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## Periodization and Terminology of the History of Eastern Slavs: Observations and Analyses

The historiography of the Eastern Slavs (Russians, Ukrainians, and Belorusinians),<sup>1</sup> unique in numerous ways, is especially complex in the matter of periodization and terminology. Both issues are of paramount importance if one is to present and interpret the history of the geographical area known as Eastern Europe in an objective and meaningful fashion. The prevailing confusion seems to result mainly from the absence of agreement among historians of various schools of thought and nationality, including Americans, regarding the proper application of periodization and terminology. There is a growing awareness among Western historians of Eastern Europe that current terminology is indeed very loose and often quite misleading. There are basically three approaches a historian may take: (1) dynastic, (2) state, and (3) national. Each has its merits and disadvantages; hence a short critical evaluation of all three against the background of the nationalities may contribute significantly to the selection of the method best suited to our purpose.

The dynastic approach, though it offers a useful base for periodization, is lacking in several essential historical attributes, such as the preservation of continuity in economic, cultural, legal, and sociopolitical institutions. The ethnogenic formation of entities (nations) always crosses dynastic periods. By now we have sufficient knowledge and historical documentation, including archeological findings, to suggest that on what is now the territory of the Ukraine a statelike structure existed in the fourth to sixth centuries A.D., or approximately five hundred years earlier than most textbooks say. Recent discoveries made by the Soviet Ukrainian archeologist Arkadii Buhai of the so-called serpentine wall near Kiev support the need for a new look at the history of the Eastern Slavs, the Normanist theory, and especially the periodization, including a basic revision of current terminology.

1. The name of the state and the people remains a subject of controversy among historians. Following the native idioms, and to avoid confusion resulting from transliteration as well as translation, the names Belorus' and Belorusinians are used rather than Belorussians, Beloruthenians, White Russians, or Kryvichans. For the origin of the Belorusinians and questions of terminology see Nicholas P. Vakar, *Belorussia: The Making of a Nation, A Case Study* (Cambridge, Mass., 1956). For additional literature see Vakar's *Bibliographical Guide to Belorussia* (Cambridge, Mass., 1956).

Furthermore, the three Eastern Slav nations view differently their relation to the Riurik and Romanov dynasties. The Ukrainians and Belorusinians accept the Riuriks as "their" dynasty, but regard the Romanovs as foreign oppressors. On the other hand, the history of the Russians, as they emerged under that name, can be only partly associated with the Riuriks but is exclusively identified with the Romanovs. The Polish Piast and Jagellonian dynasties are part of Belorusinian and Ukrainian history, but not of the history of the Russians, which can be written without mentioning them except in the area of foreign relations. Hence the dynastic approach does not offer an ideal framework for historical study.

The state approach is the most widely used among modern historians. Since the rise of the national state, historians have considered it the most obvious entity within which events of the past could be presented in a continuous mode. The state scheme is justified for the ideal situation in which the state's territory coincides with the ethnogenic principle for a prolonged period of time. Its disadvantages are numerous, especially when the "ideal situation" does not apply. In fact it never did apply to the Eastern Slavs. In the ancient period the Kievan State developed around the Kiev area, and the Antes-Poliane were the exclusive creators and mainstay before the arrival of the Riuriks. Only under this dynasty did the Kievan State emerge as a multiracial (multinational) empire (Kievan Rus'). It extended far beyond the original Slavic settlements into Finno-Ugric areas. Ethnogenically Ukrainians are to be traced back to the Antes in a direct line of succession; however, there is only a peripheral connection between the Antes on the one hand and the Belorusinians and Russians on the other. As far as the Belorusinians are concerned, their pure Slavic origin (with only minor Lithuanian mixture) can easily be established and followed down through the centuries. Historically a stateless people, Belorus' cannot be accommodated within the state history of Russia, for though it was partly conquered by Tsar Alexis of Moscow in 1667, not until 1795 (third partition of Poland) did all the Belorusinian lands come under Russia. To apply the scheme of state history to the Belorusinians requires a simultaneous history of four different states: Kievan Rus', Lithuania, Poland, and Russia. But nothing would be accomplished, since in each case the Belorusinian aspect could be traced only marginally. Obviously, such a fragmentary treatment would not produce a systematic and complete history. The periodization of the history of the Belorusinians is quite different from the generally accepted periodization for the Ukrainians and even more so for the Russians.

