed in the times of Ivan IV. Paszkiewicz /p.292/ writes that Jaroslav the Wise, having understood the great importance of waterways, endeavoured also to exploit them in a western direction. Also, Stender Petersen /p. 203/ has to stress that "le royaume russe sous le roi Jaroslav /1005-1054/ manifestait un expansionisme véhément vers la mer Baltique, et les sources nordiques nous apprennent que le jarl Sigurd, l'oncle du futur roi Olaf Tryggvason, était le percepteur des impôts du roi russe en Estonie."

Let us begin by mentioning the most recent studies and then stop a little longer at the chronologically earlier writings, in which, little by little, the part played by the Baltic, earlier, i.e. Baltic factor in the events connected with the crossingpoint of the great water ways, i.e. the Saolansk-Guzdovo "knot", comes to light.

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GNEZDOVO KURGANS AND MOUNDS

In 1874, during the work in course for the installation of the new Riga-Orel railway, was dug up, purely by accident, one of the most extensive burial grounds of Europe, one of the most important and determining witnesses in the ancient history of Eastern Europe. The excavations carried out so far, that is, up to 1949, have brought to light much various material and created as many problems, mainly concerned with the centuries of the Varangian infiltration, i.e. the 9th and 10th centuries. But the preceding centuries too have their share and since the fates of the ancient Balts are included in them, it would be our interest and duty to examine the problems surrounding the burial ground of Gnezdovo in the light of modern research.

When the reader will have glanced at the sequel of quotations and deductions, however sketchy and incomplete, he will have to come to the conclusion, I think, that the researches carried out are still very incomplete, to say the least, and that, above all, this work is overshadowed by clouds of dogmatic controversy, making the clarification of these important problems even more difficult. And yet, we cannot bypass these problems and the controversies woven around them, since they constitute one of the road-marks to the understanding of ancient baltic history, such as historians of the last decades are trying to establish it, also with the help of linguistic research (place names).

Let us begin by mentioning the most recent studies and then stop a little longer at the chronologically earlier writings, in which, little by little, the part played by the third, earlier, i.e. Baltic factor in the events connected with the crossing-point of the great water ways, i.e. the Smolensk-Gnezdovo "knot", comes to light.

GNEZDOVO KURGANS AND MOUNDS

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The newest book examining the problems of the Gnezdovo burial ground is: The towns of ancient Russia by M. Tikhomirov, published in 1959. The author examines in detail the connections of Smolensk and of the burial ground, but regarding the questions of interest to us he is either silent, usually beginning his treatise about the 10th century, or he repeats the line of archeological research established by the communist scholars.

P. 28-30 "Consequently, Gnezdovo was a cemetery, and not the town. Smolensk was the town. (Mainly the 10th century is in question).

The truth of this will be tested by the spade. Meanwhile; the Gnezdovo barrows offer an opportunity of observing Ancient Rus urban life. The amazing number of rich burials containing weapons leads us to presume that the higher orders were very powerful in 10th century Smolensk. Sizov is quite right in stressing that there is nothing to prove Varangian predominance in Gnezdovo, although he notes obvious traces of Scandinavian interments. There is every indication that the bulk of Smolensk's population in the 10th century was made up of military men: the prince's druzhina and his servants.

The Gnezdovo handicraft industries, mostly iron and earthenware, have their own features. The iron articles were locally made, and 'the treatment of metal ornaments reveals a high level of technical skill' /Sizov/. In addition to blacksmiths, Gnezdovo had bronze- and silver-smiths, and its pottery industry was of great importance. Etc.

P. 13 The slanderous theories describing Eastern Slavs as a wild people whose culture originated only after the appearance of the Normans in the North or the Khazars in the south, naturally induce us to find out who built the first Rus cities. The overwhelming majority of Russian cities bear Slav names...

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/cf. the chapter: Why towns arose,
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p.406-407 "The fact that the Varangians took a particular view of Ladoga is revealed in the Scandinavian sagas which often mention Aldeigaborg.

These sagas describe Ladoga as a strongpoint of the Varangians who came from overseas...their tombs or tumuli are alike to the 'tumuli near the town of Birka', so writes the specialist on these questions Ravdonikas. But however, 'there is no doubt that the earliest population in Ladoga consisted of Eastern Slavs.' And 'Even Ladoga could not have been built by the Scandinavians, because their sources have another name /Aldeigaborg/ for it.'

Following this line of thought, we would have that the northern Gardarika could not be on Russian ground, because it has a different name. And,

p. 397 ... The Swedish feudals, who so often visited the shores of Finland... were never able to penetrate past Lake Ladoga into the Novgorod area."

No matter what the ancient chronicles might tell in this respect!

This being already the aspect given to questions relating to Lake Ladoga by the communist scholars, what Baltic "revelations" could we expect from Gnezdovo? The more so since on p. 382 we read about Polock: "The possessions of the Polotsk princes stretch~~xx~~ almost up to the Gulf of Riga, where the Russian ruled towns of Gertsike (sic) and Kukenois stood on the western Dvina." The author is evidently oblivious to the polemic concerning the "russianism" of Jersika, and the fact that in 1106, these same Princes of Polock were heavily beaten by the Semigallians, has also been "forgotten" by the author, so familiar with Russian chronicles.

The various volumes of the Russian Great Encyclopedia , (as we know, this Encyclopedia has, at times, had a dramatic history), naturally deal with the problem of interest to us. /The interrupted edition of 1930 is still fairly quiet in tone, it tries to count the kurgans /about 5000/ of which 1000 should be destroyed and 700 explored and it mentions the role of the Krivichi, without mentioning any others, and stresses the vast network of Smolensk's commercial connections in those early centuries.

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In 1949, as we are told by the second edition of this same Encyclopedia, was begun the systematic exploration of the burial ground of Gnezdovo, led by Avdusin, who also composed the "protocol" of the excavations. The tone of this protocol and of his article in the Encyclopedia is very firm, with a tendency to be conclusive. In this region should have been found the earliest Slav antiquities - the long kurgans of the 6th and 7th centuries, family tombs of the Krivichi tribe; but in the town itself, the remains of an inhabited spot of the 6th-8th century. "The burial ground of Gnezdovo situated west of the town should be the tombs of the inhabitants of the town, soldiers and druzhiniks of the time of early feudality." Constantine, Emperor of Byzantium, should mention them already in 865. The most important things found in the excavations would be arms /swords, lances, helmets, scabbards for arrows/ and Arab and Byzantine coins, scales, ornaments, silver ornaments for the drinking vessels made of aurochs' horns. There should also be an inscription referring to comestible mustard. "Against the upholders of the Norman theory, we must say that there are only two Scandinavian tombs at Gnezdovo, and not rich ones at that, and all other tombs belong to soldiers of Slav tribes, i.e. Krivichi." The author also mentions the flourishing commerce existing with Central Asia, the Ural regions, and Sweden.

Since what we have quoted so far is in contrast, very definite contrast to the results of earlier studies, which we will read further, one can easily imagine what has taken place in the sharp quarrels of the living over the dead, as one might say in the spirit of Leonardo da Vinci.

The name of Tretjakov appears already in our chapter concerning the Daugava, i.e. the western Dvina in Russian. This man has been assigned the double task of annihilating and making ridiculous two basic theories which so far have dominated the field of Eastern-European early history:

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the theory of Slav expansion, which is to him "sadly notorious", and the theory of the political, administrative, and economic influence of the Varangians in the evolution of the Slav tribes. He proceeds to do this first by endeavouring to demonstrate that the ancestors of the actual Slavs inhabited the sites they occupy from time immemorial, and secondly, by minimizing and practically annulling the influence of the Varangians, very often simply by ignoring the facts that do not fit into his picture. These are questions of early Slavic history and we will not spend much time over them. What interests us directly is to establish, what, in the light of such opinions, would be the aspect of the Baltic-Slav ethnical-political frontier. Quoting Tretjakov: "The Latvian Lithuanian tribal tombs and burial grounds extend eastward, no further (the underlining is mine, A. Sp.) than the middle of the Daugava river-bed, embracing the Niemuna river-bed." (Roughly as in our day. A. Sp.) East of this line Tretjakov places Slavs-Krivichi, beginning already with the first years of our era. (p. 107) or from the third century A.D. (p. 229). The relative map in A. Mongait's book, which I am about to quote, (p. 323), gives us as little light regarding the question of the Latvian-Russian border-line. All towns are "drevnerusski gorod" to him, including Novgorod, and any Slav movements in these regions and in those unquiet times are absolutely out of the question. This same gentleman, in his lecture in Tartu in 1952, expressed himself thus for the enlightenment of the Baltic archeologists: "The lecturer proves that the Eastern Slav tribes mentioned in Povestj Vremennich Let, formed themselves, not in the VIIIth and IXth centuries, as has been earlier supposed, but in the first part of the first year thousand of our era... The culture of the Eastern-Slav tribes is full of outstanding old local traditions, which

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"Kratkiya Soobshcheniya o dokladach i polevich issledovaniyach Instituta Istoriyi Materialnoi Kulturi, XLII 1952, p. 4.

We can easily find the motive of communist archeology's drastic deviation from the normal course, and it belongs to one of the saddest pages of our modern civilization. In 1956 in London a book was published: Archeology in the U.S.S.R., by the emigre archeologist Mikhail Miller. Some extracts from this book speak for themselves without calling for any commentaries. In the years 1930-1934, a dramatic break took place in Russian archeology, a real "night of St. Bartholomew," when many archeologists were arrested, deported, etc., bolshevic fashion. The remaining and newly acquired ones were given the following instructions on how to write in the true party spirit:

p.80-81 "...the thesis was put forward that the Crimean Goths did not belong to the Germanic tribe at all and did not come from somewhere else, but were formed on the spot, in the Crimea."

This task was assigned to the well known Ravdonikas, the idea being that of "blotting out" of history the movements of the Goths in Russia.

The Vikings-Varangians were to undergo a similar process of annihilation.

p. 83 "... In many places along the Baltic Sea, particularly Ladoga Staraya Russa, along the Upper Volga, along the Dnepr down to Chernigov and in other places, finds had long been known of burials and objects of the so called Scandinavian or Varangian type. During the struggle to establish Soviet material culture, all this former Scandinavian culture was proclaimed to be Slavic, and Swedish archeologists began to be attacked because they continued to regard this culture as Scandinavian and because on this basis they proclaimed a number of old Russian cities...to have been Scandinavian colonies at a certain period.

p.135-136 ...At the same time, as part of the struggle against "homeless cosmopolitanism," there was a denial of any influence whatsoever on the Russian Slavs and on the formation of the first Russian state by the Goths, the Normans, and Byzantium. All the archeological remains of these peoples, as well as any others that had existed on the territory of the European U.S.S.R. from the first to the tenth century A.D. were proclaimed to be remains of Slavic culture. The jewelry of the "Gothic style", including the digitate fibulae characteristic of the

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Gothic culture which were manufactured in the Black Sea region, were proclaimed "creations of Slavic masters". The objects of inlaid enamel from a manufacturing center of the Baltic region were also proclaimed Slav products. etc. /To compare, see also Vernadsky, Ancient Russia, p. 267 tabula: Finds of Scandinavian Antiquities in Russia/.

- p. 111 Finally: "Archeology... was given its basic mission: to direct all efforts and works towards the study of the 'genesis of the Eastern Slavs' in order to prove by archeological materials that the historical Slavs, as well as their prehistoric ancestors, were from time immemorial the inhabitants and masters of the territory of the European part of the U.S.S.R."

About this period of drastic changes in communist archeology, A. Mongait expresses himself thus in Archeology in the U.S.S.R., 1. ed. 1955, 2. ed. 1959, (the quotations are from the last one):

- p. 57 "The detached speculation that was characteristic of the 'Pokrowsky school' in history, was pursued in archeology by N.Y. Marr and his followers. An especially large number of such works appeared in the period between 1930 and 1934. The year 1934, when a decree of the Central Committee of the U.S.S.R. brought about a re-organization in historical science, was marked by a change in archeology as well. Most Archeologists took the path of concrete historical research. But long years were to pass before archeology finally freed itself from the harmful influence of Marr's so called 'new theory on language.'"

In the introduction and conclusion of his book we can read how the historians of the U.S.S.R. on orders from above, struggled with the theories of the once genial "Marr and what their revelations of 'concrete research' really look like confronted with the ever condemned 'bourgeois history.'" I must admit, however, in all humility, that Mongait's explanations have not made all this any clearer to me. And I do not seem to be the only one in the dark, since C.E. Black, whom I am about to quote, says very explicitly in p. 10 of his book that he has not been able to discover "precisely what is the Marxist interpretation of history."

Russia. p. 207 caption: finds of Scandinavian Antiquities in etc. To compare, see also Veresky, Ancient Russia, of the Baltic region were also proclaimed Slav products. The objects of this enamel from a manufacturing center Sea region, were proclaimed "creations of Slav masters". Gothic culture which were manufactured in the Black

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The very well known Swedish archeologist, Y. Arvedsson: La Suède
 at 1 Such being the attitude taken by Mongait, there is not much we can
 hope to find in his book regarding the problems of Gnezdovo. For instance:

P.332-333 "A furious dispute between the Normanists and their
 opponents went on in Russian gentry-bourgeois histori-
 tury, the graphy for nearly two centuries..."

But only Antinormanists convincingly refuted some of their points
 (i.e. of the Normanists) but could not correctly elucidate
 at the the problem as a whole."

Naturally Marxist historians are the only ones capable of elucidating any
 problem, and so we have that the Gnezdovo tombs are:

the Slavic. "the burials of representatives of the higher social strata
 - Russian druzhinniki, professional soldiers, who formed the
 nucleus of the army (druzhdina).

obviously ...Of the 700 Gnezdovo mounds that have been excavated
 only two contained unmistakable Norman burials. They
 p. 225 belonged to mercenary Scandinavian warriors who served
 in the Russian druzhdina, but did not form any considerable
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 free world. For the sake of complete objectivity, let us therefore have
 a look at the achievements of Russian history before the communist era,
 precisely in the field of our immediate interest. Afterwards, we will
 draw our conclusions.

Such being the attitude taken by Mingsait, there is not much we can hope to find in his book regarding the problems of Gnezdovo. For instance: P. 222-223 "A furious dispute between the Normans and their opponents went on in Russian gentry-bourgeoisie historical-graphy for nearly two centuries..."

Antinomians convincingly refused some of their points (i.e. of the Normans) but could not correctly elucidate the problem as a whole."

Naturally Marxist historians are the only ones capable of elucidating any problem, and so we have that the Gnezdovo tombs are:

"The burials of representatives of the higher social strata - Russian druzhinniki, professional soldiers, who formed the nucleus of the army (druzina)."

...Of the 700 Gnezdovo mounds that have been excavated only two contained unmistakable Norman burials. They belonged to mercenary Scandinavian warriors who arrived in the Russian druzhina, but did not form any considerable contingent in it and did not have any privileges or influence."

If anyone should be interested in going more deeply into this "re-organization" of history and archeology, as Mingsait calls it, they would find the book by C.E. Black: Rewriting Russian History - Soviet Interpretations of Russia's Past, London 1927, very helpful. The first chapter is especially important.

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The very well known Swedish archeologist, T. Arne, in: La Suède et l'Orient, Uppsala, 1914, p. 62, writes that the first implements of Scandinavian origin were dug up on the west coast of Kurzeme in the 8th century. "A little later, maybe already in the first part of the 9th century, the Swedes settle down on the south-eastern coast of Lake Ladoga. But only around 900 do we have news of a Swedish colony in Gnezdovo and at the same time of Swedish immigrants in the guberniya of Jaroslav and Vladimir." Arne has, as yet, no news of Balts, for him there are only two factors in the problems concerning Gnezdovo: the Scandinavian and the Slavic. A. Brim /Putj iz varjag v greki, *Izvestija Akad. Nauk SSSR*, nr. 2, 1931. Otd obscestv. nauk 1931/, follows the same line of thought, obviously just before the "great revision of Russian history".

p. 223 "the old town, old Smolensk or Milinitska, as it was called by Constantine Porphyrogenitus, was situated 12 km. west of the Smolensk of our day, on the spot of the actual village of Gnezdovo.

(The author adds that Smolensk is to be found only once in Scandinavian sources under the name of Smalizku, cf. Rafn. *Antiquité* .II 455. A.Sp.)

This was an extremely important knot of communications whose development was facilitated by a whole number of factors /i.e. tradesmen's caravans from all directions. A.Sp./ Starting with 1874, the burial mounds disclosed many finds dating back to the 9th and 10th centuries, mainly of Scandinavian origin, but some also of oriental origin /the well known Russian archeologist, Spicin, is here mentioned as an authority on the subject/. From all this we must deduce that this inhabited site played an important part in Russian-Scandinavian commercial relations around the year 900."

Also very noteworthy is the book of the Russian historian, J.V. Gotje, Zelezniy vek v. Vostocnoi Evrope. It was published in 1930 by the State Printing Press and was also used as a text book for schools. It stands on the very border-line of the two ideologies, the old and the new, as a summary and a monument to the achievements of Russian history

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in the previous years. The author of this book was also one of those who was personally to suffer during the years of the "reorganization of Russian history," (Black, op. cit., p.8). I think the significance of Prof. Gotje's work will be best brought to light by comparing it with A. Mongait's book, already at its second edition in 1959 (see above), translated into English with the obvious intent of making the western world familiar with the new achievements of Marxist history in the last 25 - 30 years, i.e., during the new ideological era.

Not a specialist in archaeology, I cannot pass judgment on its development, its methods and achievements during those years, but as regards the general historical-philological approach to the study of Eastern European ancient history, the work of the Marxist porte-parole, i.e. Mr. Mongait, is certainly no progress in the direction of objective research, but is, on the contrary, a worthy representative of Russian imperialistic oppression and dogmatic intolerance. The author seems to be physiologically unable to write more than a few pages without running down the achievements of "bourgeois history" or proclaiming the greatness of "his own." However, he masters a little self-restraint at the conclusion of his introduction; for the sake of the historians of the free world, he writes in a quieter tone.

If in Gotje's book we find many interesting and clever chapters concerning not only the states of the Khazars and Bulgarians of the Volga, but also the Lithuanians /under this denomination were included the Balts generally/ and the Vikings-Varangians, Mongait treats such "exotic" subjects only in a few meaningless phrases. This is even more noteworthy when considered that Gotje had to use, in our case, data which had not yet had time to be perfected by the respective "local"

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schools - whereas for the communist writer these schools simply do not exist - cannot exist. The great movements of the Slavs, beginning with the 7th century, the driving back of the Balts in a north-easterly direction, the contribution of the Normans in the founding of the Slavic states, the victorious march of the Latvian tribes against the Livi in Courland and Livonia, in these times of resettlement, the meaning of the old amber routes, all these subjects are completely taboo to the communist writer, since they speak against the line of thought established by his party.

Also, the question of Gnezdovo is treated by Professor Gotje almost similarly to the quotation we shall read further on, that is, bringing in the Baltic element (p. 209 and others).

From the latest opinions of foreign historians concerning the problem of Gnezdovo, I shall quote only two, for the sake of general information. H. Paszkiewicz, The Origin of Russia, New York, 1954, p. 265:

"There are many different opinions as to the ethnic allegiance of the dead whose graves have been found at Gnezdovo. The inventory of the graves is the principal basis from which inferences can be drawn. Certain archeologists think that these are graves of Slavonic-Krivichian warriors with an undefined proportion of Norsemen among them; /for his sources the author quotes the communist archeologists, Artsikhovskiy and Avdusin. A.Sp./ others believe them to be Varangians, with the addition of a local Slavonic population, chiefly of women/ Sources: T. Arne, E. Kletnova, F. Braun, S. Cross, and others/. The author sides with the latter."

The other author is the Czech Fr. Dvornik: The Slavs, their early history and civilization. Boston, 1956. This author, even though not as well informed about the ancient history of eastern Slavs as he is about the western and southern Slavs, as G. A. Manning points out in his article in the Ukrainian Quarterly, Dec., 1956, nevertheless also expresses his opinions regarding the former. He especially underlines the meaning of M. Vasmer's toponymic studies. In a note 193.l.p. he writes that "important philological material allows us to trace the presence of

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the Norsemen on the Baltic and on the Volga and the Dnieper with precision." The source of this affirmation turns out to be Vasmer's well known article: Wikingerspuren in Russland, printed in the Sitzungsberichte of the Acad. of Prussia. In this same series, however, are Vasmer's studies about the "Baltenspuren": "Die Ostgrenze der Baltischen Stämme", 1932. These the author has not deemed worthy of attention.

It will also be useful to quote a passage from an article by Bernstein-Kogan (see chapter concerning the Daugava) :

The most southern spot where a great deal of implements of Scandinavian type have been found is the famous burial ground of Gnezdovo, near Smolensk. Together with Scandinavian implements were found a great number of Arab coins and implements of oriental origin. Very few, on the other hand, of Byzantine origin. In this way, the border line between the commercial areas of Byzantium and Scandinavia can be established around Kiev and Smolensk. The implements of Scandinavian origin found in Gnezdovo had evidently been taken there by way of the Daugava, because Smolensk and its surroundings were situated in the area which gravitated around the Daugava.

Finally, we shall quote some passages from R. J. Kerner's book The Urge to the Sea... The Role of Rivers, Portages, Ostrogs, Monasteries and Furs. Univ. of California Press, 1946, p. 14 :

This route /i.e. near Hedeby/ from the Baltic to the North Sea across Jutland peninsula gave the Vikings direct access to western Europe. Thus the Vikings came to dominate an east-west commercial route which began in the Near East at Constantinople, led through Russia by the Dnieper-Western Dvina-Lovat' route to the Baltic, and then into the North Sea and western Europe. It is in the light of this sweeping view that we must conceive the impact of the Vikings on Europe during the ninth century.

This quotation calls to mind the famous text by Ibn Khorhadbeh describing commerce in the world of his days (9th century). The opinions of the communist historian, B.A. Ribakov, and of the Polish Arab scholar, T. Lewicki, coincide with the above quotation (see the last Źródła Arabskie do dziejów Słowiańszczyzny, I, 130).

