

The author concentrates on the period which marked the end of nearly two centuries of relative stability in the area. Between the seventh and ninth centuries Eastern Europe had been left to develop in its own way: the Avars and Bulgars had moved on to the more tempting southern and western parts of the continent, and the Khazars had kept out the nomads pressing in from Asia. But increasing trade along the Volga-Don waterway, while promoting economic growth, also attracted from Scandinavia the invaders who were to be the cause of large movements of population and far-reaching political developments. These were the Rus', originally, in Boba's opinion, a predominantly Danish confraternity of merchants, but one which rapidly became multinational in character. He believes that the mysterious Rus' center of Artha was established in the Oka region, after Russian pressure had forced the autochthonous Meshchera to move southward. Between 820 and 830 the latter, whom Boba identifies with the Majghari or Magyars, settled in the steppes between the Dnieper and the Don, forcing the Khazars to build the fortress of Sarkel for their own protection. The invasion of the Pechenegs in 888/889 drove the Magyars westward across the Dnieper, where they joined the Altaic Onogur-Bulgars, thus creating the ethnic mixture from which the present-day Hungarians sprang.

When dealing with the Magyars, Khazars, and nomads, Boba's arguments are persuasive; but when he turns to the Rus' and to the emergence of Kievan Russia, one is too conscious that conflicting evidence has been ignored or insufficiently discussed. No single explanation of the term Rus' has yet succeeded in reconciling all the available evidence, and the present work is no exception. Also, while it is evident that the Volga became an important international trade artery before the Dnieper, Boba's denial of the existence of a *put' iz Varyag v Greki* needs more than the silence of the sources to substantiate it. Similarly, his views on the Khazar origin of Kiev and its legendary founder, on Askold and Dir, and on the supposed expulsion of Oleg and his men from Novgorod are too conjectural to be convincing. But in returning a verdict of "not proven" on some of the conclusions, it should also be emphasized that this is a serious and interesting contribution to the subject.

A. D. STOKES
Oxford

NOVGOROD THE GREAT: EXCAVATIONS AT THE MEDIEVAL CITY
DIRECTED BY A. V. ARTSIKHOVSKY AND B. A. KOLCHIN. Compiled and written by *M. W. Thompson*. New York and Washington: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967. xvii, 104 pp. \$13.50.

M. W. Thompson provides the first comprehensive account of the results of excavations in Novgorod between 1951 and 1962. This attractive book with many good illustrations will reach wide circles of readers faster than the many volumes of original reports published in Russian. The same author, through translation, has already introduced to the Western world some important Soviet publications on archaeology. Among them are A. L. Mongait's *Archaeology in the USSR*, S. A. Semenov's *Prehistoric Technology*, and C. I. Rudenko's *Pazyryk*.

Excavations of Russian medieval towns are among the most outstanding in Soviet archaeological research. The large areas excavated are truly impressive. According to Thompson, the excavations in Novgorod represent one of the major landmarks in European archaeology. The preservation of the wood by the humid

conditions in Novgorod is in a way comparable to that of the neolithic Swiss lake-shore dwellings of the fourth millennium B.C., such as at Burgäschli, between Bern and Zürich. In this way the streets and pine log cabin type houses at Novgorod have been preserved, allowing the reconstruction of the atmosphere of life in the medieval town. Through the method of dendrochronology (tree-ring dating) it was possible to date many layers very precisely: there are twenty-eight layers, which are dated from 953 to 1462.

Among the most exciting finds are birchbark documents found through most of the deposit except the bottom five and the two top street levels. Dating from the mid-eleventh to the early fifteenth centuries, the over four hundred examples from the excavation site are engraved or scratched on the soft surface of the bark. If they had been written in ink, certainly there would be no legible documents. Rolled into a small cylindrical shape, each is engraved in Cyrillic script, which looks like modern printed Russian script. These documents functioned as a sort of message, sometimes of telegraphic brevity. Because they are not signed and there are no addresses on them, it is presumed that they were probably carried by a servant or someone familiar to both sender and recipient. Most of them were evidently sent to require a certain action of the recipient. For instance, "From Nikita to Ulyanitsa. Marry me. I want you and you me. And as a witness will be Ignato. . . ."

In addition to birchbark documents, there are many other things of great value, such as workshops filled with wooden utensils, and fragments of leather, shoes, and cloth. Some of the objects were so well preserved that they would be quite suitable for use today. Thousands of cereal seeds and plowing tools (*sokhy*) give information on agriculture. Analysis of the seeds shows that a form of permanent field agriculture existed by the eleventh century, and by the next century a regular fallow-field rotation based on winter sowing of rye and spring sowing of barley had been established. Many finds speak for existing trade with the south and west. Glass fragments prove ties with the south, coins and textiles indicate trade with the west. The three thousand fragments of cloth from Novgorod are among the largest collections of medieval cloth known. Among these there are English worsted, dating from before 1250, and Flemish cloth made of Spanish wool.

If it were not for the favorable conditions which have preserved the perishable material and for the systematic excavations on a large scale, with the application of all modern methods, including statistics, the atmosphere of medieval Novgorod would not be known to us. The excavations in Novgorod have proved the origins of the city and the way in which the people lived.

MARIJA GIMBUTAS

University of California, Los Angeles

KNIAZ' DMYTRO VYSHNEVETS'KYI [Prince Dmytro Vyshnevetsky: Historical Study]. By *Liubomyr R. Vynar* [*Lubomyr R. Wynar*]. Munich: Ukrainische Freie Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1964. 94 pp.

Re-examining the lives of leaders of the Ukraine of three centuries ago poses special problems of documentation and objectivity for the historian that are not easily resolved. The difficulties multiply when the deeds of such men are legendary. This monograph deals with Prince Dmytro Vyshnevetsky, a sixteenth-century Cossack leader, whom many regard as the founder of the Zaporozhian Sich and as "the first Ukrainian hetman." The author has sought to remove the mystery that