A different situation prevails in writing the history of the Russian people, although the task is also not without confusion and difficulties. Using strictly the state as a framework, we encounter problems which should not be pushed aside and ignored. For one, the state of the Poliane in the sixth through ninth

centuries can hardly be treated as the antecedent of the Russian state, for there was no continuity between them. Russia (Muscovy) gained partial control of the territories of the earlier Poliane only during the second half of the seventeenth century (1667) and incorporated them completely only after the second partition of Poland (1793). The next formation—Kievan Rus'—existed from the ninth through thirteenth centuries. Much literary and historical controversy has centered on the issue of the nature and place of Kievan Rus' within East European history. From V. I. Tatishchev and N. M. Karamzin to V. O. Kliuchevsky, Paul Miliukov, S. M. Soloviev, A. E. Presniakov, M. N. Pokrovsky, Boris Grekov, Mykhailo Hrushevsky, Oscar Halecki, Nicholas Chubaty, George Vernadsky, and numerous others, including a long list of American writers on Russia's history, this perplexing issue has been, and still is, discussed and argued. Confusion has attended the controversy, especially as regards terminology and continuity.

Three terms have been used: Kievan Russia, Kievan Rus', and Ukrainian Rus'. The term "Kievan Russia" was introduced by Russian national historians of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; the second (Kievan Rus') is a product of Soviet historiography leaning toward a compromise with the national aspirations of the Ukrainians and Belorusinians (it is evident, for instance, in Grekov's *Kiev Rus'*: "The history of Ancient Rus was not a history of the Ukraine, nor of Byelorussia, nor yet of Great Russia alone. It was the history of a state that enabled all three to mature and gain strength," p. 12, English ed., Moscow, 1952). The third name, Ukrainian Rus', is best identified with Hrushevsky, who first challenged in a scholarly fashion the exclusive claim of the Russians to the Kievan heritage in his *Istoriia Ukrayny-Rusy* (10 vols.) and in particular in his article, "The Traditional Scheme of 'Russian' History and the Problem of a Rational Organization of the History of the Eastern Slavs."<sup>2</sup> Apart from linguistic and ethnogenic arguments, which undermine the Russian claim that Kievan Rus' is a part of Russia's history,<sup>3</sup> there are histori-

2. *Sbornik statei po slavianovedeniiu*, Imp. akademiiia nauk (St. Petersburg, 1904), vol. 1. The article was published in English in *Annals of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the United States* (1952). Hrushevsky's scheme is extensively discussed by Dmytro Doroshenko in "A Survey of Ukrainian Historiography," *Annals of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the United States*, 5, no. 4 (1957): 264–66.

3. On the linguistic aspect of the Russo-Ukrainian confrontation see Oleksa Shakhmatov and Ahatanel Kryms'kyi, *Narysy z istoriï ukrains'koi movy ta khrestomatiia z pamiatnykiv pys'mennoi staro-ukrainschyny XI-XVII vv.* (Kiev, 1922); Oleksander Kolessa, *Pohliad na istoriïi ukrains'koi movy* (Prague, 1924); Stepan Smal-Stockyi, *Rozvytok pohliadiw pro semiu slovians'kykh mov i ikh vzaimne sporidnennia*, 2nd ed. (Prague, 1927); A. Shakhmatov, "K voprosu ob obrazovanii russkikh narechei i russkikh narodnostei," *Russkii filologicheskii vestnik* (St. Petersburg, 1894). For an ethnogenic approach see Mykola Chubaty [Nicholas Chubaty], *Kniazha Rus'-Ukraina ta vynyknenia triokh skhidno-slovians'kykh natsii* (New York, 1964).