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And one more quotation from Kerner's book:

p. 22 "An illustration of the military significance of the portage system of the Valdai Hills and the crossroads represented by Smolensk may be found in Napoleon's line of march to Moscow in 1812."/See map 2/.

And the enlightened man of the XXth century might also remember, in this connection, that in the vicinity of the burial ground of Gnezdovo is situated Katyn, the burial ground of 11,000 murdered Polish officers...

X

And now, let us return to our main theme and let us try to see how far historians have got in establishing the role of the ancient Balts in the burial ground of Gnezdovo. These archeological finds will be a useful complement to the linguistic studies concerning the geographic positions occupied by the ancient Balts, with which we have dealt **earlier** in this book. The Russian archeologist, E. Kletnova, in her article, Velikij Gnezdovskij Mogilnik, printed in the collection of works published in honor of the well known Czech Slavic scholar, L. Niederle, Niederlův Sbornik. 1925/ opens wide horizons to the international significance of this great burial ground. The chief merit of the author is the fact that, being born in the Smolensk region and therefore knowing it very well, she relates, as exhaustively as possible, the history of the studies concerning it (p. 312-314), at the same time showing the as yet embryonic nature of these studies when measured against the historical importance and significance of this true archeological monument which is the burial ground of Gnezdovo. "However much importance may be attributed to the material found in this, the largest of Russian burial grounds, yet it has so far not been studied in a complete enough way and still less scientifically elaborated," (p.3.2). How

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much all the writings of the commun'st historians have contributed to the resolution of this problem, we have shown above. In one of her introductory passages, the author mentions the dimensions of the problems that arise from the tombs of Gnezdovo: "The Scandinavian North, wrapped in mist, the amber yielding Baltic coast, fabulous Biarmija, once famous and powerful Khazary, the many peopled Caucasus, world wide Arab culture, glittering Persia, and, finally, late Byzantium, all these in a greater or lesser measure have left their goods in the kurgans of this world of the dead, once the centre of a flourishing commerce, originating on this very spot, where since immemorial times the cultures of many peoples and many centuries have crossed one another, exchanging their achievements." (p. 309)

This quotation holds many possibilities for future archeologists and they will, let us hope, appreciate its promise; we will limit ourselves to finding our early ancestors among the number of ethnic elements given. The author, as far as I know, is the first to help us to do this. She does it in the form of an almost risky hypothesis: "I would venture to express the possibility that the lately excavated castle-mound of Olsha-Batek, reminding one of the looks of Lithuanian castle-mounds, belonged perhaps to the Galinds, the Goljadj of the Russian chronicles." But the author's discoveries and hypotheses do not end here. In the writings of Diodorus the Sicilian (1st century A.D.) she found the passage which in a misty and hypothetical manner links up our shores, or more precisely, our Daugava with the ancient Greek myth of the Argonauts and its central theme - the golden fleece. This quotation is given in my: The Baltic Sea in Ancient Maps, 1959 (p.6-7), but here I will quote the author's own remarks (p. 319): "Doubtlessly, there

much all the writings of the commonest historians have contributed to the resolution of this problem, we have shown above. In one of her introductory passages, the author mentions the dimensions of the problem that arise from the tombs of Gnezdovo: "The Scandinavian North, wrapped in mist, the amber yielding Baltic coast, fabulous Bismija, once famous and powerful Kazary, the many peopled Caucasus, world wide Arab culture, glittering Persia, and, finally, late Byzantium, all these in a greater or lesser measure have left their goods in the kurgans of this world of the dead, once the centre of a flourishing commerce, originating on this very spot, where since immortal times the cultures of many peoples and many centuries have crossed one another, exchanging their achievements." (p. 209)

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existed a direct route between the Don and the Dnieper and thence to the Daugava, through Smolensk and Gnezdovo; it went: Donec-Oskol-Seim-Desna-Sozh, with the help of numerous voloks. This is shown in the sequence of place names: Peshchanaya Pristanj, Strechanka, Suvolochnoye, Kladovoye, and others. Evidently, this was one of the earliest amber routes south-east, becoming later the Baltic-Khazary route, which determined a simultaneous existence of Gnezdovo on the shores of the Dnieper with Smolensk." And to entice the curiosity of the historians, I will also add this remark of hers: (320 - I): "Among the peasants of Gnezdovo the legend is still alive that in one of the kurgans the golden ram should be buried." I can add for my part that in the excavations of Spina a ram's head made of amber which seems to have come from the Baltic shores was brought to light. (see my Ancient Amber Routes, Plate VII).

With this we have not as yet exhausted Mrs. Kletnova's contributions. In 1927, in Prague, she held a lecture on the theme: The oldest commercial route from the Varangians to the Khazars. The text of this lecture is not available, as far as I know. There is, however, a summary of it, which was published in Zapiski Russkago Istoriceskago Obshestva v Prage. It will not be useless to give it here in full.

"1) This route existed and had great importance much before the traditional route from 'the Varangians to the Greeks.'"

2) It had two directions: 1) a roundabout way to the Volga and 2) a shorter one to the Daugava, beginning with Gnezdovo, following a whole line of voloks across the Desna and Seima, i.e. along the Oskol-Donec-Don.

3) The very ancient existence of this direction of the route is demonstrated by: a) The references of Ammianus Marcellinus and Saxo Grammaticus, as well as the studies of modern historians (Shafarik, Hilfering, Murzakevich Sobolevsky, Reclus, Ranke, Sizov, Spicin, Arne), b) the fact that on this route we find 1) across the Dnieper the greatest burial ground of central Russia: Gnezdovo, which is

existed a direct route between the Don and the Dnieper and thence to the Dnieper, through Saksin and Gerasimov; it went: Donac-Cokol-Bain-Gerasimov, with the help of numerous voloks. This is shown in the sequence of place names: Koshchinskaya (Koshchinskaya), Serebrianka, Suvolochnoye, Kladovoye, and others. Evidently, this was one of the earliest routes, becoming later the Baltic-Kassary route, which determined a simultaneous existence of Gerasimov on the shores of the Dnieper with Saksin. And to notice the complexity of the history, I will also add this remark of Peter (190-1): "Among the legends of Gerasimov the legend is still alive that in one of the kurgans the golden vase should be buried." I can add for my part that in the excavations of Saksin's head made of amber which seems to have come from the Baltic shores was brought to light. (see my Ancient Amber Routes, Table VII).

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- 1) This route existed and had great importance much before the traditional route from the Varangians to the Khazars.¹⁴
- 2) It had two directions: 1) a roundabout way to the Volga and 2) a shorter one to the Dnieper, beginning with Gerasimov, following a whole line of voloks across the Dnieper and Saksin, i.e. along the Cokol-Donac-Don.
- 3) The very ancient existence of this direction of the route is demonstrated by: a) The references of Amalianus Marcellinus and Saxo Grammaticus, as well as the studies of modern historians (Shafarik, Hillerig, Kuznetsov, Sobolev, Koshchinsk, Hillerig, Kuznetsov, Arne); b) the fact that on this route we find 1) across the Dnieper the great set burial ground of central Russia: Gerasimov, which is

uncommonly rich in material of oriental origin, 2) the imposing catacomb burial ground and "gorodishche" Verchneye Saltovo on the northern section of the Donec, 3) the fact that on this route we find many kurgans and gorodishche's as well as Arab dirhems which date back to the VII-IX centuries, 4) the topographical nomenclature: a/ the places of the voloks: Stoiki, Suvolochnoye, Kladovoye, Perevolochka, and others, b/ the connection of many place names with the name of the Alans who formed this route many centuries before the founding of the Khazar state: Alaunskaya Vozvishenostj, Alanji gori, Alanskiye ostrova in the Baltic Sea, the very name of the Daugava-Rudon of Persian origin...

So far the learned lady-archaeologist has brought us. The historians of our day should develop the scheme sketched out by her as well as clarify the doubtful references, for instance, on point a/. This is not a one day work. Also, given the very summary nature of the indications, it is a work of a highly critical quality which will, no doubt, be achieved by coming historians. But one thing is and remains clear: the Balts can no longer be eliminated by silence from the burial ground of Gnezdovo. And with this fact, the problems of Baltic ancient history begin a new and yet unpredictable course.

The number of historians or general readers, acquainted with Kletnova's writings is presumably very limited, owing to the fact that her works are published in little known and sometimes, hard to find editions. They would require a new, well publicized edition which would acquaint the general public with her ideas, also regarding Baltic ancient history. This was done lately by the well known Russian historian, Professor Vernadsky of Yale University, with his book Ancient Russia, 4th ed., 1952, thus creating new incentive to continue the relative research work.

It will be unnecessary to give long extracts from this widely read book (four editions in ten years), therefore, I will quote only a

uncommonly rich in material of oriental origin, 2) the imposing caucasic burial ground and "gorodishche" Verchnyaya Saitovo on the northern section of the Don, 3) the fact that on this route we find many kurkans and gorodishche's as well as Arab dirhems which date back to the VII-IX centuries, 4) the topographical nomenclature: a) the places of the voivods: Stoiki, Suvolochnoye, Kladovoye, Pervolochka, and others, b) the connection of many place names with the name of the Alans who formed this route many centuries before the founding of the Khazar state: Alanskaya Vorzhashen- noski, Alanskiy kost, Alanskiy ostrov in the Baltic Sea, the very name of the Dargava-Rudon of Persian origin...

So far the learned lady-archaeologist has brought us. The historians of our day should develop the scheme sketched out by her as well as clarify the doubtful references, for instance, on point a). This is not a one day work. Also, given the very summary nature of the indications, it is a work of a highly critical quality which will, no doubt, be achieved by coming historians. But one thing is and remains clear: the Baltic can no longer be eliminated by silence from the burial ground of Gnezdovo. And with this fact, the problems of Baltic ancient history begin a new and yet unpredictable course.

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few lines to orient possible new researches. But before this, I must mention that Professor Vernadsky's sources of information on the Baltic question are the above mentioned Kletnova and Gotje as well as Sizov who was the first to explore the burial ground of Gnezdovo from a strictly archeological angle. (see p. 230, note 123). And now, the quotation:

p. 231

"Since it is known that in the pre-Slavic period Lithuanian tribes (also here under this denomination are included all the Balts, A.Sp.) spread to the east beyond Smolensk, even reaching the Oka River (see p. 103), some of the ancient kurgans of the Smolensk and Kaluga provinces may be considered Lithuanian as well.

With the coming of the Slavs, these people settled, in many cases, in towns which had previously been held by the Lithuanians, and so in some sites the antiquities of the older layer are Lithuanian and those of the top layer Slavic. One of the most important sites of this kind is the famous Gnezdovo mound area near Smolensk...As to Lithuanian antiquities proper, they are found in the oldest kurgans of the Gnezdovo area, especially in those on the bank of the Olsha river near the village of Bateki, which were explored in 1922. (There follows a list of excavated objects,

p. 232

the most numerous of which are agricultural implements (scythes) and an uncommonly large number of arms.) Judging from the inventory of Lithuanian graves and sites, it may be surmised that the Lithuanians were a warlike people and horsemen. (The chronology of these discoveries is not yet very precise or sure; further we may read a description of Baltic ways of life, social structure, etc.)"

X

We can now conclude our chronologically long journey across regions in which the memories of the ancient Balts have hidden themselves deep under the earth. There will not be many among foreign students who will in all fairness endeavour to bring them to light: this work should be done by the Balts themselves. But when will this be possible? Certainly not now, in **these** times of triumph for the communist party and its "line." Generally, it will be useful to remind these future historians of the great difficulty and perseverance with which the Balts have to gather together the scattered remnants of their past which is so sinned-against

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by foreign historians who have treated it, in the best of cases, with utmost carelessness.

We shall conclude with a parallel to the thesis expressed above, to be found in a publication also of difficult access to the general reader: Die ethnische Deutung der "masurgermanischen" Kultur, by Ed. Sturms, published in "Contributions of Baltic University", Pinneberg, 1947. In our day, when the problems of the ancient amber trade are being gradually clarified, the work of the deceased Latvian archaeologist deserves special attention, for it was he who pointed out the role of fruitful mediators that the inhabitants of the southern part of East Prussia, the ancient Prussians, played in the amber trade.

This region, too, had to be "reconquered" and handed back to its rightful owners. Here is an extract from the Summary written in English by the author:

"The fact that the urn-graves were the same for both sexes points towards their belonging to one tribe; that this was Prussian Galinds is proved by the complete conformity of the graves and of the way of burying with the undoubtedly genuine Galind graves in the adjacent eastern region. This culture-group has, most likely, developed from the Galinds who had returned from South Russia and whose women had taken over the Germanic women's ornaments. In this case, evidently, there is not a definite cultural influence, but rather a whim of fashion at the bottom of it. The influence of the Goths, Langobards, Thuringians, and others, which can be traced in the Germanic brooches, is held by the author to be due to a long-distance trade practiced by this branch of the Galind tribe which inhabited a barren region. Availing themselves of the rich amber resources of their own country (K. Andrée, Bernstein. Königsberg, i.Pr. 1937, p.40) they may have engrossed, in the course of time, the entire amber-trade of East Prussia, making good use, to this end, of the dispersion of their tribesmen throughout Eastern and Central Europe."

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We shall conclude with a parallel to the thesis expressed above. It is to be found in a publication also of difficult access to the general reader: Die ethnische Gestaltung der "masurischen Landschaft", by Ed. Storms, published in "Contributions of Baltic University", Pinnenberg, 1927. In our day, when the problems of the ancient amber trade are being gradually clarified, the work of the deceased Latvian archaeologist deserves special attention, for it was he who pointed out the role of Prussia, the ancient Prussians played in the amber trade. This region, too, has been "discovered" and handed back to its rightful owners. There is an extract from the summary written in English by the author.

The main results were as follows: The role of the Baltic amber trade, according to the author, is to be seen in the fact that the run-graves were the result of a contact between the run-graves and the Baltic coast. This was Prussian Galindia, as proved by the complete coincidence of the graves and of the way of burial with the undoubtedly genuine Galind graves in the adjacent eastern region. This culture-group has, most likely, developed from the Galinds who had returned from South Russia and whose women had taken over the Germanic women's ornaments. In this case, evidently, there is a definite cultural influence, but rather a whim of fashion at the bottom of it. The influence of the Goths, Langobards, Thuringians, and others, which can be traced in the Germanic brooches, is held by the author to be due to a long distance trade practiced by this branch of the Galind tribes which inhabited a barren region. Availing themselves of the rich amber resources of their own country (K. Andres, Bernstein-Kaempfer, 1717, 1927, p. 107) they may have progressed in the course of time, the entire amber-trade of East Prussia, making good use, to this end, of the disposition of their tribesmen throughout Eastern and Central Europe."

THOSE WHO NO LONGER EXIST: THE YATVINGIANS AND OLD PRUSSIANS.

Let us begin this chapter somewhat sentimentally as befits its tale of grief and blood. The fiery pen of G. Merkel in the introduction to his Lieflands Vorzeit /1798/ wrote:

"You historians of a civilized Europe, how very much your career differs from mine: the history of your nations, in one brilliant period, at least, is like the life of a man in the prime of his vigour and activity. I am standing at the hearse of a youth, murdered by blood-thirsty robbers ere he could half develop. You have deeds to record: I have nothing but talents to point to. You are offering wreaths of laurel: I am planting a solitary cypress sapling.

...Deprive me of the hope of bringing about, even so much as in a remote way, the restitution of my country's forgotten rights by unmasking its oppressors; deprive me of the hope of inducing the cosmopolitan to take an interest in it - and the pen will drop from my hand."

We shall get an idea of the mettle of the old Yatvingians further on in this chapter; as for the presentation of the Old Prussians, let us use the characterisation of the 13th century English Minorite monk, Bartholomaeus Anglicus:

"gens inter ceteras barbaras gentes corpore elegans, mente audax, ingenio, arte et artificio alias nationes in circuitu preexcellens." /a people standing out among others by the elegance of their bearing, daring in spirit, and excelling all others in the qualities of their mind and skill in all arts and crafts./my History of Latvia p159

These highly talented "youthful" peoples were doomed to disappear from the stage of history, overcome by the merely physical superiority of their neighbours. Let us try to see how this came about and to understand from the connection of these ancient facts, in what circumstances this physical majority had been most effective.

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Many books have been written about the Ancient Prussians, about their ways, their battles, and their tragic end. Almost a whole branch of historical literature, sharply polemical at times, is devoted to them.

I shall limit myself to describing some outstanding moments only, i.e. quoting the chronicles of their enemies. Concerning the Yatvingians, I have been able to find only one historian who has, although he considers them "a rough and wild people," devoted to them a fairly lengthy and carefully documented study. This is the St. Petersburg academician, A. Sjögren, known for his exotic interests. This study has also been published in a difficult to come by edition: "Über die Wohnsitze und Verhältnisse der Jatvingen. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte Osteuropas um die Mittel des XIII Jahrhunderts, von Andreas Sjögren, /Mémoires de l'Académie Impériale des Sciences de St-Petersbourg. Sixième série, tome IX, 1859, p. 161-356/, that is to say, about 100 years ago. Ancient sources will furnish us with the missing elements, fairly informative in the case of the Yatvingians, even dramatically vivid when describing their death battles, but leaving obscure their beginnings. (see Annex) .

For the sake of general orientation, let us begin with a passage from the Russian geographer, N. Barsov, Ocherki russkoj istoricheskoi geografii... 2nd edition, Warsaw, 1885. He says about the Yatvingians that:

p. 40-41 "reigning over the Pripet basin, they were able to interrupt the roads leading from Kiev to the districts of the Bug and Dniester, wherefore it was imperative for the Russian princes to break their power."

So the first war actions of the princes end with the subduing of the Niemunas region belonging to the Yatvingians, with the reinforcement

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of the Slav element in this region, and with the withdrawal of the Yatvingians in a north-western direction to their neighbours, the Samogitians, Prussians and Borts, where 13th century history finds them. /p. 39/ "i.e. near the rivers Narev and Bobr, in the actual lake region of East Prussia, near the northern frontier of the Polish reign."

This is the place to quote Lowmiński's methodological remark, /Stosunki polsko-pruskie za pierwszych Piastów . Przegląd Historyczny, t.XLI /1950/, p.159:

"The main source of information about Baltic-Slavic relations of the 11th century are Russian chronicles, although even they have very little news, since the battles on the Baltic-Russian frontier were more of local interest than of wide political meaning. So it is that the authors of the Lietopisi in Kiev and Novgorod dealt with those happenings only in exceptional cases; that is to say, they became of general importance especially when the intervention of the Prince of Kiev was in question."

According to ancient Russian chronicles /Hipatiev/, the chronology of events should be the following: (Sjögren, with some reason, doubts the precision of this chronology) in the years 983 and 984, according to the Russian chronology, 6491 and 6492, Vladimir, Prince of Kiev, conquers the lands of the Yatvingians, but presumably only a part of them, for the Yatvingians retreat into the forest of Belovezh. The next battles in the years 1038 and 1112-1113 are described by four chronicles. Beginning with the year 1196, we have a long tale /Hipatiev/ about the first Yatvingian battles against the Princes of Galicia, later kings. These battles last about three quarters of a century (like the battles of the Semigallians against the Order) and end with the extinction of independent Yatvingia or, as the chronicle of Hipatiev picturesquely says: "The Yatvingians here met their end, for henceforth they ceased to exist." (in the

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year 1281)

The news furnished us by the chronicles of the 13th century - which can, with some reason, be called the century of the slaughter of the Baltic tribes - begin with a curious and, at the same time, deeply instructive tale in the appendix of Hipatiev's chronicle in 6713/1205/:

"In this year, the Russian princes fought the Yatvingians and the Lithuanians, vanquished them, and imposed tributes upon them: lime bark, woven baskets and brooms/ lika i koschnici i beniki do bani/, for they had no silver, nor anything else of value."

This statement stands in direct contrast with the date of the same chronicle and other chronicles witnessing the wealth of the Yatvingians in corn, black martens (the most valuable kind), and silver. (for instance, Hipatiev, 1250, 1273, and 1279, Pashuto, Aleksandr Nevskij... 1951, p. 75, and others).* It has entered into the so called great historiography, partly thanks to Dlugos (15th Century) as a standard motif in relation to Lithuanian early history (it is little concerned with Yatvingians), and the well known 16th century chroniclers never tire of offering similar revelations to their readers. Here we might also remember some Polish anecdotes in connection with the so called Krakow wedding (1386) in which Jogaild is presented as being overgrown with hair like a bear.

Similar scornful descriptions we can also find in other parts of the world. Evidently human nature is much alike everywhere, regardless of race and locality. Thus, we have some Inca courtiers, proudly clad in vicuna skin, deriding some vanquished tribe which should pay its tribute in bugs. (Indians of the Americas.

*This statement of the Russian chronicle indicates, no doubt, the relation of the Yatvingians with the fur and amber trade from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Cf. M. Czapkiewicz, Fr. Kmietowicz, Skarb monet Arabskich z okolic Drohiczyzna nad Bугоm, Polska Akademia Nauk, 1960, p. 171-172: Drohiczyn est due probablement à sa situation avantageuse sur le croisement de deux grand routes commerciales...

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pub. National Geographic Society, S.A. p.280). In this way, too, Baltic history was written and, in a certain measure, this seems to be true also today. I hope to return to this subject in one of the following chapters.

At the beginning of the 13th century, we still have news in the Russian chronicles of Yatvingian incursions on Russian lands /for instance, Hipatiev, app.sub 6717, mnogi pakoski tvorjahu/. Beginning with 6735 /1227/, the tone of the chronicles darkens and action takes on speed: the death battle of the Yatvingians against the combined Polish-Russian force has begun. Again, we have a parallel with events in East Prussia. The heroes of the Russian chronicles are naturally the Princes of Galicia, especially the two sons of Prince Roman, Danilo and Vasilko. Also, the Yatvingian silhouettes become more clearly defined and we hear the names of their leaders: Nebyast, Ankad, Komat, Yundil, Pestilo, Mudyeiko, Skumant, Steikint, and others. How dangerous things must have looked on the Baltic Russian frontier of the time, is told us by a foreigner /Hakluyt, The Principal Navigations, Voyages, etc., I, 159-160/:

the envoy of the pope, Innocent IV, the famous Plan Carpini, on his return from the Mongol emperor, meets at the court of the duke of Masovia, the Prince of Galicia, Vasilko, who came to visit the duke with the purpose of discussing the problem of the Tartar danger. The envoy tells us that / "After these things, duke Wasilico sent us forward with one of his servants as farre as Kiov the chiefe citie of Russia. Howbeit we went always in danger of our lives by reason of the Lithuanian, who did often invade ye borders of Russia, even in those very places by which we were to passe. But in regard of the foresayd servant, we were out of the Russian daunger, the greatest part of whom were either slaine, or carried into captivitie by the Tartars /the years of the travel were 1245-1247.A.Sp."/

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could be defined as a situation of refuge, referring to ancient times
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 a smoke screen, telling naively of the wild and fierce actions of
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 day will be written. The Russian author, although so permeated by
 the heroism of his princes so as to write that even the Polovci should
 frighten their children with their names, talks, however, with great
 respect and unmasked concern about the courage and fierce spirit of
 the Yatvingians. So, in the year 1248, we have this passage describing
 the Yatvingian Duke Skomant (the author usually uses this title for
 the Yatvingian leaders):

"he was a wizard and a very remarkable magician,
 and he was fierce as a wild beast; on foot he had
 conquered the land of Pinsk and other lands."

And in the passage in which Prince Danilo observes the destroyed castle
 of Steikint on a beautiful hill overgrown with birch trees on a lake
 shore, we can already detect an old fashioned romanticism.

It would be pointless here to give any more quotations. They
 would call for commentaries and this short essay has no room for them.
 But it is important here to bring to light the existing descriptions
 of the last stronghold of the Yatvingians. Where this last strong-
 hold should have been, (somewhere around the old provinces of Sedlica,
 Lublin, and Lomzha) is told us by Sjögren /p. 168 and 179/ and G.
 Gerullis /M. Ebert, Reallexicon, I, p. 339/. I am anxious to under-
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 the Yastvingians. So, in the year 1248, we have this passage describing
 the Yastvingian Duke Skomant (the author usually uses this title for
 the Yastvingian leaders):

"he was a wizard and a very remarkable magician,
 and he was fierce as a wild beast; on foot he had
 conquered the land of Pinsk and other lands."

and this passage in which Prince Danilo observes the destroyed castle
 of Seikint on a beautiful hill overgrown with birch trees on a lake
 shore, we can already detect an old fashioned romanticism.
 It would be pointless here to give any more quotations. They
 would call for commentaries and this short essay has no room for them.
 But it is important here to bring to light the existing descriptions
 of the last stronghold of the Yastvingians. Where this last strong-
 hold should have been, (somewhere around the old provinces of Sedlitz,
 Lublin, and Tomasz) is told us by Sjögren (p. 168 and 170) and G.
 Gerulis (M. Ebert, Reallexikon, I, p. 350). I am anxious to under-
 line something else too, i.e., a factor which anthropogeographically

would be defined as a situation of refuge, referring to ancient times when natural obstacles like mountains, marshes, forests, rivers, etc., could not be surmounted by primitive tribes, or, whenever it had been done, it had been achieved at the cost of outstanding efforts.

The material furnished us by ancient texts in this respect is fairly explicit, as it will also be in the case of the Ancient Prussians, Lithuanians and, partly also, Latvians. For instance, sub 1251:

"the Poles and the Russians, having crossed the marshes, reached the land of the Yatvingians."

sub 1256 "the great coalition against the Yatvingians /i.e. Russian Princes, especially from Galicia, Poles from Krakow and Sandomir, Poles from Mazovia/ in order to form a great army /rakj velikaya/ to fill the Yatvingian marshes with soldiers."

We read also of Prince Danilo's wanderings about the wooded land of the Yatvingians, of battles around fortifications erected in strategic positions, and so forth. Having broken through the natural defense zone (forests, marshes) which in those times was the sine qua non of the existence of single tribes, the Russians completely ravaged the land of the Yatvingians /Hipatiev, II, 193/, in the same way that the Teutonic Order was to ravage Semigallia (Reimchronik, 11331). The latter inhabitants, tired of their woes, emigrated to Lithuania, /11404/, to the great surprise of the German author. Also, the Yatvingians will have no other choice.

What could then have been the aftermath to this gruesome tale? Historians of other nations are little interested in these things; we must, however, try to follow our fellow tribesmen through the dark vales of history. The remnants of the Yatvingian tribe sought refuge by their neighbours, the Lithuanians, as did the Prussians from

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1251:

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the west and the Semigallians from the North; some of them probably remained "at home" and we can get an idea of what this "home" must have been like from Sjögren's article /p.168-169/:

"they sought refuge in the immense forests and marshes extending northward, well into the land of Samogitia; one part settled in Lithuania, where the scattered remains of this people wandered about, not only in the times of Kromer /a Polish chronicler of the second half of the 16th century/ but, according to Narbut /a Lithuanian historian of the 19th century/ even to this day their descendants may be observed in the district of Shkidilkishki. They were called Yodvezhai by the surrounding Lithuanians, and differed from their neighbours by the dark colour of their skin, their black clothes, and individual customs."

Kromer's witness sounds as follows:

"The Yatvingians, who were a brave and warlike people, were completely exterminated by their neighbours. People say, however, that the survivors can to this day be seen in Lithuania and Russia."

Also, the well known Miechov mentions them.

This is not the only news we have. Shafarik /P. Schafarik's Slawische Alterthümer, Deutsch von Mosig von Aehrenfeld, hrsg Heinrich Wuttke, Leipzig, 1843-44. I, 347-350/ gives us even more detailed information about the Yodvezhai: they are supposed to have been baptized only in 1553 and to have believed in reincarnation /metempsychosis/ which is why they would never retreat or allow themselves to be taken prisoners. The tale of the great Slavic scholar, interesting to this day, is condensed in the following sentence, which he has borrowed from an earlier author:

"In our day, all remembrance of the Yatvingians is so completely blotted out from memory that they are not even remembered in the traditions of the people of Podlachia; only the great burial mounds and, here and there, by the side of a river or in a forest, great earthen mounds remind us of their bloody battles."

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Our Stalsans /K. Stalsans, Latviesu un Lietuviesu austrumu apgabala liktenis. Chicago, 1958, p. 42-43/ gives us, too, some curious information:

"It is difficult to say when the Yatvingian language ceased to be spoken, because the relevant material has not been sufficiently studied. Worthy of notice, however, are the statistics published by the Central Russian Commission for Statistics in 1861, relating to the nationality of the inhabitants of the western provinces (Zapiski imper. russk. geograf. ob-va pod redakcijej A.N. Bebekova, St. Petersburg, 1861). In this publication we can read that the inhabitants of the former Grodno Province still called themselves Yatvingians. There were 30,927 of them.

...It is characteristic that they had not been found in one province only, but in four, that is, on the territories of the once extensive Yatvingian lands. The report does not specify what their mother tongue is. It is hardly likely that in the middle of the 19th century it should still have been the Yatvingian tongue, but we cannot know whether it had not survived in a crippled form amongst the older generations. And even if at the time of the statistics report the Yatvingian language should no longer have existed, there still were people who knew their ancestors to have been Yatvingians, otherwise, they would not have termed themselves as such to the commission."

The old Russian sources speak only of the bravery of the Yatvingians in battle; another source, the learned Polish prelate Długosz, tries to endow this quality with a literary meaning /op.cit. lib. VII, p. 389/:

"The Yatvingian country is situated north and borders on Mazovia, Russia, and Lithuania. Their language is much similar to the Prussian and Lithuanian as concerns the possibilities to understand it. The Yatvingian people are extremely (immanes) brave, so eager for glory and a good name among their descendents, that ten of them will easily start a battle with a hundred opponents in the mere hope that after their death their deeds of valour will be extolled in the songs (carminibus) of their compatriots."

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Lithuanians and their ancient poetry /A. Bezzenberger in Kultur der Gegenwart, 2 Teil Abt IX, p. 264/:

"from the 16th and 17th centuries we have news of a Lithuanian poetry and if, among these, we find traces of epic or heroic deeds, this /Heldenlieder/ fact confirms the possibility that epic poetry in Lithuania has been relegated back to the past during historical times. Generally speaking, Lithuanian poetry has suffered much during the various periods of history, and most of all in our day."

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We have given above an outline of the fate of the brave Yatvingian people, such as it has come down to us, in a poor and fragmentary form in the chronicles of their enemies of those times. This tale represents one of the four subdivisions of ancient Baltic history which I want to mention in this and in the coming chapter. Anticipating a little the conclusion which will also derive from the coming chapter, we can already begin to formulate some observations of a general nature. When exactly should the **great** Slav expansion have begun? I will mention the diverse theories on the subject in the coming chapter. The opinions differ; however, the actual "communist party" theory is that this expansion has never existed and that in Eastern Europe and especially in its Russian part, some peculiar kind of immobility is to have reigned from time immemorial. This theory quite elementarily contradicts all historical facts known to us.

The most definite impression one gets from these ancient texts is that the Baltic tribes are on the defensive, and that they are forced to retreat fatally in a north-western direction. It is sufficient to glance at the lines of communication of those times, i.e. the river system and their affluents and their direction, to understand the reason. Since the Baltic tribes are all on the defensive, this

"From the 10th and 11th centuries we have news of a Lithuanian poetry and it, among these, we find traces of epic or heroic deeds, the Heldenlieder. Fact confirms the possibility that epic poetry in Lithuania has been relegated back to the past during historical times. Generally speaking, Lithuanian poetry has suffered much during the various periods of history, and most of all in our day."

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entails the existence of an aggressor coming from the east, with the exception of East Prussia, where the geographical directions are different.

We might mention here the famous so called Nestor's chronicle and the way in which its author bestows tributes on his near and far neighbours; the Yatvingians are not here included and this fact has an anthropogeographical explanation. But, by the way, the so called Nestor is the earliest Russian chronicle which, according to a once classical formula /The Great Russian Encyclopedia, vol. 55, p. 446/, told the final results of the great movements of Russian tribes in the 9th and 10th centuries.

The unfolding of the Baltic-Slav drama can be estimated, with the help of linguistic and archeological methods, to have lasted about three quarters of a millennium, counting from the 13th century back to a problematical 6th century A.D. Is this not quite a unique historical process with an incalculable conclusion?

The texts concerning the Yatvingians tell us of the last phase of their tragedy; the earlier part, preceding the 10th century of the Russian chronicles, is lost in the darkness of history. Regarding the other, better known Baltic tribes, our data and our conjectures go back to earlier centuries. Here we must stress another of the main factors of Baltic ancient history: the situation of these peoples in geographic defense zones. These natural elements are sufficiently stressed by the ancient texts which at their appearance in the 9th century find the Baltic peoples already in natural positions of defense which enabled them to resist to the utmost. For instance, in the 13th century, when we see Baltic castles, villages, and lands burning on all sides, north, west, east, and south-east, the Lithu-

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"The land of the Aestii is very large and there are many castles in it and in each castle there is a king. And there is great abundance of honey and of fishing products. And the king, together with the wealthy drinks mare's milk (kumis), but the poor drink 'met.' There are many quarrels among them..."

/H. Geidel, Alfred Der Grosse als Geograf. Munchener Geogr. Studien, 1904/. As we know, the great Anglo-Saxon king had a great interest in geographical problems, (for instance, Monumenta Poloniae Historica, I, 12-14). There is no mention of natural elements in the famous Ibrahim-Ibn Jacub's tale either /see, for instance, G. Jacob, Ara-bische Berichte von Gesandten und germanische Furstenhofe aus dem 9 und 10 Jh. Quellen zur Deutschen Volkskunde. 1927/, but we find in it praise of the bravery of the East Prussians which reminds us of similar tales concerning the Yatvingians.

p. 14 "North of the Poles there are the Brussians (the letter P does not exist in the Arab alphabet) A.Sp. The Brussians live near the world encircling ocean. They have their own language and they do not understand the language of their neighbours. They are famous for their bravery. When they are attacked

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by an hostile army, none of the Brussian men waits to see whether his brothers join him, but assails the enemy, oblivious of all else, and hacks at him with his sword until he falls dead. The Rus (Normans, Varangians) attack them with their boats from the west."

The ancient land of the East Prussians comes alive before our eyes with the beginning of chronicles relating the long Prussian-Polish struggle. As one of the fatal consequences of this struggle, we must here mention "the greatest mistake in Polish history," deemed such unanimously by Polish historians, i.e. the request for help issued to the Teutonic Order by Duke Conrad of Mazovia against the Prussians with whom he could not deal by himself. (beginning of the 13th century). This sharp Polish self criticism begins with their historian, Dlugosz /see Przed. ed. II, 233; Mon.Pol.Hist.559,/where this "fatal mistake" is told in detail, i.e. the donation by Duke Conrad (gratioso donando) of the land of Kulm to the Crusaders.

The first Polish chronicles as well as the first hagiographical texts (see further) raise the curtain a little on ancient Prussian life. This takes place in connection with the wide international repercussions of an event which stands out as a symbol of the fight of the Prussians for their existence as well as a foreboding of their ultimate defeat. On April 23, 997, the Christian missionary, Bishop Adalbert, Czech by birth and a great personal friend both of the German Emperor, Otto III, and of the Polish king, Boleslav the Great, was dying at the hands of the Prussians. The repercussions of this event were so widespread that we can see to this day the scenes of his martyrdom engraved on the doors of the cathedral of Gnezno, together with figures of ancient Prussians. /see my History of Latvia, Plate XVI/. There are many references to this event in chronicles

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of the time and later, and quite extensive historical material in more recent times. I shall limit myself to indicating the latest studies on this subject, the earlier ones not being obtainable here. The making of Central and Eastern Europe by the Czech Slavic scholar, Fr. Dvornik, London, 1949, p. 131-134, and The Slavs, their Early History and Civilization, Boston, 1956, by the same author. In connection with the unsuccessful Christianization of the Prussians and with King Boleslav's expedition to conquer the Baltic countries, the curtain is raised for a moment and we get a fugitive glimpse of ancient Prussia in the Polish Gallus chronicle and also in Adam of Bremen /op. cit. p.78/. We see it in flames and ruin, but that is nothing new for the Balts. In the III book of the Gallus chronicle, there is a chapter called De vastatione terrae Prussiae per Polonos:

"We read that Boleslav attacked Prussia in the winter, making use of the frozen marshes by way of bridges./ for there is no other access to this country except across marshes and lakes. When he had reached the inhabited regions across these, he did not stop in any one place besieging castles or cities, for there aren't any (Wulfstan had counted a great many, A.Sp.) and the whole country is fortified and defended by elements of nature, being, as it were, situated on islands amid lakes and marshes. The land is divided among the people and the farmers by the ancient practice of drawing lots. So the warlike Boleslaw, fighting all over this barbaric country, gathered a great booty of men and women, youths and maidens, and servants, in great numbers burnt down houses and farms /villas/, whereupon he returned to Poland without a battle..."

This same Gallus has another passage /book II, 42/:

"The king entered into Prussia, a very barbaric country. /There follows a fantastic Prussian history/. So the Prussians have lived to this day without a king and without laws: they will not renounce their primitive cunning and cruelty. For their land is fortified by lakes and marshes, and not by castles or cities, and so, to this day, nobody has been able to subdue this land, for no warrior has been able to get across so many lakes and marshes."

of the time and later, and quite extensive historical material in more recent times. I shall limit myself to indicating the latest studies on this subject, the earlier ones not being obtainable here. The making of Central and Eastern Europe by the Czech Slavic scholar, Fr. Dvornik, London, 1949, p. 131-134, and The Slavs, Their Early History and Civilization, Boston, 1956, by the same author. In connection with the unsuccessful Christianization of the Prussians and with King Boleslav's expedition to conquer the Baltic countries, the entry is raised for a moment and we get a fugitive glimpse of ancient Prussia in the Polish Galus chronicle and also in Adam of Bremen's old. p. 78. We see it in flames and ruin, but that is nothing new for the Baltic. In the III book of the Galus chronicle, there is a chapter called De vastatione terrae Prussiae per Polonos:

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And the following passage from Master Vincent's chronicle /Kronika Mistrza Wincentego/ referring to 1192:

/"Other peoples living along the shores of the Baltic/ and the Prussians are extremely cruel people, fiercer than wild beasts; they /feel secure/ in their vast desert regions, thick forests, and impenetrable marshes..."

Many news about the ancient Prussians are given us by Dlugosz's chronicle. Although his writings are fairly late, much of his information is obviously gathered from earlier sources. So, for instance, his narration of the king Boleslav expedition sounds much more reasonable than that of the earlier Gallus chronicle. I, 208. After an enumeration of the Prussian districts we read:

"And as in those times they /the Prussians/ had few cities (oppida) and the same surrounded by great waters and marshes, they had many fortifications (castra), all made of wood. Boleslav, king of Poland, took the cities and many of the fortifications in which the barbarians had entrenched themselves, as, for instance, Romova, the famous Prussian centre... After besieging them, he occupied them and ordered that they should either be burnt down or destroyed."

In I, 326, we read about the Prussian defense systems which remind us of other passages of the same chronicle referring to Lithuanian prowess at war, i.e. making the most of their thick forests. In II, 68, we read of a battle in the particular frame of Prussia's natural elements, and in II, 204, a detailed description of the Mazovian Duke Conrad's unfortunate adventure, etc. Around the middle of the 13th century, Dlugosz, speaking of the years 1244, 1250, 1263, and others, "slides" from the "Prussian barbarians" to the "crusaders," i.e. to the Prussia created by the latter.

The other category of sources are, as I said, hagiographical texts, and the most interesting among them are descriptions of the life and martyrdom of St. Adalbert by 1) Canaparius and 2) Bruno of Querfurt.

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The first of these has been written in 999, the other shortly after the death of the saint. There is much in these texts of the exaltation of the missionary saints, of visions and prophetic dreams, all showing their longing for a martyr's death and the celestial prize; there are very few descriptions of nature, but we learn this much, that the land of Prussia can be approached only by struggling through the barrier of lakes and marshes, or by sea (as we see the representation on the door of the cathedral of Gnezno).

But the most fascinating part of these hagiographical texts is doubtlessly the explanation of the motives given by the Ancient Prussians of why they had to deal so ruthlessly with the missionary saint. Reading and rereading these texts, we must come to the conclusion that these "fierce pagans" are really, for those times, rare gentlemen, with a sentimental tinge, at that.

I quote the texts after the editions of Monumenta Poloniae Historica or Pomniki Dziejowe Polski, I, 1864. Already in the first, anonymous Passio we read the following declared aversion of the Old Prussians for Christian missionaries /p.155/:

"(Some from the great crowd gathered about the saint) cried that he (Adalbert) was of those who bring evil on to people /*pesumdare*/ by plunging them in water /i.e. christening them/ and that he has come hither to bring us likewise to perdition."

The monk, Canaparius, issuing from the same convent as Adalbert, i.e. the convent of St. Alexis on the Aventine in Rome, also chronologically comes closest to the tragic event. His text has been minutely analyzed by H. Voigt, H. Lowmianski, Fr. Dvornik, and others. I shall therefore quote only a few extracts to illustrate my point of view. The author's geography is naturally rather pitiful.

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After the first violent encounter around the saint's boat, the owner of the portion of coast on which it landed, leads the saint in the evening in villam (would this expression designate a farm?) A great many people gather there and the newcomer is asked why he has come and what he wishes. After his missionary answer comes the answer of the Prussians /p.181/:

"It is already a remarkable thing that Thou shouldst have come so far unpunished and therefore a speedy departure will give Thee hope of life, but the slightest tarrying will bring Thee the death penalty. Over all of us in this land whose gates we are /fauces/ reigns a common law and an established order; you all, who obey alien and to us unknown laws, will be put to death tomorrow and your heads will be cut off unless you leave our country. So they put the saint and his followers back into their boat and took them back, whereupon they remained five days in a village."

This rather "modern" politeness of the Old Prussians towards foreigners with obscure purposes is even more deeply gone into in the same hagiographical text, which otherwise does not show itself stingy of "compliments" towards the pagans. Bruno's Passio gives the following passage-explication:

p. 214 "Because of such people, say the Prussians, our cattle will cease breeding and even the old ones will die off. Hurry, hurry out of our land..."

Another manuscript gives the following variation after the words "such people:"

"Our land will yield no more crops and the trees bear no fruit, the cattle will cease...etc." /See p.214, Notes/.

And now we have Adam of Bremen's testimony on the Old Prussians, written roughly three quarters of a century after St. Adalbert's martyrdom. /Hist. of the Archbishops of Hamburg Bremen, p. 198-199/:

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"The third island, that called Samland, is close to the Russians and Poles. It is inhabited by the Semli or Prussians, a most humane people, who go out

to help those who are in peril at sea or who are attacked by pirates. Gold and silver they hold in very slight esteem. They have an abundance of very strange furs, the odor of which has inoculated our world with the deadly poison of pride. But these furs they regard, indeed, as dung, to our shame, I believe, for right or wrong, we hanker after a martenskin robe as much as for supreme happiness. Therefore, they offer their very precious marten for the woolen garments called faldones. Many praiseworthy things could be said about these peoples with respect to morals, if only they had the faith of Christ whose missionaries they cruelly persecute. At their hands Adalbert, the illustrious bishop of the Bohemians, was crowned with martyrdom. Although they share everything else with our people, they prohibit only, to this very day, indeed, access to their groves and springs which, they aver, are polluted by the entry of Christians. They take the meat of their draft animals for food and use their milk and blood as drink so freely that they are said to become intoxicated. These men are blue of color, ruddy of face, and long-haired. Living, moreover, in inaccessible swamps, they will not endure a master among them."

Such, then, is the tale about the attributes of the Old Prussians, about their ways, their at that time international fur trade, and about their unconquerable wish to be masters in their own home, which they had established, probably after varied experiences on the shores of the Baltic Sea. But their efforts to isolate themselves at all costs will prove vain. The next witness, Bartholomaeus /see beginning of this chapter/ already places them in a light of comparison with neighbouring countries. And what a light! And do we have any motive to doubt the words of the very learned Minorite monk?