cal reasons for questioning the validity of this scheme. Almost two-thirds of the former Rus' realm, including its center Kiev, remained outside the boundaries of Muscovy-Russia until the second half of the seventeenth century, and in some instances the eighteenth century. Considering that Muscovy, as a state entity, is traceable in a direct line of succession to the Principalities of Suzdal and Vladimir, both located in the eastern peripheral areas of the realm, it is proper to conclude that Kievan Rus' fits into Russian history only to a limited degree. Of all the grounds adduced by Russian historians for continuity between Kiev and Muscovy, the strongest seems to be the genealogical (dynastic) link, yet the hostility between Suzdal-Vladimir and Kiev (in addition to the almost complete absence of active relations from the last quarter of the twelfth century on) rather reduces the force of the dynastic argument.<sup>4</sup> Otherwise, for almost four centuries there was very little contact, except through the common Orthodox Church,<sup>5</sup> between areas which finally came under the rule of the Muscovite grand princes (tsars) and the larger part of the former Kievan Rus', absorbed by the Lithuanian Rus' state and the Polish Commonwealth respectively. Also, the developments in the Halych (Galician)-Volynian Kingdom as well as in the territories of Polotsk and Pskov during the thirteenth-seventeenth centuries in many ways, including the formation of the vernacular language and the sociopolitical framework, were different from what they were in the areas in which the Russian stock originated. Novgorod (Lord Novgorod the Great), which leaned toward the West, was conquered by Ivan III in 1471 and fully absorbed by Muscovy in 1475.

Russian historians bridge the gap of up to four hundred years between Kiev and Muscovy by introducing the periods of "Appanage Russia," "Tatar Yoke," and "the gathering of the Russian lands." The intention is to preserve a continuity "from ancient times to the present" within the "fabric of state history"—the history of Russia. Since Kievan Rus' ceased to exist as a separate entity during the second half of the thirteenth century, an attempt to argue continuity along the Kiev-Moscow-Petersburg line is less defensible than the one following national (i.e., ethnogenic) patterns of organic continuity. Obviously the formation of Russian nationality took place on territories which in relation to Kiev were just *cetera dominia*. Hence, Hrushevsky's comparison of this situation with the relation between the Roman Empire and the Gallic

4. This aspect is well presented in the introduction by A. E. Presniakov in his *Formation of the Great Russian State: A Study of Russian History in the Thirteenth to Fifteenth Centuries*, trans. A. E. Moorhouse (Chicago, 1970).

5. In fact, changes in the Orthodox Church proceeded differently in the two areas; for example, the Union with Rome in 1596 did not affect Muscovy. On the history of the Ukrainian church see Eduard Winter, *Byzans und Rom im Kampf um die Ukraine, 955–1939* (Leipzig, 1942); Mykola Chubaty [Nicholas Chubaty], *Istoriia Khristianstva na Rusi-Ukraini*, vol. 1: *Vid pochatku do 1353 r.* (Rome and New York, 1965).

provinces is basically correct. The two centuries of Tatar domination,<sup>6</sup> essential in the formation of the Russian state, are of only secondary importance in the history of the Belorusinians and Ukrainians, whereas the Lithuanian and Polish presence is of central significance in their respective histories for four centuries. Therefore, the term "Appanage Period" is meaningless. Instead, a more appropriate name would be "The Tatar Age and the Rise of Muscovy" (1230s–1480), which in the case of Russian state history is succeeded by "The Expansion of Muscovy-Russia" (1480–) and links Russia's history to the accession of the Romanovs in 1613. The Tatar period was obviously preceded by an "Ancient Age" up to the 1230s, which in turn can be extended into the past as far as it is historically defensible and exclusively within the Russian ethnological frontiers. By doing so, the Finno-Ugric element must be treated as autochthonic, and Slavs invading those territories viewed as conquerors and settlers. In the case of the history of the Ukraine and Belorus', the ethnogenic and geographic base is more static, except for Ukrainian expansion toward the Black Sea. Its continuity from the sixth century throughout the periods of Kievan Rus', the Halych-Volynian Kingdom, Lithuanian Rus', the Polish Commonwealth, the Cossack Ukraine, Russian domination, and into our time is uninterrupted.