Such, then, are the witnesses of the time, but how different the appraisals of later historiographies! And if anybody should be interested in asking my opinion on the matter, I would merely like to advise future historians not to be in too great a hurry in writing about these things from their imperialistic point of view. Such ways of thought are temporary, but the old witnesses remain.

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Now we should follow a little, in the analysis of Dusburg and others, the Old Prussians in their struggle against the Teutonic Order. This has mostly been done already, however, not by Balts. Apart from A. Voigt's book, Adalbert von Prag, /1898: termed by the Enc.Brit. as a "thoroughly exhaustive monography"), there have been many studies on the German and Polish side after World War I. Moreover, as the late A. Švabe says ironically, "the Poles trying to denigrate it (the Old Prussian civilization) and the Germans trying to amalgamate it with their own."

Let us leave all this for another occasion or to some other writer and let us end our short study as sentimentally as we began.

G. Herder in his Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit /Buch XVI, Cap.2/ bewails the fate of our peoples:

"All humanity is looking on in horror at the streams of blood shed here in long and savage wars, until the Old Prussians were nearly completely annihilated, the Kurs and Latvians brought into captivity by which they are smothered to this day."

Indeed, it is so; and this purpose was achieved, as so often in history, partly by fire and sword, and partly by pen and ink. Shall we hear the opinions of another famous man? Ibn Khaldoun, Prolegomènes /Paris, 1934-38, II, 46/:

"Dans la première phase, le gouvernement doit se faire appuyer par les gens d'épée; leur concours lui est indispensable, s'il veut se faire respecter et se défendre. Pour obtenir ce double resultat, il trouvera l'épée plus utile que la plume.../And, then comes the second phase/ les épées restent des-oeuvres et reposent dans leurs fourreaux.. Les gens de plume jouissent alors de plus de considérations etc."

The supremely ironical analysis of the famous Arab historian should be read in its full context; here I will have to limit myself to indicating its two phases to show how truly applicable it is to the process of annihilation of the Balts and to the so called "great historiographies."

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First with the sword and afterwards with the pen. Baltici delendi sunt: the Germans with their "Darwinian selection:" à la Treitschke & Co., the Russians with their "many storied" words of abuse /see next chap./, the Poles with their latinized smirk of contempt. Baltici delendi sunt. And much later, when the curtain rises again over the once Baltic lands, what shadows of its people shall we be able to perceive? And what will the historiography of the defeated and the dead be like? The world justifies anything in the face of brute strength, only the proud and stubborn Cato was able to say: Victrix causa diis placuit, sed victa Catoni /the gods looked with pleasure upon the victors, but Cato upon the vanquished/.

The defeated Old Prussians are mentioned occasionally in later times, as late as the 17th, or beginning of the 18th century, when the last known survivor still spoke the language of his ancestors. This is how the Pope's legate in Poland, Ruggiero, writes about them, 16th century, /Latviesi im Livonija, p.120-121/:

"this same tongue /i.e. Lithuanian/, much changed, is still to be heard in a few Prussian villages where the remainder of the Old Prussians live; these Prussians were oppressed and almost annihilated by the Teutonic Order and now they live in small villages scarcely keeping up their mother tongue."

A P P E N D I X

In this appendix I would like to add a few notes of my own on the historical continuity of the lasting polemic about the identification of the Aestii with the Old Prussians.

Still in 1948, R. Schmittlein in his Toponymie Lithuanienne, p. 73, says that this identification rather represents a dogma than a historical fact. On the other hand, W.K. Matthews in the same year

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Baltic Origins. Revue des Etudes Slaves, t. 24, p. 51/ enumerates these studies in which the Aestii have been identified with other nations and not with the Balts:

"O. Bremer and G. Kossima regard the Aestii as West Somians who were subsequently displaced by Prussians, and Rozwadowski subscribes to this view. A.A. Shachmatov thought the Aestii were Celtic...but this hypothesis has been contested by Vasmer and K. Buga. The latter was unshakably convinced of the identity of the Aestii and the ancient Baltic peoples, notably the Prussians..."

The archeologists nourish no doubts as to this identity. Some linguists do, but they seem to be few. For, indeed, had not the Old Prussians been the people of Sembia who created the great amber commerce at the time of the Roman Empire, where then should we place the Baltic tribes? They certainly cannot have been completely insignificant, since they resisted the invasions of the Goths, Slavs, Varangians, and Saxons and in later centuries gave so much trouble to Saxon knights, Polish and Swedish kings, and to the powerful Grand Dukes of Muscovy, and were able to create such a flourishing and powerful nation at the time of the Lithuanian expansion.

Let us take a look at the line of historical continuity by taking a step back in history. To the so called Nestor /12th century, beginning of/ the Prussians are Prussians and live by the Varangian Sea; generally, this author is already well informed on the complexity of the Baltic tribes. The slightly earlier /end of 11th century/ Adam of Bremen gives us the description of the Old Prussians which we read above; no one has put that to doubt. He also mentions the Aestii, but in this case, like the Amazons and similar legendary motifs, his information has been copied down from earlier texts /in this case, Einhard's/.

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Ibrahim Ibn Jacob /10th century/ speaks only of the Prussians, but one century earlier Wulfstan mentions only the Aestii; so does Einhard, Adam of Bremen's main source. From the analysis of these texts it follows that the main three or four are informatively interrelated. So we have that Wulfstan's text finds a confirmation in the Christian legends dealing with the death of St. Adalbert. /see H. Lowmianski, Stosunki polsko pruskie sapierwszich Piastow, Przegląd Historyczny, tom XLI, p. 155-157/ and no one has ever doubted that the saint met his death at the hands of the Old Prussians. Some motifs from Wulfstan's text are repeated also in Adam of Bremen's description, lib. IV, cap. XVIII. We may also note a similarity in many motifs of Wulfstan's and Ibrahim's texts etc.

So it follows from the complexity of all the quoted texts that to "throw a bridge" from the Aestii to the Old Prussians seems to be an easy and natural thing. On the other side, some old texts of the time of Cassiodorus up to Tacitus are traditionally linked up among themselves. /See my Ambassadors of the Aestii in Ravenna at the Court of Theodoricus, Riga, 1939/. Let us also not forget the imperious links imposed upon this ensemble of texts by the amber trade, which was the reason the name of the Aestii saw the light. There remains, therefore, the "leap" between Cassiodorus and Wulfstan, i.e., from the 6th to the 9th century. Doubtlessly, this lapse of time is not so slight and much had happened in those centuries, especially in the way of movements of peoples, but, in any case, if one wanted at all costs to break away from the Aestii-Baltic tradition, one would have to prove when and wherefore and, above all, "find" a dwelling place for the ancient Baltic tribes, and that would mean undertaking a polemical battle with the archeologists. If at one time the "ignoring" of Baltic times almost

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 imposed upon this ensemble of texts by the amber trade, which was the
 reason the name of the Aestii saw the light. There remains, therefore,
 the "gap" between Gasiodorus and Wulfstan, i.e., from the 6th to the
 9th century. Doubtlessly, this lapse of time is not so slight and
 much had happened in those centuries, especially in the way of move-
 ments of peoples, but, in any case, if one wanted at all costs to break
 away from the Aestii-Baltic tradition, one would have to prove when
 and wherefore and, above all, "find" a dwelling place for the ancient
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Withdrawal, political build-up, counterblows;
Lithuanians and Latvians.

used to be the fashion, nowadays, similar arguments are no longer able to satisfy the inquiring minds of students and historians.

In Simon's chronicle /XVII, 106/ we find the following description of Algirdas, Grand Duke of Lithuania, and conqueror of vast Russian lands:

And so, by fighting and by cunning Algirdas conquered many lands and many places and towns and many countries did he take into his power: for he knew how to use not only strength, but also wit.

According to the index of the complete edition of Russian chronicles,

Lithuania, up to the 13th century, is mentioned in the following years:

1040 /6548/, 1044, 1128, 1149, 1152, 1159, 1161, 1162, 1180, 1183, 1190, 1191, 1195, 1198, 1200, 1203, 1204, 1205. (Concerning the last date, see foregoing chapter).

I mention this sequence of dates, merely to show the intensity of contacts between Lithuania and Russia. The context of these chronicles is almost exclusively concerned with wars, conflicts, and tributes, i.e. contacts that have to be settled among the two neighbours. Modern Russian history, for political reasons, has tried to forge "an evil legend" out of this constant contact among neighbours, but even in the absence of this legend, it is rather difficult to understand how they have achieved this "year de force." Pashkiewicz /op.cit.190/, so careful in drawing conclusions, writes:

at the beginning of the 12th century, when the Forest /i.e. the so called Nestor's chronicle/ was being written, there was a greater feeling of remoteness between the Lithuanians and the Rus than between the Rus and the Finns.

This remoteness will be sufficiently illustrated by a few quotations from the above mentioned texts.

In Jurgela's book, p. 37, there is an engraving from an old Russian prayer book representing Lithuanian horsemen who lead away a Russian prisoner tied with a rope. Pashuto, in his Alaksandr Veliki, p. 3, writes

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[The remainder of the page contains extremely faint, illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]

Withdrawal, political build-up, counterblows:
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In Simeon's chronicle /XVII, 108/ we find the following description of Algirdas, Grand Duke of Lithuania, and conqueror of vast Russian lands:

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According to the index of the complete edition of Russian chronicles, Lithuania, up to the 13th century, is mentioned in the following years:

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"to be put to shame by Lithuanians"
 "Lithuania in its forests"
 "Lithuanians and Yatvingians did perform many rascally deeds."

The most impressive tirade in the same chronicle, however, is the words of abuse aimed at Lithuania's Grand Duke Traidenis, 1270, the same, as we have seen, who took under his protection the Baltic refugees from Prussia, Semigallia, and Yatvingia and who is accused of a strongly anti-Christian attitude. He deserves the honour of four strong epithets, whereas the Tartar Khan Nogaj is attributed with two only. I doubt whether this passage could be translated into any other language without losing some of its "colour," so I will limit myself to indicating where it can be found: Hip., sub anno 6778.

All this is merely to illustrate the "psychological basis" of the relations between the two neighbours. A great deal of news about ancient Lithuania is also furnished us by 15th century Dlugosz. Even if chronologically quite late, the amount and variety of this information make the author one of the main sources of ancient Lithuanian history, in spite of his, at times, agnostic or dogmatically intolerant approach, which is also often full of quite elementary prejudice. I would like to mention only a few parts of Dlugosz's great chronicle in many volumes (edit. Przewdziecki):

Lithuanorum origo et cultus Deorum, moresque veteres describuntur, III, 470. (this contains the famous description of Olgerd's /Algirdas/ pagan burial); Lithuanorum nominis prima auditio, II, 177.... and others.

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Długosz's importance must also be underlined in view of the fact that, according to many historians, a number of documents of great significance to Lithuania's ancient history have been lost or destroyed, a not too surprising fact, considering the unquiet fates of the Eastern European countries.

The Lithuanians did not get better "literature" from the West either. This last rampart of pagan Europe, a "confessional anachronism" as some historian defined it, also received its due from the side of crusader propaganda. Paszkiewicz, p. 187:

Followers of the Roman Church - Poles, Teutonic and Livonian Orders - and adherents of the Eastern Church, are all at one in calling the Lithuanians enemies of Christianity and cruel spillers of innocent blood. In the light of these sources, the Lithuanians are sons of Satan, and godless men, and as to the level of their culture and the traits of their character, we meet with the most drastic designations such as: barbarians, perjurers, dogs, men who through their natural vileness attack their neighbours like so many wolves. This picture of the Lithuanians was drawn largely in anger, with the feeling that Lithuania was hard to conquer...

In reading this precisely documented flow of epithets, we are reminded of the classical words: Inde irae.

Whatever the polemical atmosphere about them, the Lithuanians were certainly preserved, at the time of the terrible slaughter of the Baltic tribes in the 13th century, from various Slav-German coalitions because of their central position in the midst of the Baltic tribes. The blows fell most heavily on the tribes on the periphery, which were, in time, either completely annihilated or subdued. The territorial reserves for the retreat of the Lithuanians were so vast and deep that the Lithuanians were able to resist for a long period and made their entry into history relatively late, in the 11th century. The Lithuanians were thus able to isolate themselves from the inimical outer world, and the "light" of the world's chronicles did not fall upon them. We can thus note sev-

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I regret being unable to make sufficient use of some works of the Lithuanian facts in ancient Lithuanian history which differentiate the Lithuanians from other Baltic tribes. First, there are the noteworthy archaisms of their language and of some of their customs; then we have the date of their final Christianization, end of the 14th century, which, seen in relation to the rest of Europe, is an outstanding and rather curious anachronism. The closed character of the Lithuanians, such as Dlugosz describes it, is also probably attributable to this long period of isolation. /Przezd.ed.lib. X, p.475/. But, above all, we must stress here the political moment, which, as far as the Lithuanians are concerned, is acknowledged even by those historians who can perceive other Baltic tribes only with the help of a magnifying glass, or not at all. The Prussians and Yatvingians were unable to open their wings, crushed by the great numerical superiority of the enemy; the Latvians, withdrawing from the marshes, sought refuge on the shores of the Baltic Sea; but the force of the Lithuanian counter blows against the Russians was registered by all. In the words of the Russian chronicle: (Pashuto, 75)

"the Lithuanian tongue did multiply" and
 "by their speedy unification, while fighting
 the enemy on the East and West, Mindaugas
 created a nation."

Many books have been written about ancient Lithuanian history, the stress being put on those centuries when the Lithuanian counterblows brought into their power many Russian lands, i.e. in the 14th and 15th centuries. A special term was even coined in Russian historiography: Litovskorusskoye gosudarstvo. This is not my field of knowledge and inquiry, coming after the 13th century. I will just mention here the works of some historians which open, in my opinion, the right perspectives onto Lithuanian ancient history: they are, in chronological order: M. Liubavski (1929), V.Pashuto /1947/, H. Paszkiewicz /1954/, and V.Pashuto /1959/.

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Prof. M.K. Liubavski, one of the most outstanding scholars of Prof. Kliuchevsky's school and Rector of the University of Moscow, was one of those who, as we know, was spiritually "eliminated" at the time of the creation of the new Marxist party "line" history. It happened in 1929. In this same year, his article Litva i slavianie, was still published in Minsk, in the White Ruthenian language. This article is worthy of his name and of his school. In it, on the basis of a quiet and honest study of the ancient texts, he lays the foundations of the process which not much later will be called: Aufstieg des Lithauischen Staates /M. Vasmer's formula/. We must also note the fact that Liubavski considers as quite obvious some facts concerning ancient Baltic history which were never perceived by Baltic-German historians when they happened to write or, shall we say, make contemptuous remarks about the Ancient Balts, remarks which were diligently transcribed as so many axioms in the history books of the world of the 19th century. Liubavski does not find it necessary to cross swords over problems of the early Arabian trade, the short and temporary nature of the imposition of Nestor's tributes on some of the eastern Baltic tribes, the political organization of those Baltic tribes deduced from the juridical analysis of the titles of their kings, their withdrawal before the Slav aggression and their finding refuge in nature's conditions, the organization of a Baltic resistance against pressure from the outside, and so on (see further).

The Marxist historian Pashuto published in 1947 in the historical journal, Voprosi istoriyi (No.8), an article entitled Hoziaistvo i tehnika srednevekovoi Litvi. Although his faithfulness to the party line cannot be put in doubt, we must, however, say about this article that it can also be used by historians of the free world, except, of

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Finally, a few quotations from Paszkiewicz:

p. 187 Lithuanian history, as a whole, differs fundamentally from that of the other Baltic peoples. It is a striking fact, as, in the early days, Lithuania was not superior to the Prussians and Letts either in respect of population or the size of her territory...Lithuania alone among all the Balts played a significant role in history /see further on this subject/.

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This over-simplified formula shows, however, a fairly accurate picture of these ancient relations: let us remember the tale of Plan Car-pini, as well as of our Henricus.

in the course of their predatory exploits in East and South, they often raided the valleys of the rivers which served as important trade routes, such as Dvina / Latv. Daugava, A.Sp./, the Lovat, the upper reaches of the Volga, the Dnieper, etc.

p. 203 From the 13th century onwards a new trend /i.e. in the policy of conquest of the Lithuanians/ manifested itself: while the raids continued, the tendency was to subdue and permanently to attach to Lithuania various non-Lithuanian lands.

p. 213 Every student of these events must be struck by the extraordinary growth of Lithuania's domination and influence in the East and South during the first half of the 14th century. The realm of Gediminas extended from Pskov in the North to the southern limits of the land of Kiev, from the upper reaches of the Volga to Volynia.

I think that the above quotations show convincingly enough what kind of strength the Lithuanian nation could build up in its central situation of refuge and isolation, and what kind of expansionistic trends were possible, especially when the Russian principalities were weakened by the Tartar invasion.

Now we must leave the "trodden paths" of historical documentation and venture back into the mist of centuries, apparently wrapped in impenetrable darkness, or "in the fastnesse of moors and fens," as Beowulf so picturesquely writes. After having shortly examined our possibilities in this field, we will come to the conclusion that things are not as desperate as they looked at first, especially if we take into account the achievements of the younger generation in the fields of linguistics and archeology. The former is mainly connected with the study of place names, which has brought such brilliant results in the works of such students as

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A. Dauzat, La toponomique française, 1940 and 1953, and H. Krahe, Sprache und Vorzeit, 1954. In the study of the toponomy of Eastern Europe, M. Vasmer has assured himself of a lasting reputation (see further).

At the time when the already mentioned Barsov had been able to note important movements of peoples and tribes on the basis of the text of the so-called Nestor's chronicle and by paying great attention to the analysis of place names, his study did not touch upon the slightly later problems of Russian infiltration into formerly Baltic territories. The time had not yet come for the study of these problems. The first to deal with them, as M. Vasmer states it, is A. Kochubinski: Territoriya doistoricheskoi Litvi. Zhurn. Min. Nar. Pr., 1897, I.

This work, written more than 60 years ago, remains, in some of its aspects, valid to this day. For instance, the semicircle of Northern Lithuania as a blatant proof of Russian aggression, the retreat of the Latvians which, in his view, is a victorious march against the Libians, his unforgettable formula of the movement "from marsh to sea" of the Baltic tribes, evident throughout the centuries, these views still hold true. This work is followed soon thereafter by a short notice by the well known Slavic scholar, A. Sobolevski, Gdie Zhila Litva? Izv. Imp. Akad. Nauk, 1911, pp. 1051-1054, much quoted at the time. On examining this notice, it seems strange that such a short study should have made so great an impression. The reason is probably to be sought in the fact that it deals with an unresolved, but already actual problem. In it we also find some quotations from Russian chronicles referring to the abodes of the Ancient Balts to be found a long way outside the actual south-eastern frontiers of Lithuania.

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The names of two other Russian historians, A. Pogodin and A. Shamsajov, outside the actual south-eastern frontiers of Lithuania. In referring to the tribes of the Ancient Balts to be found a long way actual problem. In it we also find some quotations from Russian chronic to be sought in the fact that it deals with an unresolved, but already study should have made so great an impression. The reason is probably time. On examining this notice, it seems strange that such a short Litva? Imp. Akad. Nauk, 1911, pp. 1051-1054, which quoted at the notice by the well known Slavic scholar, A. Sobolevski, Gdańsk still hold true. This work is followed soon thereafter by a short of the Baltic tribes, evident throughout the centuries, these views Lipians, his unforgettable formula of the movement "from marsh to sea" the Latvians which, in his view, is a victorious march against the ern Lithuanians as a distant proof of Russian aggression, the retreat of its aspects, valid to this day. For instance, the semicircle of North- This work, written more than 60 years ago, remains, in some of Teritorijy dotatoricheskoi Litvy. Zhurn. Min. War. Pr., 1897, I. The first to deal with them, as M. Vasmer states it, is A. Kochubinski: territories. The time had not yet come for the study of these problems, slightly later problems of Russian infiltration into formerly Baltic to the analysis of place names, his study did not touch upon the text of the so-called Nestor's chronicle and by paying great attention note important movements of peoples and tribes on the basis of the At the time when the already mentioned Barsov had been able to M. Vasmer has assured himself of a lasting reputation (see further). und Vorseit, 1924. In the study of the toponymy of Eastern Europe, A. Danzst, de toponymique française, 1940 and 1953, and H. Krabe, Sprache

are linked with the time of World War I and the period preceding it. I cannot say much about the first, having been able only to obtain some popular book of his /see bibliography/. To the second, on the other hand, I would like to devote a number of lines. This historian's honest and careful approach to the problems of Baltic-Russian relations opens excellent possibilities for further studies of the lasting drama that took place on the wooded and marshy shores of the rivers, in the key positions of their basins. His Drevneishiya sudjbi russkogo plemeni (p.28) reads:

Our chronicle (i.e. Nestor's, written about 1112) gives precise information based on the personal observation of chroniclers of the time and their contemporaries, as well as data drawn from the live tradition and recollections of the people. Basing ourselves on this information, we are able to establish the limits of the Slav expansion in the 11th century, as well as reconstruct some earlier facts which, at the time the chronicle was written, had already somewhat faded out or changed. The Slav tribes mentioned by Nestor, to be found in Russia in the 10th and 11th centuries lived: in the basins of the Dniepr and its most important affluents, the Pripet on one side, the Desna and Sema on the other; in the basins of the western and southern part of the Bug, and the Dniestr, the upper parts of the Daugava and Volga, in the basins of the lakes Ilmen and Volchova; and finally in the basin of the Oka.

p. 29 The abodes of the Krivichi extended far northwards in the basins of the Daugava and Velikaya, as we can see from later chronicles which call Pskov's neighboring town, Izborsk, a Krivich town, and as can also be deduced from the fact that the Latvian term "krievs", applied to the Krivichi, was used to designate all Russians in general.

p. 41 Their moving upwards following the Dniepr, as well as towards the regions on the other bank of the Pripet, brought the Slavs into conflict with the Lithuanian tribes. Geographical nomenclature, as demonstrated in the works of A. Kochubinski, A. Pogodin, and A. Sobolevski, proves that the left bank of the Pripet was Lithuanian (Yatvingian) territory (see also the Lithuanian character of the names of rivers and lakes in the Minsk province). Similarly, also the basin of the Berezina was inhabited by Lithuanian tribes from very early times. Both the western Slavs moving from south to east and the eastern Slavs moving from south to north probably had to endure heavy fighting with the Lithuanians for the possession of the Pri-

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The Lithuanians were driven back from the Pripet, Berezina, and Dniepr by the efforts of the eastern and western Slavs; the Krivichi found an opening for further advance northwards; moving northwards they came into conflict with the Latvians. The driving back of the Latvians westwards towards the middle course of the Daugava gave the Russians the possibility to invade the territories inhabited by Finnish tribes.

After World War I, the years 1920-30 were rich in studies on the subject interesting us. Linguistic studies tried to establish more and more closely the extension of Ancient Baltic abodes, and cartographic schemes endeavoured to enclose them in ever more precise boundaries. The following are the most important works in these directions: The Manuel de l'Antiquité Slave, I-II, I, p. 23, 1926, by the famous Czech scholar, L. Niederle, was for a long time the book most often consulted by all students of the problem. Its maps of the Slav expansion were and remain the leaders of general orientation. Among other important data let us note a passage which illustrates beautifully the long and heavy process of Slav expansion /I, 186-187/:

The Goliads, dwelling near the river Protva mentioned by the chronicles, are supposed to be the remnants of some Lithuanian (i.e. Baltic) tribe; moreover, we know that still in the 13th century there were remnants of Latvian colonies by the Daugava, the delta of the Volga, the river Vazusa, and some parts of the Tver and Moscovy provinces. (see bibliography). These isolated remnants indicated how great were the difficulties of the Slav colonizers when pushing their way into the Baltic zone.

In the "Reallexicon" edited by M. Ebert, we find an article by G. Gerullis: Baltische Volker. The author is so sure of his subject that he can indicate in detail the prehistoric boundaries of the Baltic peoples /p.339/:

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and Smolensk, whereas the Kurs and Sels are to be sought westwards in the region of Vilno. They were divided from the Slavs by the river Pripet with its marshy basin, etc.

A great number of the conclusions here quoted and many others were reached with the help of the researches carried out by the late Lithuanian linguist, K. Buga, and now gathered and published in the: Die Vorgeschichte der Aistischen Baltischen Stamme im Lichte der Ortsnamensforschung. Streitberg Festschrift, 1924. How precise his chronological schemes, constructed linguistically, are, I cannot say; I can only note that they have not been overthrown to this day and that his deep insight into the movements of the Baltic tribes has left a lasting mark on the work of later students. I cannot forget the words said to me by Prof. G. Gerullis: "Er (i.e. Buga) war nicht immer recht metodisch, aber er war genial." His cartographic scheme, too, seems to be made to invite further research and improvement.

Let us quote some sentences of his above mentioned article (p.26):

The vocabulary of the Lithuanian languages possesses, besides the pure Lithuanian elements, one not to be underestimated quantity of non-Lithuanian elements. The numerically outstanding elements are the White-Ruthenian ones, the less numerous ones are the Polish, Russian, German, Latvian. There are a few elements of Gothic, Scandinavian, and Finnish origin.

The primitive domicile of the Lithuanians and Latvians was in the region of the left side affluents of the Pripet, of both sides of the Berezina, and at the northern sector of the Dniepr up to the estuary of the Berezina and up to the region of the sources and upper course of the Sosh. This domicile embraced in such a way the whole province of Minsk, without its southern part, the districts of Senno and Orsha of the province Mohilev, and finally the districts of Bielij, Porechye, Smolensk, and, in part, of Yelnia from the province of Smolensk.

To mention one more work of a general nature, I shall quote Baltische Lande, I, published in 1939, in which we find the article by the Finnish linguist V. Kiparsky, dealing with Baltic languages and complete with a schematic map of the expansion of the Baltic tribes. I have used these

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maps in my History of Latvia, 2nd edition, 1957.

Let us close this list of prewar writers with the name of A. Vasmer. Several of his studies on the subject of our interest are published in Geistige Arbeit series /Nov. 1938/, Beitrage zur historischen Völkerkunde Osteuropas. To be found also in a volume of the Prussian Academy of 1940. The schematic map which completes the articles shows us the ancient Baltic provinces not far from Moscow, Kaluga, etc. Here, the article is entitled: Die alten Bevölkerungsverhältnisse Russlands im Lichte der Sprachforschung. To my knowledge, the conclusions arrived at by Vasmer and his foregoers have not been bettered or contested, except, naturally, by the Soviets, who simply ignore all who do not fall in with their theories.

World War II dealt pitiless blows to the Baltic States and their losses were extremely heavy. The Baltic Problem disappeared for a while from the focus of the world's interest. /see my Latvia and the Baltic Problem, 1954/ and following the Roman saying: inter arma silent musae, the muses of historical research were extraordinarily silent in the 1940's concerning the unfortunate Baltic peoples.

But little by little, things began to look better again. So, at the end of the 1940's, we have two articles by two well known linguists. W.K. Matthews, very well acquainted with the Baltic States, published in the Revue des Études Slaves an article of a general nature: Baltic origins, 1948, and the Finnish linguist, Kiparsky, published in the same journal: Chronologie des relations slavobaltiques et finnobaltiques, 1948. The Alsatian, R. Schmittlein, published the first part of his Toponymie Lithuanienne, 1948. A year later appeared: Atlas to the prehistory of the Slavs by the Polish linguist, K. Jazdzewski, Lodz, 1949. All these **works**

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have in common the once established toponymic approach and the recontrolling and perfecting of the sources. Kiparsky's article underlines the important demographic factor of the Baltic populations (une population clairesemée) which helps us better to understand the movements of the ancient peoples.

As for Jazdzewski's Atlas, I personally feel that the schematic representation of the retreat of the Baltic peoples might be a little premature. In any case, one gets the impression that the actual maps are clearer than their commentaries. Such a conclusion would be risky. But we must, however, admit that the movements of the Baltic peoples in certain directions have become common knowledge to such an extent that one of the newest Atlases, the carefully elaborated Westermann's Atlas zur Weltgeschichte /1956 edit./ registers, without any qualms, the hypothetical contours of this centuries long process. (see tables 34, 48, 49, 50-51, 57, 61, 67, especially the second, third, and fourth.)

The authors of text books on Eastern European history give the prehistoric movements of the Baltic peoples as an established historical fact and, depending on their particular national temperament, also give a more plausible picture of Baltic ancient history than any of the great 19th century text books. One example is Ancient Russia by A. Vernadsky, which has had 4 editions in 10 years. (The last one in 1952.)

The Bolsheviks, naturally, have their own history. We have already mentioned this fact and will do so again. The most blatant fact standing out in this connection is that they completely ignore the results of the studies of place names. Perhaps they feel this method of theirs is scientific in its own right.

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proach which is capable of giving deep insight into the past, at least by encouraging creative thought. Such methods began to appear when the traditional Baltic German historical school started to decline; anything brought forth by this school had a taste of colonialism by which it was characterized, and similar modern approaches were of little use to it. The Lithuanians and ancient Prussians were luckier in this respect. Prof. Lówmianski has tried to define the respective problems in, for instance, Witold Wielki Ksiąze Litewski. Here are some quotations :

The Grand Duchy of Lithuania was composed then /14th century/ of several, densely populated districts, divided one from the other by lines of forests and marshes, extending from the middle zone of the Duchy... Thus, ethnographic Lithuania and Black Russia /i.e. White Russia and the districts of Polesje called Black because of their thick forests/ together with the Minsk region, were like an island, encircled on all sides by a ring of impenetrable forests and marshes.

Further on we read about "the sea of forests and marshes" of the Polesje region. Still further:

Gedimina's land was divided from the regions of the Order by "Wielka Puszcza" (big forest zone). /This is supposed to have been 40 miles long and wide and to have extended along the left bank of the Niemunas as far as the Mazurian lakes and the Gulf of Kurzeme./ On the right bank of the Niemunas was a chain of Lithuanian towns, blocking the access of the Lithuanian land to the crusaders.

Further on the author quotes the well known description by Gilbert de Lannow /1414/.

In this connection I must mention Dr. V. Daugirdaite-Sruogiene's Lietuvos Istorija /Chicago, 1956, p. 137/, in which we see the corresponding cartographic representation. Unfortunately, neither the date nor the author of the map are mentioned.

In order to enrich the overall picture of ancient Lithuania, let us not forget also to mention the description of it given in Pius II, De Europa

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...it is possible to realize how the landscape was gradually transformed into cultivated land by the
 "That is Lithuania hidden by forests /Litva v lesech/," as the Hipatian chronicle has it. Such is also the vision of our homeland, i.e. eastern Courland, where, as our Dainas (folk songs) sing, "Beyond Daugava, there are black forests."

*

Both of the ancient Livonian chronicles, Henricus de Lettis and the Reimchronik, are able to give us an inside view into the peculiar geographical pattern of our ancient land. Some interesting examples of how foreign visitors saw and described it can be found in my Latvieši un Livonija 16.g.s. Generally speaking, those chronicles lack an antropogeographical approach. Nevertheless, in some places certain creative touches of this kind of sensibility appear; this is especially true with the Reimchronik,

The author, for instance, in v. 1906-07 or 2989-2997, speaks with emphasis about manchin bozen walt /several wicked woods/, or manche bose bach /several wicked rivers/. I can imagine the bad feelings of a heavily armored knight in getting over the river Misa, not far from my birthplace, so rich in swampy meadows and hidden or open whirlpools. Between the lands of the Semigallians and the Kurs stretched a wild zone, possibly some kind of a natural frontier, as was usual in those times. Those men who knew the ways or paths from Kuldiga to Dobeles and Tervete were held in high esteem; it follows that without those guides similar passages were perilous /v.9125 sq./: "they wandered among many bad ways, bushes and woods without any goal,/this charming:/ one zil." In the same way, in order to reach the castles of the proud Semigallians one had to get through "different extensive woodlands" /11429/. Here my comments on the map of F. Schwengel, 1928, The Baltic Sea in Ancient Maps, p. 71, may be recorded:

and political footings for the future nation and its state.

...it is possible to realize how the countryside was gradually transformed into cultivated farmland by the sturdy and patient efforts of the Latvian peasant as he followed the course of the rivers, marshes, and waterways.

Our ancient homeland would look, we may guess, as if seen through an opaque glass: woods and woodland, desert plains, swampy extensions; and behind them lived and toiled a singing, living people, very particular in its tastes and its fondness for beauty, like the Welshmen, described by their Gyraldus Cambrensis. In those ever growing "islands" of cultivated land, somewhere in the woody extentions of Eastern Europe, one branch of the old Baltic civilization was born and developed. History knows very little about this origin and development since historical evidence generally begins to flow when a certain development is at its end. Modern anthropogeography, however, in its search of the dark paths of prehistory, can often prepare the way for documented history with its inspiring, if not too fragile formulas.

One example. In the Reimchronik we can observe how the strong castles of the conquerors grew up in many geographical "knots." This is evidence even to the modern reader or observer of the "strategic" fantasy of those peoples. But the archeologists have taught us long ago that those castles of the knights generally rose in spots where before them had stood the old Latvian strongholds built by more ancient military techniques. The so called strategic fantasy evidently has much more ancient, local roots. Following the river courses, examining the geographical disposition of those strongholds, we can surmise the ways and kinds of methods used by the ancient Latvian tribes in penetrating their future homeland. With time and the succession of generations, those fortified places will be overgrown with everyday life, will become, as we call it, civilization: thus, the above mentioned "islands" will become social bases, military and political footings for the future nation and its state.

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Our two ancient chronicles mention those strategic and cultural centers where the conquerors later constructed their castles which cut like hard nails into the "natives." In our country, after the storms that have raged over it during the centuries, those castles today are only miserable ruins, but if one wants to realize their cruel role in the history of the vanquished nations, one can travel through Ireland and Wales, for instance, where the ruthless rule of the Normans comes to life before one's eyes. Let us quote the Reimchronik, v. 8255-8257, where we can listen to the complaints of the known Lithuanian ruler, Traidenis, /kynic thoreiden/, after his unsuccessful assault on the castle Duneburc /Daugavpils, in Latvian, i.e. the castle of the Duna/:

Ir heiden, mir getruwet,
 Dis hus ist gebuwet
 Mitten uf das hertze min.

Compare also v. 5296-5298, where one can read that with the building of such a castle the people of this region "komen schiere in uwere hant" /come straight into the hand of the lord, i.e. become subject to his tyranny./ Henricus, on his part, tells us of similar observations about the castle of Oesel /Osilia/, p. 266, or of the desperate attempt of the Semigallians to tear down the newly built castle of Riga into the river with their ship-ropes /p. 26/. The new chalk and stone building technique was not yet known to them, and later they were often derided in history books for their naivete, but one would do well to think of the difficulties of knowing what kind of ropes and ships there ought to be, and not to forget, by the way, that the invading German traders were unable to smash the trade expansion of those Semigallians, except with the help of the pope himself, Innocent III, i.e. with his official edicts. /p.74/. Neither were the sturdy sea-going Kurs, experts at trade and piracy, able to storm the newbuilt castle of Riga. Yet, they presented a frightening, awesome spectacle. The multitudo paganorum and the exercitus magnus made many hearts tremble and the

Our two ancient chronicles mention those strategic and cultural cen-
 ters where the conquerors later constructed their castles which cut like
 and nails into the "natives". In our country, after the storm that have
 raged over it during the centuries, those castles today are only miserable
 ruins, but if one wants to realize their cruel role in the history of the
 vanquished nations, one can travel through Ireland and Wales, for instance,
 where the ruthless rule of the Normans comes to life before one's eyes.
 Let us quote the Reimchronik, v. 8252-8257, where we can listen to the
 complaints of the known Lithuanian ruler, Traidenis, Avinis traidenis,
 after his unsuccessful assault on the castle Dunebur Daugavpils, in Lat-

lan, i.e. the castle of the Duna:
 Ir beiden mir getruwet,
 Die hus ist gedruwet
 Mitten uf das herze mir.

Compare also v. 2296-2298, where one can read that with the building of
 such a castle the people of this region "kamen schiere in unere hant" (come
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chronicler's style is of epic grandeur in the description of the array of their primitive wooden shields. /p. 140/: Et ut refulsit sol in tabulas albas, resplenduerunt aquae et campi ab eis.

The proud castle of Koknese, for its part, is greatly honored in the writings of Livonian humanists, but is called the younger brother of the Kreml of Moscow in Russian chronicles. It is, by the way, one of the most pictured places in Livonia throughout the centuries.

In a few words, we have yet to recall the role of Livonia's and Courland's waterways in the ancient history of the Baltic tribes, i.e. the political importance of the river basins in ancient times. First of all, we must not forget that our rivers, partly because of the meteorologic influence of the woods, were much more abundant in water than centuries later. The following of them were navigable: Gauja /Henricus, p. 154/, Lielupe, German Kurlandische Aa /Reimchronik, 8035/, which flows by the Mezotne stronghold, and Musa /Henricus, 232/; the Embach river gets the honorable title of the Mater aquarum /Henricus, 162/, the Memel is full of Prussian ships /Reimchronik, v. 3841 sq./. We can, in this connection, realize how stately the Castrum Holm must have looked in the middle of the broad perspective of the Daugava /in medio fluminis situm/. Henricus tries to stress the importance of this waterway, and it is obvious that the desire of the merchants to keep this important way open for their far reaching operations must have been very strong. It is obvious, too, that the dangers to this route from the Lithuanian side were great.

This was the way things looked at the beginning of the 13th century. What times were like, however, when the Varangians pushed eastward centuries ago, carrying with them, as one of their kinsmen in England writes, a sharp sword and a balance for silver and silver coins, we have to figure out with the help of imagination and archeological evidence /see further/.

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Some hints are to be found in Henricus, pp. 146, 166, 168, etc. Livs, Slavs, Varangians, Saxons, Balts, all of them tried to burden the waters of the Daugava -let us remember the many names of this river! - with their pretensions and their purposes. But looking at the role of the river from the historical point of view, what was its most lasting, decisive accomplishment? It seems that the Sarmatica Duna, as the Livonian humanists call it, had to fulfill some special "mission" /a word often used on its shores/. That is, its function was to stir up **rivalties** and struggles, but not, as ancient rivers often did, to educate people on their banks, to develop them socially and politically, to be an efficient cultural stimulant. The romantic songs of the Latvian Risorgimento about "the dear mother Daugava" is sentimental fiction more than anything else.

*

The above quoted A. Kochubinski writes on p. 64:

The Latvian land is a country of a conqueror, gotten from the Livs in the general process of Arianisation; it is a gain only of yesterday: we still hear the languages of the Livs in the mouths of the older generation.

p. 65

But what does the belt in the northern part of the province /guberniya/ of Vilno represent, which embraces the province of Kaunas, i.e. the northern Lithuanian basis of the once Lithuanian-Polish kingdom, and which bolsters itself on the tail of Lithuanian speaking people in the northern part of the province of Grodno? Is it a belt showing the Lithuanian aggression on the White-Ruthenians, or, on the contrary, evidence of a different ethnic stock in past times to the south of this zone? If the Latvians intruded upon the Finns, and the ethnical transformations took place here from south to north, from the marshes to the sea /italics mine, A.Sp./, in this case it would not be reasonable to admit, on the basis of the same observation, an opposite direction for the province of Vilno. At any rate, the destinies of this ethnic belt are very curious...

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But what does the belt in the northern part of the province of Guberniya of Vinnograd, which embraces the province of Kanava, i.e. the northern Lithuanian part of the once Lithuanian-Polish Kingdom, and which borders itself on the left of Lithuanian speaking people in the northern part of the province of Grodno? Is it a belt showing the Lithuanian aggression on the White-Ruthenians, or, on the contrary, evidence of a different ethnic stock in past times to the south of this zone? If the Latvians inducted upon the Finns, and the ethnical transformations took place here from south to north, from the marshes to the sea (Italic wine, A.S.P.), in this case it would not be reasonable to admit, on the basis of the same observation, an opposite direction for the province of Vinnograd. At any rate, the destinies of this ethnic belt are very curious...

The secret, continues the author, will be disclosed by the proper names of the localities. The prehistoric frontiers of ancient Lithuania should

probably be traced as follows :

to the south - the basin of the river Pripet,
to the east - the basin of the river Berezina,
to the west - the upper course of the river Narev,
perhaps the river Western Bug.

This was written in 1897! To be frank, Latvians had very seldom indeed heard similar language, since they were more accustomed to insults in the vein of the known Slavic scholar, Al. Bruckner, who called them nothing less than feig and entartet /Ullsteins Weltgeschichte, 1909, p. 602/.

The destinies of the Latvian branch of the Balts, it must be stressed from the very beginning, were, as far as it is possible to ascertain, were different from those of the other branches. First of all, the texts of their neighbors, or rather enemies, are silent about all of them, except the western Kurs. Consequently, the history books abound with assertions about "the great darkness" of their past, this "darkness" supposedly being the result of the primitive or barbaric level of their ancient civilization. In short, according to historians of the "historic century", i.e. the 19th, the Latvians are a nation without a history. This "darkness", however, can have a cause hitherto unmentioned: their breaking away, their more or less abrupt detachment from the advancing and pressing Russians, and from the sources of their information (chronicles), and it certainly did not happen in too friendly a way. We know how things went in the early history of the Ancient Prussians. We know what kind of "age-old" friendship, as the Soviets put it, was witnessed on the Lithuanian-Russian frontiers. Finally, the manifold rows of ancient castle mounds on Latvian soil, and even beyond the state boundaries of 1939 toward the east, in no way contradict our hypothesis. Perhaps some would venture to say that Nestor /beg.12th cent./ describes magnanimous gestures as imposing tributes even on the Kurs, but modern historians generally feel no compunction to explain such imperialistic wishful thinking.

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would venture to say that Nestor \ beg. 12th cent. \ describes magnanimous

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generally feel no compunction to explain such imperialistic wishful thinking

Observing the political events, we have to point out the existence of a double pressure on the Latvian tribes since at least the 9th century. This double pressure, ethnical and political, in general on the Eastern Baltic shores, is a rather usual occurrence during the past centuries up to our days. The explanations are not hard to find, since the estuary of the Daugava, or, generally, the estuaries of the river flowing in the Baltic Sea, is a natural zone of attraction for contrasting forces, a frontier between a sea and a continent. It is one of the so called passaggi obbligati of Europe, hard to conquer, still harder to keep. And with all these premises, our ancestors chose it as their home, because in the elementary, pitiless struggle for existence they had no other choice if they wanted to remain alive as a nation and not become another White Ruthenia.

The first important historical evidence about the Eastern Latvians is the great victory of the Semigallians over the princes of Polock at the beginning of the 12th century, as told by the Hipatian chronicle. Rimbert gives the first evidence about the Western Latvians, their struggles with the Danes and the Swedes in the second half of the 9th century. Those events already signify some kind of crystallization of certain political developments, i.e. the formation of early Baltic states or tribal states able to resist their aggressive neighbours. Many different events have already occurred around the Daugava, ^{too/} for instance, and as Mr. A. Stender-Petersen has shown, the tales and legends of Saxo Grammaticus are not to be treated so negligibly as they were by the gentlemen of the German Baltic school.

The archeologists, on their part, try to offer us a practically useful chronology of the first political formations of the old Latvians and their relations to the great waterway of the Daugava. Fr. Balodis in his last work, Handelswege nach dem Osten..., puts the following chronological frame on the above mentioned problems /p. 329/:

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The Scandinavian commercial relations with the east and, consequently, with the Latvians fall into two separately shaped periods: during the 8th-10th centuries, certainly the commerce of the transit through the Baltic lands in the direction to the east prevails, but during the 11th-12th centuries the archeological findings give us the evidence of the existence of direct commercial relations between Scandinavia and the Baltic Sea's eastern shores.

The different inhabitants of those shores, continues the author, the Lithuanians, the Livs, and Estonians get to be included in this commerce with the small Latvian states, the Semigallians, the Letts of Livonia, and those of Yersika. I would like to add, in this connection, that, notwithstanding the amount of archeological evidence to the contrary, many historians continue calling these states a Russian principality. The full process of commercial interdependence, concludes Fr. Balodis, is shown in the 11th century.