It is true that Ukrainians, and even more so Belorusinians, in certain periods existed as stateless nations, yet historical memories have served as a substitute for independence and have never lost the organic continuity of national histories. If the symbol of a national capital has any historical significance, and obviously it has, then it should be remembered that neither the Ukrainians nor the Belorusinians ever had to conquer their respective capitals (Kiev and Minsk) from the Russians. The reference "Kiev, the mother of Russian towns" requires not only semantical correction but also a more proper symbolic assignment—"mother of Eastern Slav towns," or better "Rus' towns." In conclusion, it can be suggested that the state-based histories of all three nations are justifiable only in strict accord with national histories. To ignore the national element altogether in this part of Europe amounts to distortion and oversimplification. Clearly the history of the Ukrainians (Rusinians, Ruthenians) cannot be presented within the history of Russia, just as the history of the Russians (Muscovites, Great Russians) is unthinkable within the history of Ukrainian Rus'.

As far as the ancient period is concerned, particularly that of Kievan Rus', no principles are violated in taking the national approach within the

6. According to Vernadsky, Russia is to be considered a Eurasian empire; hence the whole foundation of Russian civilization is different from the Ukrainian and Belorusinian foundations. See George Vernadsky, *The Tsardom of Moscow, 1547–1682*, 2 vols. (New Haven, 1969).

rise-and-decline cycle unless the proper nomenclature is replaced with terminology favoring specific national interests. The Frankish Kingdom may be seen as both an entity in itself and a part of Germanic history. The situation of Kievan Rus' is analogous, yet here the question of succession presents greater confusion. Under such circumstances it is quite understandable that historians from all three nations share an interest in that state. The degree of identity obviously varies greatly, yet common elements do exist. Early Slav history is the history of Slavs and not the history of Russians or Ukrainians.<sup>7</sup> But from that period on, national histories emerge which can and should be handled within a meaningful framework extending back into a specific past as well as branching off into different directions.

Another advantage of national history is that it provides a better chance to explore the sociological, economic, cultural, linguistic, and religious changes chronologically. The history of the Irish, or even the Italians, offers another example, in addition to the Eastern Slavs, in favor of the national approach. Although recognizing the trend in contemporary historiography which favors (at least at the textbook level) the state as the most appropriate unit for the study of history, one nevertheless finds in the case of the Eastern Slavs a justification as well as a need for a state approach, provided that it does not promote the interests of one of the three nationalities at the expense of the others. In this regard, and especially in respect to the history of Russia as promulgated by Russian national historians and generally accepted in the United States, much remains to be questioned including periodization, translation, and

7. An extensive bibliography on the early history of the Eastern Slavs is to be found in a useful study by P. N. Tret'iakov, *Vostochnoslavianskie plemena* (Moscow, 1953); Chubatyi, *Kniazha Rus'-Ukraina*; Iaroslav Pasternak, "Problemy etnogenezy ukrains'koho narodu v svitli arkheoloichnykh doslidzhen," *Ukrains'kyi istoryk*, 4, no. 4 (1970): 5-29, as well as his *Arkheologiya Ukrayiny* (Toronto, 1961). In Western literature on the early history of the Eastern Slavs see the recently (poorly) translated English version of Roger Portal, *The Slavs: A Cultural and Historical Survey of the Slavonic Peoples*, trans. Patrick Evans (New York, 1970). Portal follows essentially the Russian historiography, but he admits that "there began in the twelfth century a process of linguistic differentiation which gradually centred itself round three dialects, the Great Russian, Byelorussian and Ukrainian" (p. 37). Another well-known Slav historian, Francis Dvornik, in his *Slavs in European History and Civilization* (New Brunswick, 1962), follows the Russian scheme exclusively. Oscar Halecki in all his works, including *Borderlands of Western Civilization: A History of East Central Europe* (New York, 1952) and *From Florence to Brest, 1439-1596* (New York, 1958), clearly distinguishes all three nations in all historical stages. He considers Kievan Rus' as a part of Ukrainian-Belorusian history, with the Russians being only an offspring but not an heir. Soviet historiography in the last decade produced, in addition to Boris Grekov's works, a number of studies dealing exclusively with Kievan Rus', including foreign relations. See, for example, V. T. Pashuto, *Vneshniaia politika drevnei Rusi* (Moscow, 1968), and I. M. Shekera, *Mizhnarodni sviazky Kyivs'koi Rusi: Z istorii zornishnoi polityky Rusi v period utvorennia i smitsnennia drevnorus'skoi derzhavy v VII-X st.* (Kiev, 1963).