The Latvian Encyclopedia, interrupted by the invading Bolsheviks in 1940 on the letter T, has to give the following archeological survey about the banks of Daugava. On pages 4754-4756 we find the article, "Archeological finds on the banks of Daugava," and we have to quote the following:

/During the Iron Age, i.e. roughly speaking from the beginning of our era to 1200 A.D., especially in the second half of those centuries/ The commercial road of the Daugava was strongly fortified: on its banks there were 42 castle hills, 17 on the southern, 25 on the northern bank. During the last period, i.e. 800-1200, all of them were inhabited...On the so called Island of Death, called so since World War I, about 100 Arabian dirhems were found.

Our geographical and political considerations are not yet ended.

It was often written and repeated that the Latvian tribes did penetrate into their historical area, coming from the south-east, and that they found the older dwellers, the Livs there. The linguistic influence of those Livs on the development of the Latvian language, for instance, is a known fact. But nobody has bothered to ask, it seems to me, what kind of geographical environment those newcomers had to face. Let us have a close

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Our geographical and political considerations are not yet ended, it was often written and repeated that the Latvian tribes did penetrate into their historical area, coming from the south-east, and that they found the older dwellers, the Livs there. The linguistic influence of those Livs on the development of the Latvian language, for instance, is a known fact. But nobody has bothered to ask, it seems to me, what kind of geographical environment those newcomers had to face. Let us have a close

look at our map and let us ask ourselves where precisely those tribes, who had come from the depth of the continent, found the place, the center, of their political gathering - the point of their political crystallization. For the tribes on the seashore the same question has to be put in a different manner. But for the inland tribes, did not the deep cut into the coast line of Riga, forming two non-symmetrically shaped "horns", prescribe a different political future for both of those "horns", especially at the beginning? Did not the broad and at the same time sharp line of the Daugava, a waterway known already from ancient times (via gentium), efficiently help to maintain a politically divided picture for the numerically small groups of newcomers? Must we not, therefore, admire the tenacious temper of the Latvians that made them become masters of such a geographical situation which was, moreover, complicated by the foresaid double pressure from abroad? It seems to me that the new political creation was at the very beginning destined to break up into several centers, into different points of political gathering in those prehistoric centuries.

But where, if not along the principal riverbeds, could those centers be found in the geographical environment of the ancient Latvian soil with its swamps and woods? But those rivers, as already pointed out in my History of Latvia, are to a certain extent strangers or newcomers, too, on the narrow belt of the heterogeneous coastline on the Baltic Sea. This means that all of them, with only one historically dubious exception, the Gauja, whose sources are on the narrow belt itself, start in foreign, not Baltic lands: Venta and Lielupe in the Lithuanian hinterlands, and the Daugava in Russia, very close to the sources of Russia's two destiny rivers, the Dniepr and the Volga. Thus our Sarmatica Duna carries to the sea a lot of foreign happenings and

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 sources of Russia's two destiny rivers, the Dniepr and the Volga. Thus
 the *Varangian Run* carries to the sea a lot of foreign happenings and

destinies that clash with the age-old aspirations and possible power trends of the local seashore populations, the Balts.

A 16th century learned man's vision is that not all the so-called geopolitical sensibilities are the creations only of modern times.

A. Krantz, the known chronicler, wrote in his Wandalia, 1519, modo suo, naturally, and modo temporum ipsius (lib. VI, cap. IX) :

The Livonians were once Sarmatians, as we said, and, being numerous, they covered far away regions of Tartaria; tribes which, coming from Scythia, expanded into those regions pressed them onto the narrow shore of the sea. But even the regions of Sarmatia were not inhabited by people of only one language, a fact proved by the variety of languages in Livonia. In this narrow province, we (now) find, squeezed together, the languages of many different peoples who, as we said, once lived in a scattered way, etc.

Our learned P. Einhorn (ss.rer.livon. II, 580) has done his best to learn from the farsighted vision of Krantz, but not too successfully as concerns the ancient ethnic denominations :

Liefland haben ehemals die Saracener (sic. A.Sp.), die eine grosse, und durch Tartern allenhalben weit ausgebreitete Natio sind, in gehabt, sind aber von den Volckern, die aus Scythia kommen, in die Enge am Meer getrieben.

Very expressive, indeed: "in die Enge getrieben."

G. Herder (Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit, Buch XVI, cap.4) has instead a better, and also more mystical vision, as his times preferred :

These peoples (the Latvians), living on the shore of the Baltic Sea, are of an unknown origin; taking into consideration all possible probabilities, they were pushed in this direction (i.e. of their actual homes) until they could be pushed no further.

*

Ultimately, we have to return to the fatal question of why the Eastern Slavic expansion, which overflowed such large and broad regions in Eastern Europe (see Niederle's map for the 10th cent), in the first supposed centuries of its development bypassed our narrow and shallow zone by the sea, occupied by Livs-Estonians and Balts?

We read in my History of Latvia, page 105 :

destinies that clash with the age-old aspirations and possible power trends of the local seashore populations, the Baltic.

A 19th century learned man's vision is that not all the so-called geopolitical sensitivities are the creations only of modern times.

A. Kranz, the known chronicler, wrote in his Wandkarte, 1819, modo suo, naturally, and modo temporum ipsius (Iib. VI, cap. IX) :

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Litland haben ehemals die Sarmaten (sic. A. Sp.), die eine grosse, und durch Tartarn allenthalben weit ausgebreitete Nation sind, in gehabt, sind aber von den Völkern, die aus Scythia kommen, in die Enge am Meer getrieben.

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The expansion of the Slavs in the 10th century is represented on two maps attached to Niederle's manual where it is shown as extending from the Elbe as far as Lake Ladoga, and from the Baltic Sea to the Adriatic and Aegean Seas. There remain several ethnic islands, left more or less intact in the vast Slav expansion: (1) that of the Balts and the Estonians, as the most ancient groups (excluding the regions occupied by the Finns in Central and northern Russia, not yet reached by the Slav expansion); (2) that of the Hungarians in the Danube basin, and farther towards the east the lands of the Roumanians. On examining these maps, another picture emerges: that of a vast river which has broken its banks and flooded the huge plains towards the east, its limits being, on the one hand, the Baltic littoral, and the countries bordering on the Danube and the Black Sea on the other.

Those "islands" remained out of the floods not because the Eastern Slavs happened to stop short right there of their well known demographic exuberance, or because their expansionist trends, what today the Marxists call imperialism, came to a halt precisely in this direction. On the contrary, as we have seen, the wishful efforts of Nestor, of Yaroslav the Wise, Ivan the IV, a.s.o., were aimed in just this direction. Let us once again repeat the penetrating words of old Solovjev /I I IX/, eliminating the antiquated part:

The Slavic tribes in their movements from the south to the north /in the direction of Novgorod. A.Sp./ in the middle of the 9th century, nowhere kept hold on the shores of some sea: opposed to the relatively slow movements of the Slavs /Niederle speaks about the Slavic sliding. A.Sp./ we observe the rash movements of the vikings. The Slavs got hold of an important place, i.e. at the outlet of the river Volhov, where Novgorod was founded, but at the other important place, where the Volhov flows into the lake of Ladoga, they could not hold out...The area of the principality of Novgorod is an area of lakes with its most important center, the lake Ilmen. So the natural frontiers of this principality have to coincide with the river system of the lakes Ilmen and Ladoga, and, therefore, we can observe that, in reality, the frontiers of the Novgorod area go through the volok regions of the Volga, Dniepr, and Zapadnaya Dvina /Daugava/ river systems or basins. Obviously, we have to trace those frontiers approximately... The frontiers are marked particularly by the voloks, and nowhere have they such an outstanding importance as here, with us, in Russia, because they, in part, replace the mountain chains.

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In this way it could happen that the craving of the Krivichi, spontaneously aroused by the vikings, /as the older schools used to repeat/, was able to create in this area of rivers, lakes, and swamps not only a commercial passage with different significance in the different coming centuries, but also some kind of natural frontiers between peoples and civilizations. Indeed, if we carefully study the old contemporary texts, we can see that the repeated Russian invasions into the Baltic seashore area could occur /or find their way/ only through two passaggi obbligati, fit for the display of a similar military enterprise. The first one, perhaps the oldest, goes along the Daugava, with a ramification in or from the direction of Vilno and Smolensk, i.e. the way that Prof. Kerner called Napolenon's way to Moscow; the second bypasses Pskov and Izborsk, along the Embach towards Yurev /founded as a Russian city in 1030/, German Dorpat, Estonian Tartu. In the middle, there remained some dubious possibilities of coming through, a thing not too simple during the Dark Ages, i.e. along and across the Lovat and the Velikaya river basins. In due course of time, even those regions turned out not to be insurmountable, and some quotations from Barsov's book were able to show us what kind of Russian penetration should be supposed for them. But those are not regions of quick expansion, but rather of slow penetration. We can realize to a certain degree how things developed, if we study the description of the enterprising baron Herberstein, who was daring enough to choose the shortest, most direct way from Vitebsk to Novgorod. And even if we were not in possession of accounts like the one just mentioned, or if we had not read the desperate sighs of the Russian chroniclers about "the wicked woods," we would come to the conclusion, by studying the respective physical maps and the disposition of the old castle hills, that: jadis, on ne passait pas par ici. With time, naturally, and with the increase of the population, the pressure

In this way it could happen that the craving of the Krivichi, 'spontaneously' aroused by the Vikings, as the older schools used to repeat, was able to create in this area of rivers, lakes, and swamps not only a commercial passage with different significance in the different coming centuries, but also some kind of natural frontiers between peoples and civilizations. Indeed, if we carefully study the old contemporary texts, we can see that the repeated Russian invasions into the Baltic seashore area could occur /or find their way/ only through two passages obligati, fit for the display of a similar military enterprise. The first one, perhaps the oldest, goes along the Dvina, with a ramification in or from the direction of Vilno and Smolensk, i.e. the way that Prof. Kerner called Napoleon's way to Moscow; the second bypasses Pskov and Izborak, along the Embach towards Yurev /founded as a Russian city in 1030/, German Dorpat, Estonian Tartu. In the middle, there remained some dubious possibilities of coming through, a thing not too simple during the Dark Ages, i.e. along and across the Lovat and the Velikaya river basins. In due course of time, even these regions turned out not to be impassable, and some quotations from Barsov's book were able to show us what kind of Russian penetration should be supposed for them. But those are not regions of quick expansion, but rather of slow penetration. We can realize to a certain degree how things developed, if we study the description of the enterprising baron Herberstein, who was daring enough to choose the shortest, most direct way from Vitebsk to Novgorod. And even if we were not in possession of accounts like the one just mentioned, or if we had not read the desperate sighs of the Russian chroniclers about "the wicked woods", we would come to the conclusion, by studying the respective physical maps and the disposition of the old castle hills, that: Jadis, on ne passait pas par ici. With time, naturally, and with the increase of the population, the pressure

from inside increases too, and the whole area becomes humanized little by little. Thus, the once natural frontiers may in this way be transformed into zones of penetration.

The linguists dealing with the Baltic-Slavic problems are of different opinions concerning the primitive relationship between those two groups of languages, i.e. their primitive linguistic unity or some chronological juxtaposition of both language groups. It is not a matter of my knowledge, so I shall limit myself to quoting one of the known authorities in this field. A. Senn in his On the degree of kinship between Slavic and Baltic writes as follows:

When the primitive Indo-European unity dissolved, the Balts and the Slavs became separated from each other by an immense lake /which later dried up as a result of a slow, but continuous rise of the soil/ and a large impenetrable marshy country, the present day bogs of White Russia. The Baltic people settled to the northeast and north of that lake, between Vilna and Moscow, while the Slavs had their homes between the lake and the Carpathian Mountains. Later, the Slavs expanded their territory eastward and northward and about 300-200 B.C., perhaps a thousand years after this separation, Balts and Slavs became neighbours once more. The Baltic tribes now were more and more pushed to the west, into lands inhabited by the Finns, until they finally reached the Baltic Sea. But in their old homes between Vilna and Moscow, where everything is Slavic now, they had left some traces in the form of Baltic river- and place names.

All these assertions are very probable, and the prehistoric chronologies of K. Buga /see above/ have not, as far as I know, been decidedly rejected up to now. But at least one issue remains without clarification: the moral side of the difference between Baltic and Slavic popular tradition, as stressed already by E. Réclus and, in part, also by I. Kant. At any rate, the persistent Russian sexual perversity - I myself was able to find some example of it even in 16th century texts - is alien to the Baltic practice, old and new.

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The Latvian tribes had, in the course of time, to yield sometimes to Russian pressure, "to submit to the Russian princes, but not to the Russian

people", as old S. Solovjev honestly states. Yet, the Latvian tribes constantly tried to escape from Russian domination, to get rid of this political impact, and, by the way, of "the light" of the publicity of their ancient chronicles, demonstrating in this way their "more active nature." The much quoted Kochubinski expressed this "active nature" with a term unusual in historiography. He speaks of "their way of victory" against Livonia's and Courland's Livs. But those analyses were known only by the linguists. Meanwhile, the Lithuanian counterblows in the 14th and 15th centuries were all the general reader knew about Baltic resistance in the eastern direction.

Now we have to define this Latvian "more active nature," as seen and formulated by some linguists of international renown. A. Meillet has stressed it many times, and his description sounds like this /Les langues dans l'Europe Nouvelle/ regarding the temper of the Latvians :

there are fewer archaisms in their language compared with the language of the Lithuanians. Every language changes more quickly if spoken by a more active and mobile people, which rejuvenates itself in a larger measure.

V. Kiparsky, on his part, describes the differences between the two surviving Baltic languages with the following words /Baltische Lande, I/ :

The outstanding Latvian phonetic innovations compel us to consider this language as modern as, for instance, the Romance languages compared with the Latin. The most characteristic fact is the shift of the stress from the free syllable's place in the Lithuanian to the first syllable in Latvian. Without doubt, it is due to the influence of Finnish phonetics, because, as is known, the Latvian language is spoken today in major part in the former territory of the Finnish tribes.

Kiparsky notes even more the fact in Latvian of dropping the final syllables, the change of K and G sounds into C and Dz, and also the changes of AN into UO, EN into IE, u into in, i /this last change in the years between 900 and 1150/. Those phonetic changes, considered historically, compel us to imagine strong external shocks and shifts which confounded the pri-

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mitive Baltic, naturally very hybrid linguistic unity, unsettling some groups of peoples in their search for easier or better destinies.

G. Devoto finally in Lettonia. Il Mondo d'Oggi defines all those changes in the following manner:

The common Baltic period came to its end in the first centuries of the Christian era, but the formation of smaller national kernels with their own power of influencing other neighbouring unities and in fixing the use of some innovations, we can guess to have happened chronologically together with those territorial shifts /migrations/ at the end of which we observe the emerging of the Baltic languages in their final shape about the 8th century A.D.

Specialists in matters of our folk songs attribute the creation of the poetical form of our Dainas to the same 8th century.

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I would like to conclude with a quotation which synthesizes the development of the problems we are treating. Prof. V. Kiparsky in his Oxford lecture, The earliest contacts of the Russians with the Finns and Balts, comes to conclusions of this kind:

p. 78-79 ...the Slavonic /Old Russian/ loan words in both the West Finnic and in the Baltic languages appear to us to reflect the same historical process - the Russian advance towards the Baltic. Furthermore, we think it likely that the Proto-Russians, after leaving the first Slavonic homeland /somewhere in White Russia and central and eastern Poland between the Carpathians and the Pripet marshes/, moved due north along the Lovat and the Volkhov to Lake Ladoga, and along the Velikaya to Lake Pskov. The oldest russified place-names of Finnish, Vodian, or Estonian origin are found precisely between these two lakes, for example, Luga - Finnish, Laukaan-joki /with Russian u for Finnish au; in later loan words and place names foreign au is usually represented by Russian ov, av, e.g. Kovno - Lithuanian, Kaunas, Avgust - August, etc/. After taking possession of this area, the Russians spread towards the west and south west, to Lettish and Lithuanian lands.

This hypothesis is in agreement with such fragmentary historical data as we possess. In A.D. 862, Truvor the Varangian is recorded as coming with his "Russians" to

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Izborsk /near Pskov/, on the Estonian linguistic frontier; in 1030 Yaroslav the Wise established the city of Yurev /German, Dorpat, Estonian, Tartu/ in Estonia, naming it after his patron saint; and at the beginning of the 13th century there were Russian military strongholds at Gerzike and Kukenois on the Dvina, about 50 miles from the Bay of Riga. It is also confirmed by recent Soviet archaeological research: "Novgorodskie sopki" /ancient Russian tumuli/ attributed to the 6th or 7th centuries have been found in the Lake Ilmen area, and remains of a Slavonic population of the 7th or 8th century have been discovered at Staraya Ladoga /the Aldeigjuborg of the Scandinavians/, near Lake Ladoga /those facts, the author takes, as he asserts, from V.V. Mavrodin's book, Obrazovaniye drevnerusskago gosudarstva, Leningrad, 1945, p. 81-82, A.Sp./.

All this implies that the Baltic population, which is generally admitted to have been native to the Polotsk-Vitebsk area, was very sparse; otherwise, more traces would have survived in both the Baltic and the Slavonic languages, of ancient contacts between the two peoples, dating from the period when the Slavs crossed the Polotsk-Vitebsk area.

I have to add two kinds of remarks to Prof. Kiparsky's statements. First, as do all of those who do not like to take into consideration the research work done by Latvian archeologists /a full report of the excavations of 1939 is given by Prof. Fr. Balodis; see Bibliography sub Balodis/, he seems to evaluate the happenings at Gerzike in a rather simplified way. This simplified way fits the Russian views well, too. The second remark concerns the chronologies of Mavrodin, accepted by Kiparsky without criticism. Without any intention to plunge into deep discussions about those complicated chronologies, (and, as we know, Mavrodin had to defend himself against his critics), I shall only remind the reader that the Bolshevik ~~ix~~ prehistorians are particularly interested in insisting on the ancientness of the chronological terms concerning Novgorod, using them as ideological tools against their hated Norman theory. Their assertions must always be checked.

Now, some words about the content itself of the quotation. We will recall many things touched upon in the previous pages, as, for instance,

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I would, finally, like to repeat the already many times quoted lines of the Reimchronik about the particular national character of the Latvians who with personal courage attacked the woody and lonely geographical environment of their new homeland /v. 341-345/ :

Da nach liet ein ander lant,
 Die sint letten genant:
 Die heidenschaft hat spehe site.
 Sie wonet note ein ander mite,
 Sie buwen besunder in manchen walt.

/There nearby lies another land,
 Its people are called Latvians.
 Those heathen have an exploring-cunning habit,
 They do not live in community with other people
 (Literally: in the middle of...)
 They do build their homes in many woods./

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 Die heidenacht hat spate site,
 Sie wohnt not ein ander mite,
 Sie buwen besunder in wachen walt.
 (There nearby lies another land,
 Its people are called Latvians.
 Those heathen have an exploring-sounding habit
 They do not live in community with other people
 (Literally: in the middle of...)
 They do build their homes in many woods.)

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In the last years polemics, i.e. various contrasting views regarding the Gnezdovo burial mounds have been revived; as a matter of fact they never quite ended. The fact alone that various scholars have expounded different statistics about the number of these burial places, shows how far indeed we are from any definite conclusions as to the solving of these problems. At the same time we must submit, however, that these problems concern almost solely the Varangian-Viking period, not earlier centuries.

The newest findings appear to be the most revolutionary: G. H. Sawyer, The Age of the Vikings, London 1962. There, in some instances, is a tendency to change in its very substance the "classic" image of the Viking in scientific literature. Concerning Gnezdovo directly, the author seems to follow in the footsteps of the Bolshevik archaeologists, and the information more or less corresponds to the general line of his book not to exaggerate either the role of the Vikings played in their time, nor their characteristics and savage deeds. At this point, his criticism is directed especially towards the opinions of two well known researchers: J. Brömsted and H. Arbman. Since all these contrasting opinions no longer touch upon problems of our interest directly, I shall draw the interested reader's attention to some respective pages of the recent books of these two above mentioned authors : J. Brömsted's The Vikings (a Pelican

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... In his iconoclasm Mr. Sawyer has been led to make a number of indefensible statements. He has, for instance, completely swallowed the Russian interpretation of the Viking role in Russia. He claims, for example, that the northern element in the Gnezdovo grave-field "has been greatly exaggerated", without describing the finds or advancing any concrete argument to counter the traditional view of Scandinavian scholars. It is true that the Viking character of the Gnezdovo grave-field has been exaggerated by Brøsted, but Arbman's arguments, which Mr. Sawyer dismisses in a sentence, are so widely held to be true by western scholars that they deserve more respect than that given them here. The fact remains that many of the female graves of the Gnezdovo cemetery contain oval brooches which, even if not made in Scandinavia, indicate a Scandinavian fashion, while the grave-form itself is Swedish and the inventory of grave-goods contains many objects which are undoubtedly of Swedish origin, or were made to a Swedish pattern.

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The question rises: what about the ancient Balts? In these books we will find very little which concerns us directly. Both Scandinavian authors are mindful enough to mention the well known excavations at Grobina, especially the first author, the gentleman from Denmark, who tries to draw some general conclusions from the excavated finds as to the chronology of the Swedish Varangian expansion in the easterly direction, and as to its ways in the ancient Kurish territory (pages 19 - 20). The Swedish gentleman, without mentioning the Grobini excavations (p. 28), displays the Varangian trade route map of Eastern Europe (p.p. 76 - 77), but it corresponds only in part to what we read in our Chapter I. Also Mr. Sawyer mentions in a few places the ancient Balts, for instance, p.p. 26, 190, and further, but in the context one cannot unfortunately get a clear picture how well, if at all, the author is acquainted with the ancient Baltic problem.