terminology.<sup>8</sup> Russian national historiography as it emerged in the twentieth century, including the work of V. O. Kliuchevsky and Paul Miliukov, at best can be characterized as using a conglomerate of state, national, dynastic, and even territorial criteria. Otherwise, there is an attempt to incorporate retroactively into Russia's past the history of all territories and peoples conquered or annexed, even when their histories date back much further than Russian history and possess quite different historical characteristics. In this retroactive spirit, Vernadsky begins *A History of Russia* with the Cimmerian and Scythian era (1000–200 b.c.), the Sarmato-Gothic epoch (200 b.c.–a.d. 370), and the Hunno-Antic period (370–558)—that is, he extends it to territories which did not become "Russian" until the eighteenth century. Once Russia's history has been linked directly to the Scythians, the claim on Kievan Rus' is predetermined. Although Soviet historiography from Pokrovsky to the present accepts the common ancestry of all three groups of Eastern Slavs and the heritage of Kievan Rus', Russian national and American historians still refuse to undertake a thorough re-examination of the notion of "one Russian nationality." Nicholas Riasanovsky, among others,<sup>9</sup> asserts, "The territory inhabited by the Russians directly west and southwest of the Kiev area was divided into Volynia and Galicia. . . . Galicia became repeatedly a battleground for the Russians and the Poles."<sup>10</sup> Having populated the Ukraine with "Russians" in the twelfth century, Riasanovsky, without any explanation, from the seventeenth century on distinguishes the Ukraine from Russia in all aspects, including literature, art, education, and religion (pp. 217 ff.). Thus Professor

8. American East European historiography originated and, to a significant degree, remains under the domination of Russian national historians who came to the United States after World War I. Among the most influential, in addition to Anatole Mazour and A. Lobanov-Rostovsky, should be mentioned Michael Karpovich, George Vernadsky (author of five volumes of *A History of Russia*, New Haven, 1943–69), and Michael Florinsky, who produced a whole generation of American historians reflecting the historical school of their teachers. The prolonged absence of any confrontation contributed to the identification of American historiography with the Russian interpretation. Only in the 1950s did the first challenges take place. But they were usually overshadowed by emotionalism and labeling—a natural reaction accompanying any challenge to the status quo. The impact of Russian historiography on Western historians can be measured by the fact that in the first respectable world history (*The Historians' History of the World*, ed. Henry Smith Williams, 25 vols., New York, 1905) the history of Russia, written by a French scholar, A. S. Rappoport, is based chiefly on the works of Russian historians. However, Rappoport was well aware of the national issues involved, pointing out that "their [Russians and Ukrainians] history is no less diversified than their nature; the first have their centre at Moscow, the second at Kiev" (17:91).

9. With the notable exception of Herbert J. Ellison, *A History of Russia* (New York, 1964), who is more aware of the complexity of the issues involved, including terminological difficulties.