At this instance it would be in order to mention one more thorough study, The Northern Seas. Shipping and Commerce in Northern Europe A.D. 300 - 1100, by Archibald R. Lewis /Princeton, 1958/. This is one of the recent studies where also our coastline, as a natural part of the Baltic Sea gulf (basin), gets proper attention. There, the author is trying to explore even material obtained from the school of the younger generation of Baltic historians, and if there his possibilities in this respect are limited and uncertain, he cannot be blamed for it. The same approach, as to the validity of the data, can be applied mentioning a somewhat earlier study of Lucien Musset, Les Peuples Scandinaves au Moyen Âge, Paris, Presses Universitaires, 1951.

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In 1962, the White-Russian SSR Academy in Minsk published a book: Polozk. Istoričeski; Očerk. The Foreword to this book begins with the following sentences: "In 1962 the Polozk working people mark the 1100th anniversary of the foundation of their home town. The town of Polozk has its great history..." Interesting indeed, and not only to the working people of Polozk, but also to us, Balts. Our interests are, however, very little satisfied, because this edition is dedicated exclusively to the working people of this town, i.e. to their existence in the paradise of the Communist empire.

I shall quote here just one example about the distortions of the historical facts. On pages 11 - 12 we read that the territory of the Polozk region in the eleventh and twelfth centuries "stretched almost up to the Gulf of Riga, including towns of the present-day Latvian territory - Koknese and Jersika (in ancient texts : Kukencis i Gersike)."

The authors, no doubt, must know the Nestor Chronicle well, but conceal the true story of how the Princes of Polozk lost heavily the battle against the Sengallians. This story would not fit very well into the party line, consequently, - a taboo for the western ear.

The actual text in the original reads, as follows :

"Lieta 6614 (i.e. 1106) ... tomeže lietie podedisha Zimegola Vseslavičj, vsju bratju, i družini ubisha 9 tisjachj"...
/Year 6614 (i.e. 1106)... in the same year brothers Vseslavičji'i invaded Sengallia, but were defeated, and of their men 9000 were killed/.

In the pre-Revolution writings of the Russian historians matters looked different. In the works of Daniliewicz, for instance, and others, also in the book of our Latvian historian, K. Stalsans, one can sense, even see, the ancient Baltic connections with those regions.

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A few words must be said about the recent book of the well known Soviet historian, V. T. Pashuto - Obrazovaniye Litovskogo Gosudarstva, Moskva, 1959

Every researcher of ancient Baltic history must get acquainted with the large, even vast amount of historical sources used in this book. How complete these sources are, I cannot venture to say. Another important reason for the necessity of examining this work is that in his study, which must have cost the author many years of hard work, for the first time, if I am not mistaken, he has not only listed, but discussed as well, in a sensible and correct form, without any of the usual tiresome contempt and discrimination, a great number of the works of the so-called "bourgeois"-historians. This entirely new approach of the Soviet historians is expressed in an especially interesting manner in the second part of the book, called Historiography (Russian, Polish, Lithuanian, German and, finally, national-democratic, - the latter forming perhaps a table of contents to the next part).

The author's guide-line all through this vast material is his dogmatic stand, and from this point he proceeds to scrutinize the huge amount of books on Lithuania's ancient history. There is one exception, however, and obviously a very characteristic one: omission of the names of Latvian historians abroad.

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They are definitely not listed, whereas the names of German-Baltic historians, even if only a few, appear. This fact must have some significance, some special reasons.

I do not intend to write a book review here, I would merely want to establish today's trends in the research work on ancient Baltic history. Nevertheless, I would like to bring up one example of Mr. Pashuto's dogmatic line, because it is the most characteristic one in his whole approach. On page 191 we read about a very little heard of Russian historian who discusses Lithuanian ancient history in the tone used by the officers of Tsar Nicholas I's gendarmerie. Pashuto's reaction to this tone is: "in his words one can sense the last imperialistic historiographical voice on Lithuania, a voice long faded away into the past. After the glorious socialist October revolution, the imperialistic views have become the heritage of the emigrants abroad."

How touching indeed! At the present time, the loud voice of the historic spokesman for "the greatest colonial empire", as the USSR is called today everywhere, is blaming those emigrants for their imperialistic views, who at the expense of great longings, suffering and hardships work to defend the rights of their country, the sovereign rights of countries freed from the Russian imperialistic grip, and who try to restore independence to their native land. Of course, paper can hold everything, and thus our distinguished author decides for himself where the instructions he has received for his writings end and where he can start

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On the Latvian side, however, we have not yet come far enough to enjoy the spirit of the new trend. The reasons for this cannot be so easily explained, but, as I mentioned before, there must be a special motive.

Only last year, in January 1962, the Journal of Central European Affairs published my review on the book The History of the Latvian SSR, in three volumes. There one can see that none of the new winds was blowing in our native land, not even the slightest breeze to indicate that a minimum of attention has been awarded the works of the Latvian emigre historians abroad, not even in a negative way. A total totschweigen from that direction. The strange signs in Pashuto's book, however, makes one think of the marked ostracism toward the recent extensive research work done by Latvian emigre historians, and this ostracism cannot be too helpful in the search for historical truth, because a great number of their books published were received favorably by the western critics.

Something of a first lark, however, although in the archaeological and ethnographical field only, can be mentioned the following edition: Voprosi etnicheskoy istoriyi narodov Pribaltiki po dannim archeologiyi, etnografiyi i antropologiyi, pod redaktsiyey S. A. Tarakanovoy i L. N. Terentyevoy. Moskva 1959.

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This work (The Problem of the Ethnic History of the Baltic Peoples) deserves our attention for several reasons, the most important being that this first volume seems to indicate a new trend in archaeological research. The authors, especially those of Baltic stock, have quoted freely the once strictly forbidden research works of the bourgeois element. If this trend can continue, the scholarly tradition existing **prior** to World War II, might in some way be restored. For historians, however, such freedom is still impossible.

Another encouraging aspect is the systematic accumulation of archaeological evidence from the almost unexplored zone to the east of the Latvian and Lithuanian national frontiers. We hope this evidence will help to create a clearer picture of the prehistoric happenings in an area where there has been so much nationalistic misunderstanding, distrust, ill will, or simple ignorance. There are, moreover, pages with a new and interesting approach to the Yatvingian question (p. 540 - 41).

In at least two places the book indicates that finally the problem of Slavic secular penetration into Baltic prehistoric territories, and the toponymic method (without indicating the promoters, however) are being recognized even in Soviet studies. Perhaps scholars like M. Vasmer, V. Kiparsky, whose linguistic maps are shown also in my History of Latvia (2nd ed., 1957, p. 29), and others, may find themselves being quoted one day by archaeologists from the other side of the Iron Curtain.

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With understandable interest I examined the book, mentioned here below, which I found quite by accident in a Polish bibliography: A. Kamiński, *Jaćwież*. Łódź, 1953.

No wonder that similar "discoveries" may catch one by surprise. In the wide world there are not many books written in the Polish language which have passed through readers' hands. Furthermore, the publisher of this book - Societas Litterarum Lodziensis - happens to be in a provincial Polish town, consequently, not too well known.

The author, a Polish archaeologist, has taken up an honorable mission, as he writes (p. 191) :

A la suite de la seconde guerre mondiale, la principale partie du pays des Jatviegien s'est trouvée sur le territoire de la Pologne populaire (sic A.Sp.). Ce fait impose à la science polonaise la tâche d'étudier l'histoire et la culture de ce peuple. C'est d'autant plus important que les derniers travaux synthétiques consacrés à la Jatviegie ont paru il y a presque cent ans... Et le but essentiel de cette étude est de créer une base réelle pour l'étape nouvelle et proche, principalement archéologique des études sur la Jatviegie.
/The same in Polish, p. 9, etc./

To gather the tiny bits of information, broken-up through the ages and scattered in all directions, in order to present a monographic survey on the ancient Jatvingians and their problems, is no easy task. Therefore, the author deserves all the credit for his accomplished work. He has collected a great number (about 180) bibliographic notes, records, letters, etc., in other words, material which especially in our day, in a broader sense, is within the reach of few. His work, therefore, is to be considered as the first later-day summary of this kind after a hundred-year period, counting from the last known Sjögren thesis, which the author

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calls głosny (considerable).

How "clear" the even elementary topographic data on this vanished Baltic tribe can be, we may judge from two maps drawn up by the author and attached to his book. The reader who does not know the Polish language, may get, however, some help from the summaries in French to be found in the last pages of the book.

In the same connection, I would like to mention some recent studies of Polish Arabists, including several books by T. Lewicky. These researches, it is interesting to note, are concentrated on the Arab dirhams and deposits. The learned commentators have brought some new light into the ancient Baltic connections, and we no longer have to be fed by the host and more often stupid elaborations of the several Russian chronicles, such as the one, for example, we find in Chapter IV, 4, about the Yatvingians and the Old Prussians.

*

Jan Natanson-Leski, Rozwój Terytorialny Polski do roku 1572, Warszawa 1907

In effect it is a very helpful book, also thanks to the carefully drawn maps, for the ancient history of Poland. But as in some geographical sectors the ancient Polish and Old Prussian territories lay adjacent, and, as we know from ancient evidence, these peoples were not the most peace-loving ones, it is interesting to observe how the known Polish historian defines, in the light of modern knowledge, those frontiers and, consequently, the resulting relations between the neighboring Poles and Old Prussians. The characteristics of the geographical environment seem convincing, but the characteristics of the old Baltic tribes, let us say, are only partly correct, for instance see p.p. 18-19. His account of the martyrdom of Wojciech-Adalbert (p. 25) just as the recently much disputed trends by Polish historians to evaluate the role of Konrad of Mazovia deserve due attention (p.p. 50 - 51).

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In 1963 appeared Dr. M. Gimbutas book, The Balts, in the known series Ancient Peoples and Places, General Editor Glyn Daniel. For those who are not too familiar with the writings on the Baltic problem, the following words of presentation, printed on the jacket of the book, should be quoted :

Dr. Gimbutas has given us the first complete record of the Balts from their arrival on the Baltic coast to the emergence of the Lithuanian State in the thirteenth century A.D., that has ever been published in any language.

It does not mean that the Baltic historiography is poor or inadequate. The contrary is rather the case, as can be seen from the voluminous bibliographic works containing an enormous range of books, particularly in German, Polish, Russian, Swedish and other languages. But all these writings bear a definite mark of prejudice and subordination to the point of view of the various invaders and conquerors of the Baltic coast, abounding with deep and unsettled controversies. Mrs. Gimbutas book offers us a general, so to say inside look from a strictly Baltic point of view, and this is the author's first and essential merit.

Whatever this book may cause, appreciation or criticism, I myself, not being a specialist in these matters, would like to stress, however, the real and true Baltic overtones which were not to be found in the learned books of alien scholars who are now often generous and sympathetic toward the Baltic cause, but who only a few generations ago were full of colonial smirk, with a

In this way we want to discover the source of the strength of that small, brave folk who were able to oppose the only powerful Lithuania and Poland but also the victorious knights of western Europe who fought under the banners of the Teutonic Order.

In 1967 appeared Dr. M. Gidycz's book, The Baltic, in the known series Anglo-Polish and Polish, General Editor Glyn Daniel. For those who are not too familiar with the writings on the Baltic problem, the following words of presentation, printed on the jacket of the book, should be quoted:

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Another merit of Dr. Gimbutas book to be stressed is the mentioning of the wide range of events and the evaluation especially of the most ancient times. This is of particular importance, because for many, alas too many, scholars, the Baltic prehistory as such simply did not exist, regardless of historical evidence, not too extensive, yet evidence, and regardless of different archaeological and linguistic proofs.

For further studies the most recent bibliography, so richly quoted in Gimbutas book, is very useful. Here I would like to emphasize two points. First, the interest which modern Polish archaeologists show for the long ago extinct Prussian tribes whose territories now lie inside the Polish frontiers. I have already quoted the book of A. Kamiński. Likewise, the name of J. Antoniewicz, who directs the excavations "in ancient Baltic Sudovian lands" (Gimbutas, p. 19), must also be added. The American reader may obtain some information on the subject from his short article in the Archeology, Autumn 1958 issue. Recently I was fortunate to obtain also his book The Sudavians, Białystock, 1962. This booklet of only 20 pages of text, with some maps and many illustrations, is some kind of expansion of the quoted article. What is very important for the Baltic cause, is the promise of an "extended investigation plan" for the future. That they are not empty words, can be seen from the bibliography about the respective problems, mostly in the Polish language. The approach to the old Balt past is deeply sympathetic (p. 14) :

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Now some remarks have to be made about a linguistic research work of considerable scholarly qualities written by a Russian linguist; it shows a remarkable switch, even an entirely new trend which only a few years ago for the Bolshevik so-called scientists of those years would have been simply impossible. What has happened in this Alice's Wonderland, expression once used by a well known American scholar, I do not know. But evidently something must have happened, because the book is edited by the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. Its title: Linguisticheskij Analiz Hydronymov Verhnego Podneprovya, by B. N. Toporov, 1962. A linguistic analysis of the names of rivers, lakes etc. of the region of the Upper Dniepr. It is a good and penetrating linguistic analysis, an abundant collection of respective names proper, without the once used, highly stilted abuse of the national-bourgeois sciences, with quotations of all available authorities in the field of toponomy (earlier carefully avoided), and with the acceptance and demonstration of the Slavic penetration into former Baltic lands supported by rich material of names proper, etc., etc. Truthfully, to me it was, as the Germans say, ein Erlebniss, after all that I had to write in some of my previous chapters.

Some quotations from this book will illustrate the guidelines of the Russian linguist's work (p. 173) :

If we take into consideration the general types of word-forming elements to be found in the names of rivers, lakes etc. /the Russian word is hydronyms/ of the upper part of the basin of the Dniepr, and if we analyze also the different types of Balto-Slavic names for rivers, lakes, etc., together with the fact that even the small rivers and many

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names of settlements have Baltic names /and the names of settlements can relatively change in the course of time/, we have a good basis to come to a very important conclusion from our point of view. The main point of the conclusion is the following: the Baltic ethnic stock in the upper part of the river Dniepr did recede to a considerable degree to the NW, whereas the Eastern Slavic tribes moved to the north.

Evidently the Slavic movements took place as some kind of natural, gradual penetration into Baltic regions with assimilation tendencies toward the Baltic peoples who lived there; it could have happened in different periods and in different places of the territory in question. We have to surmise that even at times when the Slavic penetration had reached regions far beyond those of the upper Dniepr, yet on the Baltic territory remained many islands of the Baltic stock where the population, passing through a period of bilingual existence, finally changed the course toward the Russian language, but left from its side in the speech and ethnographic peculiarities of the local population some traces from which we might realize that on these territories, taken over by the Slavs, there have ceased to exist several autonomous Baltic dialects different from those we know. Those dialects, as we should suppose, continued to exist, even in reduced terms, a relatively long time, i.e. till the beginning of the second millenium A.D.

The Slavic tribes, says the author (p.244), did come from the regions of the left bank of the Dniepr, and only later, already under the eyes of history, they began to move northward pushing out or assimilating the more ancient peoples.

All this seems to sound reasonable, except what I have to say in my comments to page 16. Furthermore, the large amount of linguistic documentation is in itself a serious contribution to the solution of the problem. But the general idea, as presented, is not new. Let us recall L. Niederle's "glyding movements" of the early Slav expansion, and Barsow's acute, for his time, remarks, or Engel's "Unterwanderung" and so on.

And one more quotation (p. 16) :

It should be extremely interesting to analyze as accurately as possible the reciprocal relations between the Balts and the Slavs, and more so because there is a possibility to assume that a massive expulsion of the Balts did not take place in the direction of their later dwelling places.

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This statement does not convince me. Firstly, it tries, in part, to avoid the general trend of the Baltic movements from SE to NW (see above), and, secondly, it does not seem to take into consideration the secular, hostile clashes between the Balts and the Slavs, such as we have seen them, for instance, reproduced sometimes in the old Russian chronicles. To my ears the statement, in short, sounds too "lyrical."

In our days - the unhappiest days for the Balts -- there is another more or less violent Slavic penetration into the Baltic lands, now called Russification, and not a few papers and articles are or will be written from the Russian or the Russofile side about the "ideal coexistence" between Russians, Latvians and Lithuanians in the Soviet occupied Baltic States. However, all this writing cannot convince either us, nor many other peoples in the world.

It is far from my desire to insinuate to the authors similar political intentions so-to-speak "between the lines", however, statements and guessings, such as the quoted ones, are simply unacceptable without further research and investigation.

Prof. Antoniewicz writes (pp. 112-113): "There is our task to observe it from the period when the historical catastrophe came for the Yatvingians, it would be possible to find out their further destinies in those regions."

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As the last in this ex tempore examination may be mentioned the Acta Baltico-Slavica I, Pamiętnik i Konferencji Nauk Historycznych w Białymstoku, Białystok, 1964. This publication deserves a particular interest from the side of the Baltic historians, because a large group of Polish archaeologists and linguists, as well as historians have studied with best intentions the remains of the old Baltic tribes, the Sudovians-Yatvingians, whose territories now are included in the frontier of Poland. Their language in itself and in its probable influence on the early developments of the Polish language, are studied with best possible methods and with objective minds, just as their early places, their relations with neighbors, etc., are subjects of special researchers, and one of those scholars has truthfully the right to say that the Yatvingians received such attention from them "as never before in their tragic history" /p. 274/.

The Sudovian-Yatvingian problem in its true historical connection comes to light by those researchers, particularly by Prof. J. Antoniewicz, the spiritus rector, who started the great enterprise of approaching the historical role of this heroic Baltic tribe further inquiry of which had seemingly been terminated by the fateful statement once put forth by the Russian chronicle, i.e. that after the combined Polish-Russian efforts to crush the Sudovian-Yatvingian nation, it "ceased to exist."

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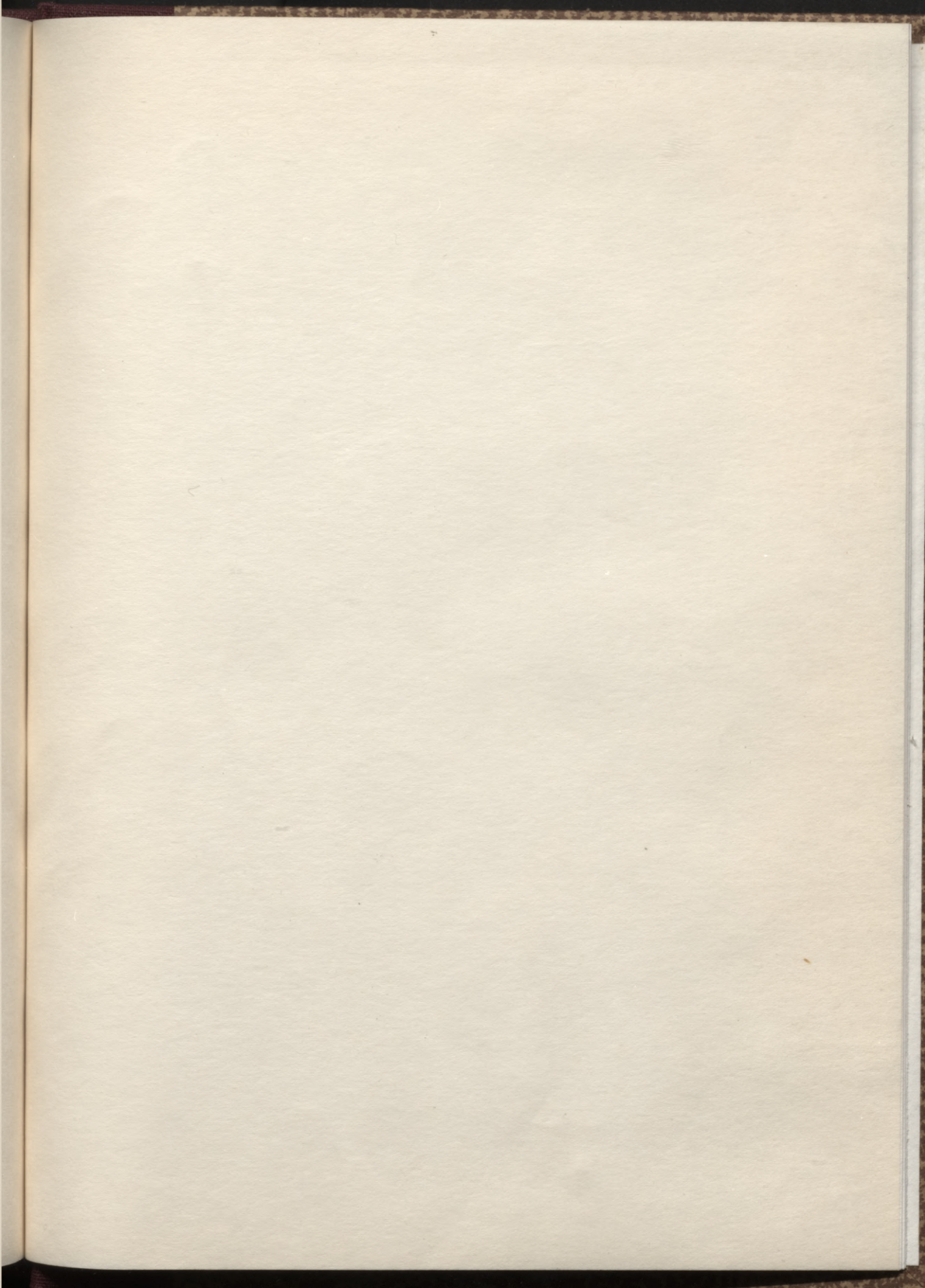
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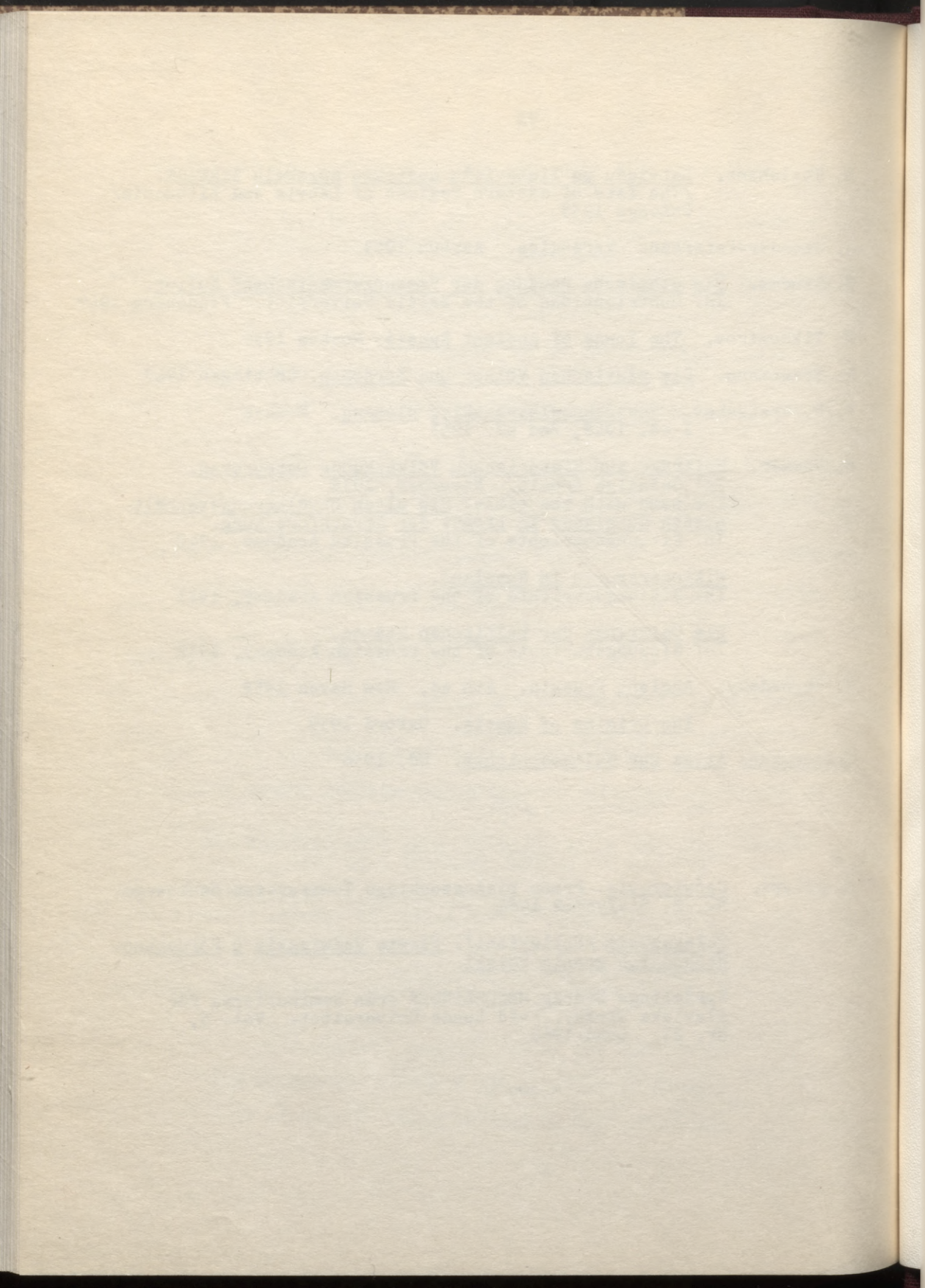
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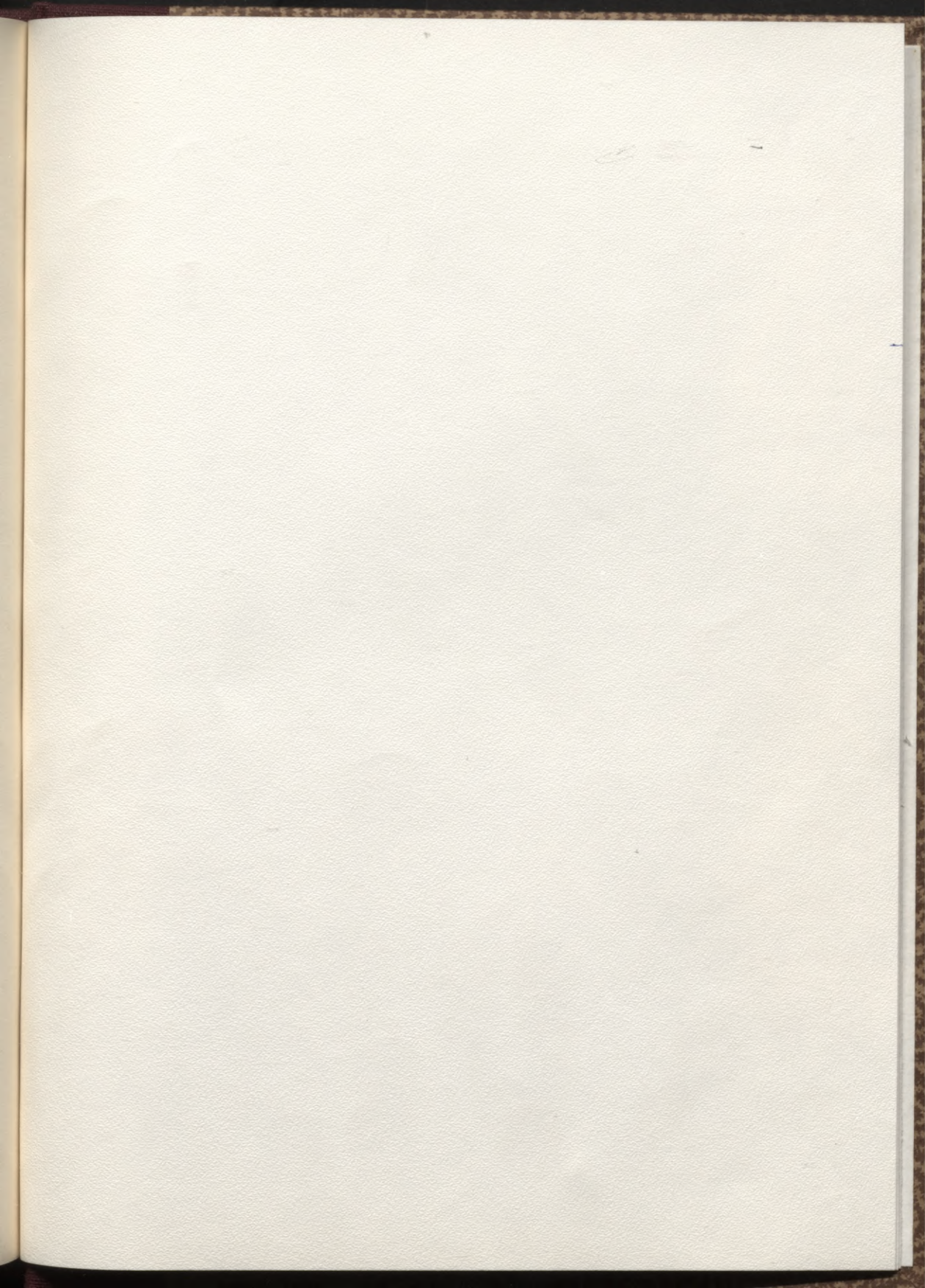
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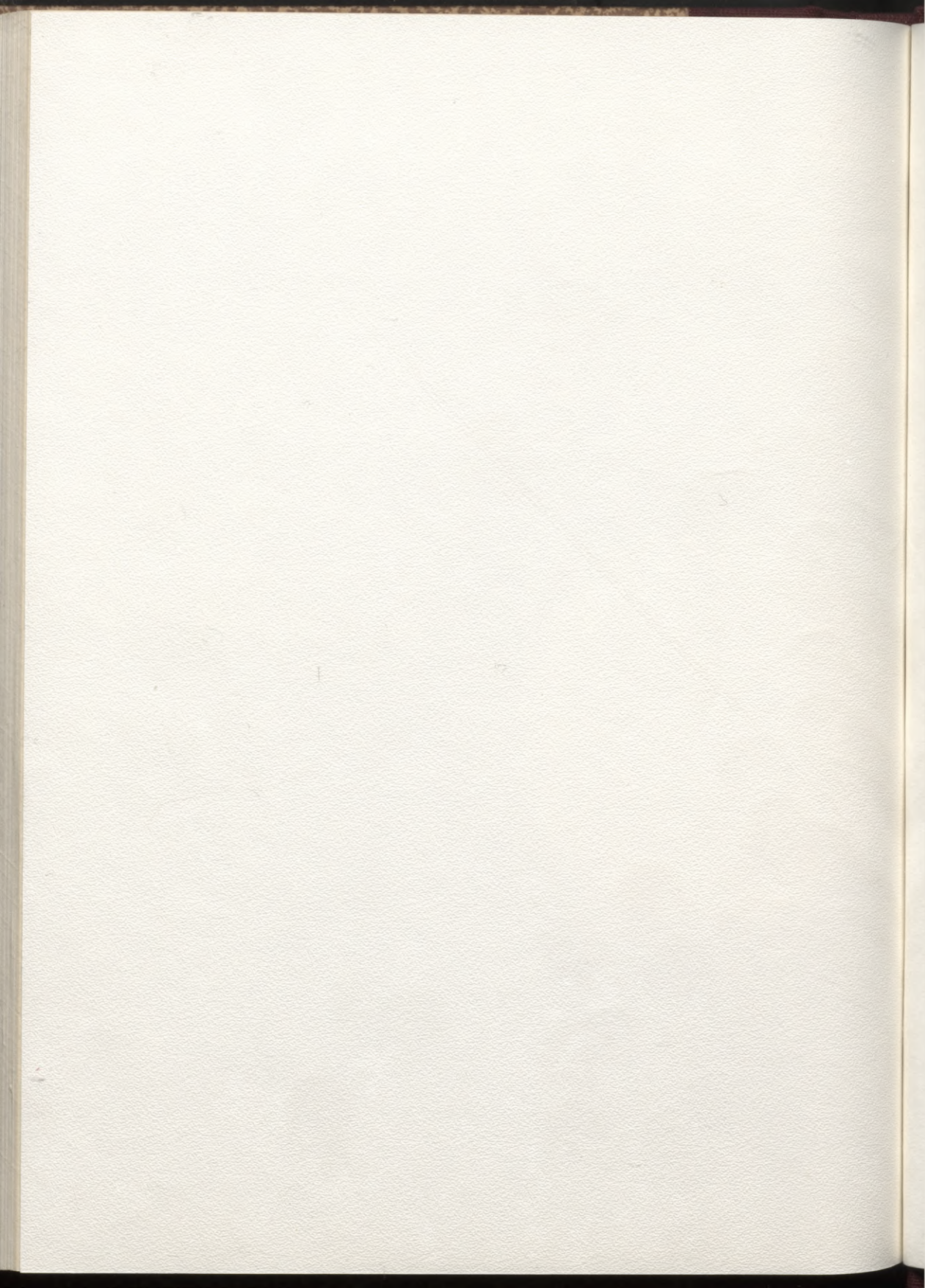
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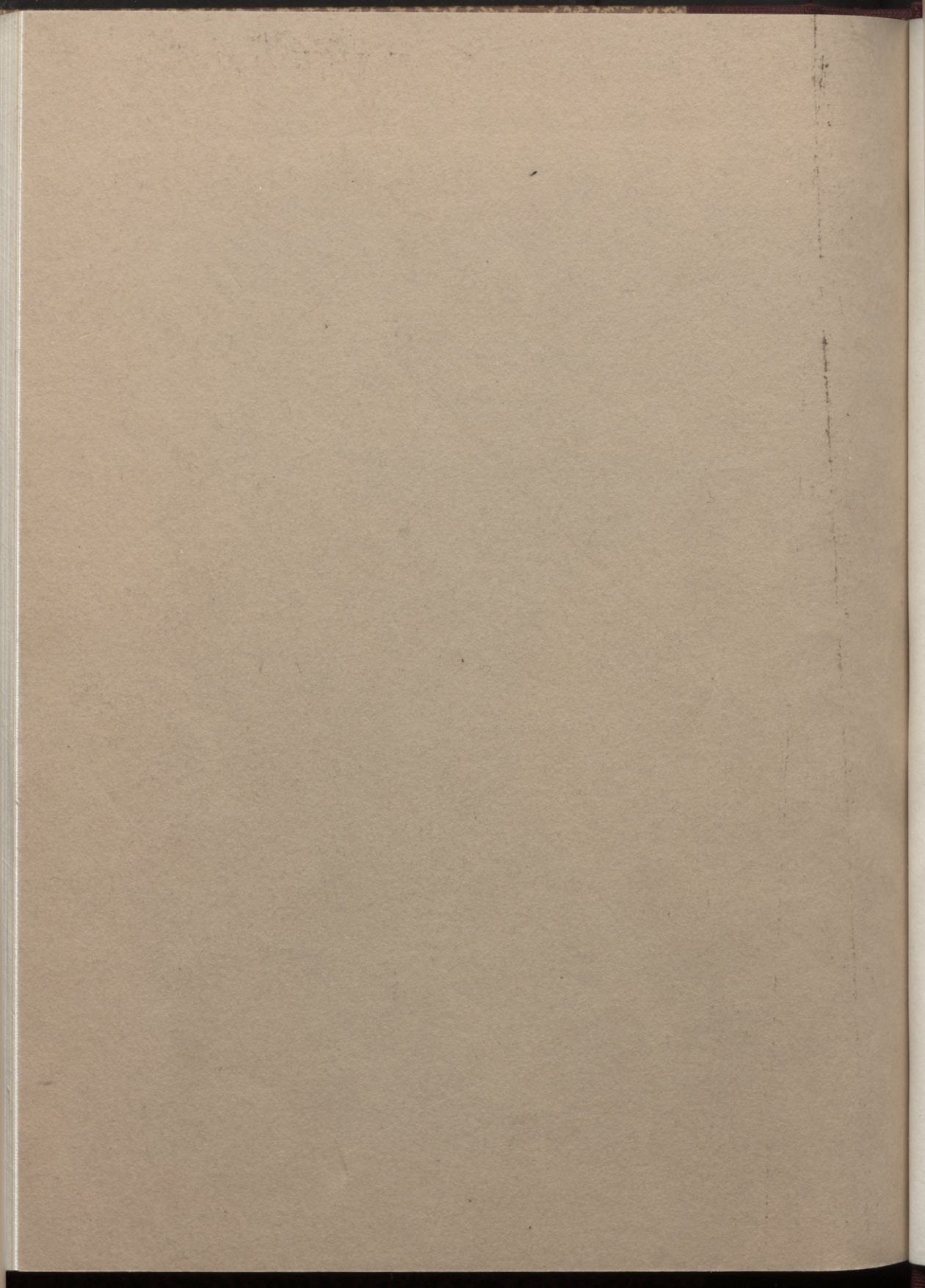
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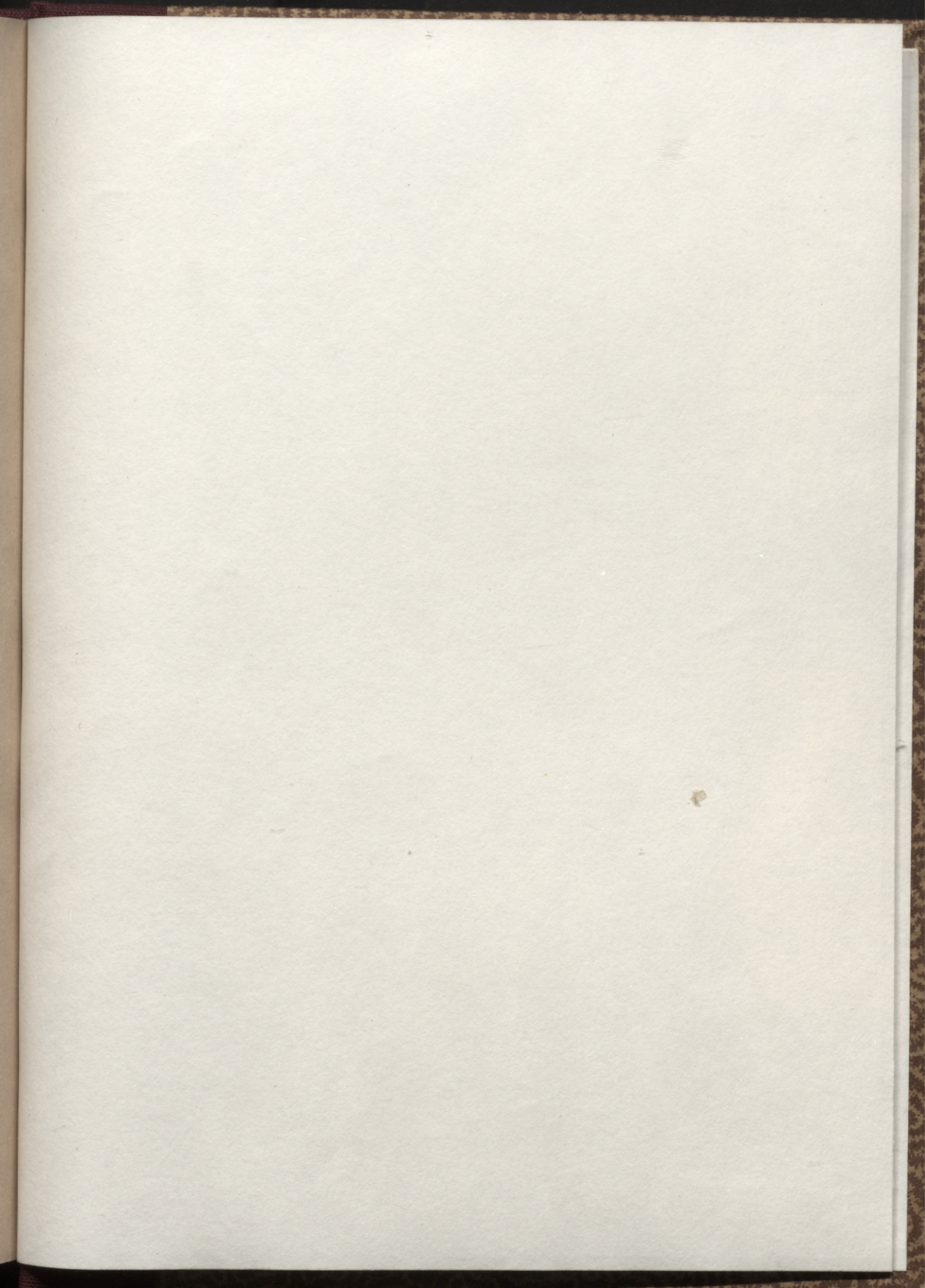


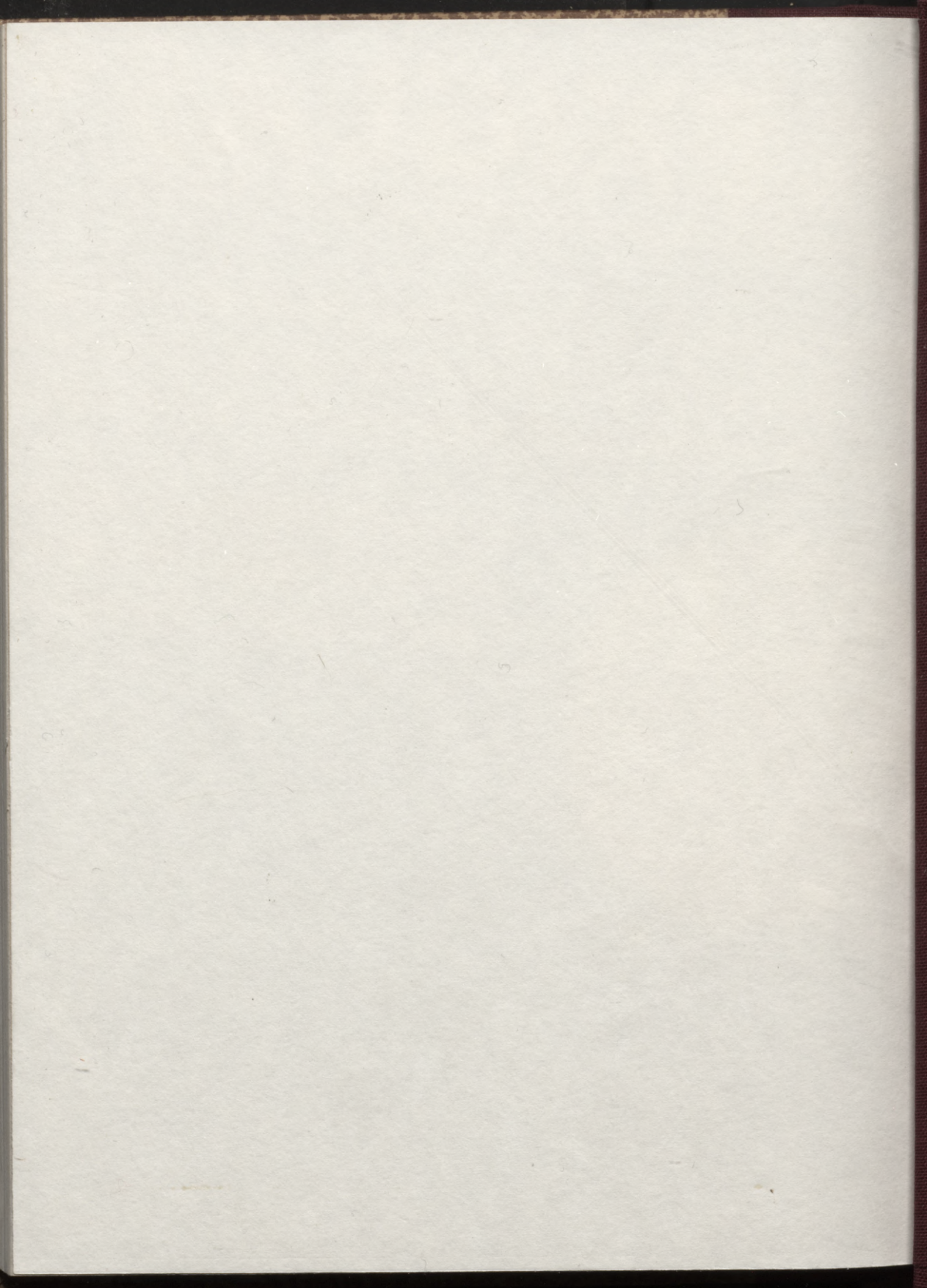












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