10. Nicholas V. Riasanovsky, *A History of Russia*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1969), pp. 97–98.

Riasanovsky's treatment amounts to the sudden birth of a nation—the Ukrainians—sometime in the seventeenth century. Such a curiosity is the result of the improper periodization and terminology introduced by Russian historians for political reasons. Similar Russification of the past has been performed by Kliuchevsky, who claims that the official language in the Lithuanian Rus' Principality was Russian.<sup>11</sup> In fact, the language used at that time was, as Chyzhevsky has shown, Old Ukrainian mixed with or "undistinguishable from the Belorussian."<sup>12</sup> A recent discovery in France reveals that the first grammar of the Old Ukrainian language was compiled in 1643 by Ivan Uzhevych.<sup>13</sup>

The prevailing confusion, or perhaps intentional distortion, could easily be prevented by accepting a uniform scheme for all three nationalities and by using the correct nomenclatures as they were known and applied historically. Against this background, obviously, the national-state framework respecting the territorial base emerges as the most desirable form for writing the histories of Russia, the Ukraine, and Belorus'. Today an expert on East European history, given all the sources and literature available, including Ukrainian and Belorusinian works, as well as Soviet scholarly contributions primarily of a documentary and archeological nature (B. Rybakov, I. Tikhomirov, and others),<sup>14</sup> is in a position to restore the historical patterns and continuity of all three peoples without imposing on them pasts that they never experienced.

It is refreshing to note that in addition to Ukrainian and Belorusinian national historians, the Polish historians from Joachim Lelewel and Karol Szajnocha to Oscar Halecki, Tadeusz Manteuffel, and Henryk Batowski distinguish clearly between Russia and the Ukraine from ancient times to the present. A similar realization is emerging among German scholars. Gotthold Rhode has introduced into German historiography terminology which may serve as a model in our attempt to clarify and explain the problem under discussion.<sup>15</sup> Certainly not by accident Rhode places the Kievan realm in Ukrainian history: "Mit 'Reussen' übersetzen wir Rus', um Verwechslung mit den 'Russen' zu vermeiden, unter denen doch nur die Grossrussen zu verstehen

11. Vasili Klyuchevsky, *The Rise of the Romanovs*, trans. and ed. Liliana Archibald (London, 1970), p. 116.

12. Dmytro Chyzhev's'kyi [Čiževsky, Tschižewskij], *Istoriia ukrains'koi literatury* (New York, 1956), p. 22.

13. *Slovians'ka hramatyka, napysana Ivanom Uzhevychem . . . v Paryshi roku 1643*. For details see O. Shevchenko's report in *Literaturna Ukraina* (Kiev), Oct. 24, 1969.

14. For the Soviet contribution see Akademiiia nauk SSSR, Institut istorii, *Istoriia istoricheskoi nauki v SSSR: Dooktiabrskii period, bibliografija* (Moscow, 1965); M. I. Marchenko, *Ukrains'ka istoriohrafija s davnikh chasiv do seredyny XIX st.* (Kiev, 1959).

15. Gotthold Rhode, "Die Ostgrenze Polens im Mittelalter," *Zeitschrift für Ostforschung*, 2, no. 1 (1953): 15–65. Also, one of the most outstanding German scholars, Eduard Winter, considers Kievan Rus' first of all as part of Ukrainian history in his *Byzanz und Rom*.

sind." Henceforth, "Rus'," "Rusychi" or "Ruthenians," and finally "Ukrainians." A Ukrainian is called "Rusyn" and not "Russkii," just as we speak of "Muscovy," "Moskvich," "Russia" (since 1713), and "Russian" ("Russkii").<sup>16</sup> Sigismund von Herberstein, and other travelers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, went to the "Moscowitern."<sup>17</sup> A similar ethnogenic, linguistic, and territorial identity was enjoyed by the Belorusinians, who, although known under various names, occupied a large territory for over a thousand years.<sup>18</sup> They are entitled to share the great heritage of Kievan Rus' to a larger degree than the Russians, and their contribution to the civilization of Lithuania must not be sacrificed to satisfy the Russian national ego.

Soviet historiography, originally bound by a socialist promise to eliminate national discrimination and restore national equality, soon was forced to act as an agent for an ideology rather than as an independent discipline serving its own purpose. After years of experiment, notably under the guidance of M. N. Pokrovsky, it underwent in the late 1930s a significant revision which intended to place the cradle of world history on the territory of the USSR.<sup>19</sup> The ideological program "Workers of all countries unite" was supplemented by the nineteenth-century Pan-Slavic slogan: "All Slavs unite." Having assumed several—often contradictory—assignments, Soviet historiography had to be revised whenever political expediency dictated.<sup>20</sup> A perpetual rewriting affected all non-Russian nationalities, including the Ukrainians and Belorusinians.<sup>21</sup>

16. Linguistic formation and division into three main groups began before 1130 and continued into the thirteenth century. Reinhold Trautman, *Die slavischen Völker und die Sprachen: Eine Einführung in die Slavistik* (Göttingen, 1947), pp. 128–72.

17. Herberstein, *Reise zu den Moscowitern*, ed. Traudl Seifert (Munich, 1966).

18. On the linguistic borders of Belorusinian see E. F. Karsky, *Etnograficheskaiia karta belorusskogo plemeni* (Petrograd, 1917) and *Dialektologicheskaiia karta russkogo iazyka* (Petrograd, 1914). See also Nicholas P. Vakar, "The Name 'White Russia,'" *American Slavic and East European Review*, 8, no. 3 (1949): 201 ff.

19. For pertinent analyses regarding this aspect of Soviet historiography see Klaus Mehnert, *Weltrevolution durch Weltgeschichte: Die Geschichtslehre des Stalinismus* (Stuttgart, 1953). Although Pokrovsky began his *Russkaia istoriia s drevneishikh vremen* (1933–34) with the early history of the Eastern Slavs from the sixth century (he continuously uses the name Kiev Rus'), the most recent *Istoriia SSSR s drevneishikh vremen do nashikh dnei*, 8 vols., Akademiiia nauk SSSR, Institut istorii (Moscow, 1966–67), goes as far back as the Paleolithic Age, with references to the Shelskian man living in the basin of the Black Sea, an area conquered by Russia in the last quarter of the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century. Events which took place in three thousand B.C. become an integral part of the history of the USSR. Thus the USSR is endowed with the oldest uninterrupted history of any state or nation.

20. C. E. Black, ed., *Rewriting Russian History: Soviet Interpretations of Russia's Past* (New York, 1956), especially chapter 2 by Leo Yaresh, "The Problem of Periodization."

21. American historiography at least has one excellent study dealing with this—so

In the 1920s *Slovo o polku Ihoreve* (*The Song of Ihor's Campaign*) was returned to Ukrainian literature;<sup>22</sup> two decades later it was officially “transferred” into the Russian literary treasury. Even though Soviet historians in writing USSR history take the territorial approach which connects earlier (unrelated) periods with events of later times which took place on the territory of the present-day USSR, they argue that the Russian element was the one that attracted other nations. Since in the Middle Ages Kievan Rus' had been the state of all Eastern Slavs, the political conclusion of Soviet historiography also became the “organic and historically necessary conclusion”—reunification within the USSR. This historical reasoning found its symbolic manifestation in the new Soviet anthem: “Soiuz nerushimyi respublik svobodnykh splotila naveki Velikaia Rus’.” Obviously the “Rus” of the anthem is not “Rus'-Ukraina,” but “Rus'-Rossiia,” the gatherer of “all Russian lands,” as the Russian national historians insisted prior to 1917.

Notwithstanding the outstanding contributions of Soviet historiography to the history of all three nationalities, as well as most valuable archeological discoveries, as long as it remains under political controls Soviet historiography cannot be expected to contribute objectively to the complex questions of periodization and terminology. In this article an attempt has been made only to stress the existing confusion, contradictions, and oversimplifications that prevail in current historiography. Certain suggestions regarding the periodization and nomenclature of the history of Eastern Slavs are not an attempt to legislate “correct” terminology but to initiate an academic discussion and scholarly exchange, from which all historians of Eastern Europe can only profit.

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far—rarely considered aspect of Soviet historiography: Lowell Tillett, *The Great Friendship: Soviet Historians on the Non-Russian Nationalities* (Chapel Hill, 1969).

22. M. O. Skrypnyk, “Aktualni zavdannia ukrains'koho literaturoznavstva,” *Krytyka* (Kharkiv), 1929, no. 6, p. 5.